

REMINISCENCES  
OF A VERY OLD  
MAN



JOHN SARTAIN · 1808-1897



coll

Engros  
Brog.













The Reminiscences of  
a Very Old Man



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JOHN SARTAIN, IN HIS 89TH YEAR  
*From a Photograph by Wright & Cook*

**T**HE REMINISCENCES  
OF A VERY OLD MAN  
1808-1897. BY JOHN SARTAIN  
*ACADEMICIAN OF THE PENNSYLVANIA  
ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, CAVA-  
LIERE OF THE ROYAL EQUESTRIAN  
ORDER OF THE CROWN OF ITALY, ETC.*



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## INTRODUCTION

**B**ENVENUTO Cellini, the eminent Florentine artist and consummate bravo, declares that "It is the duty of every one, in whatever state or condition of life, to be his own biographer; but he should not enter upon this important and arduous undertaking before he has attained the age of forty." Now as I already number much more than twice that many years, it is fair to assume that Cellini would pronounce me fully qualified, at least in the matter of age. But I should never have entered upon this task, for task it is, had it not been for the importunity of numerous friends who insist that much that I have seen, and much that I know of many persons of distinction both in this country and in Europe, ought to be recorded. Should I find time from other pressing and more important affairs to accomplish this writing, the reader—if reader there happens to be—will find, I hope, that I have avoided what Chester Harding calls an Egotistography. My reminiscences will go back to what I saw of the great national jubilee re-

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joicings of 1814 on the occasion of Napoleon's overthrow by the allied forces of Europe, and his banishment to Elba.

Every drama, whether of real or mimic life, must be provided with a stage and a theatre. Even for the performance of Punch this is essential. What a shifting of scenery has not London presented from time to time, as successive actions—often tragic, sometimes ludicrous or pleasurable—passed in panoramic fashion before the observer! What it was my fortune to see in an unobtrusive way of the scenes and performances with which I happened to come in contact, it will be the purpose of the following pages to present in manner as best I may, a simple unpretentious narrative.

It may not be out of place to mention here the immediate impulse toward the starting of this book. A small gathering of intimates in my library one evening included my esteemed friends, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Janvier. In the course of the general conversation, I had occasion to relate the case of a man who endeavoured to evade payment of a just claim by means of a quibble. In the written obligation the words "this inden-

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ture" were used, but as the four smooth edges of the document formed a perfect parallelogram, he argued that there was no indenture, and therefore the contract was not binding. The judge on the bench asked to look at the agreement. When it was handed up to him, he took out his pen-knife and cut one edge of the paper to a waved line, and then returned it to the captious disputant, saying, "It is now an indenture."

This suggested to Mr. Janvier an amusing idea. He drew up an obligation that I would within one year from date begin writing my reminiscences. He placed the pen in my hand and I signed it. He then cut it in two diagonally in a waved line from one corner to the other. "There, that's an indenture. You may have one half. I shall keep the other, and will hold you to it."

Hence this book.



Reminiscences of England





## CHAPTER I

*London—1808 to 1830*

**T**HE London of my earliest recollection, which my mind's eye still sees with vivid distinctness, exists no longer, or at least only in a few detached fragments left here and there. The miles of fields that I remember, and which in part I have traversed, are now covered with smoke-blackened houses, and many extensive outlying wild commons are transformed into beautiful parks and gardens. So now to begin, let us ignore the London of to-day and substitute a few glimpses of the London of my childhood.

Those who are familiar with the picturesque beauties of St. James' Park, its winding and varied lake shore and islands peopled with swans and other water fowl, must find it difficult to realize in imagination the place as I knew it prior to 1820. A broad, straight canal divided the enclosure into two long fields, from which the public was excluded and which were used only for pasturage. A few fine old elms stood here and there, remote from one another. Midway of its length, the canal was spanned by a one-arched Chinese bridge with a pagoda over the crown of the arch. It had been built for the Peace Celebration in 1814, and had be-

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come a valued short-cut by way of Queen Anne's Gate to what was then known as Tothill's Fields. It was for pedestrians only, and the rise at each end was by a succession of steps and platforms.

The Mall on the north side existed then as now, but the ranks of trees were finer and larger than the sickly race that has succeeded them. The separation of the Mall from the grassy enclosure was by a dry ditch with a wooden railing at the bottom, painted black with some kind of pitchy paint. There were no gates anywhere, and I never knew how the animals grazing within, chiefly sheep, were got in or out, but there must have been somewhere concealed a movable panel for the purpose. For all that, I and the other children used to get in to gather the buttercups and daisies, and the way we accomplished it was this: the upright rails were mostly just a trifle too close together to let my little head through, but after trying some twenty or more, Eureka! a space a bit wider would be found. Where my head would pass through my body would, and thus went in the whole troop of us.

In those primitive days of innocence London had no police, but only constables who were selected from among respectable shopkeepers. They remained at home minding their own proper business except when called out to arrest a thief or some disturber of the peace, and all the neighbourhood knew which grocer, shoemaker or tallow-chandler represented the majesty

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of the law. As insignia of office and to inspire awe and reverence of his authority, each constable was furnished by the powers that were with a small round staff about nine inches long, with a rude carving on the end intended to represent a kingly crown, the whole painted with some device that I do not remember. As these defenders of law and order issued forth from their private affairs only when summoned, we children were never molested for trespassing on his Majesty's reserved domain.

The south side of the park was planted with rows of trees bordering broad straight walks, corresponding with those on the north, but fewer in number. There was no public carriage way then as now, no thoroughfare except for pedestrians, and it was so little frequented as to be always a solitude save when the drill sergeant exercised his awkward squad of raw recruits. At its eastern end, this southern boundary was irregular and zigzag and was known as Birdcage Walk. A brick wall at the western end toward Buckingham House enclosed the soldiers' barracks, and I have stood near that wall listening with feelings of distress to the agonized groans of a man being flogged.

West of the park stood the red brick mansion known as Buckingham House, the town house of Queen Charlotte, wife of George the Third and prolific mother of his fifteen children, whom Byron styled "a bad ugly woman." The east view from its windows

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was along the straight canal, while northward, across the Green Park, was seen the shining fountain of the "Queen's Basin," which lay parallel with Piccadilly and less than a stone's throw from it. This fountain looked well enough when seen from afar, but it was distance that lent enchantment to the view, for it consisted only of an ugly iron pipe, some twenty feet in height perhaps. A considerable body of water poured from the top, which was covered with a plain iron cap to spread the flow before it fell. A few feet from the base of the pipe was a circular brick wall with a flat stone capping, intended no doubt to contain the descending flood which was to fall in a sheet over its brim, but the open joints of the brick work let it through so freely that the surface of the water within was on the same level as that outside. In winter, I have seen the water of this fountain frozen into the most fantastic shapes, lovely to behold, stalagmites of crystal rising to meet pendant icicles in the strangest contorted forms, sparkling with beauty when the sun shone. Four or five magnificent old elms stood west of the fountain, with seats against their trunks under the shade of their broad spreading branches, which when occupied by ladies made a charming feature of the place. But those fine trees died of old age long years ago, and the Queen's Basin is filled up and grass-grown; and as the mind's eye reproduces the things that are past and gone, a sort of heartache arises along

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with the vision of what is no more. The same change has come over what was Rosamond's Pond, which reposed amid the grove in the hollow some sixty yards further west.

West of all this was, and is, Hyde Park Corner, where the northwest and southeast angles of the two parks terminate diagonally opposite each other at the end of Piccadilly; but how different from its present dignified and imposing appearance was this locality in the reign of the third George. The classic gates of Decimus Burton had not then risen in stately beauty, nor had the residence of the Duke of Wellington put on its architectural attire, for both Apsley House and the hospital almost opposite were plain unsightly brick buildings. The conspicuous feature of the spot was an obstruction in the shape of a turnpike gate, which stretched its all-embracing arms from side to side of the wide avenue, and all comers not pedestrians had to stand and deliver before being permitted to pass through. Those were slow-going times, but imagine if you can the traffic of to-day held in check by such a barrier; the pent-up accumulation stagnating on both sides of the gates would indeed be a sight to wonder at.

So have I seen the waters of Father Thames piled up at old London Bridge, waiting their turn to get through the narrow ways between the piers of its small Gothic arches. Whether the flow was up stream or down it

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was the same, almost like a waterfall over a dam. But the toll-gate is a thing of the past, and so is King John's old bridge, and free passage to traffic on land and water is permitted on both thoroughfares.

No Regent Street existed as yet, nor Regent's Park; the latter was, I think, planned and planted, but it was invisible to the public. What is now Albany Street, built up with houses on both sides, was then a country road, with a walk for pedestrians on the east side only, and on Sunday afternoons it was thronged with the cockney populace on their way to Primrose Hill. I once saw a frightened hare on this road rushing full tilt toward the built-up part of the town, but unpursued because so unexpected. The prospect eastward from the top of Primrose Hill was a wide spread of grassy meadows, and at the foot of its eastern slope was Chalk Farm, to the neighbourhood of which duellists used to resort to give and receive satisfaction, when that style of mutual assassination was fashionable. The twin mount on the other side, the summit of which is now covered with buildings, used to be known as Blood Hill, and derived that appellation, I think, from the circumstance that the bodies of some murdered men had been found in the ditch at its foot. Before Regent Street existed, the chief thoroughfare between Oxford Street to the north (then commonly called Oxford Road), and Piccadilly to the south, was a narrow lane named Swallow Street, the only remain-

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ing portion of which still enters Piccadilly opposite St. James' Church. The traffic arriving from the Strand by way of the Haymarket, uniting with that from Coventry Street, passed up Tichborne Street (now obliterated), through Marylebone Street, and entered Swallow Street from the northern end of Warwick Street. The house line on the east side of the modern Regent Street is the same as was the east line of Swallow Street, the present breadth having been obtained by totally abolishing the entire west side of the old lane. I remember distinctly the appearance before the transformation began.

The avenue planned for connecting Waterloo Place with Regent Street took the graceful sweep of a quarter circle, and was named the Regent's Quadrant. When the Roman Doric colonnade on both sides of the street existed, as originally built by the architect Nash, the effect was extremely beautiful, but the columns were long since removed.

I remember well the beginning of the demolition of houses for opening Regent Street, for before this, the school I attended in Air Street stood on a spot now in the middle of the road of the Regent's Quadrant. At the foot of Waterloo Place, which is after all properly a part of Regent Street and was built at the same time, stood Carlton House, the residence of the Prince of Wales. He had become Regent upon the mental failure of his father, George the Third, and the new

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street was named in his honour. The building had a beautifully proportioned Corinthian portico of six columns on the centre of its north front, of sufficient projection for a carriage to drive under it, but unfortunately this fine façade was partially concealed from view by a wall on a line with the Pall Mall house fronts. This wall served as base for a range of coupled Ionic columns, interrupted at either end by arched gates for the entrance and exit of carriages. The palace itself could be seen but imperfectly through this screen.

I have mentioned the old London Bridge and the dam it formed against the rising and falling tide, but it was not only the stone piers that made the obstruction; it was the starlings built around the piers for their protection that so seriously narrowed the channels. I remember that they resembled enormous barges with narrow prows at both ends.

The next bridge west of London Bridge was Blackfriars, spanning the river in a graceful curve, each pier being ornamented on both fronts with coupled columns, which were utilized as supports for recessed seats for weary wayfarers on the sidewalks above. This fine structure was torn down a few years ago to give place to one better suited to the requirements of the enlarged traffic of the present day.

Farringdon Street, beginning at the foot of Holborn Hill, leads southward to this bridge, and I well re-



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member the market house that occupied the middle of the roadway from end to end, terminating at the foot of Ludgate Hill. Often have I walked through this market after dark during its hours of active business, noisy, in the butcher's portion especially, with invitations to "buy, buy, buy," and the crisp, clicking accompaniment of knife sharpening on steel. Under the pavement where this market stood, is a culverted sewer through which flows a torrent of fluid horrors. Before it was arched over it inspired that couplet of Pope's:—

*There the Fleet ditch with disemboguing streams,  
Rolls its black tribute of dead dogs to Thames.*

Yet this now noisome current must have been a beautiful stream of clear water, flowing between green sloping banks, high and wide, when it bore on its sheltering bosom the Roman fleet. Cæsar's ships having floated here gave name to it and to near localities, as Fleet River, Fleet Street, and Fleet prison.

The river banks were high and in some places abrupt, as was shown in many spots with which I was familiar; Breakneck Stairs for instance, almost opposite Holborn Hill. This appropriately named long and steep flight of stone steps came down from a squalid quarter of tall, old lodging houses, decayed and wretched. I always saw linen, miscalled white, hanging out to dry on lines projected from the windows by means of long poles. It was wash-day all the time with one or other

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of the numerous tenants. Here lived Oliver Goldsmith, but in his day the place may have been better; it is to be hoped so at least. The slope was much less steep at Ludgate Hill, where once stood the gate to Lud's town, afterward the Londinium of the Romans. But further upstream the valley narrowed, as at Clerkenwell on one side and Mutton Hill on the other. The former place derived its name from its having been the favourite resort of the London clerks for their holiday games, near a well of superior water. Saffron Hill on the west side, running parallel with the stream, was but slightly undulating for that reason. I remember it as a nest of thieves or worse, and the home of the dangerous classes generally. Dickens in *Oliver Twist* locates his bad characters in this neighbourhood, but a large part of the quarter has been pulled down to make way for modern improvements. A long way further north, almost as far as Battle Bridge (now named King's Cross), occurs at Pentonville another steep slope on the east bank, and here was a noted pleasure garden called Bagnidge Wells. Although the whole of the stream has now disappeared from view, arched over for a culvert, I remember this northern part running open to the air, and it formed a pleasing feature of the garden of Bagnidge Wells, through which it flowed. Its waters were of course pure and uncontaminated at that time, for it still babbled among green fields, not having yet reached built-up London.

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Still further north, beyond King's Cross, was old St. Pancras Church on the right of the road going north, and opposite was a steep, high bank, grass-grown, which I climbed in 1823 to make a sketch of the ruinous old building on the other side. The bank was part of the ancient Roman camp, and its remaining in such good condition for nearly nineteen centuries proves the excellence of the protection grass sod affords against the wear of the weather. The earthworks here were probably erected by the men who came over in the ships that lay in the stream below, and Battle Bridge near by got its name from a conflict between them and the native Britons.

When I recrossed to Europe in 1855 I went to examine the ancient camp, but to my infinite disappointment it had been levelled, and a model lodging-house reared on the site. The tumble-down bit of old architecture opposite had also disappeared, and a brand new Gothic church reared in its stead.

The names of places often serve to mark the site of some interesting historical event, and frequently to my great regret I find them changed by some busybody who probably knows nothing of the past, and therefore cannot guess at the appropriateness of the original appellation. Battle Bridge was so called for the greater part of twenty centuries, but it is now known only as King's Cross, and the new name has this trivial origin. In the middle of the wide open space was erected a

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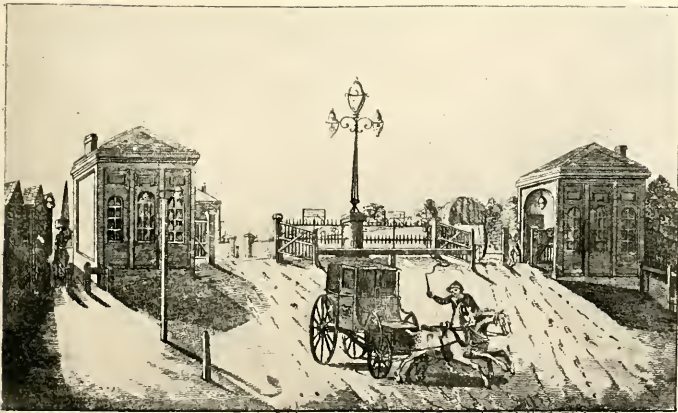
sort of watchbox, a shelter for members of the new police force which had superseded the constabulary. It was a ridiculous piece of architecture, too small to hold more than two or three, and reminded most people of a pepper-box, and it was commonly so designated. The crowning feature of the structure was a statue of George the Fourth, and from that the space was named King's Cross. A regrettable change of this nature was made in a street back of the County Fire Office and Regent's Quadrant, close against where I was born, the sign on the corner of which now reads Sherwood Street. The right name, however, which it originally bore is Sherrard, derived from a curious old mansion that stood on the east side, the residence of Lady Sherrard, whose family owned Leicester Square, then Leicester Fields. I suppose some wiseacre in temporary authority fancied the true name to be a corruption of the one he substituted, and thought he was working a restoration. But I well remember the dignified old house with its range of attached columns in front, each alternating with a large window, many paned; the open balustrade over whose entablature screened the attic window above. In my mind's eye I see it all distinctly now, the courtyard in front with neither pavement, grass nor gravel, but only levelled earth; it had been grassy originally, no doubt, but as a playground for children was worn bare. The stairway inside leading to the main apartment was spacious,



GATES TO HYDE PARK: AT HYDE PARK CORNER



THE TOLL GATE BY APSLEY HOUSE



TURNPIKE GATE AT HYDE PARK CORNER



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and the large L shaped room was used as a billiard saloon as far back as I can remember. In my boyhood I often went in and looked on at the play, and sometimes was pressed into service to mark the game for the players by moving the hands on the two dials. This building was pulled down in the latter part of 1819, probably before that meddlesome Sherwood man was born.

Near that clumsy old bridge at Westminster, that has been replaced by one of extreme beauty, stood a group of ugly, black, brick buildings on the left bank of the river; the old Parliament Houses. As I was looking at them from the opposite shore one day in 1820, and thinking it was high time they were demolished, there came down the stream a steamboat. I had not noticed it until it was abreast of where I stood, so noiseless was its movement and so absorbed in thought was I. It swept around in graceful curve till it lay bow upstream, for the tide was running out, and then dropped anchor. I had never seen a steamboat before, and I confess that I was awestruck, and a palpitation in my breast arose at the novel sight. I am aware how childish this must appear to a modern reader, but if I write at all my experiences must go down faithfully as they occurred. There are times favourable to intense impressions, and on this occasion the broad spread of the twilight sky, reflected from the dimpled surface of the water, deepened the contrast of gloom on the

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dark Parliament buildings opposite, while the perfect quiet made the sudden spectral appearance of the steamboat all the more impressive.

The serene calm of this twilight experience was in singular contrast with the turbulent scene I witnessed the next day in St. James' Park. The carriage of the King, George the Fourth, was passing along the road between Carlton House and the arched gate of the Horse Guards, preceded by a small troop of horse soldiers, while a similar troop followed in the rear. But close alongside the carriage moved a group of women, uttering loud groans and hisses, waving clenched fists above their heads, and yelling execrations against the royal occupant within, who was invisible because the blinds of the carriage were close drawn. As the cavalcade neared the building of the Horse Guards, these amazons dropped off. What surprised me was that the guards did not interfere, but kept on at a gentle trot, scarcely faster than a walk, looking neither to the right nor to the left, as if unconscious of what was going on close to the carriage they were supposed to be guarding. In explanation of this surprising sight, I was afterward told that the general unpopularity of the King was just then intensified by the procedure he had caused to be instituted against his Queen, which also accounted for the sex of the little mob.

But to return to the river. In front of me lay a fleet



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of flat-bottomed coal barges, which at high tide were moored afloat, at other times reposing on a bed of black, shining mud. These mud-spreads of old Father Thames at London were a serious eye-sorrow before the days of the Thames Embankment. Between Westminster and Waterloo Bridges, there was a sort of cove on the north side, with acres of this unsightly stuff festering and broiling in the sun at every low tide. The Embankment reformed all this. We never hear the name of John Martin, the artist, associated as it should be with this great public improvement, yet he it was who first urged its construction and drew plans for it. I have an etching by him, done not later than 1825, giving a perspective view along a street he planned, from his projected embankment to the southeast angle of St. Martin's Church, Trafalgar Square, thus opening out to view a noble building which up to that time was buried among narrow alleys and low rookeries. His fertile brain had also perfected a project for supplying London with an abundance of pure water by bringing the river Coln to its doors, through a varied and beautiful landscape, to be planted as a park most of the way. I possess three or four of his etchings of the scenery that he designed to create for the passage of the stream, which occasionally descends in picturesque cascades.

In one way or other, artists have had their full share in the achievement of many of the most important

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improvements and conveniences that we at present enjoy. Imagine what a slow-going people we should of necessity be without steam navigation; the artist Fulton was the first to apply successfully the force of vapour to that use. How tedious would now appear the means for communication of thought, if we were suddenly deprived of the electric telegraph; it was another artist, Morse, who first utilized that mysterious agent, electricity, for the purpose. Da Vinci even exercised his brain for public utility in inventing the wheelbarrow. The artist, Joshua Shaw, invented the percussion cap for firearms, thus dismissing the clumsy method of flint and steel. Difficult indeed it must have been in the old time to follow the admonition of Oliver Cromwell, "keep your powder dry." This same landscape painter, Shaw, invented the glazier's revolving diamond for cutting glass in curves without shifting the finger grip on the handle, an invaluable advantage to workers in stained glass, in which curves are multitudinous. He also invented the wafer priming for cannon. For this and other improvements Congress voted him twenty-five thousand dollars, and the Czar of Russia sent him a present of a purse of money. Both Morse and Shaw were friends of mine, and I was once in the same room with John Martin, and was much amused at seeing him puzzled over the drinking-glass of a bird-cage, wondering why the whole bulk of water did not flow out, as it was

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above the level of the cup where the bird dipped his bill. He understood presently, however, that for every drop of water that came out a bubble of air had to go in.

Although London remained without a National Gallery of pictures until so late a period as 1822-23, it did possess a Museum, thanks to that enlightened enthusiast, Sir Hans Sloane, whose collection became the nucleus of the present fine assemblage of curious and beautiful objects housed in the British Museum, a building of the utmost architectural grandeur, well worthy of the nation. Montague House was the original depository of the collection. It stood on a portion of the present site, and although regarded at the time of its erection as the finest residence in London, it was insignificant in comparison with the present noble structure. It was in the French style with mansard roofs, and was built of brick. The eagerness displayed by Sloane in adding to his gatherings on every possible occasion is alluded to by Alexander Pope in this wise:—

*“Gate! How cam’st thou here?”*

*“I was brought to Chiswick last year,*

*Battered by wind and weather,*

*Inigo Jones put me together.*

Sir Hans Sloane let me alone!

*Burlington brought me hither.”*

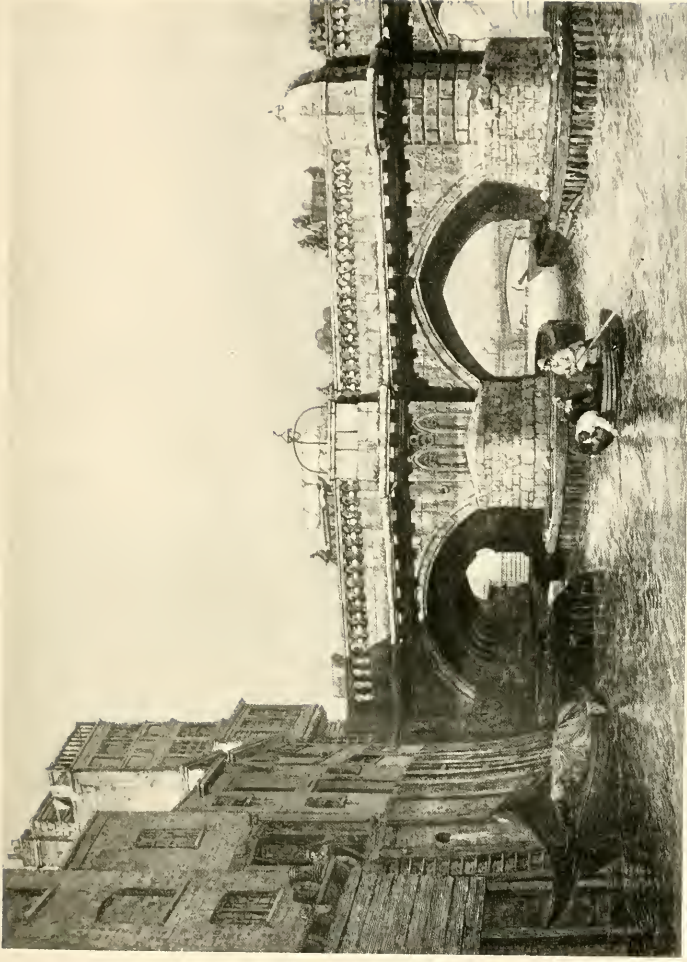
Sloane’s collections were largely in the line of natural

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history, I believe, but subsequently other kinds of objects were added, such for example as a fine collection of Etruscan vases, then the Townley collection of ancient sculptures, after that the Phidian marbles from the Athenian Parthenon. Special galleries were constructed for the display of these, and the Townley galleries were admirable for showing the statues to the best advantage; the light was direct, not diffused, and the beauties of the forms were clearly seen and understood. The objects were not then lost and overwhelmed, as now, by the magnificence of the architecture, the jewels sacrificed to the casket.

In the Egyptian room of the British Museum is the famous "Rosetta Stone," the triple inscription on which furnished the first clue to the deciphering of Egyptian characters, the same inscription being repeated on it in Greek, hieroglyphic and enchorial or demotic. This precious mass of basalt is now safely enclosed in a glass case by itself, where no finger can touch it, but when I was a student drawing from the antiques there it must have been less valued, for it lay unprotected on the stone floor and I used to sit on it while eating my Abernethy biscuits for lunch.

There were only three bridges over the Thames at London by which access could be had to what was known as St. George's Fields, on the south side. These were old London Bridge, Blackfriars and Westminster; all three have since been taken down to make



OLD LONDON BRIDGE  
*From an Etching by E. W. Cooke*



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way for more capacious structures. They were building a bridge at Vauxhall, and I remember the half-spans of the iron arches lying about, ready to be used on the stone piers. A superb level bridge of granite was in course of construction, called the Strand Bridge, and I was lifted up to get a view of it from between the stone balusters of Westminster Bridge. It was not yet baptized by the name of Waterloo, for the good reason that the famous battle had not yet been fought, as Napoleon was still living in retirement at his country residence on the island of Elba.

By the river side immediately below the Tower of London was the district of St. Katharine's, as vile a quarter as could be found anywhere in or near London. Here newly-returned sailors were taken in and done for, emerging penniless, and through the labyrinthian narrow ways no well-dressed person dared venture after dark. In the olden time it must have been a place of good repute, or otherwise the Hospital and Chapel of St. Katharine would hardly have been built there. This was an institution endowed as an asylum for aged ladies who had been in the service of the Queen, and whose reduced circumstances required that a suitable refuge should be provided where they could pass the remainder of their lives in comparative ease and comfort. The whole region deteriorated gradually, till it became such an utter abomination that nothing short of total obliteration could

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be devised as a remedy. A St. Katharine's Dock Company was organized, the houses pulled down, the earth on which they had rested scooped out and the water of the river let in. In place of the old endowed hospital removed, a new one was erected on the east side of the Regent's Park, a Gothic chapel in the centre and the dwellings symmetrically placed on either side, the whole forming three sides of an open court.

A little higher up stream on the Southwark side, in the neighbourhood of the old church of St. Saviour's, just above London Bridge, there must have been in former times many structures of considerable architectural pretensions, judging from the numerous fragments that I remember well but which have since been destroyed. My interest in such objects induced me to search for them among narrow and crooked lanes. A fire which occurred in one of the large warehouses, which threw down the roof and front wall, disclosed to view in the end wall a circular window with beautiful Gothic tracery. When I made known this find to the eminent engraver, George Cooke, he sent his son Edward (afterwards the Royal Academician), to make a careful drawing of it, from which he engraved the plate in his *London and its Vicinity*. He made also a beautiful plate for the same work of the excavations for the St. Katharine's Dock.

The region known as Belgravia, at the west end, was, as I remember it, a vast treeless plain of meadow land,



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extending north and west from Knightsbridge and Sloane Street, and so far east as almost to reach the garden wall of Buckingham House. It was known in its entirety as the "Five Fields," and was crossed by a country road called the King's Road, a high bank of earth with a ditch on each side of it, the latter mostly dry. At one place alongside the road was a pond of water that used to be crowded most of the time by boys bathing, myself among them in my day. It was the only place available for that pastime except the Serpentine in Hyde Park, where it was not permitted until after dark in the evening.

But as I fear this long talk of mine about the London of my early remembrance is becoming tedious, I will bring it to a close, although there is much more I could tell. Those were the days when flint, steel, and tinder box was the legitimate, accepted and only way of obtaining a light. A few crack-brained people were contending that it was perfectly feasible to light the streets with an illuminating gas, conducted through pipes, and to convince the people of its practicability they kept one burner going at Charing Cross.

Another set, equally untrustworthy, were trying to make people believe that vehicles could be run on iron rails to advantage, instead of on good old-fashioned roads, and could be drawn along by steam-engines instead of horses. But it was difficult to get people to credit it.

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Byron sneered that—

. . . soon

*Steam engines will conduct us to the moon.*

It cannot be denied that in those days people were less annoyed than now by the smoke. With only a third of the present population, they had much less than a third of the smoke. The dome of St. Paul's Cathedral could then be seen from a distance, but it cannot now. The extensive region south of the Euston Road was vegetable garden-ground, and nearly the entire distance between the Whitechapel and Stepney churches was pasture-ground, including an equal distance north and south. No wonder then that with these vast spaces covered with smoke-producing houses, the all-embracing veil continues to deepen. This boundless modern Babylon is dominated by the noble masterpiece of Sir Christopher Wren.

The great fire of London in 1666 was commemorated by the erection of a fluted Doric column more than two hundred feet in height, which stands on the east side of the street that was the northern approach to old London Bridge, named Fish Street Hill. I used to read an inscription cut deep into the stone, not far above the eyes of pedestrians, and running all around its four sides, to the effect that the conflagration was intentionally the work of the Papists. It is there no longer, having been obliterated by order of the au-

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thorities. It was this inscription that inspired Alexander Pope to write the couplet:—

*There London's column pointing to the skies,  
Like a tall bully rears its head and lies.*

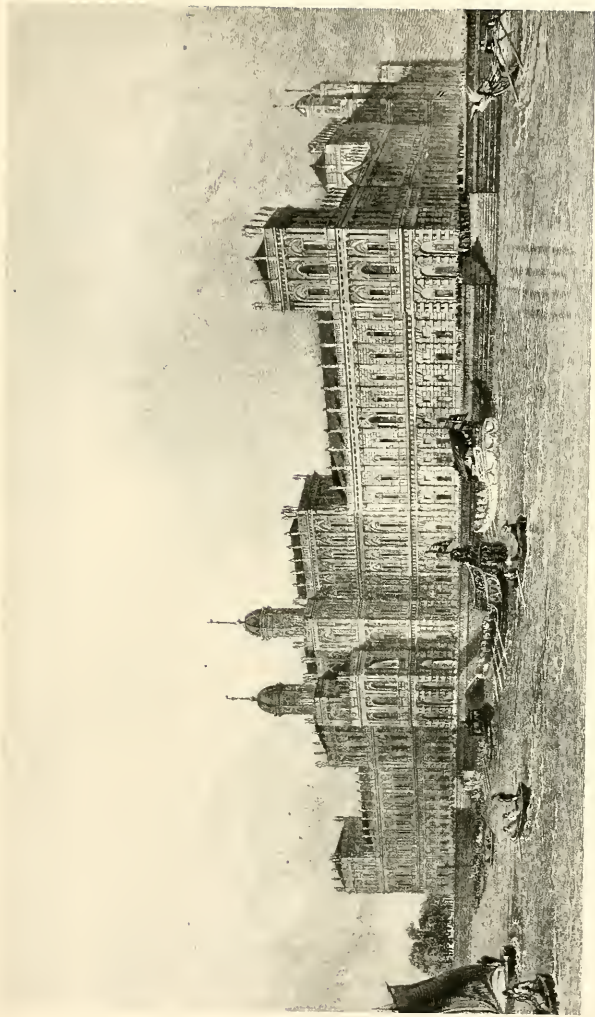
The almost total destruction of the old city by fire afforded a fine opportunity for rebuilding it on a grand scale worthy of a great metropolis. Sir Christopher Wren submitted a plan to this end, with two spacious streets running eastward from St. Paul's Cathedral, and furnishing each owner with a lot far superior in location to the one he had held before the fire. The second great avenue provided room upon a broad street for as many additional buildings as now have frontage upon Cheapside and the Poultry. But the narrow-minded citizens were obstinate, and each shopkeeper refused to have any other than the exact spot he had occupied before, in no matter how crooked and narrow a lane, or inaccessible a nook in a no-thoroughfare court. They verified the words of the poet:—

*And there's St. Paul's, that's like a foolscap crown  
On a fool's head, and that is London town.*

Connected with this ground plan for the new city of the great architect was his design for St. Paul's Cathedral, intended to be viewed directly in front, presenting when seen in its entirety a superb pyramidal mass. I have in my collection also an engraving of another

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grand scheme for the embellishment of London which was never carried out, the Palace of Whitehall as it would have appeared if completed in accordance with the design made by Inigo Jones for James the First. Within this magnificent pile of architecture was to have been a circular court, enriched with sculpture and adorned with a central fountain. Another old print shows the only part of the architect's plan which was added by the king to Cardinal Wolsey's palace, the Banqueting Hall, together with the old Whitehall Gate near by.



WHITEHALL PALACE AS DESIGNED BY INIGO JONES  
*After a Drawing in the British Museum*



## CHAPTER II

*The Peace Jubilees—1814 and 1815*

**T**HE excitement in London over the peace that had been conquered from France by the allied powers of Europe was so fervid, that it would be impossible for any one who had witnessed the jubilation to forget it, and what I saw remains indelibly impressed on my memory, although I was only a child, six years old. It continued through several days, but the greatest display was reserved for the last, when it culminated in one intensified burst on a single night, the grand finale of the whole. By this time everybody must have been utterly exhausted, both those who made and those who witnessed the successive shows.

The first of the scenes that I remember was a fleet of ships on the Serpentine in Hyde Park, viewed from the sloping ground on the north shore. I was next led through the grove of trees, under and against the embankment that holds back that large body of water, and the winding paths were bordered by all kinds of tempting attractions, in charge of very noisy proprietors. One of these, a woman, darted forward, obstructing the narrow way, and shook a bag in my face, crying, "Now, my pretty dear, take a dip in my

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lucky bag; all prizes and no blanks; only a penny!" And thus as we walked on amid the numerous rivals that lined the path on both sides, all were vociferously importuning the passers-by for custom. Then as now, a stream of water flowed through this pleasant dell, fed by the overflow from the Serpentine, but at that time it widened into an ornamental basin, called by the boys, from its shape, "Leg-of-Mutton Pond." Where it narrowed, it passed under a one-arched bridge, over which ran a road reserved for equestrians. It then broadened again into a second, larger pond before flowing under the three-arched bridge at Rotten Row, where a dam held back the water so as to form these two ponds, which are now filled up. From here it flowed to and under Knightsbridge, a little stream not more than ten feet wide and a foot deep, yet the damming of this insignificant rivulet has made the beautiful sheet known as the Serpentine. Knightsbridge looks little enough like a bridge nowadays, but in the old time I used to gaze from the parapet of the bridge on the north side of the way into the running water, as it pursued its course to join the Thames at Chelsea.

We went through the Green Park, where great preparations were in progress, and then through St. James' Park, where I saw building a triumphal arch across the road on the north side of the Mall, not far from its approach to Constitution Hill. Men were also at



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work finishing the pagoda on the middle of the Chinese bridge, and covered galleries were erecting, three stories high, at every coign of vantage. Carpenters were busy everywhere, for all was of wood.

At night the streets were ablaze with illuminations, but as this was before the use of gas, little oil lamps of wrinkled glass of various colours had to suffice, sometimes emblazoning mottoes suitable to the occasion. An official of the newly restored Bourbon dynasty made an exceptionally brilliant display, as of course became him, and among his inscriptions were prominent the words, "Peace and Concord." A party of British sailors, gloriously drunk, mistook the last word, and read it "Conquered." Swearing the customary oath of that day, involving disaster to their eyes, they roared that England never had been conquered, and proceeded to demolish not only the offensive illumination, but every pane of glass in the Frenchman's house-front.

Opposite where I lived (and where I was born) in Queen Street, Golden Square, was a house occupied by French royalist fugitives, and from the windows of each of the three stories, large white flags glittering with *fleurs-de-lis* in shining gold hung in a flood of light as bright as multitudinous tallow candles could make it. I thought it a dream of dazzling beauty realized, and can fancy I see it now. Everywhere the streets were filled with the noisy, jubilant crowd, and

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among the most uproarious were the butchers with their "marrow-bones and cleavers." These were a recognized institution, now obsolete apparently, for I have not heard of it of late years. The butchers marched in a line in single file along the curb, and each in turn struck his cleaver a blow with the marrow-bone, making a parody on a peal of church bells. In burlesque of the wedding-chimes, the "marrow-bones and cleavers" would sometimes ring their changes in front of the house of some newly-married couple, until they had extorted a guerdon—to leave them in peace.

The great climax at length arrived, the crowning festivity—the sham naval battle on the Serpentine, the ascent of Sadler's balloon from in front of the Buckingham House, the unveiling of the Temple of Concord, and the grand pyrotechnical display as a finale. As one could not be in all three parks at the same time, each sightseer had to be content with a third of the shows, and the best of them was in the Green Park, where had been erected the beautiful Temple of Concord. It was there I had the good fortune to be taken by my father, for from the same spot could also be seen the balloon ascension and the fireworks. During the inflating, the big balloon swayed restlessly from side to side as if impatient to be off, and when it arose, a little before sunset, the wind carried it in a northeasterly direction. While it was well in view and

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apparently above St. James' Street, streams of sand were poured out from the car, which I was told was gold dust, and so it looked in the rays of the evening sun.

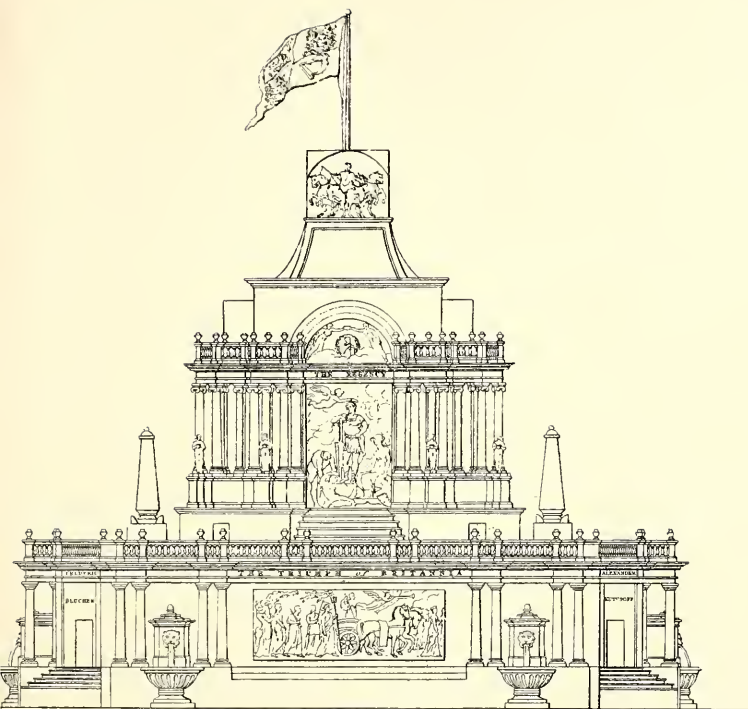
In the southeast quarter of the Green Park stood a grim, gray, fortress-like structure. It was made, however, only of painted cloth, and after dark at the firing of a gun it all fell away, to the surprise of the crowd, and disclosed the gorgeous Temple of Peace, resplendent in colour, brightness and beauty. Large in dimensions as it was, it revolved slowly and exposed successively, to the view of all, its four sides enriched with beautiful transparent pictures lit from behind. Those filling the panels of the lower story were the largest, being each thirty feet long, and were painted by the best artists of the day for the style of art required. One was by Thomas Stothard, R. A., and three by Henry Howard, R. A.

Mrs. Bray, who in 1851 published her life of Thomas Stothard, who was her first husband's father, tells about the painting of his transparency for the Temple of Concord. It represented among other things Britannia in a chariot drawn by four white horses. They had neglected to inform the artist that the building was to revolve, or which way it would move, consequently it so happened that Stothard arranged his composition the reverse of what it should have been. It would have been an awkward circumstance to show

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Britannia's progress retrograde and her horses moving tail foremost, so there was nothing to do but to place the picture face inwards to reverse it, thus weakening the colour effect considerably. Mrs. Bray says the picture was painted in a spacious apartment in the King's Mews near Charing Cross (the site of the present Trafalgar Square), because Stothard had not convenience for so large a work at his home in Newman Street.

She makes a singular mistake in stating that the Temple of Concord was in Hyde Park. I know positively that it was in the Green Park, a little north of St. James' Park, for I saw it and remember it as distinctly as if it were last week. More than forty years ago she wrote as follows: "Although thousands have passed away since the event occurred, yet there are many still surviving who can remember the grand National Jubilee of 1814." Yes, true enough, for I too survive even yet, although millions have gone over to the majority since she wrote those words. In 1863 my daughter and I took tea and spent a delightful evening with Mrs. Bray. She displayed remarkable energy and vivacity, and although seventy years old, sang for us to her own accompaniment, and insisted upon pulling out unaided a bottom bureau-drawer, heavy with bundles of papers: She was looking for some drawings of Stothard's which she wanted to show me, when she learned that I was an enthusiastic admirer of that



TEMPLE OF CONCORD, GREEN PARK, 1814

*Britannia: Transparency by Thomas Stothard, R. A.*



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great artist. Great he was, combining in his work the refined grace of Raphael with the splendour of effect and colour of Rubens.

After the unveiling of the Temple of Concord came the display of fireworks in a semi-circular enclosure extending from the front of Buckingham House to the eastern boundary of the Green Park. The rockets went up in flights of fifty in a rush, and alternating with them the set pieces were fired off. The beauty of these last was destroyed to my mind and only inflicted torture upon me, for somebody told me that a Frenchman was burnt up in each one set off.

The fireworks were well placed for being seen by the greatest number. The view was good, not only from the Green Park but also from the open spaces of St. James' Park, and especially from the Chinese bridge. Unfortunately those on the bridge had a special display of their own, not by request as the announcements read, but by accident. The wooden pagoda caught fire, and all but the two lower stories were consumed before it could be extinguished. This I could not see from where I was posted, any more than I could witness the naval battle on the *Serpentine*, meant, I think, to represent the battle of Lake Erie. Of the two hostile fleets one was destroyed and of course it was not the English, notwithstanding the despatch of the American Commodore Perry, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." Fable is as

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good as fact so that the people are pleased, and it was then more easy to throw dust in the eyes of the populace than it is now.

The fireworks were the close of the show, and with that my eyes closed also, and I was carried home in the arms of a family friend. A few evenings later my father took me with him again to the same spot, and the contrast with what I had last seen there was most depressing. "Darkness there and nothing more."

Later there rose occasion for another Peace Celebration, when Bonaparte was again overthrown, at Waterloo. This jubilee was on a reduced scale compared with the one of the preceding year, and its chief feature was the christening of the new bridge over the Thames, until then known as the Strand Bridge. This magnificent structure of granite was afterwards and forever to be called Waterloo Bridge; the great bridge and the great battle were to bear the same name. The ceremony was performed on both land and water with all the imposing pomp and state befitting so important an occasion. A prominent figure everywhere of course was the Duke of Wellington.

As by this time I had arrived at the mature age of seven, I felt myself entitled to escape from leading strings and make for the sights alone. Accordingly, I might have been seen at this Waterloo celebration, threading my way among the legs of the horses that were crowded together at the junction of the bridge



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entrance and the Strand. I saw little enough in the densely packed crowd, my stature being that of my seven years, but heard plenty, for the sound of booming cannon and braying trumpets penetrated everywhere. This finished the public rejoicings conducted by the government upon the restoration of the old conservative system, which had been universally prevalent before Europe was startled by the upheaval of the first French Revolution.

## CHAPTER III

### *The Rod*

**D**URING the nearly ninety years of my life no greater progress has been made in any direction whatever than in the methods employed in teaching and training children. As I myself was one of the sufferers from the old system, I may be pardoned for devoting a short chapter to recording facts that can scarcely be realized in these days of advanced thought, which have so fully recognized the absolute importance of the most careful treatment of childhood.

The *Inferno* of Dante is a description of the punishment of the guilty, but what follows relates to the wanton infliction of pain on innocent helpless infancy, the result of the old absurd doctrine that "to spare the rod is to spoil the child." The ways and degrees of suffering, both mental and physical, are various. Jove chained Prometheus on Caucasus and sent a vulture to gnaw at his liver. This must have been very trying, not merely in its severity but in its duration. The Holy Inquisition is credited with remarkable ingenuity in devising contrivances for extorting by torture any answers it desired to certain questions. But though Mother Ward's methods of torturing the

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infantile pupils of her dame-school were less demonstrative, they were no less effective. I was one of her pupils and know all about it. We little ones sat in a row on a bench without a supporting back, and were ordered to sit upright. If, after prolonged sitting, fatigue of the spine caused the weaker ones to droop in the least, down came a sharp cane stroke on the poor little knuckles without word of warning, and a keener pain diverted for a time the attention of the sufferer from the dull ache of the weary back. The dame's vulture eyes glared over the top rim of her spectacles, and all the eyes of Argus could not equal the detective vigilance of hers. I frequently experienced this exquisite agony and wondered in what I could have transgressed. It was probably inflicted on the then prevalent principle laid down by King Solomon, and certainly the rod was not spared with or without cause.

Why children were sent to such places I cannot understand, unless it was to get them out of the way, but it may be assumed that they were also to be taught something. All we learned there was what each of the five vowels spelled preceded by the consonant *b*, and also what "our god-fathers and god-mothers had promised and vowed" in our names. "First that we should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." I have not yet discovered

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what earthly use (or heavenly either) there could be in cramming into the mind of a child stuff so incomprehensible to it. But fortunately all things have an end, and the long, long weary days of that dame-school terminated for me at last.

I was next promoted to a school kept in the top story of a tall house in Brewer Street opposite Bridle Lane, and at the corner was a coal and wood store kept by a famous man, Tom Crib, the pugilist, a brute greatly venerated by high and low as the Champion of England. On my first day at this academy, I saw a little friend of mine who was very dear to me, standing on a form with a chain attached to a band around his slender ankle, and at the end of the chain a wooden block. The chain was carved out of wood and the links were large. What this punishment was for I did not know, but I saw that he had to walk the length of the bench a few times back and forth, dragging the block after him. The sight shocked me and my heart seemed to rise to my throat. I was the more pained, no doubt, because I was so fond of this little boy, who was a very gentle, affectionate child. I used to wonder over his talent for drawing animals, and he had the singular habit of making sounds similar to the voice of the animal he was at the time engaged in delineating. It seemed as if he could not help it, as if he were carried away by a sort of inspired enthusiasm. The surprise and indignation I felt made me regard

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this school as worse than the other, and I determined I would not go to it. Next day I refused to return, so I was carried there. I remember going up-stairs heels foremost, borne ignominiously by four of the school-girls, each taking a quarter of me. As soon as I was forced into the room, I was marched to a dark closet and bolted in. I don't remember learning anything at this school.

My third and last experience was with a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Williams by name, by character a savage. This brute was thin, had a keen, sharp black eye, and wore his hair powdered, the pendant queue behind making the collar of his black dress-coat white with the hair powder; he had knee breeches, black silk stockings, and large silver buckles on his shoes. These shoes were thin-soled so that you never heard him, when he came up behind you and began to slash your head, ears and shoulders with the cane which he always carried about with him, ready for instant use. One morning when I was intent on my writing copy, "all of a sudden miserable pain surprised me," and the wretch was lashing me over the head furiously with his stick,—what for I never knew. Naturally I threw up my hands over my head, and they received part of the punishment. I made no complaint at home, but my mother noticed great welts on the backs of both little hands, and having learned the cause went to see the reverend gentleman about it.

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Two of the scholars, I remember, were respectively sons of Fores of the print shop at the corner of Sackville Street and Piccadilly, and Leuschars of Piccadilly opposite St. James' Church, and at both places I observe the same names still after a lapse of more than eighty years.

This school was in Air Street, on what is now the middle of the road of the Regent's Quadrant, for that great improvement, the making of Regent Street, had not yet been commenced. When the opening of this new street began to be talked of, and it was decided that the course of the proposed line would pass through the reverend school-master's property, he set to work with all diligence to improve it. A strong force of carpenters soon covered the open yard with a new room lit by skylights. People said this was done solely to extort enlarged profits in shape of damages. As soon as the building was condemned and Mr. Williams had obtained a settlement for it, he sold the good will of the school to the Rev. Philip Le Briton, a man of milder type than his predecessor, and he removed it to Poland Street. But my sufferings under my first three tyrants had been so acute that nothing could obliterate my intense disgust at the whole school system, so that in a little over two years after my father's death, my mother had to let me have my own way and leave the detested régime for good and all. For good it proved. From the time of my emancipa-

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tion, at the age of ten years, I became diligent in study from the love of it, and have so continued all my life since.

That this brutal method of bringing up children and young people generally is happily falling into disuse, is comforting to know, and I do not doubt that the exposure of its shameful barbarities by Dickens, Huxley and others has exercised a wholesome influence. But not all the fossils are dead yet. There are some who would like to see a progress backward to "the good old times," as witness the following advertisement cut from a London newspaper within a decade; "Birch Rods.—Small and handy, 1s., by post, well packed. Ida Weston, care of Mrs. Taylor, 8 Hawthorne Terrace, Canterbury."

A friend out of curiosity ordered one, and in due time it arrived, accompanied by the following note: "Miss Weston encloses one rod herewith. It must be steeped in water to restore its suppleness, and the handle may be wrapped in ribbon. Miss Weston advertises at a loss, but with a view to restore the rod and reform the present untamed race of English boys and girls."

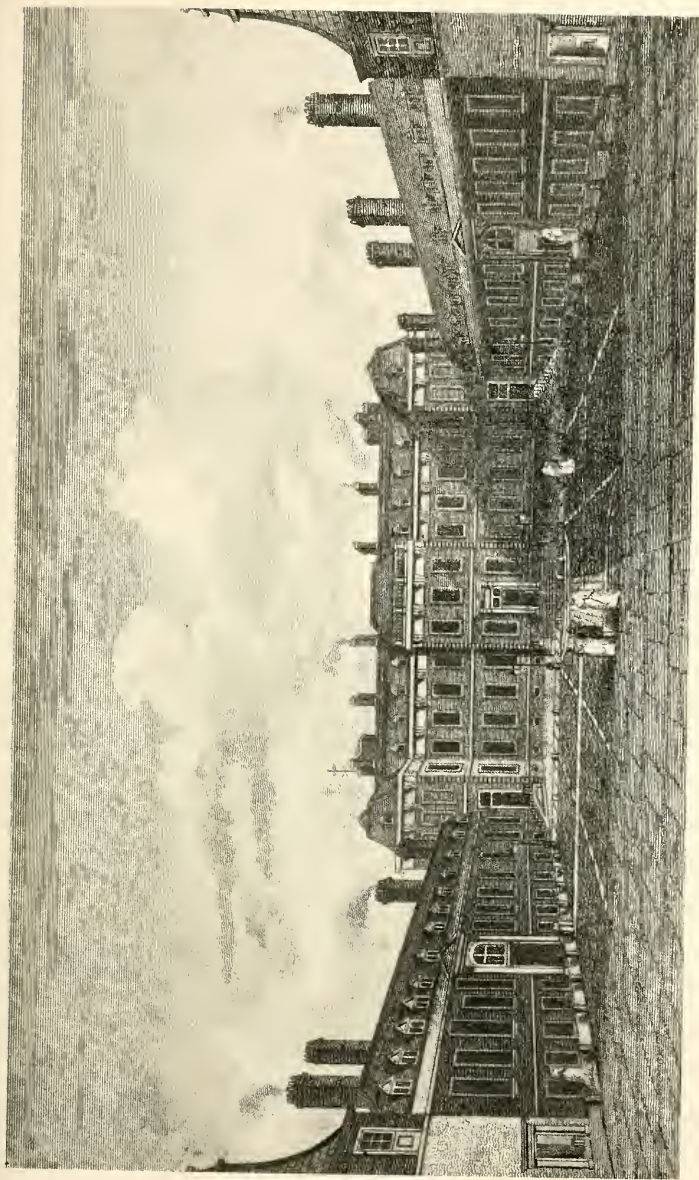
In Christ's Hospital, London, commonly called the "Blue Coat School," punishment used to be heavy and frequent. The monitors had license to chastise freely, with or without cause. Charles Lamb, who was educated there, writes, "I have been called out

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of my bed and waked for the purpose in the coldest winter nights,—and this not once, but night after night,—in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leather thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there had been any talking heard after we had gone to bed, to make the last six beds in the dormitory where the youngest children slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit nor had any power to hinder.” These chastisements had to be borne with patience, and the training had the effect of rendering the youths hardy, but brutal. The formal punishment for runaways was, for the first offence, fetters; for the second, imprisonment in a cell large enough only for the culprit to lie at full length upon some straw with a blanket, a glimmer of light being admitted through a small window. The confinement was solitary—the prisoner seeing only the porter who brought his bread and water, or the beadle who came twice a week to take him out for an airing and a whipping.

As a general thing schoolmasters punished their boys, not for any offence or unwillingness or incapacity to learn, but on the theory of the Hebrew king. Erasmus bears witness that this was the principle on which he was flogged, although he was a favourite with his master, but the discipline nearly “spoiled the child,” for his health and spirits were broken by it and he began to dislike his studies. He says that whenever





OLD BRITISH MUSEUM, MONTAGUE HOUSE



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he dined with the Dean of St. Paul's, one or two boys were served up to be flogged by way of dessert. On one of these occasions the Dean called up a meek, gentle boy, ten years old, who had lately been earnestly commended to his care by a tender mother,—ordered him to be flogged for some pretended fault till the victim was fainting under the scourge. “Not that he deserved this,” said the Dean to Erasmus while it was going on, “but it is fitting to humble him.”

This flogging practice was not restricted to young children and boys; it was permitted by the statutes of many colleges, and was a favourite recreation of the deans, tutors and censors of the day. Dr. Potter, of Trinity College, flogged a collegian arrived at man's estate and wearing a sword by his side. Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his *Memoir of Milton*, says, “I am ashamed to relate what I fear is true, that Milton was one of the last students in either university that suffered the *public* indignity of corporal correction.” There is a tradition that Dr. Johnson himself was scourged over the buttery hatch at Oxford. Well did the French Commissioners remark in their report to their government, that the English schools have “a kind of punishment which we do not think we ought to envy—the corporal punishment which is reserved among us to children in the nursery. The Rod is one of those ancient English traditions which survive because they have survived. A foreigner can hardly con-

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ceive the perseverance with which English teachers cling to this old and degrading custom. One is astonished at seeing English masters remove a garment which the prudery of their language hesitates to name."

Thus much about masculine teachers. What shall be said of the ways of the gentler sex? Two instances will be sufficient, one illustrating the treatment of the scholars of a charity school of their own by wealthy ladies, the other of female domination over young ladies moving in the well-to-do circles of society, both realistic pictures drawn faithfully from life.

The charity school was established in the latter part of the last century by the wife and daughter of an earl, and as the names of the family and the locality are not essential to the story they are omitted. "These ladies provided and regulated everything, ruled the teachers, laid down and enforced the laws, and the younger one, Lady Maria, superintended all the punishments, doing a great deal of the whipping herself. The Lady Marjory did not care to flog us, but delighted to make her maid do it; and I have seen her stand by and look on till the poor girl was quite exhausted by the exercise of flogging a number of kicking, squalling youngsters, both boys and girls; for the ladies flogged indiscriminately, and it seemed to me took pleasure in so doing. The school was in the grounds, but some distance from the mansion, which

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was one of the finest in the county. From our windows we could see the arms of the family emblazoned on the great doors—two leopards, with golden crowns upon their heads and a shield between them. My lady the Countess was a very handsome woman and always finely dressed, but we were very much afraid of her; she whipped without mercy; once she had the whole school—twenty boys and twenty girls—up for punishment, which she and her maid administered, and not for any fault committed.

“The school was an old building called the Hermitage, built by a wicked earl for his mistress. It had not been used for a long time, and on the present earl’s marriage his lady took a fancy to establish a school there for the sons and daughters of some of the tenantry, and orphans who were to be clothed and educated at her expense. We were dressed in uniform and my lady chose it extremely ugly, for it was a whim of hers that her girls should not be like those of any other school. Her daughters were the mistresses when I was there, for when they grew up their mother gave it up to them, and they proved themselves worthy successors to her, I can tell you.

“The great event of each day was what we called ‘punishment hour,’ which was from four to five in the afternoon. When gentlemen visitors were at the mansion the ladies would come in good temper with pleasant faces, but sometimes they would be very cross

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and ready to vent on us all the annoyances they might have met with at home. There was a great contrast between the two. The Lady Marjory was fat and sleepy looking like her father the earl, with light hair and blue eyes; the Lady Maria was slight and dark, with eyes like a hawk, the picture of her mother in features as well as temper. Both ladies had copied the French mode of dressing from their cousin Mademoiselle Burgoyne, from Paris, who was staying at the castle. They used to come to the school daily in toilettes that were to our eyes like the draperies in a fairy tale. The feathers and flowers, the sparkling jewelry, and the huge scented fans they carried were subjects of daily and hourly admiration among us. All the bad marks against any boy or girl were laid before their ladyships, who would appoint the punishments and see them carried out. Lady Marjory used to bring her mother's maid with her to do the whipping, taking her to task severely for the awkward manner in which she sometimes managed the business. I remember one afternoon her giving the girl two or three sharp cuts with the rod for not administering punishment in a sufficiently smart manner. We were all mustered in school, and among the long list of black marks there were three to one girl,—a laundry mark, a talking mark, and a mark for 'want of respect to my lady;' any omission of duly curtseying to or saluting our teachers was called by that name.

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“Betty Brown, the girl to be whipped, was ordered to stand out, which she did, looking very shamefaced. She was a big, tall girl, and in appearance far more robust than either the Lady Maria or her cousin. Betty stood before the party till Miss Thomas, the schoolmistress, rose and, curtsying to the ladies, read out the punishment. ‘Betty Brown will fetch the rod,’ my lady said; and the girl went, colouring crimson and ready to cry. When she came back she knelt, as was the custom, and presented it, and Mademoiselle said sharply, ‘Kiss it.’ Betty kissed it, looking dreadfully terrified while she was being prepared for flogging. Joan the maid stripped her, and she was made to fold up her clothes as though she were going to bed, while we all sat in our places looking on, not allowed to move or speak. When she stood ready for the rod, the bell was rung for the dairy-woman,—a great, stout person who had the en- vialable task of horsing us when we were to be birched. Joan tucked up her sleeves, and, receiving the rod from the Lady Marjory, with a profound curtsy prepared for business. But Betty was not going to be flogged without opposition; she was a big, strong girl, and it took a good many pairs of hands to get her fairly established on Dorothy’s back, who did not like her office at all. Once there and the girl’s hands pin- ioned by her brawny arms, there was little chance of the culprit escaping, for Dorothy was as strong as a man.

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“‘Hold that girl’s feet,’ was Lady Marjory’s next order, ‘or Joan will never be able to get at her.’ So Miss Thomas made the feet fast, and then Joan began. The dreaded rod fell swiftly and surely on the white flesh, raising red weals in all directions. If Joan was clumsy she was energetic, and Betty Brown roared and wrestled under the operation most lustily; but for all that the performance did not satisfy the three ladies.

“‘What a clumsy creature!’ said Mademoiselle; ‘she hasn’t an atom of grace.’

“‘Marjory should do it herself,’ said Lady Maria; ‘one can’t expect everything from servants.’

“‘I hate such violent exercise,’ said her sister; and then turning to Joan, ‘You clumsy, awkward creature, you! Have I not shown you a hundred times how to use the rod? Has not my mother shown you?’

“‘Yes, and made me feel it too,’ said the girl sulkily. ‘The brat kicks so, there’s no doing anything properly.’

“Lady Marjory had risen to her feet and come nearer to the girl and her punisher as she spoke, and whether by accident or design I don’t know, but Joan, in raising her arm to give an effective blow, happened to touch the face of her ladyship, who stood behind her. My lady then forgot she did not like violent exercise; she snatched the rod from the servant’s hand, and, poising herself in an attitude, commenced heartily lashing the girl on her arms and neck and wherever she could get an opportunity to strike her.



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For a minute Joan was too astonished to resist; but when she recovered her scattered wits, she rushed round the room with the lady in full pursuit, leaving Betty Brown shivering and smarting on her uncomfortable elevation.

“The ladies not only whipped us girls, but they whipped the boys too—but Lady Marjory had scruples of modesty about it and declined. Mademoiselle Burgoyne introduced many new ways into the school: the whippings were to be done by long, regular, sharp blows counted in a measured manner, and when sentenced to a whipping we had to kneel and say, ‘May it please your ladyship to give me so many blows on account of my great fault;’ and when we returned the rod, the formula was, ‘I thank your ladyship humbly for the whipping I have received;’ and we had to say it without sobbing or stuttering. My lady whipped her maids and her pages, and my lord thrashed his valet and his grooms; all servants were amenable to this mode of punishment, and mothers whipped their grown-up daughters. It would have rejoiced the heart of Solomon to see what a universal following his admonition received.”

The second instance referred to was as follows: A fashionable London journal, *The Queen*, opened its columns a short time before 1870 to a controversy on the subject of the whipping of young ladies in schools. A correspondent writes, “Whipping a child of seven

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or eight is one thing; but such castigation as some of your correspondents describe I should have read with incredulity but that my own recent experience furnishes confirmation.

“I am a bachelor. Many years ago my only sister died, leaving her daughter to my care. My niece is only eighteen and is as modest and well-conducted a young lady as I know anywhere. Up to last September she attended a London ladies' college of the first rank, and gave extreme satisfaction and was at the head of her classes. In that month I took a residence at a pleasant town on the Thames. My niece, who is fond of study, wished to attend certain classes at a large school in the neighbourhood, and the arrangement was made by me with the lady principal.

“One Saturday afternoon in the commencement of December, I returned from London just before dinner and was met with a very distressed face from my old housekeeper. Her young mistress had come home from the school in a half-distracted state and locked herself in her room. The old servant had, however, obtained admission and ascertained what was the trouble. There had been a class for English composition at the school that morning, the teacher being a visiting tutor. Lecturing rather glibly on English poetry this person attributed the line,

*We mortal millions live alone,*

to Tennyson. My niece at once corrected him, saying

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that the line was Matthew Arnold's. A governess who sat in the class-room sharply told her not to interrupt, and when the lecture concluded, a bad mark was entered against her in the register. It is the custom of the schoolmistress to inflict corporal punishment for all the bad marks of a certain magnitude, and my niece had seen one or two of the younger children whipped, but her attendance being only on certain days she did not know that the discipline was anything but infantile.

“To her surprise, when about to leave after her lessons she was ordered into the school-room. To her amazement and indignation she found she was to be birched for impudence to a teacher. She protested and implored, but in vain. Her resistance was useless against force; she was held across a desk, the clothing was completely removed from the lower part of her person, and the lady principal gave her twelve sharp cuts with a birch.

“You may imagine my indignation at such an outrage to a modest young lady who is actually engaged to be married. My resolution was soon taken. That evening I consulted the wives of three of my friends, who approved of it. With much difficulty I induced my niece to return to school on Monday. Luckily it was not long to Christmas, and she escaped any further insult except the occasional chaff of one or two younger girls. Early in January I wrote a polite note to the

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lady principal, asking her to lunch at my house and receive the amount due her. She came and was shown into the library, where the three married ladies above mentioned awaited her. Causing her to be seated I told her my opinion of her conduct, observing that for my niece's sake I desired to avoid the exposure attendant upon legal proceedings, and added that with the approval of the ladies present I should punish her as she had punished my niece. Of course there was a tempestuous scene, but she had to submit. I had ridden over to Eton and got a good stout birch from the man who makes for the college. It is only necessary to add that she was treated as my niece had been in the matter of apparel, and that I gave her twenty strokes, whose severity the state of her cuticle plainly attested. She was well able to bear them, being forty years old, unmarried, a tall, strong, stout woman. My niece declined to be present at the punishment, but I compelled the woman to apologize humbly to her afterwards. I have since heard a rumour that she intends to give up the school and leave the neighbourhood."



CHEAPSIDE BEFORE THE FIRE OF LONDON



## CHAPTER IV

*Covent Garden Theatre in 1821—The “Kemble Family”  
Picture*

**L**IFE is for work and not for play, and my life-work began soon after I was twelve years of age. A Mr. Charles Hawkes, to whom I was warmly attached, kept a nursery garden on Prince's Road, Lambeth, near where we lived, and I was fond of being in his company, busying myself in his garden. The laboratory of the Italian Signor Mortram, pyrotechnist and scenic artist, backed against this garden, fronting upon Lambeth Walk, although at some hundred feet distance from it. One day while I was occupied in digging a trench in which to plant a dwarf box border between the gravel-path and the flower-bed, I saw Mr. Mortram watching my work. I supposed he was interested in the operation, but I afterwards learned that he was revolving in his mind something that resulted in consequences to me. Presently he addressed me, asking how I would like to be a fire-works maker. I said I should like it very much. He asked me who was my father, and I answered that he had been dead more than four years. “Well then, your mother,—you have a mother?” I told him that I had. “Ask her to come to see me, that we may talk

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it over; I live in Westminster Road, opposite the Marsh Gate." This was a turnpike gate and suitably named, for all the surrounding flats had been a marsh. My father's business, having been deprived of competent direction by his death, had soon run down, although my mother at first tried to carry it on and superintend the factory. This made me glad of the opportunity to earn money and relieve her somewhat of her burden. Everything was arranged satisfactorily and I went to work, making my start in life before I reached my teens. The signor told my mother that his attention was drawn to me by the vigorous way in which I handled my spade. The truth is that something had occurred that ruffled my temper considerably, and the ardour he admired was the giving vent to my anger, but he did not know that.

The life was a hard one, considering the many hours of labour almost every day, but not monotonous, being full of varied amusement in connection with public exhibitions. To my employer was confided the department of "steam, smoke and fire" at Charles Kemble's Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, and such effects were in frequent demand in afterpieces, and in pantomimes especially. He was also assistant to Telbin Grieve, the head scene-painter, as artist in the same theatre. In addition, he was one of the two pyrotechnists to Vauxhall Garden, Madame Henzler being the other, and as exhibitions were given three evenings in the week



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they alternated, each furnishing the display twice in every other week. The exhibitions made those work-days long on which they occurred, for the signal for starting the fireworks was given by the clock striking the hour of midnight, and the firing occupied half an hour. However, Vauxhall Garden was open only during the summer season. The theatre continued its performances through the rest of the year and closed very late at night, for in those days the public was not satisfied with a full five-act drama, but exacted from the management an afterpiece in addition. To walk home after this to beyond St. Paul's, and then in the morning another couple of miles to reach work at half past seven, was not an easy life, but I cannot say that it "was not a happy one."

Macready was a member of the stock company of the Covent Garden Theatre at that time (1821), but he had not yet attained the highest position in it: that was held by Charles Young, who on tragedy nights, Mondays, always had the leading part. Macready used to play Rob Roy MacGregor, Joseph Surface and similar characters, but I saw him in *Virginius*, which I understood had been written by James Sheridan Knowles expressly for him, and I think he owned or controlled rights in its production. Ordinarily his manner was serious and dignified, and I thought he generally had a look of discontent, but once and once only I saw on his face an amused expression. The play

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was *Virginus*, and Macready was in the wing with Virginia, both waiting their cue, and to her he was addressing some sneering remarks about Abbott, who held the stage in the character of Icilius. I stood where I could see the faces of both, and it was clear from Abbott's restlessness and the quick, annoyed glances out of the corner of his eye, that he divined the nature of the conversation going on at his expense and the enjoyment of Macready at his vexation.

David Edwin, the eminent Philadelphia engraver, was engaged by Mr. Warren of the Chestnut Street Theatre, after he was compelled by his failing sight to discontinue the use of the graver, and he was often the messenger to the actors. He told me that on one occasion he went to Macready, who was then in Philadelphia, stopping at Head's Hotel, on Third Street above Spruce, (originally the Bingham mansion), to take him a balance due on account of his engagement. The actor looked at the money which Edwin placed on the table, as if it would be a degradation to touch it, and then, raising his eyes to the face of the messenger, gazed at him solemnly for a minute. Putting his finger in the pocket of his vest he then drew forth with great deliberation a Mexican half dollar, and holding it by the edge between finger and thumb horizontally, like a plate for charity, he advanced a step and offered it to Edwin, who with equal dignity declined it, saying, "Sir, Mr. Warren pays

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me." Macready raised his eyelids slightly as if surprised, and returned the silver to his pocket without a word.

My coign of vantage, from which I was able to obtain a view of nearly the whole stage and yet be out of sight of the audience, was close against the first side-wing back of the foot-lights. On this spot I had to stand to illumine with a blue sulphurous light the ghost of the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, as he stalked past me on to the stage. For this purpose I held in my left hand an iron spoon filled with a composition of sulphur, nitre, meal powder and red orpiment, and in my right, a small port fire, ready lighted. My cue for applying the light was three heavy blows on the floor with a large drumstick, given by the prompter just before the time for his ghostship to advance.

It was the custom to keep the wings and other parts of the stage behind the scenes clear of persons not actually on immediate duty, not excepting even the actors, who were in the green room ready for the summons of the prompter, by his messenger the call-boy. But I used to take my stand with impunity; being small, perhaps I was unobserved, or maybe I was treated with indulgence, for I perceived that the "powder monkey" (the name I was known by) was rather a favourite. My diminutive stature adapted me all the better for some of my duties; for example, in

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Sheridan's play of *The Critic, or a Tragedy Rehearsed*, the ships of the Spanish Armada appear in a succession of three ranks, the first row, as demanded by the law of perspective, being the largest, and the scenic water on which they rested rising very little above the stage. The second row, by the same law, had smaller ships and a higher bank of water, and so on to the third. To me was allotted the front rank because I was small enough to be concealed from the view even of the gods in the upper gallery, as I lay listening for my cue, when I would fire from the guns a broadside of small Roman-candle-stars, which would expire before they could fall upon the stage.

Sometimes the most laughable and ridiculous blunders happen before an audience when the work is handled by ignorant and stupid assistants not properly supervised, and by this mention of the perspective arrangement of the ships in the play of *The Critic* I am reminded of an instance exquisitely ludicrous. At Vauxhall Gardens, one of the successive shows of the evening was a theatre of moving scenery, without actors, and the effect was very beautiful. In front was represented tumbling water flowing toward the spectators, the realistic appearance being produced by painted canvas stretched around three large rollers revolving one behind the other, the foremost being lowest. Behind these was a bridge, through whose arch was visible a sheet of falling water, made by the

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obvious means of painted canvas passing over two rollers, and beyond, seen over the bridge, appeared a sheet of smooth water. Now all this was eminently successful and elicited admiration and applause, until the attendants began sending row-boats across the water beyond the bridge. Some of the boatmen were made small, of course, intended for the remote distance, while others were large for the nearest ledge, and some were intermediate for the middle distance, all accurately adjusted according to the law of perspective. But the senders of these automatic manikin boatmen paid no attention to the obvious proprieties, and despatched a diminutive rower across on the nearest ledge while at the same time a colossus would be seen labouring over in the remote distance. Nothing more absurd than this spectacle can be imagined, and the applause changed into roars of derisive laughter.

At the time of which I am speaking Abbott was a very handsome man, and when Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* was produced, altered into a splendid show piece, he played the character of Sir Proteus, and in that he met with a frightful accident that I witnessed. In the last scene he had hardly entered on the stage, engaged in a sword combat with the robber from whom he was rescuing the Lady Silvia, when he missed his guard, and his adversary's heavy weapon came crashing down into his face, cutting from above his brow on to the cheek-bone

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below the eye. The curtain was rung down immediately, and of course the play could not be finished. He dropped his sword on the instant and clapped both hands to his face. As he was led past where I stood, which was not six feet from the spot where the accident occurred, I saw the sanguine stains between the fingers of his white gloves. Conner then assumed the part in subsequent performances while Abbott's wound was healing. Very many years after I saw Abbott on the stage of the Park Theatre, New York, and I naturally looked for the scar, and there it yet remained. This theatre disappeared long ago. It stood on Park Row, opposite the present post-office.

The rendering of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* was so altered from the original that Shakespeare would have been greatly surprised, could he have seen it, but it secured a long run in consequence of the liberties taken. My part in the performance was to explode a great tower with gunpowder. Sir Thurio (played by Farren) cried, "Ah, Lady Silvia, we shall soon gain the victory!" That last word being my cue, I applied my light port-fire to the powder on the instant, and the tower burst asunder; each half of the structure, nicely poised on rockers by the framework behind, was pulled over by a scene shifter on either side at the moment of the explosion, producing an effect in front that was realistic in the extreme. Then was disclosed to the audience a dazzling, fairy-like scene.

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In the centre were three great flat wheels with curved spokes covered with loose, shining tinsel of various colours, revolving one behind the other in opposite directions, the back one seen between the spokes of those in front, producing charming, almost magical moving patterns. Four separate groups crossed the stage in succession, representing the seasons. But the climax of the display was Cleopatra on her galley, which was gorgeous in the extreme, and so large as to fill the stage from side to side, while the broad expanse of the ample sails of rich silk, pale green, rose color and pearl, adorned with golden ornamentation, left no vacant space anywhere above or around. The vessel rocked slowly and majestically upon the bosom of the mimic waters, which were made to rise and sink in wavy swells in imitation of nature. No wonder the piece had a long run with so much splendour to help it.

I often witnessed occurrences behind the scenes by no means of the painful nature of that just narrated about Abbott. One night, when the after-piece was *The Two Pages of Frederick the Great*, Mrs. Chatterton and Miss Foote, as the two pages, had both forgotten the dialogue, and when it was almost time for them to go on the stage they were together trying in an anxious and excited manner to help each other to the lost words. When the time was up, I gathered from their remarks that an approximation merely to the exact words would have to serve. A few minutes later I watched the per-

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formance from the side wing and they both appeared to go through their parts without embarrassment, although just before they went on they were full of serious trouble.

Liston, who was the foremost actor in London in the line of drolleries, played Launce, and Farren played Sir Thurio. Whatever character Farren took was sure to be personated to the life. As Frederick the Great he looked just like the old portraits made living, and his manners were all that we read of about Frederick. His Sir Peter Teazle in *The School for Scandal* was such perfection that when suit was brought against him in court for breaking contract and going over to the Drury Lane Company, it was given in evidence that it was not possible to produce *The School for Scandal* at all without Farren as Sir Peter. Looking at Farren in citizen's dress, I could never make up my mind whether he was old or young. Miss Maria Tree represented Julia; not the Miss Tree who afterwards became Mrs. Charles Kean, for that lady had not yet appeared on any stage, her *début*, when it did occur, being for her sister's benefit. Of Miss Maria Tree I have an admirable whole length portrait, after a drawing by Wageman, in the character of the Robber's Wife, also another equally good by the same artist of Jones as Puff in Sheridan's Play of *The Critic*. Jones played Sir Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Occasionally I saw behind the scenes



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Charles Kemble's daughter Fanny. Of course she was too young to have any business connection with the theatre then, but some years later she made her *début* as *The Roman Daughter*, a play selected for her first appearance with a special meaning. The theatre was large and the expenses heavy, and the management needed a change from the routine attractions. The appearance of a new Kemble on the stage made a sudden and immense success, and turned the tide of popularity in favour of her father's theatre, and saved the fortunes of the house. One of the last works of Sir Thomas Lawrence was an elaborate and beautiful drawing of the young actress, a facsimile engraving from which was afterwards published.

It was somewhere about 1833 that Mr. Kemble and his daughter played an engagement at the old Chestnut Street Theatre, near Sixth Street, Philadelphia. They stayed at Head's Hotel, on Third Street near Spruce Street, and here I saw them in their parlour. Mr. Kemble had commissioned me to re-engrave his portrait as Secretary Cromwell, copied from Harlow's picture of the Kemble family, and I went there to deliver the proofs from the plate. I had previously engraved a portrait of Sir Thomas Lawrence, after the fine print by Cousins, and I purposely placed the Lawrence on top so that it should be the first seen when opened. Miss Fanny was standing on the hearth rug, her back to the fire, and her hands behind her.

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As the package was opened, she naturally expected to see the portrait of her father, but to her astonishment there was that of her friend Sir Thomas. The way in which her sudden pleasurable surprise was expressed was worth witnessing. I expressly planned the surprise, and it was a success.

Among the members of the Covent Garden company in 1821 were Mr. and Mrs. Fawcett and Miss Foote; the latter used to personate Ariel to Charles Young's Prospero in *The Tempest*. And then there was also Miss Stephens, the accomplished vocalist, who afterwards became Countess of Essex. Chapman, to whom was assigned the role of the king in Hamlet, emigrated to America, and in 1830 I saw him at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, of which he was the lessee, and the larger part of the principal performers were members of his own talented family. To avoid the too frequent recurrence of the Chapman name on the bills, some assumed other names.

Although all these actors have long since passed away their lineaments are faithfully preserved to us in the character pictures of George Clint. A fine print was published of his *Miss Foote in the Character of Maria Darlington*, in *A Roland for an Oliver*, painted by him for Colonel Berkeley, of which I possess a proof. But it would resemble an ample catalogue to enumerate the pictures Clint made of the prominent actors of that period, and lovers of the dramatic art are under great

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obligations to him, for it was more than twenty years earlier than the invention of daguerreotyping.

Besides painting original pictures, this accomplished artist occupied much of his time in engraving, especially in mezzotinto, an art he had learned from Mr. Edward Bell. His crowning work in that line was his famous plate after George H. Harlow's splendid picture of *The Trial of Queen Katharine*, which is also known as *The Kemble Family*, because containing portraits from life, of Mrs. Siddons as Queen Katharine, John Philip Kemble as Secretary Cromwell and Stephen Kemble as King Henry. But there are, besides the Kembles, Miss Stephens, Blanchard, Conway, Park, and others. The plate was so popular, and the demand for impressions so great that Clint had to engrave it three times. Many erroneous stories were current regarding the work, and the origin of this remarkable picture was in itself so remarkable that the particulars are worth relating. The real facts of the case are to be had in a letter from Mr. Cribb, who owned the copyright and employed Clint to make the engraving. In correction of erroneous statements the true history is given in the following extract from Cribb's letter on the subject:

SIR:

**M**R. Welsh employed Mr. Harlow to paint a whole length figure of Mrs. Siddons upon a small scale from *recollection* in the character of Queen

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Katharine, for which he was to pay Mr. Harlow twenty guineas, his usual price for that size picture. After the artist had made a commencement he conceived the idea of enlarging his subject and introducing other portraits. He mentioned his wish to Mr. Welsh, telling him that if he could induce Mrs. Siddons to sit for her portrait he would paint him a picture worthy of the subject. Mrs. Siddons did consent, and on the day appointed went to Mr. Harlow's studio. Mr. Welsh was present and was astonished at seeing so large a composition sketched in chalk on the ample canvas. After this he waited on the artist and told him that it was not possible for him to pay for so large a picture. Harlow replied that the picture was his for the twenty guineas agreed on, that he should be amply repaid by the reputation he would gain by it, and that he should owe everything to him (Mr. W.) for getting Mrs. Siddons to sit. Mr. Welsh also induced most of the others to sit whose portraits are introduced.

When the picture was finished Mr. Welsh presented the artist with one hundred guineas, which Harlow told me he considered very handsome conduct, as the painting was to cost him only twenty guineas, and it was his own affair that he had done so much, adding, "It will make a noise at Somerset House, and then I can do as I please." The day after the exhibition opened he doubled his price for portraits.



THE TRIAL OF QUEEN KATHARINE—THE KEMBLE FAMILY  
*From an Engraving by John Sartain from the Painting by G. H. Harlowe*



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In addition to the one hundred guineas, Mr. Welsh relinquished to the artist the right to publish a print, and Mr. Harlow, not caring to be troubled with print selling, sold the copyright to me for one hundred guineas. As to Mr. Welsh having received from me five hundred guineas for the loan of the picture, I never paid him a single shilling; he told me that he had given up the right of publication entirely to Mr. Harlow. I hope this account will convince you that the imputations cast upon Mr. Welsh are wholly undeserved.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM CRIBB.

15 *Tavistock Street, Covent Garden.*

The picture was painted in the year 1817, and while the artist was engaged on it he also had in progress a portrait of Fuseli for Mr. James Knowles. The shrewd academy professor made several sharp criticisms on the composition of the Queen Katharine, and among other things suggested the introduction of the page who is adjusting the cushion on which they want the queen to kneel. My friend, William E. Burton, the eminent comedian and manager, said to me, pointing to the page in the print, "That's my leg,—Harlow painted that boy's figure from me." The print before us was a small copy I had engraved for *Campbell's Foreign Semi-Monthly Magazine*, of which

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work I was both proprietor and editor, and it appeared in the number for January 1, 1844.

The print of it by Clint is an admirable work and conveys an idea of having been copied from a very large picture, and I always supposed it was, until Mr. Charles Kemble set me right. He spread out his hands and said, "It was only about so wide." I saw it long afterward in the International Exhibition of 1862 at South Kensington, London, and it looked to me less brilliant and effective than the engraving from it, but time may have subdued it somewhat. Still I remember the artist's portrait of himself at Florence in the Gallery of the Uffizi, and his picture in the Gallery of St. Luke's Academy at Rome, *The Presentation of the Cardinal's Hat to Wolsey*, both as fresh and clear as if they had not been painted a week. Charles Kemble's portrait in the picture as Secretary Cromwell, sitting beyond the table, pen in hand, had been engraved by itself—I think by Lupton, a pupil and protégé of Clint's—and Mr. Kemble, when in Philadelphia, showed me a proof of the plate in its original state. He owned the plate itself, but it had been worn out and then repaired by some unskilful hand, the face being made ludicrous by distortion. He asked me to restore it to its pristine condition, which I did after nearly obliterating the old by a new mezzotint ground, and he was greatly pleased with the result.



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I was introduced to Mr. Kemble in Sully's painting room, going there by appointment for the purpose. When the sitting was over, Mr. Kemble stepped down from the raised platform and, looking at the picture, remarked that the face appeared large. Sully said, "You have a large face." To which Kemble replied, "Fortunate for me—in my profession." This portrait is only a head, and is in the permanent collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. It was painted about 1833.

Besides the actors already named as belonging to the Covent Garden company, there was Mrs. Chatterton, who played with Miss Foote in *The Two Pages of Frederick the Great*, and Miss Hallande, who personated Captain Macheath in *The Beggars' Opera* and Silvia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Liston, the original Paul Pry, played Captain Dalgetty in *The Children of the Mist*, with Yates as Son of the Mist, and Macready appeared in *Rob Roy*.

But the company had an adjunct of a quite different character that was needed occasionally, especially in Christmas pantomimes. It consisted of a sort of juvenile rabble gathered from the slums in the immediate neighbourhood just north of the theatre, between Covent Garden and Longacre. Managers of popular entertainments experience the necessity of sometimes presenting to their audiences scenes of an exciting character to add to the attraction, otherwise the in-

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terest is apt to wane and profits decline. John Philip Kemble, dignified and severe a classic as he was, and for whom the theatre was built in 1808, tried it in *Macbeth*, but the refractory urchins who personated the "black spirits and white, red spirits and grey," of Hecate's troop, were so outrageously unmanageable that he had to abandon the experiment. But it was still necessary in certain cases to have within summons a lot of such boys, and I had frequent opportunities of witnessing behind the scenes how difficult it was to bring this unruly element into something approaching order and obedience. There was a scene in the pantomime of *Harlequin and Mother Bunch* representing Blackheath, where the spacious stage was pretty well filled by a crowd of these boys of all sizes. On these occasions the mirth and fun would become so fast and furious as to be contagious, and I took to joining in the sport.

Among the boys, more particularly the older ones, were some of a questionable sort, for I learned they were thieves. I was pained to hear this of them, because they were such pleasant, good-natured fellows, and, as I had occasion to know, strictly fair and honourable in their dealings with one another, however they may have been with those not of their guild. When disguised in oriental turbans and robes glistening with jewels, as in the great procession in *Blue Beard* or other similar pageants, they looked not merely highly

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respectable, but even impressively noble. What first drew my attention to this group of older boys, and led finally to my learning not only their character but some of their exploits, was a song I heard them singing in a subdued tone, the refrain at the end of each verse being:—

*O gentlemen judges, may you all be damned  
For sending poor lads to Virginia.*

These experts were probably unaware that in the upper strata of society there were many engaged in the same line of industry as themselves, only with larger enterprises and on a wider field, and involving consequences more cruel. These latter too wear for a time their stage costumes, indicating the highest respectability, until some untoward accident uncloaks them. An eminent financier whom I once knew was met on the street by a lady who exclaimed, "Why, Mr. —, I heard you were drowned!" "Oh, no, my dear madam, you see I am not." "Well, I heard you were drowned in the tears of widows and orphans."

The made-up elephants for the procession in *Blue Beard* when seen behind the scenes looked by no means respectable, whatever improvement distance might lend to their appearance. They could not be made to step right, and Lord Byron tells of hearing the hind legs of an elephant cursing the eyes of the fore legs for not moving better.

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There were occasions when the painting room of the theatre presented lively times in the rapid preparation of scenery for some piece about to be produced with too little time to do it. The design was always made by the artist-in-chief, but it would take all the force of assistants at command to hurry through its execution on the enlarged scale. My employer, Mr. Mortram, was one of the scene painters, and in emergencies he would have me help him forward with some purely mechanical work. One morning while the new scenery for the pantomime of *Harlequin and Mother Bunch* was being rushed through, I was engaged in sticking tinsel upon the artist's touches of glue, to represent the glitter of the castle of polished steel in the moonlight, when a lively controversy arose as to who should go to sketch the "White Horse Cellar" in Piccadilly, at that time the starting-place of the stages going west. A view of it was wanted for the piece. One man could not go because what he was about must be done immediately, and another the same, and so on through the group. At last one of them cried, "Look here, Mortram, can't you send that boy of yours? You say he draws." No sooner proposed than settled, and I was despatched with a stiff card-board, two sheets of paper, and directions to make a kind of map of the house-front with the sign-boards of their relative size and proportion, and another drawing of the signs on a separate sheet large

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enough to show their wording. I accomplished my task sufficiently well to enable them to paint the scene from my diagram, adding, however, in the foreground a crowd of stage-coaches.

## CHAPTER V

*Theatre Life Continued—Marshalsea and King's Bench  
Prisons*

**M**R. Mortram had a son who was also a pyrotechnist. His manufactory was in Westminster Road, next door to Madame Hengler's, and a short distance from the Obelisk which Dickens calls the "Obstacle." Father and son were on unfriendly terms, and did not speak to each other until a reconciliation was brought about in the following way. When George the Fourth was to be crowned, the government suddenly decided to have a display of fireworks, and at the eleventh hour Sir William Congreve (he of the famous rocket) sent an order to the elder Mortram to undertake part of the work. But he was away in the west of England, preparing an exhibition at Bath to commemorate the same event. Mortram, Jr., tendered his services on his father's behalf; they were cheerfully accepted, and thus the breach was healed.

The coronation display was held in the largest open space of Hyde Park, north of the Serpentine and some distance west of Park Lane. An extensive circle was enclosed by a temporary open wooden fence, behind which stood the set pieces, presenting a contin-

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uous front all around. The people for whom the sight was prepared were fated, however, not to see it. The authorities had issued orders that the firing was to proceed slowly, and midnight arrived before half the display, and the best half, had been set off, when a sudden cloud-burst brought down such a deluge of rain, that the pieces were all fired off at once in a dazzling blaze all around the circle, while the people with backs turned were running for shelter, like straight rays from a central focus.

Mortram, Jr., employed a boy named Jim,—I never knew his full name,—whose occupation was similar to my own, and we were consequently thrown together to assist each other where the strength of either was insufficient. In some of the performances at Covent Garden Theatre a good deal of lime was used, as hot water dashed on it would produce a volume of steam to pour out of a chimney, whether of a moving steamboat or of a factory. This lime was deposited in our closet in quantities no greater than a barrellful at a time, for fear of a fire, I believe, and it took the united strength of Jim and myself to carry it to the theatre from the lime-yard where we bought it. The barrel was swung on a pole, one end of which rested on his shoulder and the other end on mine. Our way was through Hungerford Market, and under the western colonnade of the old building was one of our accustomed resting-places for change of shoulders. A boy

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about the place became friendly with us, and we talked while resting. He told us some gruesome stories about the locality, among others that the buildings were haunted by the ghost of a lady. He had not seen it himself, but he knew those who said they had. It was supposed to be a Lady Hungerford, who had owned the place when it was a palace, and who had been hanged at Tyburn for murder. The site of the old Hungerford mansion, as near as I can make it out, must now be covered by the Charing Cross railway station. Hungerford Stairs led down to boats on the water at high tide, and at low tide to the expanse of acres of shining black mud of which I have spoken elsewhere.

A little later another boy was employed about this half-ruinous structure, but at the end nearest the Thames, where it was most dilapidated. His occupation was pasting labels on Warren's blacking-boxes, to the musical accompaniment of a prosperous colony of squealing rats, that inhabited the room next below his. He earned in this way a shilling a day, and must have been a consequential little fellow, for going into a public house one day he called for a glass of ale and added, "Let it be your very best." The landlord and his wife surveyed him in amused surprise, and then the woman lifted him up and kissed him. Charles Dickens himself has told us this story of his boyhood. Mortram, Jr., got arrested for debt and was confined



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in the Marshalsea Prison in the borough of Southwark, but I did not know it until Jim and I were one day on our way to the Elephant and Castle, a great stage-coach station. Jim stopped near the church and told me to wait for him till he had done an errand. He went into a building which stood back from the line of the street, the space in front being enclosed by a dwarf brick wall with an iron railing on top. I had to wait a considerable time for him, and when he came out I asked him what it was, for I thought it looked different from the other houses. He said that it was the Marshalsea Prison for debtors, and that his master was in there. He had to take to him a present from my Mrs. Mortram, a Christmas plum pudding. He said I could go with him on his next visit, but I must carry something. This occurred very soon, but it was in the evening. The turnkey reconnoitred before opening to our knock, sliding back a movable panel which covered a small aperture. When we were inside, in a room comfortably warmed by a large coal fire, the outer door was secured with a big key and another opposite was unlocked. Through this we emerged into the open air again beyond, where there was yet another unfastening and fastening of a strong lock as we passed through a gate in a tall iron railing. We then crossed a paved space of perhaps three or four yards, and were at the dwellings of the inmates.

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Jim behaved as if perfectly at home, and took me through the first door on the left. A cheerful fire blazed in a grate in one corner of the room and seemed to give more light than the two candles, stuck in the necks of bottles, that stood on a long table of rough boards. Seated on long, rude benches at each side of the table were seven or eight persons, two or three of them women, and some were intent upon a game of cards. Jim told me to wait there until he came for me, and I stood back against the wall very much abashed, though no one noticed me. At the further end, away from the players and the lights, were three well-dressed men in conversation across the table. The one near me, as I stood, sat astride the bench and leaning sideways spoke earnestly. "I tell you, man, his name ought not to be Garth, but Guelf, for Garth was not his father. What I know of that disgraceful business ought to bring me a pretty penny out of the hush-money bag that that man in Regent Street holds the strings of. It would lift me out of all my present difficulties." "Then why don't you make a try for it?" asked one of the others. "Well, because —because I'm afraid. It's a ticklish business dealing with men in power. They might rake up some things that are best forgotten." "How can they find out?" "Find out? Why, they've as many eyes as Argus, and the ear of Dionysius; spies everywhere, especially among women and those you would the least sus-

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pect." They stopped talking and all three turned their eyes toward the end of the room, and even the absorbed card-players ceased playing and looked up.

A decently dressed, middle-aged woman had been brought in, looking most unhappy and forlorn. She glanced slowly around in a bewildered sort of way, and said presently, "They have brought me here for no debt of mine; it was my husband's, and he has been dead these four years. How can I get money to pay it? Why, I can only earn a bare living by my needle; how can I pay it?" A tall man rose from his seat and spoke to her in kind and soothing tones, telling her not to grieve, that the Marshalsea was not the bad place it had the name of being; it was better than the King's Bench or any of the other places; that it would only be a short time until the Insolvent Court met, and then she would be free. "But it's a prison," she cried, "and it is most cruel to put me in prison." He guided her gently to the seat from which he had risen, for she looked as if she would faint. At this moment Jim appeared at the door and beckoned me to follow him.

There was a paved passage-way on the south side of the dwellings, against a high wall that separated the prison enclosure from the churchyard. I saw things but vaguely, for there was no other light than that of the moon; but it appeared to me that this passage, of some six or seven yards wide, ran all around a

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block of dwellings for the inmates. Entering about the third door on the left, I was guided up a dark stairway to what I think was the second landing. Here Jim knocked, remarking that the door opposite was Mr. Mortram's, but he was almost never there in the evening. The door was opened by Mr. Mortram himself, and we were admitted. He said, "Charlotte, will you please let these youngsters stay here a little while? There's no fire in my room." "Certainly," said she. "There, boys, sit on that box; you're not so big but there's room for you both." He then went out to get what Jim had come for.

I was surprised at the snug comfort of the place, although the room was small and the ceiling so low that the four posts of the bedstead, which took up most of the space, almost touched it. A small grate with the fire, occupied the angle most remote from the door, and there was a carpet on the floor. Charlotte, as they called her, was the hostess, and the furniture was hers. The others were visitors, but prisoners. What I learned of them was gained not all at once, of course. The only gentleman in the room, after Mr. Mortram left, was Mr. Amherst, a dramatic author, who was there on account of having been surety for somebody in the Surrey Theatre who had failed to pay and had skipped. Between the bedstead and the fireplace there was just room for one chair, and on that sat a lady, the most beautiful in face and fig-

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ure that I ever saw. She was a Mrs. Miller, widow of an army officer, and the two girls present were her daughters. The pension she received was insufficient for their maintenance, and she was there for an unpaid board bill. What was Charlotte's cause of detention I do not know, but on both the occasions when I saw her she seemed bright and cheerful. I heard her tell that when she was young she was lady's maid to Lady Hamilton, who was an excellent mistress, so kind, considerate and affable. Lord Nelson was a frequent visitor, and when there was no one else present she would say, "Charlotte, I know you like to hear me play; come in." She knew there was a good deal of scandal talked about her, but she did not care, and only laughed. In one of the rooms there was a picture of her by an artist named Romney, as a fairy or a Bacchante or something of that sort, and very like her when she was merry. Both Mr. Amherst and Mrs. Miller I met with again years later, the former in Philadelphia; but of this I will speak hereafter.

Mr. Mortram put his head in at the door and told Jim he was ready, so we crossed the landing and followed him into his room. He motioned us to seats while he put up a package of papers, and said to me, "Well, Johnny, what do you think of the inside of a prison?" I answered that I did not know it was so comfortable. He said, "Of course you have never seen the inside of one before?" I said that I had, the

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King's Bench Prison. He exclaimed, "The devil you have! How did that come about? Did you get into debt too? How old are you?" I said I was twelve. "Well, tell me all about the King's Bench. I'm curious to know, for I never saw the inside."

I told him that five or six years before, my father went to visit a friend who was an official in the prison, and took me with him. They were both born in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, had been playmates, and went to school together. It was a cold morning, and I was taken into a large kitchen to get warm and was left there. Great joints of meat were roasting before the most enormous fire I had ever seen. There must have been six or seven roasts on the two spits, which were one above the other, and as they went round by themselves I was curious to find out what turned them. An iron wheel was at one end of each spit, held up by a chain which pulled it around, and they told me that it was a smoke-jack in the chimney that supplied the motive power. A large wooden screen was in front of the fire, lined with bright tin that reflected back the heat and kept the cold air from the meat, and piles of plates and dishes were on shelves getting warm. On the back was a seat, for I remember being lifted up to sit on it. I soon got tired of this and slid off to inspect things out of doors. Next to the kitchen was what I saw must be a public house. "Of course," interrupted Mr. Mortram. "We have one here too; we



THE OPENING OF NEW LONDON BRIDGE  
*After the Painting by Clarkson Stanfield, R. A.*





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can't live without porter, you know." I saw a very high wall, with a railing on top made of spikes crossed on each other, like that around the long cannon in St. James' Park near Spring Garden. My father told me it was called a chevaux-de-frise. Between the wall and the prisoners' houses was a very wide open space where men were playing ball, using long-handled bats with open mesh-work for striking the ball. On the wall, as high as most houses, were painted or chalked enormous circles for the game.

Mr. Westbrook, a friend of my father's, joined him here, either by chance or by appointment, and at dusk we left, crossing the river by old London Bridge, because that was our friend's nearest way home to Stepney. At the city end of the bridge and in front of Fishmongers' Hall, I was lifted up to look between the stone balusters at the great water-wheels, that were turned by the force of the river as it plunged through the small arches like a waterfall. I felt a kind of terror at the sight of the great, black, dripping, slow-moving things in the darkness, and the groaning and splashing of the struggling water. I heard them say that the wheels went round only when the tide was rising. When it was running out the waterfall was on the other side of the bridge, and the submerged wheels could not turn, the river was banked up so high around them, waiting to get through the arches.

When I had finished my answers to the queries put

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to me, Mr. Mortram handed Jim a package, telling him to take it the first thing in the morning to Mr. McCreery, Took's Court, Chancery Lane, and ask him to please send proof as soon as he possibly could. He looked at his watch and said, "Now be off, quick, or you 'll be shut in here all night."

I cannot remember how we passed through the locked iron gate, but we were admitted to the lodge-room in front by knocking with our knuckles. This was my first visit to the Marshalsea, and I was in it but once more, for Mr. Mortram was soon released as insolvent.

In this connection I have a few words to say about the singular and unlooked-for happenings, the chance meetings, in times and places remote, with persons whom it would seem most unlikely one could ever again encounter. The Mr. Amherst, whom I have mentioned as a prisoner in Marshalsea, inspired me with a kind of veneration, because I had seen in shop windows the open title-page of plays he had written, bearing after his name the words, "Author of," followed by an inverted pyramid of titles of pieces, perhaps ten or fifteen in number. Some twenty or more years after, a circus, called Welsh's Olympic, was built in Philadelphia, on the south side of Chestnut Street, east of Ninth, where the Continental Hotel now stands. I went with my family to one of the first performances, and was fairly startled by the voice of

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the usher who politely showed us our seats. I did not need to turn my eyes toward him to know that there stood Amherst. He little thought the person he was addressing in suave tones had been the small boy who had seen him in quite other quarters. Some years after this, I saw him again, seated near me in the old Chestnut Street Theatre, above Sixth Street, and conversing with Mr. Davenport the actor, father of Fanny Davenport. He seemed ageing fast, and his dress was anything but new and fresh. The next thing I heard was that he had died in the almshouse in West Philadelphia. What had made me so familiar with the sound of his voice was that when I saw him for the second time with Mr. Mortram, Mrs. Miller had insisted on his reading something aloud, which he did in a manner that I thought enchanting. I had never heard anything to compare to it.

The changes that rapidly succeed one another as time rolls on, are as unexpected as the sudden surprises of the kaleidoscope. What could be more unlikely than that I should ever again meet Mrs. Miller? Yet I did. In the course of years I had become an artist,—or thought I had, and others thought so too,—and I received a commission to paint a lady's portrait in water-colours, which if successful was to be engraved. For this I was conducted to the residence of Lady Gresley, a stone-fronted house on the south side of Conduit Street, a few doors from Regent Street. Who should

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the sitter be but Mrs. Miller, her beauty not in the least impaired! My astonishment may be imagined, but I was careful to conceal it, and she of course could not recognize in the young man commissioned to paint her portrait the little boy she had seen in the Marshalsea. She had appeared on the public stage in the character of the "Irish Widow," with the hope of adopting the theatrical career as a profession. But she had so much yet to learn that Mr. Elliston would offer her no more than two pounds per week. This came to the knowledge of Lady Gresley, who was so indignant thereat that she forbade her acceptance of the paltry salary, and declared that she would rather take care of her herself. Thus it was that the would-be actress and ex-inmate of the Marshalsea came to be domiciled in Conduit Street.

Years after, while I was spending an evening with Mr. Charles Toppan, the eminent bank-note engraver of Philadelphia, the conversation drifted to his experiences in London when he was young. Among other things he mentioned having met there the most exquisitely beautiful lady he had ever seen in all his life. Before he had time to name her, I asked, "Was she not a Mrs. Miller?" Amazed, he answered that she was.

But I think the most remarkable coincidence of a meeting after many years of time, and when thousands of miles of space had intervened, was an experience

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told me by David Edwin, the distinguished stipple engraver of Philadelphia. When he was a boy in London he was in the Strand early one morning, standing on the sidewalk in front of Northumberland House, looking up St. Martin's Lane, which at that time ended at the Strand instead of at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields as now. It was about eight o'clock, the atmosphere hazy but not dense enough for a fog, and apparently nobody about yet, for London hours for rising are much later than in Philadelphia. To his great wonder and astonishment he saw a young woman, entirely nude, issue from one of the houses, cross the street and enter a house on the opposite side. Long years after, in Philadelphia, he was in company one evening with a group of merry fellows who were entertaining one another over their cups with gay anecdotes. "Now I will tell you something," said one, "that's quite out of common, and I know it to be a fact, for I was a party to it and won a trifle of money over it on a bet. A lively set of both sexes had been to the Haymarket Theatre and afterwards to a supper at a house in St. Martin's Lane. With songs and stories over the flowing bowl, we kept it up all night until daylight surprised us. The frolic ended in a wager that one of the women should cross the open street divested of all clothing. She was dared into doing it and was paid handsomely." Edwin here interposed and told them the year and month of the

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occurrence. The narrator was amazed, and exclaimed, "That's a fact, it was then; but how in the world could *you* learn it?" "Why, I saw it," said Edwin. He remembered the date with such exactitude because it was just before his master, a Dutch engraver, took him over to Amsterdam.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Turnpikes*

**T**HE number of hours demanded for duty with Mr. Mortram would have been more fatiguing but for the amusement inseparable from the nature of the occupation, and I should have been well content to continue. But I was taken from it to be made useful where my hours of daily service were still longer, and my occupation totally void of entertainment. Mr. Goodland, a relative of ours, was proprietor of the turnpike trust of the lower road from Bermondsey to Deptford. It comprised seven gates, one of which was named Gibraltar, probably because it commanded all the rest, all vehicles from either direction having to pass through it, there being no by-road at this part. For this reason it was necessary to have a trustworthy person there to check off the name of the gate at which toll had previously been paid. Mr. Goodland wanted me for this post, and it was thus I came to be removed from my old employment to the new. But I very soon grew tired of my occupation, and no wonder, for my hard tasks left me so little time for natural rest. I did not sleep at Gibraltar, there being no accommodation for it, but at the Butt Lane Gate, Deptford. I had to be off to

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my post before five o'clock in the morning, and my attention must never flag all day, or my record against the other gates would be imperfect. Any negligence was apt to be discovered, as each gate was made a check against the others. After having my mind on the strain all day, when evening came I had to walk from Deptford to Bermondsey, to submit my daily record to a close scrutiny, and then walk back to Deptford and get the little sleep the time left me. The complaint of Faust's Margaret about fitted my case:

*I can scarce avail  
To wake so early and to sleep so late,  
And then, my mother is in each detail  
So accurate.*

My need of rest was so great that I must sometimes have walked nearly the whole distance fast asleep, for I would find myself at my destination unable to recollect how I came there. Once I was awakened by coming square up against a scaffold pole, and once awoke by missing the accustomed level footing of the raised sidewalk, cut down to the level of the road where a gate gave entrance to a field. I tried all I could to be relieved, but in vain, so, growing desperate, at last I cut the knot that would not untie, by taking what is called "French leave." Early in the morning the news was carried to headquarters at Dandy's Gate, Bermondsey, that Gibraltar was without a garrison,



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and young Charles Goodland posted off at once to my mother in the city, and there found the runaway. When I had related my grievances and hardships, it was seen that the attempt to force me back must be abandoned.

There were seven gates in this trust of the lower Deptford Road, which were named respectively Lilliput, Dandy's, Swan, St. Helena, Commercial, Gibraltar, and Butt Lane. The tolls levied were exorbitant, being a shilling per horse attached to vehicles with wheels of three inch tires, eightpence if the wheels were of double that breadth, and so on. Lilliput, the first gate on the Bermondsey end, was within a stone's throw of a locality made famous by Dickens in *Oliver Twist*, Jacob's Island, where Bill Sykes met his death after the murder of Nancy. These turnpike trusts were farmed out by the road commissioners to the highest responsible bidder that could also be backed up by acceptable sureties, and it was thus my cousin Goodland became owner of the lower Deptford Road trust. But so far as the region immediately around London is concerned, they have long been a thing of the past.

In connection with my sleep-walking, I had occasion to mention the raised sidewalk for foot passengers on that portion of the lower Deptford Road where it crossed the fields. The land south of the river Thames was generally low and inclined to be swampy, includ-

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ing the part opposite London, then known as St. George's Fields. The turnpike gate on the Westminster Road, not more than a quarter of a mile from the bridge of that name, was known as the Marsh gate, a significant indication of the marshy character of the neighbourhood. Mr. Mortram, the pyrotechnist, lived almost opposite that gate, and I remember that under the rotting floor of the back kitchen of his house was discovered a large, square reservoir of water, evidently framed for the drainage of the surrounding earth. I saw that the surface of the water was not more than eight inches lower than the under side of the joists, laid across it for the support of the new floor. It was thus made clear why the sidewalk in front of these houses was raised so much higher than the roadway. The basements could not otherwise have been made without going down into the water. This house is next to the corner of what was known as the New Cut, which ran from the Westminster Road to the Blackfriars Road. Midway along this cut ends the long line of brick arches built to support the sloping road from the end of Waterloo Bridge down to the natural level at the New Cut, a distance very little short of half a mile.

One of my early memories, is of an old-time place of amusement, near Westminster Bridge, Astley's Theatre, noted for its equestrian exhibitions. Astley's beginning before the public as a performer is noteworthy,

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considering the development from it of the circus of to-day, with its four rings and enormous tent. He had been groom to a gentleman who was fond of horses, and when they separated he received the present of a fine horse from his patron. With this animal he made daily displays, in an open field, of his remarkable skill in horsemanship, performing many daring feats, and at the close a hat was passed around for voluntary contributions. His advertisements were very primitive, consisting of written notices tacked on to the trunks of trees here and there.

With such a beginning he could not be expected to have acquired much knowledge of the arts of music and painting, but both of these were necessary adjuncts in the theatre he afterwards owned. It is told of him that noticing one night that the brass wind instruments in his orchestra were sometimes silent, he demanded the reason. He was told there was a rest, which was pointed out on the written score. He stormed at the musicians. "Rest! I don't pay you for resting. I pay you for playing. Blow away!" In painting he evidently preferred the realistic school. His artist was engaged in decorating the proscenium over the front of the stage with a cluster of flags, drums, trumpets, cannon, and I don't know what all, when Astley called to the painter that he had shown but one end of the drum. The artist explained that it was not possible to represent it otherwise. "Nonsense!"

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exclaimed Astley. "Suppose a real drum was up there, wouldn't the audience on this side see one end, and wouldn't the audience on the other side of the theatre see the other end? Now I want it done as if there was a real drum up there."

## CHAPTER VII

*Apprenticeship—William Young Ottley, and his Friends, Rogers, Leslie, Lawrence, Dibdin, Douce, and Roscoe*

IT had been necessary that I should be in the way of earning money after my father's death and my mother's unsuccessful attempt to carry on the business. But now my grandmother at Trowbridge died, leaving us her estate, and this put us on our feet again. It was time that I should select some occupation for my life's career, and as I was fond of drawing and devoted myself to it whenever I could find opportunity, I decided to learn the art of engraving. I was therefore apprenticed to Mr. John Swaine, and thus at the age of fourteen entered upon the profession in which I have been actively and incessantly at work during the last seventy-five years.

Mr. Swaine was a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company in Threadneedle Street, and it was there that I was indentured to him in February, 1823, becoming by means of that process a "freeman of the city." Now, under the system of negro slavery, when a transfer of property in the person occurred, the price was paid by the purchaser; but in the white slavery termed apprenticeship the payment takes the opposite direction, and not only was I to give seven

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years of my time without compensation, but to make a payment of seventy pounds sterling to boot. I was to be taught a variety of branches in addition to pictorial work,—heraldry, letter engraving, and so forth. My mother thought this a great advantage, and I knew no better, but I soon learned that these varieties involved a great deal of drudgery. Besides, under the old régime, the duties of an apprentice included the running of errands or any menial occupation the master ordered.

Work in an engraver's jobbing office I found most unfavourable for artistic progress. The apprentice's chief occupation was cutting names on door-plates, dog-collars, trunk-plates, and some still rougher work, and my practice in drawing was only heraldry. This training gave command of hand and rapid certainty of execution, however, and between whiles I applied myself diligently to practice in pictorial work. I soon began to repine, because I saw that it would be impossible for me to acquire enough knowledge and experience to follow the branch of regular pictorial engraving, and that my seven years would be wasted, as well as the seventy pounds premium that had been paid.

My case seemed a hopeless one, when Mr. William Young Ottley happened to see one or two of my little scraps of line practice, and commended them. The idea occurred to him to use me to carry forward to completion a work he had begun thirty years before

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in Rome, if he could arrive at a satisfactory arrangement with Mr. Swaine for my time. This project was an historical sketch of the early Florentine school, not in words, but in examples of the compositions of the best artists through two centuries and a half, from Cimabue in 1360 down to Luca Signorelli in 1500, arranged in chronological order. Terms were agreed upon, and it was a splendid piece of good fortune for me. Mr. Ottley was known in the literary world not only as the most learned antiquary in all matters relating to art, more especially Italian art, but also as an accomplished artist himself, though amateur only. I could not have fallen into better hands.

This work in folio, *The Early Florentine School*, published complete in 1826, had been planned and actually commenced in 1792; some of the plates after Giotto having been then engraved by Tomaso Piroli. They were done from drawings by Humbert, an artist employed by Mr. Ottley to copy the pictures he had selected, it being then long before photography was even dreamed of. Progress ceased, however, very soon after it had begun, and it might never have been resumed but for the arrangement for utilizing my services. I began work upon the plates in 1823, and continued at it twenty months. During that time, I engraved throughout eighteen of the plates, and worked up to finish fourteen others left incomplete by Piroli. Several of Piroli's plates I had to alter considerably,

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scooping out parts and punching up from the back on an anvil before proceeding to finish, so that I became quite expert. A *Nativity* by Sandro Botticelli, I engraved from the original picture, owned by Mr. Ottley, and worked it up to its full effect. The others were from Humbert's drawings.

Three of the plates I engraved throughout before I was fifteen, two being after Benozzo Gozzoli: *Abraham entertaining the Angels*, and a group from a wall in the Campo Santo at Pisa. The third was after Giotto. The last three I did were from Luca Signorelli, after his frescoes in the Duomo at Orvieto: *The Wicked destroyed at the End of the World*, a group of demons from his *Inferno*, and a group of angels from his picture of heaven. I also engraved from the façade of the same cathedral a sculptured group by Niccola Pisano, and I have since seen the originals at Orvieto. Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, Donatello and others were among the artists I copied.

This delightful work was performed amidst charming surroundings, of themselves an education. My engraving table stood in the corner of a picture gallery, the walls covered with admirable paintings by great masters. If I raised my eyes from my work to the south wall opposite, there was a first-class Rembrandt, a nude woman seated, an old woman wiping her feet after a bath. It is now in the La Caze Gallery of the Louvre. To the left was a Domenichino of *Cephalus*



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and *Aurora*, figures larger than life. To the right of the Rembrandt a large picture of *The Battle of the Angels*, a noble composition by Mr. Ottley himself, painted in black and white, evidenced consummate mastery in drawing the nude figure. It was his intention to paint over it in solid colour, but whether he ever did I do not know. A line of works of lesser dimensions occupied the space beneath, among them a Guido, a Schedone, a Correggio study in oils, a Giorgione, and in the middle an antique torso of a Cupid, not unlike the marble known as *The Genius of the Vatican*.

On the west wall, opposite the fireplace, and over the Print Cabinets, was, among other large pictures, a very large Titian, a *Madonna and Child* with landscape background. Just back of where I sat, was another Titian, *The Rape of Europa*, a beautiful picture of captivating colour, and lighter in general tone than any other work of his I have seen. Below the Titian, and level with the eye, was the *Nativity* of Sandro Botticelli. It was a tall upright; in the sky over the straw-thatched stable was a circle of rejoicing angels, and in the lower portion groups of angels embracing men. I engraved a plate of the middle portion only, that is, of the Nativity proper, copying it just where it hung, and it is numbered the fiftieth plate of the series in the completed folio work.

On the west side of the door of entrance was a large Salvator Rosa, St. George, pouring upon the Dragon some liquid from a bottle. Over these hung two large

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Bassanos that extended across the whole width of the gallery, the subjects of course treated after his accustomed manner, but the colouring very rich and fine, although dark. Both recesses on each side of the fireplace were filled with books. To reach this gallery from the dwelling the way was through another smaller gallery, also lighted from above, the walls of which were covered from floor to ceiling with pictures by the old pre-Raphaelite artists, which Mr. Ottley had collected in Italy during the latter part of the last century. Most of them were taken from churches during the occupation by the French soldiery, and but for Mr. Ottley's intervention might have been destroyed. Now to spend twenty months in a room starred with pictures such as I have attempted to describe, was a great privilege which I did not fail to appreciate. But in addition was the instruction I was constantly receiving from Mr. Ottley himself, in superintending and directing my work, and last, not least, the conversation of the eminent men who visited such a man as Mr. Ottley. Among them were Sir Thomas Lawrence, President of the Royal Academy, Samuel Rogers, the poet-banker, Thomas Roscoe, Charles R. Leslie, R. A., Thomas Frognall Dibdin, the bibliographer, Francis Douce, the antiquary, Rev. William Long, Frazer, Lloyd and others.

Samuel Rogers, the poet-banker, was one of Mr. Ottley's most frequent visitors, and from his appearance

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I guessed him to be about sixty. He had not yet published that superb volume illustrated by Stothard and Turner, *Italy*, nor the companion volume, illustrated by the same artists, his *Miscellaneous Poems*, which at the sale of Mrs. Morgan's rich collection in New York brought seventy dollars for each volume.

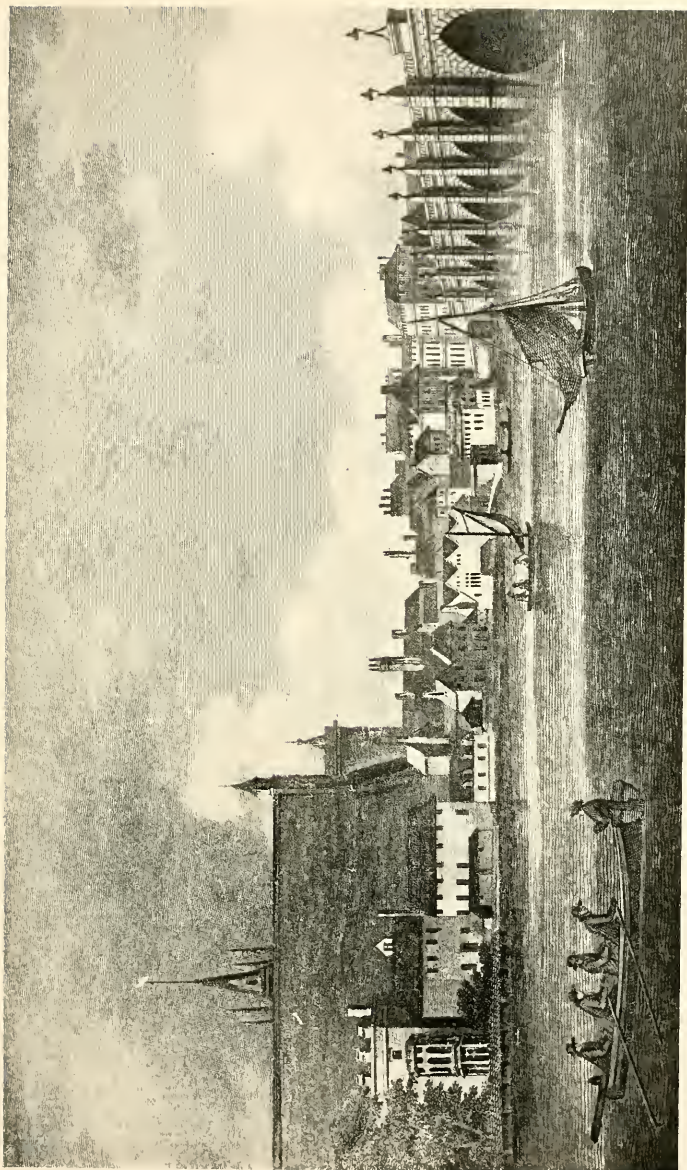
There was one peculiarity about his face that drew my attention: the sockets of his eyes were rather deep-sunk, so that the edges of the cheek-bones were very definitely marked, and yet the eye in the centre was itself prominent, forming altogether a sort of cone. Under excitement the expression was peculiar, which was rare, however, because ordinarily he was mild and equable. But one day his host brought out for his delectation a portfolio of choice mediæval paintings, collected from richly illuminated missals and other similarly decorated works. They were each mounted separately on very thick card-board and were rare, splendid and valuable, and made a heavy pile in a single folio. Rogers's fine taste was much gratified by such a treat, and he gave frequent utterance to the pleasure he experienced. All at once a vexatious surprise occurred, startling those in the gallery by its sudden noise. Owing to a thoughtless way of placing the folio, it overbalanced and fell to the floor with a resounding plunge, to the detriment of the corners of some of the mountings, and possibly to some of the miniatures. Rogers had placed the folio flat on the table,

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but with the empty leaf projecting beyond its edge. As he examined the pictures, one by one, he laid each precious gem with tender care on the opposite side, until the increasing weight brought about the catastrophe. The mortification seen in those curious goggle-eyes of his could not be forgotten.

I have a good portrait of Rogers, copied from a delicate drawing by Sir Thomas Lawrence. It is an unmistakable likeness, but as the Academy President always worked for beauty, not only in ladies' faces but also in those of men, such a peculiarity as I have referred to would be softened down to disappearance. The outline etching of Rogers by Maclise, published in Fraser, is like, though bordering on caricature. Rogers was remarkable for his exquisitely refined taste, almost approaching fastidiousness, so that of the multitudinous collection of art objects he possessed none were of doubtful quality. I am told that in order to render perfect the volume of his *Italy*, with its superb illustrations, he expended on it no less than £10,000, and on the subsequent volume of his *Poems*, £5,000.

On one occasion I remember Charles R. Leslie, our Philadelphia Royal Academician, standing before Mr. Ottley's grand picture of *The Battle of the Angels*. After commending the composition and effect, and more particularly the masterly drawing of the individual nude figures, he remarked that it was a pity it was not in colour. Mr. Ottley said that it had been his in-



WESTMINSTER, OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSES AND WESTMINSTER BRIDGE



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tention from the beginning to paint it in colour; this was only the preparation. Leslie said it would not do to work on that same canvas. "Why not?" was asked in surprise. "Because it would be impossible to conquer that intensely cold black and white," said Leslie. Leslie as a boy started in Bradford's bookstore in Philadelphia, but his predilection for art often found vent in sketches, the most remarkable of these being three coloured drawings of Cooke, the actor, that are still preserved in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, one as Falstaff, one as Richard the Third, and the other as Othello. A subscription was immediately raised to enable him to go to London to study regularly for the profession, and to receive advice and guidance from such men as Benjamin West and Washington Allston. He studied diligently and progressed rapidly. One of his first successes was the charming picture of *Sir Roger de Coverley and the Spectator going to Church*, the background to the figures being a view of Chingford Church, Essex, near Epping Forest. I possess a facsimile of Leslie's sepia drawing from nature of that ivy-covered building. In 1826 I was one Sunday in this interesting church, then in fair condition and used for weekly services. I went up into the pulpit and saw on the cushionless pine desk a Bible secured by a chain. I went to see the church again in 1888, but time had worn it into a ruin.

When Leslie was about to depart for London, Sully

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gave him some instructions and showed him how to set a palette, for which the young student was very thankful, and said he did not know how he could ever repay such kindness. To this Sully answered, "When you have attained that position in art which I predict for you, I in turn will ask your instruction." During the first year of the reign of Victoria, Sully went to London and painted the whole length portrait of the Queen from life, for the St. George Society of Philadelphia, for which she had consented to sit. Sully then reminded Leslie of the incident of the latter's boyhood, and asked him to say frankly how his pictures struck him. "Frankly then," said Leslie, "they look too much as if one could blow them away." This was told me by Sully himself.

In 1841 Leslie painted for me a portrait of my father-in-law, Mr. Swaine, and it still hangs in my library as fresh and as beautiful as the day on which it was finished. Henry C. Carey, the eminent writer on political economy, married a sister of the artist, and there are some of his pictures in the Carey collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, which came through that connection.

Thomas Roscoe used to come to Ottley's gallery, and frequently it was to ask assistance in his translation from the Italian of Lanzi, on which he was then engaged. He would be perplexed to find the exact meaning of certain words or phrases that occurred in refer-



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ence to purely art matters, which Mr. Ottley understood from having lived so long in Italian art circles, himself a devoted student of art, though an amateur only. Roscoe was a most agreeable man, and the conversations I frequently heard between the two concerning Italian art were highly instructive as well as entertaining, and it was evident the translation gained much by Roscoe's application to Ottley. The latter had himself, in former years, begun a translation of Lanzi, but dropped it after making considerable progress.

Francis Douce, the antiquary, was another of the frequent visitors. He had a loud voice and used it in a dictatorial way, as if those he talked to were of small account and hardly worth his notice. Mr. Ottley had a large table in the middle of the gallery, on which was an accumulation of all kinds of things,—books, drawings, prints, and what not,—piled on one another in a confused way as if valueless. One day Douce noticed in the heap some very curious old ivory carvings, flat plates like book covers, and after examining one or two asked Mr. Ottley what he supposed they were for. He replied that he did not know. Douce pitched them from him as if scornfully, but after awhile proposed to buy them. The owner, after a minute's thought, said, "If they are worth ten guineas to you, you can have them." The purchaser discovered a small vacant space on the table, and I

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saw him count out ten shillings in addition to the ten sovereigns, and he carried off the ivories. There appeared to be eight or ten of them. On the occasion of a subsequent visit he mentioned that he had discovered their use. They were the ornamental backs to ladies' hand mirrors. He possessed a large collection of valuable manuscripts and other objects that are kept in a sealed box in the British Museum, not to be opened until the first day of the next century.

At another time he was turning over the leaves of Mr. Ottley's folio book, *The Italian School of Design*, an admirable and costly work containing engraved facsimiles of drawings by the most celebrated old masters. After commenting on those by Raphael done with the silver point (made of the pure metal without alloy, and used before the introduction of lead pencils) and contrasting these, his early works, with the larger, bolder drawings with pen or crayon, he was led to talk about the large debt this artist owed to Michael Angelo. Raphael had suddenly changed his style from what is termed his second, to his last, broader and grander manner, obviously the result of having seen the vault of the Sistine Chapel while in progress. Mr. Ottley had proved in the work referred to that the chapel was opened one year earlier than all writers agree in dating it. Douce exclaimed, "What the devil does it matter whether it was opened a year earlier or a year later, in 1511 or 1512? It was on All Saints' Day, and

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that's sufficient." Mr. Ottley explained that it mattered a great deal, as on that hinged the decision of the question of how Raphael improved his manner all at once, and proved that credit should be given to his sight of his great rival's work. Vasari recorded the day of the public opening of the chapel, but neglected to state the year. This time Douce bought the book, paying down twelve guineas, the price of it. Money was of small account with him, for he had the heaped-up savings of the miserly sculptor Nol-lekens, who bequeathed his fortune to him.

There was one visitor whose entrance always gave me a thrill of pleasure, and that was Sir Thomas Lawrence, the President of the Royal Academy, who never came till late in the afternoon. When he first took notice of me, he came around into my corner and asked me what I was doing. I replied that it was Donatello's bas-relief on the pulpit of the Church of San Lorenzo at Florence, *Christ taken down from the Cross*. He examined my plate attentively and exclaimed, "Ha! I possess the artist's first sketch for this bronze, but it's a good deal changed from his original design." He spoke some very kind and encouraging words about my work. In conversation the tones of his voice were very pleasant to the ear,—soft and low,—and the language was marked by simplicity and directness. I once heard him comment on the large Titian on the east wall. Standing on the hearth with his back

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to the fire, his hands behind him, he analyzed its various qualities, expressing admiration especially for the breadth of treatment.

The Donatello drawing he referred to had been copied in facsimile in Ottley's *Italian School of Design*, folio, published complete in 1823. This is a splendid work and contains as many as eighty-four exact reproductions of original drawings by the best masters, those by Raphael and Michael Angelo being the most numerous. They formed a part, but a very small part, of the great collection formerly owned by Mr. Ottley, and purchased from him by Sir Thomas Lawrence at a cost of £8,000. The combined accumulation of works of this character, obtained by Lawrence from various sources, surpassed in quantity and quality the united collections of all the crowned heads of Europe put together. It was the great ambition of the artist's life to enrich the nation with this vast collection of original works, unique, and beyond comparison, his own name as founder to be permanently associated with it. This noble purpose failed of its accomplishment because of the liberal and careless way in which he spent his earnings, involving him in debt beyond his ability to pay. Unable to realize the project himself, he yet trusted to its being carried out by others after his death, and with that hope he devised that the king, George the Fourth, might have the collection for a sum considerably below half what

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it had cost, and if his Majesty declined it, Sir Robert Peel might take it at a still less sum. Neither of them being possessed of sufficient largeness of heart or patriotism, there was nothing left but to let this wonderful collection be again scattered, through the hands of dealers, to the four quarters of the earth, beyond the possibility of ever being reassembled.

I remember hearing Mr. Ottley once speak to Sir Thomas Lawrence with an inflection of dissatisfaction. At the annual dinner of the academicians, immediately following the death of Henry Fuseli, the president made no allusion to the loss the Royal Academy had sustained. Mr. Ottley expressed his surprise in tones that sounded to me like a reproach, but Lawrence excused his omission by saying that he had felt afraid it might not be well received.

Dr. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, the bibliographer, I do not remember much about, except that he was a lively little man of fifty who spoke rapidly, laughed heartily, and skipped about like a youth, although his face indicated middle age at least.

When my labours on the plates for *The Early Florentine School* were finished, I obtained permission to draw from the antique marbles in the British Museum four hours each week, and it was then that I ate my lunch sitting on the large black stone now so carefully guarded, that then lay on the floor of the Egyptian department, the Rosetta Stone.

## CHAPTER VIII

*William Blake and John Varley*

**M**Y first knowledge of the works of William Blake and my admiration of certain qualities in them came through an introduction to Mr. John Varley, the eminent painter in water colours. In his gallery and studio I saw the entire series of the illustrations of *The Book of Job* each framed separately and hanging side by side in one continuous line on the north wall of the room. They were suspended level with the eye, a great comfort on account of the minute character of the engraving, which was done with a knife-like tool, not with the ordinary graver or burin, and was entirely devoid of the customary preparation of etching. Blake engraved all the text of the book in the same way when he published it, for he could not afford to pay a compositor to set it up in type.

Mr. Varley was a remarkably frank and pleasant gentleman, an enthusiast in whatever subjects interested him, and the three most prominent of these were his landscape-art, astrology, and the works of Blake. His conversation was always interesting and instructive; he talked rapidly and never ceased washing-in on his picture the while. When I first saw him, he welcomed me

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in the warmest manner, and after a brief conversation invited me to look around at the works on the walls. He occupied a long room lighted from above without windows on the sides, which was reached through a long passage, the entrance door being on Tichfield Street. Over the Blake prints hung large pictures in water colours by himself, just returned from exhibitions. The subjects were *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Destruction of Tyre*, and *The Grave of Thomson*. This last, a most beautiful view, illustrated the lines by Collins,

*In yonder grave a Druid lies,  
Where slowly winds the stealing wave,  
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise  
To deck its poet's sylvan grave."*

Besides these water-colours, there was on another wall a large picture in oils by him, of a scene extremely solemn and grand, a funeral procession. It was either *The Burial of Saul* or a subject suggested by the music of a dirge bearing that title.

I was deeply impressed with the prints by Blake, and having examined the whole twenty-one most carefully, I raised my eyes to an unframed canvas on the wall above, at the end of the line of prints. It appeared to be a regular 25x30 portrait size, turned horizontal, giving space for two life-size heads painted side by side. One was of a man of a clear, pinkish complexion, with short red hair in crisp curls, negro-like in charac-

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ter but not in colour, the entire head as round as a ball. The other, to the right of the first, was of a totally different type. The large portion of the face was in deep shadow from the raised visor of the helmet that encased the head, and from out of this shadow the eyes glared unpleasantly. The canvas was bare except where the heads were painted, and these looked as if done in oil, but were not so, for Blake, like Michael Angelo, despised that medium. He preferred to use glue-water as a vehicle for his pigments. Under the heads was written in lead-pencil two lines, as follows, as near as I can recollect: "William Wallace appeared and stayed long enough for me to paint this portrait of him, when King Edward the First took his place and I painted him also. He promised to come again and bring his wife and children. W. Blake." I read this to myself once or twice and was puzzled, when Varley, perceiving my perplexity, said: "I see you don't understand that writing, but it is true. Wallace did really appear to Blake, and that portrait was painted from him, and the other also is a faithful portrait of King Edward painted as he saw him. Come this way and look at this little picture on the mantel-piece." I did as I was bid and took it in my hand, for it stood loose and appeared to be painted on a kind of cardboard. Varley said it represented the spirit of a flea. It was a profile view of a finely drawn human figure in all but the head, which was that of a flea; in



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his left hand, the one toward the spectator, was a small bowl filled to the brim with blood, which he held forward as if showing it to some one not within the field of the picture. The entire painting was dark, but the background became less so near the figure, so that the form, still darker, had relief. The strongly-developed muscles were partially covered with bronze-like scales, that had a dim gloss in the lights, and in some parts bristling hairs grew out between them.

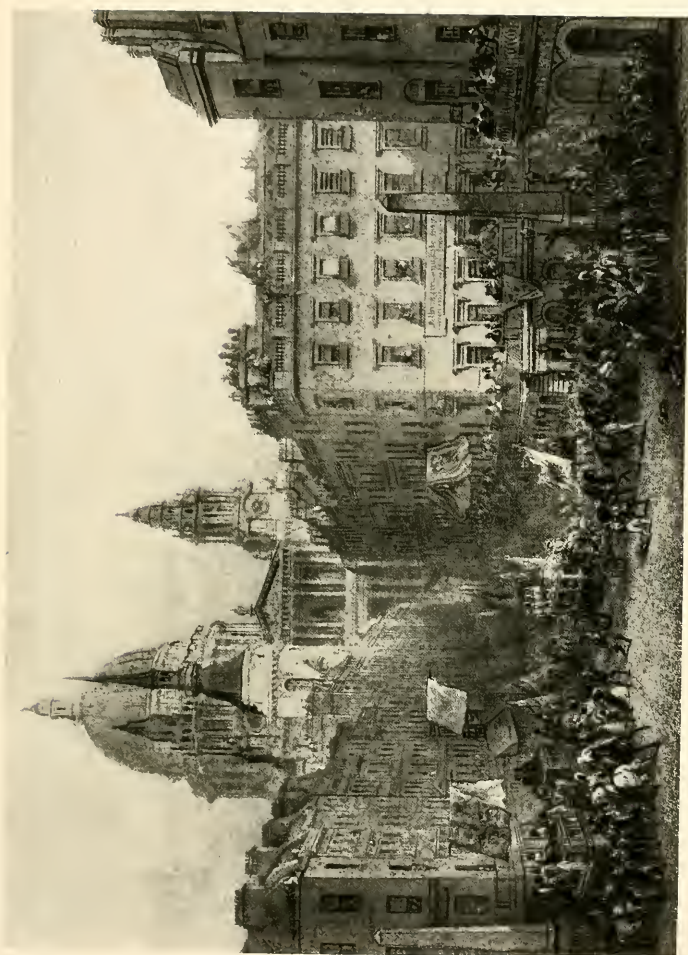
Blake made the illustrations for a folio edition of Young's *Night Thoughts*, and engraved them also. Afterwards, for Cromek, he illustrated Blair's *Grave*, and was greatly disappointed when the engraving was confided to the Italian Schiavonetti, an excellent artist whose modern style of work was more acceptable to the public than that of Blake. He had received but twenty guineas for his thirteen designs, and reckoned upon his earnings on the engraving to make the commission more profitable. His ill-will toward Cromek was greatly increased by the publisher's having broken an alleged engagement in connection with the picture, illustrating Chaucer, *The Pilgrimage to Canterbury*. He claimed that he had made considerable progress on the painting of that subject when Cromek saw it and proposed to publish an engraving of it, using language that Blake interpreted as equivalent to an order. But Cromek instead used his idea and gave a commission for the picture to Stothard, whose style of art was

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more captivating than Blake's. He afterwards engaged Schiavonetti to engrave it, but the latter died just as he had completed the superb preparatory etching (of which I possess a proof), and the plate was finished by James Heath.

Various statements have been published as to this transfer of the order from Blake to Stothard, Cromek denying that he had ever led the former to expect an order of the kind. I chance to know the cause, which has never appeared till now. I had it from the lips of Henry Richter, whose pupil I was for eight months in 1827-28, and whose father was really at the bottom of the affair. Richter, the worker in scagliola, and Stothard and Cromek were all neighbours in Newman Street, Oxford Street. Richter wanted to get his son Henry into Stothard's studio as a pupil, and in order to lay the latter under an obligation, he induced Cromek to give the commission as he did. Stothard, however, declined to receive the son, and when the elder Richter reproached him for being ungrateful, Stothard replied that teaching was not in his line, or words to that effect.

The fact is, Stothard had little enough to be grateful for, beyond the opportunity of increasing his artistic reputation. For this beautiful picture he received only sixty guineas. Cromek agreed to augment that sum to a hundred if the artist would work on it another month and carry it on to finer finish. The time and



ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LORD MAYOR'S DAY  
*After the Painting by David Roberts, R. A.*



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finish were given, but the additional pay never came. The publisher subsequently sold the picture, it is said, for three hundred guineas, but the younger Stothard told his wife, afterwards Mrs. Bray, that he knew positively that the sum was five hundred.

The irritated Blake went on with his picture of the *Pilgrimage* and when finished exhibited it along with other of his works, and printed a descriptive catalogue which I have read in a copy Richter had preserved. Some passages in it are provocative of laughter; witness the following in reference to his rival's picture.

"That painter has represented Chaucer himself as a knave who thrusts himself among honest people to make game of and laugh at them, though I must do justice to the painter and say that he has made him look more like a fool than a knave." . . . "The scene of Mr. S——'s picture is by Dulwich Hills, which was not the way to Canterbury; but perhaps the painter thought he would give them a ride round about, because they were a burlesque set of scarecrows, not worth any man's respect or care."

Stothard's portrait of Chaucer in the group is anything but what Blake's spite represents, and was copied from authentic material in the British Museum. The landscape background which Blake terms the Dulwich Hills was sketched by Stothard from nature somewhere on the road near Peckham, which is on the way to Canterbury.

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I never saw Blake, but I did see his widow. My friend Tatham, the sculptor, in the kindness of his heart took her for his housekeeper, and on my visiting him she opened the street door to me. I don't know what would have become of her in her age and poverty but for this timely refuge offered after the death of her husband.

It has been asserted of John Varley that he accepted money for the casting of horoscopes. I do not believe it from what I know in connection with his astrological diversions. Mine he cast, and I have it in his own writing, still preserved. One of his studies was what he termed zodiacal physiognomy, which was perfected into a complete system; the theory being that not only was a person's career in life influenced and in large measure controlled by the position of the stars at the hour of his birth, but also that the character of his face, figure, and temperament was stamped and fixed at the same instant. For example, the circle of the twelve signs of the zodiac, allowing thirty degrees to each, is divided into four trigons of three signs each; the earthy, aerial, fiery, and watery, corresponding to the temperaments. Aries the ram, formerly the first month of the year, March, is the first sign of the aerial trigon; to find the other two signs thereunto belonging, place the angle of an equilateral triangle at Aries, and the touching points of the other two angles show the other two signs that belong in that trigon. The same applies to the other three trigons or tem-

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peraments. Varley illustrated the subject by the following example: Lord Byron was born under the intellectual sign Aries, and his style of face exhibited the characteristics proper to that sign, but the slight thickening at the end of the nose, and the other well-known personal deformity, resulted from a reflection from the sign directly opposite in the zodiacal circle, which is opposite not only in position, but also in character and temperament. Persons born when the sign Gemini is ascending above the eastern horizon should be of an elegant style of figure, agile, dexterous at sleight-of-hand, graceful in the dance, in sword fence, skating, and so forth, but these characteristics are liable to be impaired by reflection from the sign opposite in the zodiacal circle.

Gilchrist in his *Life of Blake* says that many of Varley's horoscopes came true. The artist Collins died on the day the stars foretold, and a man who tried to profit by Varley's warning by lying in bed the whole of the day upon which a fatal accident was to occur, came down-stairs in the evening in the belief that the dangerous time was past, stumbled over a coal-scuttle, and fulfilled the prediction.

Two of my earliest friends, students of art with whom I was most intimate, I came to know through John Varley. These were George Richmond and Theodore von Holst. The former, one year my junior, afterwards became a Royal Academician through the excel-

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lence of his portraits, and was married to a daughter of Tatham the architect. His son, also a Royal Academician, has recently received the commission to decorate St. Paul's in mosaic. Holst never condescended to portraiture, but devoted himself chiefly to painting scenes from Faust and other German works in a broad, Fuseli-like manner. He was two years my junior, and died in 1844 at the age of thirty-four. A fair example of his style may be seen in the engraving in the second volume of the *Book of Gems* (middle period) at page 43, the subject being entitled *Too Late*. It was used by the editor, S. C. Hall, to illustrate a passage in Young's *Night Thoughts*, "Procrastination is the thief of time." He was an intimate acquaintance of Wainwright the poisoner, who was a skilful amateur artist, and in appearance and manners an elegant gentleman. Holst admired him and desired that I should know him, for his true character and heartless crimes had not then, in 1827, been discovered. Holst had always a large quantity of unfinished work on hand, but one thing which he did finish was the *Drinking Scene* in Faust, and this was purchased from him by Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer. I have always felt that Bulwer was drawn to Holst all the more because of the known intimacy of the latter with the wretch Wainwright, and much of the information Bulwer thus obtained seems to have been worked up in his novel *Lucretia, or the Children of the Night*.



## CHAPTER IX

*Studio Work—Henry Richter—Emancipation*

**M**Y work on the plates for *The Early Florentine School* being done, and the completed folio volume published in 1826, I had to return, of course, to my old occupation of cutting names on trunk-labels, door-plates, and the like, not so continuously, however, but that there were intervals when I could practise picture-work in the line manner. In this way I engraved a plate, quarto-size, of Northcote's *Hubert and Prince Arthur*, also a small group of *Charity* after Henry Corbould. These being viewed with favour by some connoisseurs in art, my acquaintance was soon extended among a class of people who could control commissions for picture plates. Mr. Swaine then proposed to me that I should execute any orders for such work that I could procure, and receive a portion of the profit, an offer that might be called liberal, since by the terms of my indenture all my earnings during my apprenticeship belonged to him. Under this arrangement it was agreed that I should engrave a series of twelve illustrations of Goethe's *Faust*, from designs by Theodore von Holst, the art student I have mentioned as introduced to me by John Varley. The style of Holst's drawing of the human figure

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was most masterly, firm and grand in outline and free from littleness and triviality of detail, like the contours of Fuseli, whose manner he followed. The proposed series was to be published in quarto form, and to be composed chiefly of etchings imitating his drawings, none of which were wrought up to a finished effect. Only six of the proposed set were ever done, because Holst made no more, but began to introduce other subjects to complete the number. *The Wild Huntsman* was one of these, and the only one engraved, and the Faust series came to a stand for lack of material. The subjects finished were *Faust in his Study*, *Mephistopheles and the Student*, *Faust and Margaret*, *Margaret in Despair*, *The Witches departing for the Hartz Mountains*, and *Walpurgis Night*.

It was hurtful to the credit of Holst that figures he drew and claimed as original were plagiarized. His principal figure in *The Curse of the Wild Huntsman* is Fuseli's King Lear cursing Cordelia. At the request of John Varley I introduced Holst to Mr. Ottley, who, looking over the drawings shown, remarked of one of them, "That 's copied." "No," said Holst, "it 's original." "Oh, but, my dear sir, I 'll show you." He then brought out a print of Michael Angelo's *Creation of Eve* from the Sistine Chapel, and sure enough the sleeping figure of Adam was so exactly the same that it could not have resulted from accident or unconscious memory.

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While waiting for additional designs for the Faust series, Mr. Henry Richter proposed to Mr. Swaine a commission for me to engrave for him a copy of his picture, *The Tight Shoe*. I was to do it in stipple on steel, neither of which I had attempted as yet, but as he had seen what I had accomplished in the line manner on copper he accepted it as assurance of success in dotted work, which is so much easier. It was deemed advisable that I should experimentally engrave a small plate on steel, *Omphale*, after an antique gem, using a study from nature he had made with the same movement, the figure turned to a front view instead of profile. After I had completed the etching and was about to carry it on with the graver, he changed his mind and decided to have me do it in mezzotinto. So a ground was rocked over the etching, and I scraped it up successfully to a satisfactory finish.

I was glad of this change, for it would have been very tedious to engrave in stipple so large a plate as *The Tight Shoe*, containing several figures. I had suggested it to him before, but he objected that "mezzotint is such a black style." I had told him that I intended to try it for myself at all events. I had made the acquaintance of a young man named James Eagan, who used to lay the mezzotinto grounds for Samuel W. Reynolds, the famous engraver after Sir Joshua, and as he had offered to lay a ground for me I meant to avail myself of the opportunity. The end was

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that *The Tight Shoe* was engraved in mezzotinto, the small plate having turned out so well. *Omphale* was my first attempt in a style new to me, which I continued to practise ever after, only occasionally executing commissions in the pure line manner. I sold the steel plate to Mr. Littell in Philadelphia in 1830.

It was quite natural and proper that Mr. Richter should desire to keep a close watch over the progress of his plate, but that was seen to be difficult, since he lived at Brook Green, Hammersmith, three or four miles from Queen Street, Golden Square, where Mr. Swaine's office was located. Another disadvantage was that the rude and coarse jobs I was frequently obliged to do made my hand tremulous, spoiling it for delicate art work; for example, the cutting of names and addresses of dealers deep into circular brass registers to be set in floors to be walked over; or, worse yet, lettering large brass dog-collars, the zigzag edges of which were bent up at a right angle into spiked borders. This kind of rolled brass is so exceedingly tough that no graver could stand the strain, and when the point broke, down would go the knuckles on the spikes, and the bleeding was evidence that more than the brass had been cut.

This induced Mr. Richter to try to make some such arrangement for my services as had previously been made with Mr. Ottley, but nothing resulted from the conference. I was now much older and more ex-

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perienced, and I suppose the price asked was too high. I, of course, was not present at the conference, being only an apprentice, whose condition, even in an artistic craft, was in all respects the same as that of a slave, expected to obey uncomplainingly and do whatever was ordered, down to the most menial service.

I was growing more and more anxious for emancipation from my thrall. If no simpler way offered I was ready to join a Scotch friend of mine, named Cameron, who, heart-broken over a love disappointment, had determined to join the Greeks in their struggle for freedom against the Turks. Indeed, it looked very much as if it would be for him either Greece or suicide. It was agreed between us that he should go first to the committee in London who were collecting help of all kinds to aid the Greek revolt. Sir Francis Burdett was a member of the committee, but I forget the names of the others. They discharged their trust to "help, aid, and assist," by discouraging those who offered themselves for military service. They told Cameron that the Greeks were a set of scamps, and that it would be well to have nothing to do with them. Lord Cochrane, who was admiral of a fleet acting in behalf of the Greeks, is represented as saying something similar.

I finally succeeded in arranging to buy off the remainder of my time, agreeing to pay two hundred pounds as soon as I was of age, when I would come into

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possession of a bequest from my grandmother. The next thing was to decide upon the course best calculated to advance me in the knowledge and practice of art. Richter urged me to come to him and engrave *The Tight Shoe*. So sure had he been of my acquiescence, he said, that he had made arrangements which would be very inconvenient to alter. This representation inclined me to do as he wished, but I was warned by the experience of others who had worked for him, that he would make it very difficult for me to break away so long as he found it to his profit to keep me. Influenced by what he said I felt it incumbent upon me to go to him, although unwillingly, stipulating, however, that I was to engrave the one plate only, and no more. I engraved *The Tight Shoe* as agreed, and was then induced to do another for him also, *The Tempest* with the words of Ariel quoted beneath the title, "Pardon, master, I will be correspondent to command, and do my spiriting gently." The picture represented a group of three figures down to the knees, the Pope, the Church and the Devil, the words of Ariel being supposed to be the utterance of the last of the three personages. It was a political satire, born of the ferment and agitation over Catholic Emancipation, which was then nearing its consummation. The print was displayed in the window of a print shop in Gracechurch Street, and attracted such a crowd of excited persons who angrily inquired what

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was meant by it, that it had to be removed from the window for fear of trouble. The plate had really been engraved with a view to its being bought up to be suppressed, and the result was not a disappointment.

The final passage of the Emancipation Act by the British Parliament is linked to a bit of Philadelphia history. On receipt of the news in Philadelphia the Liberty Bell in the tower of the State House was rung, and cracked in the ringing. When I was up in the tower in 1830, two years after, viewing the cracked bell for the first time, Downing, who was then the custodian of Independence Hall, told me of it and remarked to me that "the bell refused to ring for a British Act, even when the Act was a good one."

When the two plates were nearly finished, Mr. Richter, ignoring the engagement that I was to do only one, began preparations for a third, after his painting, *The Brute of a Husband*. But I considered that it was time I should be earning money, and objected to be condemned to work for board and lodging as my sole recompense. In our talk over a new arrangement, Richter lost his temper and used language so offensive that I refused to engrave the plate for him on any terms whatever. We parted in anger, and from that time on he did all he could to hinder my success.

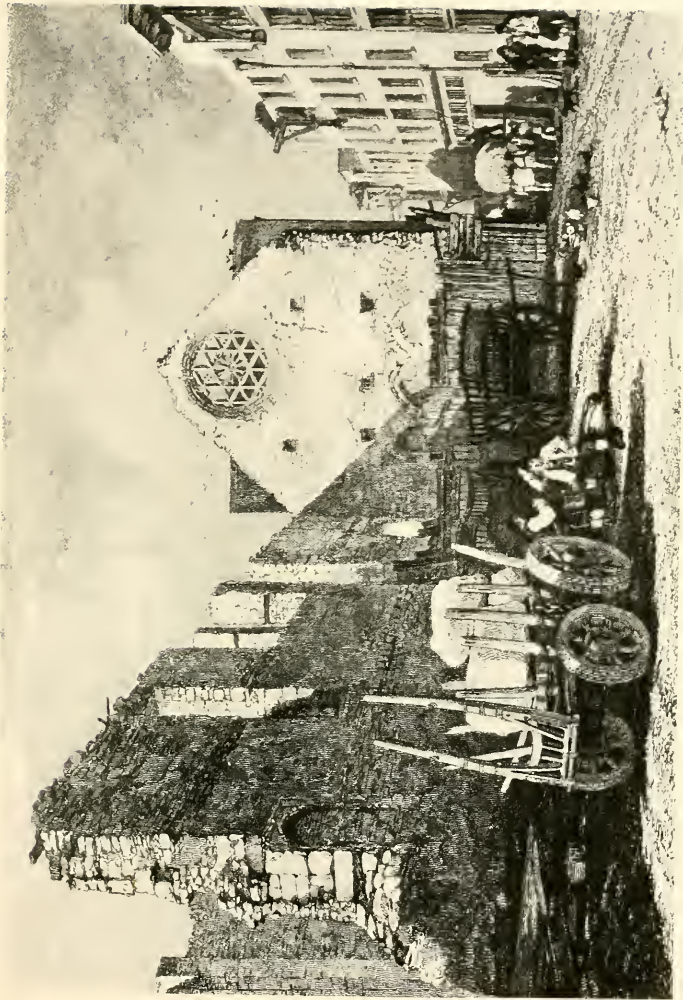
When I went to Mr. Richter I reckoned on giving all my leisure to the undivided study of art and its history, but I found that my valuable evenings were

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frittered away unprofitably. Richter was fanatical on the subject of Immanuel Kant, and pressed on me the reading of translations of his transcendental philosophy that he and Wergmann, the watchmaker, had made. These two claimed to be the first to introduce to the English mind the Kantian doctrines. They prepared for the *Encyclopædia Londinensis* the articles on logic, metaphysics, and some other subjects that served their purpose, and tried to have religion confided to them, but the editor was obliged to assign that subject to a bishop of the Church of England. Beside this unprofitable reading, I was often asked to make the fourth in a quadrille in the evening dancing lesson, to take the place of Mrs. Richter, who was a large, fat, heavy woman, and often I must wind up the night with a game of chess with Mr. Richter, who was an enthusiast, and who surprised me by being strangely ruffled on the rare occasions when I beat him.

I remember a conference between Wergmann and Richter over the practicability of getting the transcendental philosophy of Kant introduced into the course of instruction of the London University, which they agreed would be dependent upon the approval of Sir James Mackintosh. The establishment of the London University, besides adding to the metropolis a fine example of classic architecture in itself, was indirectly the cause of completing the noble river front of Somerset House, which up to that time had been wanting.





REMAINS OF WINCHESTER PALACE, SOUTHWARK  
*From an Engraving by George Cooke*



## ENGLAND

The Conservatives established King's College as a counterpoise to the London University, and built for its accommodation the eastern wing of Sir William Chambers's masterpiece of architectural design.

It is interesting to get a glimpse of the appearance of the old Somerset House, which stood on the spot now occupied by so beautiful a structure. I have prints in my collection, one of the garden upon the Thames including the river front of the palace, another representing the demolition of the old building and a portion of the new already erected, and a third showing the architecture of the Strand front. This is introduced incidentally as background to a burlesque caricature of a procession of freemasons. The top of the church tower seen over the roof of the old mansion is that of St. Mary-le-Strand. The front of this church viewed from the west presents a pleasing architectural composition, but the steeple as seen from the south, edgewise as one might say, is so narrow in diameter that it would hardly be a surprise to see it blown over by a strong wind from either the east or the west. But it is not the architect who was to blame for this singular defect, because as originally designed the tower was not to be on the roof of the church at all. It was to rest on the ground a short distance in front, and serve at the same time as a memorial or monument to Queen Anne, for St. Mary-le-Strand was one of her fifty churches. In this, Gibbs followed the plan of some of the famous

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builders of Italy; the celebrated Giotto Tower at Florence and the Leaning Tower of Pisa stand apart from their cathedrals, and the great Campanile at Venice is separated from San Marco by the entire breadth of the wide Piazzetta. But the London architect was forced to abandon this part of his design, and erect the steeple on the roof in conformity with English usage, although the foundations were inadequate. The effort to diminish the weight of the superstructure resulted in the remarkable form we see.

The prevalence of this architectural fashion so offensive in its bad taste is much to be regretted. Witness the spoiling of that other fine church by Gibbs, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, which fronts the end of the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square. Behind that noble portico, a stone steeple rides a-cock-horse, as it were, on the ridge of the roof. Better that the church should have no steeple at all than thus be disfigured. But architects are not always accountable for incongruities that invite criticism, because these are often perpetrated by order of those for whom the designs are made. I myself must confess a fault of that kind or worse,—for the steeple I built at the entrance to Monument Cemetery in Philadelphia stands not only over the ridge of a roof, but over an entrance-arch gateway. The board of directors would have it so, and refused the ground to place it otherwise.

While working for Mr. Richter I did not sleep in the

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house, as there was no bedroom for my accommodation. He engaged lodging for me at the extreme end of Brook Green most remote from the Hammersmith Road. It was in a wide house reduced at that time to half its original size; other buildings were few and scattering, and the whole neighbourhood was forlorn and lonely. Eventually a comfortable room was fitted up for me in the upper part of this house, but until it was ready I slept in a long, desolate apartment with very scant old-fashioned furniture, and three curtainless windows overlooking the Green. There was a small worn-out lock, but no key, and below a feeble little bolt that when pushed home scarcely caught in the box staple. My whole surroundings impressed me as altogether grim and ghostly. Brickmaking seemed to be the only business that flourished in the vicinity, and the workmen from the brick-yards used to assemble in the room beneath mine, and roar out narrative songs with no end to the number of verses, for the monotonous drone sent me to sleep before I could finish my attempt to count them. They may have been good honest men enough, but their appearance certainly was not prepossessing.

One night I lay trying to recollect whether I had bolted the fragile fastening, without summoning resolution to get out of my warm bed to solve the doubt. Presently I thought I heard a slight noise in the room. All my faculties became centred in the sense of

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hearing, for the sound was so faint and fine, "there's nothing lives 'twixt it and silence." After a while I became conscious of a gentle touch on the bed-covering near my feet, and then again distinctly felt it higher up. I could not see, for my head was under the sheet. I kept still, pretending to be asleep until the slight pressure reached my shoulder, when I jumped up with a sudden spring, and caught in my arms—empty space only. The intruder was a kitten. I took the innocent little creature to my warm bosom and stroked her, and with her happy purring she lulled me to sleep.

Brook Green got its name from a small stream of water that flowed through the middle of it, crossed here and there by small bridges, guarded by a horizontal rail which was supported by a post at each end. One of these bridges with its protecting rail is shown in the engraving of *The Tight Shoe* as seen through the open door. This I copied on to the steel plate direct from nature, at Mr. Richter's desire.

I remember attending one of the fairs that used to be held periodically on this Green. Others that I also well remember were Bartholomew's Fair at Smithfield, one at Stepney, one at Greenwich, and one at Tot-hill's Fields, a little way south of Queen Anne's Gate, St. James's Park. In primitive times, when these fairs had their origin, they were no doubt innocent enough, but at last they drifted into such demoralizing nuisances that they had to be abolished.

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Being now extricated from the Richter entanglement I commenced business for myself, and engaged apartments in Howland Street, Fitzroy Square. I met with fair encouragement after I had engraved a portrait of Sir Charles Wilkins of the East India Company. Ackermann, the noted German publisher, then of the Strand, having been shown some of my work, commissioned me to engrave a plate in line after a picture by Mr. Richard Barrett Davis, for his annual entitled *The Forget-Me-Not*. It was he who first introduced into England this class of publications, that had already become popular in Germany. Ackermann also put into my hands the revision and improvement of a plate he had had done for the same book by Agar after Singleton. I engraved some fancy subjects in mezzotint for different publishers, but the best paying work was portraits for private parties.

One day, being at the printer's for a proof of a plate I had in progress, I met a young man named Stork, a stipple-engraver who was there on a like errand. He remarked to me that he wished he were an engraver in mezzotint like myself, instead of in his own style, for in that case he would go right off to America. He had been informed that there was not only a first-rate opening, but that some institution interested in art had offered substantial inducements for a mezzotint engraver of fair abilities to come over and settle.

This set me to wondering whether it would not be to

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my advantage to act on his suggestion, for notwithstanding that I was constantly engaged on commissions, my means were not perceptibly increasing. Finally, after my marriage with the daughter of my preceptor, Mr. John Swaine, I made up my mind to take the step. After I began to speak of it openly, one and another brought me letters of introduction to persons in New York and Philadelphia, chiefly the former. So absorbed was I in study and the pursuit of my art, and so little did I know of maritime matters, that I inquired at a shipping agency for information about steamships, and yet it was only the year 1830! I was heartily laughed at, and was told that steamers were for river navigation only, and that if I were to live to the age of Methuselah I should never hear of such a thing as a steamer crossing the ocean.

At the London docks I chose a ship that sailed for Philadelphia, although my destination was New York, for I found the cabins preferable to those on the packets for the other port; and besides, I thought I might as well deliver my Philadelphia letters of introduction on the way through instead of travelling there for the purpose.

At that time the American vessels were readily distinguishable from those of other nations in port by a beautiful feature. A broad band of unpainted wood, varnished to a rich colour, ran in a graceful sweep from stem to stern just below the bulwarks.



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The date appointed for sailing, Saturday, the twenty-eighth of June, was postponed for some reason or other, and as I passed the Mansion House on my way back from the dock that day, I noticed a small piece of paper attached to the pier of masonry under a column of the portico. It was the official notification, from Sir Robert Peel to the Lord Mayor, of the death of the King, George the Fourth. The language used struck me as peculiar, for he said that "he regretted that it had pleased the Almighty to relieve his Majesty of his sufferings." One would expect that such a notice would attract a crowd, but of the multitude about I was the only reader. Nine years earlier I had helped in preparing a part of the display of fireworks in Hyde Park on the evening of his coronation day. So my wife and I left London on Sunday the fourth of July, 1830, and in a little over eight weeks were landed in Philadelphia.




Reminiscences of America



## CHAPTER X

*Philadelphia and New York in 1830—National Academy of Design—Philadelphia Artists—Letter from Charles Wilson Peale to his Son, Rembrandt Peale*

N Monday of the ninth week after the ship left London, we were sailing up the placid waters of the river Delaware with a fair breeze, just strong enough to give satisfactory progress. In the afternoon the steamboat Robert Morris came in sight on her way to Philadelphia, carrying passengers from Baltimore. She was a beautiful vessel for that day, and the hull was distinguished by the same long stripe of unpainted varnished wood that I had admired in the American liners in London. One of the quarantine physicians suggested that if there were any of us who would prefer to reach the city quickly, instead of remaining on board until the morrow, now was our opportunity, for we could signal the steamer to stop alongside. Mr. Dallett (afterwards president of the Penn Township Bank), my wife and myself were the only ones who decided to leave the ship in which we had been imprisoned so long, and we rejoiced to be free.

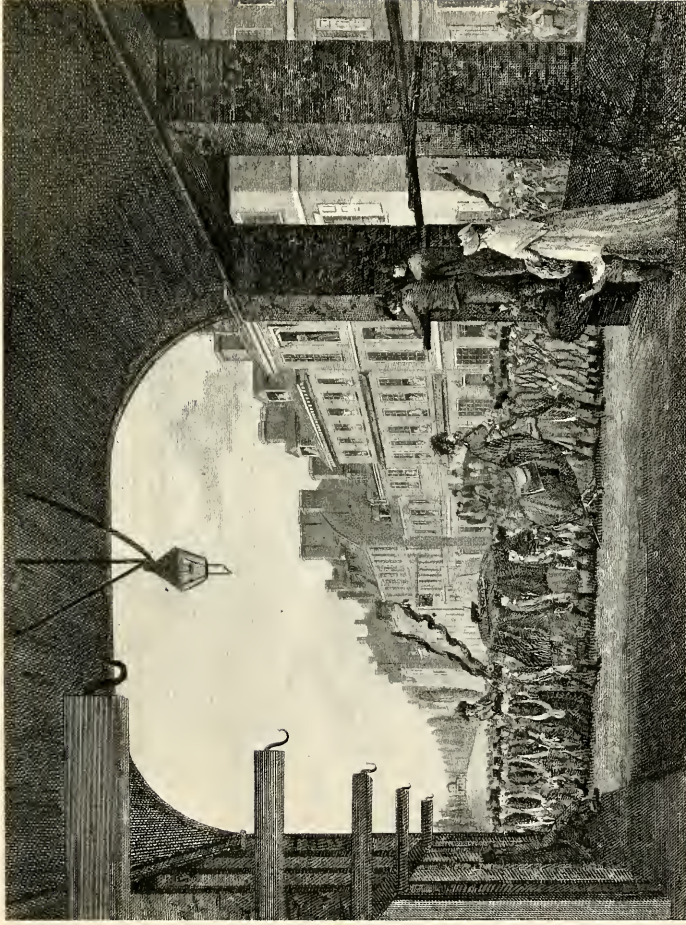
We two then first trod American soil at the Chestnut Street wharf. Having already selected the letter

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of introduction to be delivered immediately on landing, we inquired the way to Centre Square. Strolling up Chestnut Street we noticed on Third Street to our left a white marble building of fine architecture, with a projecting portico of six Corinthian columns, and turned out of our way to admire it. We asked a passer-by what it was, and he answered, "It's Stephen Girard's banking-house. Are you strangers?" Resuming our walk, we were directed at Fourth Street to go north till we came to a wide avenue with a market extending through the middle of the road from the river-bank to Eighth Street, and there to turn westward again to Broad.

When we delivered our note of introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson, they received us with the utmost cordiality, and before the day was done had settled us comfortably in a boarding-house on the north side of Market Street, near Twelfth. The view from our window was charming; a beautiful grove of fine trees covered the whole block from Eleventh to Twelfth Streets and from Market to Chestnut. One house only had been built on it, that stood on the corner of Twelfth and Market Streets. In it Robert Morris had died. The entire square of ground was owned by Stephen Girard, and he intended it to be the site of his projected college for orphan boys.

The next day I went to the wharf to look after our belongings on the ship, which had arrived, and I saw



WASHINGTON'S MOCK—FUNERAL CROSSING MARKET STREET, PHILADELPHIA  
*Centre Square Water-Works in the Distance on the Site of the Present City Hall*  
*From an Etching after W. Birch*





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the captain at the landing in conversation with a gentleman. He beckoned me to him and introduced me to Mr. Ralston, an eminent merchant of Philadelphia, and he in turn gave me later an introduction to Mr. John Vaughn. When Mr. Vaughn had seen the prints I had engraved, he urged and insisted that they should appear in the exhibition of the Franklin Institute which happened to be open at the time, and this resulted greatly to my advantage. A youngish gentleman, Mr. Frederick Fraley, seemed to be a leading spirit in the institute, which I was told had been founded about six years before.

After I had satisfied myself as to what might appear to be my prospects of business success in Philadelphia, I went to New York, my original destination, and delivered my letters there. The means and amount of travel between the two cities were then so different from the present facilities that it may interest many to read of the primitive methods of that time. There were but two trips a day, at six in the morning and at twelve noon, both starting from Arch Street wharf by steamboat to Bordentown, and on my first journey to New York I took the early boat. Upon sighting the landing at Bordentown, flags were displayed signalling the number of passengers to be provided for, so that by the time the boat arrived the requisite number of four-horse stages were ranged side by side on the sloping shore, with their wheels securely blocked to prevent

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their backing into the river. Usually about six or seven sufficed. Very soon after starting, we ascended a steep, narrow lane, shaded on both sides by over-arching branches of fine old trees, and then drove along a road a short distance from Joseph Bonaparte's extensive park, and running parallel with its southern boundary. On the arrival of our stage at a small stream called, if I remember aright, South River,—yet how such an insignificant creek came to be dignified by the name of river I do not know,—we embarked on a steamboat, which though of small dimensions seemed as broad as the water it was to navigate. It was propelled by side paddles, of course, and had to plough its way through mud and water and make such sudden turns that the bow often seemed on the point of running into a bank directly in front. The boat was not much in length from stem to stern, otherwise it would have been impossible for it to navigate a stream that made so many sharp curves in its crooked, meandering course through the wide, dreary flat to join the Raritan River. At one place I saw a straight canal cut to evade a long reach of the natural channel, but I suppose it was unfinished, for there was a vessel in it laid crosswise from shore to shore. Shortly before entering Staten Island Sound from the Raritan, we passed a few stakes driven close to the bank, which were said to be the beginning of a wharf for the South Amboy terminal of the projected railroad to New York from Camden, opposite Philadelphia.

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Although we had started at six in the morning it was the dusk of evening when we arrived in New York. The gas was lit, but all the brightness and life were below Fulton Street. Everywhere northward was gloom and quiet unrelieved by any business places or shops. The population, I was told, was in the neighbourhood of two hundred thousand, about the same as that of Philadelphia at the time, or perhaps a little more. Trinity Church, on Broadway opposite Wall Street, was a wretched piece of architecture pretending to be Gothic, a striking contrast to the splendid structure that now occupies the same spot. On Wall Street, only a few steps from Broadway, was another church, standing back with an open grassy plot in front, and in an out-of-town place away up Broadway they were inserting in the city plan an open space to be called Union Square.

Having delivered my introductions, I found reason to conclude that my original purpose of settling in New York was the right thing to do, and I returned to Philadelphia with the intention of carrying it out. But before narrating what changed this determination and kept me in Philadelphia, I will give the itinerary of my second trip to New York, by the midday line. We were taken as before by steamboat to Bordentown, but the stages to which we were transferred carried us to New Brunswick on the Raritan. At the extreme lower end of the town, and I think the very last house, was

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a hotel in which we were to pass the night. The travellers were fewer in number than by the earlier line, for we could all sit without crowding around one fire of blazing logs. An attendant brought in a supply of slippers, and placing a pair for each person took away in exchange the boots to clean and polish. Early next morning we boarded a steamboat that lay, with steam up ready to start, at the wharf alongside the hotel, and on this by way of Staten Island Sound we arrived at the foot of Courtlandt Street, New York, during the forenoon. Such was the amount of intercourse between the two cities in 1830, and such the means of conveyance.

Among my letters to persons resident in New York was one to Mr. Creighton, curator of the galleries of the old American Academy of Arts, an institution chartered in 1808, two years later than that of Philadelphia. I found him in his rooms at the Academy building, which stood on the south side of Barclay Street, a very short distance from Broadway, on ground now occupied by the granite structure known as the Astor House. He was the son of the Rev. J. Creighton of England, who was prominent as associate and helper of John Wesley, preaching zealously the doctrines and reform principles of his leader. His portrait is introduced in Claxton's well-known picture of the *Death-bed of Wesley*, of which, by the way, I made a large engraving.

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The handsome main gallery of the Academy, of a proportion rather too narrow for its length, was well filled with pictures respectable in quality. A prominent canvas, which occupied the end of the long room and formed the most striking feature of the collection, was a beautiful work by Sir Thomas Lawrence, a whole-length portrait of Benjamin West, for which I was told the Academy had paid two thousand dollars. A door on one side opened into another smaller gallery, piled with pictures of various sizes all painted by John Trumbull, who was vice-president of the institution. I remember being surprised at the great difference between the large and the small works in their style of execution, the latter being beautiful in spirit and touch, while the former were deficient in these qualities. In addition to these two galleries were the apartments of the curator and his wife, and there on the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Creighton I dined with them.

Now all the foregoing could not have been only a mere dream of mine, yet Daniel Huntington, President of the National Academy of Design, in his history of the old American Academy makes no mention whatever that it had ever been located as I have described it. The Academy possessed, I understood, a fine collection of casts which I did not see. They were probably stored away somewhere, most likely in its previous quarters on Chambers Street.

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Near the time fixed for my permanent departure for New York, I was introduced to Mr. Sully and other artists. Mr. Sully was warm in his commendation of Philadelphia as a place of residence, and advised me by all means to settle in it. He backed up his persuasion by giving me an order to engrave for him a portrait of Bishop White that he had painted from life. The husband of one of his step-daughters, John Neagle the artist, commissioned me to engrave a plate from a picture of his that he called *Patriotism and Age*, of which he had painted duplicates, one being in the possession of William Strickland, the architect, while the other was owned by Dr. Dewees, professor in the University of Pennsylvania. He left to me the choice of which to copy, and as I thought Mr. Strickland's the best I secured it of course. Mr. Kennett, the American bookseller in London, had given me a letter to Mr. Henry C. Carey, the publisher, and from him I received an order to engrave a picture of a Miss Jackson, painted by Sully in 1808, the year I was born. It was said at that time that she had been considered the belle of Philadelphia. Mr. Thomas T. Ash, the publisher, and Mr. Thomas Doughty ordered a plate to be done, in the pure line manner, of a deer in the foreground of a landscape.

It is no wonder that with such encouragement I settled down permanently, as Mr. Sully advised. I took a house on South Ninth Street, and the first Sunday I



PATRIOTISM AND AGE

*From an Engraving by John Sartain  
after the Painting by John Neagle*





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was installed I was visited by so many artists that it looked as if they had come by pre-arrangement, but they said it was not so. The group included Sully, Neagle, Eicholtz, Doughty the landscapist, Cephas G. Childs, Joshua Shaw, and a portrait painter on silk in oils whose name I have forgotten. Mr. Eicholtz was so much pleased with the specimens of my work that he proposed that I should engrave for him a picture he had lately painted, the portrait of a bishop. This he afterwards dropped, substituting for it his portrait of Nicholas Biddle, president of the United States Bank.

Other artists resident in Philadelphia at that time were Bass Otis, A. B. Rockey and Robert Street, portrait painters, Dickinson the miniature painter, Thomas Birch the marine artist, and his father, William Birch, who painted in enamel and engraved, his subjects being mostly views in Philadelphia. Street was an artist of so eccentric a character as to be regarded by many as of unsound mind. Manuel J. de França, a Portuguese artist from Funchal in the Island of Madeira, was in the city, I believe, but not yet known, and there was a young man of excellent talents named Hubbard, who never appeared in artistic circles and remained, I think, but a very short time in Philadelphia. He painted a small whole-length sitting portrait of President Andrew Jackson, from which I engraved a plate in 1832. I never made Hubbard's acquaintance, but

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he boarded with a neighbour of mine, and I saw him on the steps of his house in the fall of 1830. In the earlier part of his career, before he became a painter, he was a skilful artist in quite another line, that of cutting profile likenesses with scissors out of paper. My friend Cameron told me that for some time he and Hubbard and a friend had led a sort of vagabond life on the highways and byways of northern France. Occasionally, when their funds became low, Hubbard would enter the inn of a village and soon interest the women of the household by his winning ways and his skill in cutting silhouettes. In this manner he replenished their exchequer and they would go on their way rejoicing. His style of dress seemed to be studied to make him appear younger than he really was, and from stray words dropped now and then they guessed that he had escaped from the thrall of some travelling showman.

Henry Inman cannot be included in this list, because he had not yet removed his studio from New York, as he did very soon after, nor had Rembrandt Peale arrived from Europe, where he was occupied in making copies from celebrated masterpieces.

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts was at this time in anything but a prosperous condition. Located as it was far out on Chestnut Street, beyond Tenth, it stood in a kind of solitude, and paying visitors were few and far between. The building was

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some distance back from the street, with a circular grass-plot in front, in the centre of which rose the mutilated antique marble statue of Ceres, brought by Commodore Patterson from Megara, one of the isles of Greece. On the pavement near the curb were two grand old Lombardy poplars, whose roots had so destroyed the level of the brick sidewalk as to force pedestrians to be careful of their steps.

The original structure, erected before the stockholders applied for a charter, was a dome-roofed rotunda, fifty feet in diameter, with light in the centre, but the outer covering of shingles was so decayed as to leak like a sieve. It was an amusing sight on a rainy day to see the floor spotted over with tubs, buckets, basins and other vessels that Mrs. Scarlet, the janitress, would stand about to catch the drippings, which in many places had already rotted the floor.

Apropos of this list of artists resident in Philadelphia in 1830 I think it well to insert just here a copy of an interesting letter as yet unpublished, showing who were the artists practising their profession in this country during the last century. It was written by Charles Wilson Peale in 1812 to his son Rembrandt, and is dated from Bellafield, October 28. It was given to me by the president of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Mr. Caleb Cope, who told me that it had been found among the papers of Rembrandt Peale after his death.

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DEAR REMBRANDT:

HAVING promised you an account of the painters that came within my knowledge in the commencement of the arts in America I now commence it, with a regret that I have neglected it so long as to have let slip in memory the names of some of them, but by leaving a blank it may be filled up by inquiry amongst some of my antient friends. Among the first pictures said to be painted in America I have seen a few portraits done by Kain, they were stiff and formal and in the dresses of the time, the drawing tolerably good and I think were like. Some of these are in Mr. Hopkinson's family.

“In 1768-9 I visited Boston in the commencement of my painting and hunting for colours I found a colour-shop which had some figures with ornamental signs about it, these I suspect was painted by a Mr. Smibert. Becoming a little acquainted with the owner of the shop he told me that a relation of his had been a painter, and he said he would give me a feast. Leading me upstairs he introduced me into a painter's room, an appropriate apartment lined with green cloth or baise, where there were a number of pictures unfinished. He had begun a picture, several heads painted, of the antient philosophers, and some groups of figures, these were the last works of Smibert. He had been in Italy and spent a fortune in travelling to gain knowledge in the art. Mr. Copley very probably

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can give a full account of him. It was at his shop I heard of Mr. Copley and taking directions I went and introduced myself to him as a person just beginning to paint portraits. He received me very politely. I found in his room a considerable number of portraits, many of them highly finished. He lent me a head done by and representing candle light which I copied. But where am I rambling? this is giving a part of my history instead of the first known artists in America.

“I must go back to about the year 1755, sometime near that period Wollaston visited Annapolis and painted a number of portraits of the first families in that city. He had some instructions from a noted drapery painter in London, and soon after took his passage to New York, from thence he visited all the principal towns painting, to Charlestown, S. Carolina, and from thence he returned to England. I was in London when he returned from the East Indies very rich. He carried to the East Indies two daughters, one or both of them married and thus acquired great fortunes. They died, and the father, soon after he arrived in London, went to Bath where I believe he died.

“The elder Hesselius, a German, was a portrait painter that lived in Market Street between the years 1750 to 1760. He went into Maryland and painted some pictures at Annapolis, his son John, after Wollaston also went to Annapolis and painted a considerable number of portraits in oil.

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“About this time West must have made his beginning, his first essays at portraits were perhaps done at Lancaster and I believe encouraged by the Shippen family. About the same period or a little later young Claypole attempted portrait painting, his father was a house painter and glazer. In 1762 on a visit to Philadelphia, I went to see the paintings of Mr. James Claypole. He was not at home. I saw his pictures and among them one done by Miss Rench, whom, if I mistake not, he married. After her death he intended to go to London to visit Mr. West with whom he had been intimate, but meeting with a storm was drove into the West Indies. In the Island of Jamaica he married, and settled there.

“In 1769 I went to London with a recommendation of Mr. Allan the elder, who had been a patron of Mr. West, and with Mr. Allan’s family. Mr. West took his passage to Italy. Mr. Pratt had been with Mr. West about two years and had just left London, and Mr. West supposed he had returned to Philadelphia, but he had been to Bristol sometime painting portraits, imagining himself much improved in his mode of colouring, so related to Mr. West by Mr. Hambleton, the uncle of William Hambleton. Mr. West told me that the letters from Mr. Allan was the best I could bring, yet as an American he should cheerfully assist me. He was so polite as to interest himself in assisting to get me lodgings near to him,

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and as I was a stranger I might find difficulties. He went with me to a house which a pupil of his had lately occupied, here he found that pupil whom he had thought was returned to his native place, New York. Mr. Delanoy told Mr. West that some circumstances had occurred which had detained him longer in London than he expected, but that now he was on the point of taking his passage. Mr. West, in the most friendly manner advised Mr. Delanoy to come to his house and copy one or two pictures to carry with him to America that his friends would expect to see some of his work and it would be an advantage to him in many respects. This treatment to a young man who certainly ought to have seen Mr. West daily when his lodging was scarcely a stone's throw distant, in my opinion savoured of a want of respect at least. The circumstance made me to admire Mr. West's temper as forgiving and friendly, and it is not the only instance which came within my knowledge of the goodness of his heart in the time of my residence in London. I shall ever remember his kindness to me with gratitude.

“Some few years before I went to England, on a visit to Philadelphia to purchase some colours, Mr. James Tilghman, who then resided there, told me of a painter who he thought could give me some information about colours, that he was a man of considerable talent, but rather of an eccentric turn of mind. I waited on Mr. Steele who received me politely in his painting room,

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the floor was covered with drawings, prints, colours, and paintings on scraps of canvas in every direction, he then had on hand his own portrait on a half length canvas; a full face, very like, but of too purple red colour, his right leg across his knee, therefore it was in part a whole-length picture. I intended to keep up an acquaintance with him. Rivington, who then kept a book-store at the corner of Market and Front Street in who's store Mr. Steele was often seated, at this store I bought the *Handmaid to the Arts*, it was the only book he had on colours or painting. This I began to study at my lodgings in order to enable me to form some judgment on what colours I ought to purchase, also the quantity. Mr. Marshall, in Chestnut Street, the only colour shop in the city, obligingly gave me a list of what colours he had and the prices annexed. Going again to see Mr. Steele I was a short time in his painting room when there came a rap at the door. He very cautiously opened it, when a person touched him and said, 'You are to go with me!' 'At who's suit is this?' I understood it was his washerwoman. Finding Mr. Steele in such a disagreeable situation I took my leave of him. He apologized for being obliged to go out. This was the last time I saw him, he was of a respectable and wealthy family on the eastern shore of Maryland, had a fondness for painting, I believe went to Italy and spent his fortune, and it was said was somewhat deranged in his



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mind. Some pieces I have seen of his pencil seemed to confirm my opinion that such was his misfortune.

“Mr. Pratt returned to Philadelphia after I was in England, and sometime after my return to Annapolis I went to Philadelphia in 1772 to paint a portrait of John Dickinson, Esq. for Mr. Jennings, who was my friend and patron while in London. Mr. Dickinson was much celebrated as being the author of the Farmer’s letters. Mr. Pratt had a considerable number of portraits on hand and had painted a whole-length of Mr. Dickinson. At this time I became acquainted with Mr. Semitore, a miniature painter, he was fond of collecting subjects of natural history, his painting room was ornamented with frames of butterflies, and he had a considerable number of snakes, etc. in spirits, he also collected medals and coins. He was a bachelor and such was his chief amusement, however in his latter time he made a sort of museum, displayed in one or two rooms, chiefly consisting of the above and of antic dresses, arms, etc. he received a small sum for admission, and also taught some young ladies drawing.

“About the year 1773 or 4 a Swedish gentleman named Greath visited Philadelphia. It was said that he only painted for his amusement and it was a favour to get him to paint a portrait in miniature. He sold a head of Christ, perhaps copied from a good picture,

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for a good price, his stay was short in the city. I was not acquainted with him.

“Some years afterwards another Swede came to the city he brought with him a number of miniature pictures, among them some historical pieces and whole figures. He painted portraits in miniature and by many persons he was esteemed an excellent painter, several persons that employed him found that his painting was not so handsome as his other pictures, the fact was that he made his pictures too much of brickdust colouring, his drawing was however good, a very considerable recommendation of him. He told me that he thought he could make a fortune in a short time in South America and I believe he went there, and since I have not heard of him.

“Mr. Bembridge was born in Philadelphia, his mother lived in a house in Lodge Alley the walls of which Mr. Bembridge covered with paintings as large as life copied chiefly from Raffaelle’s paints, this work was accomplished before he was more than seventeen years of age. Much was expected from such talents and he was sent to Italy where he spent many years, he returned to Philadelphia and after a short stay he married Miss Hetty Sage, then went to Charlestown, S. Carolina. The climate perhaps made him indolent for it is certain he did not acquire much celebrity, which the opportunities he had enjoyed of improvement and his early love of the art, promised.

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“Miss Polly Rench, sister to Mrs. James Claypole, painted in miniature and had the merit of maintaining her mother and a young brother by the work of her pencil. She was a native of Maryland and probably first embraced the idea of painting from the connection of her sister, but of this I want information. She married Mr. Rush, then a young practitioner of the law, since a judge. After her marriage she never could be prevailed on to paint a single picture; she often told me that she only followed the profession of painting to obtain a living, that it was very disagreeable to her to stare in the face of gentlemen as she thought it savoured of impudence, to paint ladies portraits was more agreeable to her feelings.

“Several inquiries may enable me to correct many particulars of the different artists contained in the foregoing sketch, for that purpose I wish to write to Mr. West, Copley and others intimate with the arts practised in America.

“Mr. Stuart who showed talent for painting in his native place, went to London to study under Mr. West, he stayed a number of years in London and practised portrait painting with success, but was negligent to finish what he began or he might very probably have made a fortune by his pencil. Being a man of wit and humour perhaps these qualities might lead him into company and be a cause of neglect of his pencil. He went to Dublin where he also met with

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success for a time, returning to America he has met with great encouragement. I might say much more of him but his merit is well known.

“A few years after our peace with England numbers of painters have come to reside amongst us, and many young men of our country have shown their talents for the fine arts, and indeed the artists have become so numerous that I cannot undertake to make any account of them.”

*Bellafield, October 28, 1812.*

The signature was not appended to this letter for the obvious reason that Charles Wilson Peale had yet a few words to add.

To conclude my memories of Philadelphia as it was when I arrived in 1830: there was but one solitary structure on Smith's Island, the large island opposite the city in the channel of the Delaware River, which has recently been removed as an obstruction and whose existence will soon be forgotten. A vessel had been run up on the sloping bank and stranded, and had been converted into a tavern. The principal attraction was that this vessel had brought over the news of the conclusion of peace with England, after the war of 1812. A doorway had been cut in its side, through which the curious and thirsty passed in and out. The native whiskey of the day, which I tasted there for the first time, was clear and limpid as

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spring water; they had not yet begun to colour it as they now do.

The island with its grand old trees exists no more. Where it stood is now a depth of water twenty-six feet at low tide, thanks to an enormous expenditure of human labour and of money for the sake of the improvement of the commercial facilities of Philadelphia. We now have a clear, unobstructed view of the city of Camden across the mile-wide waters of the River Delaware, except for the transient sails of moving craft.

The river in some places was in very close proximity to the city houses fronting on it. I remember that near the foot of Walnut Street, the south-east corner of one building rose sheer out of the water, so that there had been constructed around it an L-shaped wooden causeway supported by sloping struts secured to the walls below. I have often passed over it, but always somewhat timorously, for it had a very decayed and unsafe appearance.

The climate of Philadelphia must have been much colder formerly, for the River Delaware used to be frozen over regularly every winter, and I have frequently driven across with my wife to New Jersey in a sleigh. I had one dangerous experience in the early thirties. I took my two little boys with me to walk across to Smith's Island. Half-way over, to our dismay we found the ice broken into pieces, floating loose in the water, and turning saw men on the city wharves

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gesticulating wildly and shouting, though we could scarcely hear them because of the distance. I then saw that the plank by which we had descended from the wharf was being constantly straightened, and realized that the whole mass of ice upon which we were standing had broken loose and that we were floating down stream with the tide. We ran as fast as we could, but on such a slippery surface, dragging a little one by each hand, I could not progress as rapidly as the emergency demanded. Finally, when we were near the shore, and just before it would have been too late, a man ran down the plank on to the ice and took the youngest under his arm. But for this timely assistance our situation would have been one of great peril.

Safe on the wharf I asked which of the men had come to the rescue, and emptied my pocket into his hand. On a signal from him the whole cluster disappeared into a tavern close by. A few hours later I went back to look at the place, and found the river entirely free from ice. What we had walked on in the morning was only a temporary ice jam between the island and the city.

## CHAPTER XI

*Early Art Work in Philadelphia—Penn Treaty Monument  
—Henry Inman—Picture Galleries—Academy of the Fine  
Arts Fire*

**I** WAS hardly through with my first commission when a friend of mine named Cameron, —the same London comrade who made an unsuccessful attempt to volunteer in the Greek cause, and who had found consolation in marriage with a sympathizing widow,—urged me to join him in a residence just outside the city limits. The house, or rather mansion, we took was a little beyond Fairmount, in what is now the East Park, and was surrounded by a square plot of four acres taken out of Pratt's grounds, and bounded on the east by the deep cut made by Robert Morris for the projected canal that was never completed.

The place was owned by a city alderman, who had bought it for the sake of the fine red gravel that composed the hill, paying for it the low price of three thousand dollars, although the house alone must have cost at least five or six thousand dollars to build. All the beautiful places along both sides of the River Schuylkill were at that time deserted, on account of the prevalence of fever and ague caused by the build-

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ing of the dam at Fairmount by the Schuylkill Navigation Company. The backing up of the water over ground previously exposed to light and air generated malaria. Breck's Island, so-called from Mr. Samuel Breck, whose mansion and grounds were just opposite on the west bank, had been covered with a fine growth of trees, and the stumps of these remained above the shallow water for years, until they slowly decayed. The old Breck mansion, *Sweetbriar*, has been retained as a place of refreshment and shelter in what is now the West Park. After some seventy years, the original healthy condition of all this smiling country is restored, and it is included in the extensive Fairmount Park.

Before leaving the subject of Schuylkill navigation, it may be well to refer to certain by-gone landmarks that were familiar to my sight. The broad and deep cut made through the gravel hill alongside of Pratt's Garden, which has since been utilized for the Reading Railway, was intended, as I have said, for the Robert Morris canal, the precursor of the subsequently perfected work on the other side of the river. Well do I remember the continuous course dug for it, reaching eastward half-way through the block to Thirteenth Street a little south of Willow, which latter street followed the former course of Peg's Run to the Delaware River.

Our mansion had been erected for the father of Charles R. Leslie, the Royal Academician. He was a maker



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of and dealer in clocks, and many are the fine old-fashioned upright clocks still to be seen in Philadelphia with the name Leslie engraved on the gray steel face. The contractor who built the house was the grandfather of another Philadelphia artist, Daniel Ridgway Knight, now resident in Paris.

We moved out on the first of April, 1831, a day most appropriate for a move so foolish. We had been warned that ague would be a certain result, but those in perfect health are apt to regard themselves as proof against sickness. It seems that the experience of each of us has to be purchased at our own cost. By the month of August we were all attacked as had been predicted, and we were obliged to return to town.

The malady which I thus contracted remained incurable for several months, reducing my good working time to every other day. Before my recovery I had engraved three portraits for Boston, the Rev. Dr. Sharp, Professor Ware, and the Rev. Dr. Charles Lowell. Philadelphia portraits done at the same time were one of Mr. Nicholas Biddle for himself, after a painting by Sully, and one of the Rev. Dr. Furness, also after Sully. I engraved in addition all the illustrations for an annual published by Thomas T. Ash, and numerous plates after Stothard and Turner for an edition of Rogers's *Italy*.

The most serious difficulty with which I had to contend at the beginning was the inferior quality of the

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plate-printing. Frankfort black was an article unknown, and yet it is the one sole material suitable for the production of first-class mezzotint work. Accordingly I took steps to import from Paris a barrel of the proper black, and also waited on Mr. Matthias Baldwin with a drawing of a press to ascertain the cost. It may surprise many who now see the enormous extent of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, to learn that at that time the whole of the establishment was comprised in the back-buildings of the house still standing on the southwest corner of Sixth and Minor Streets. On a large sign between the first and second stories were the words, "M. W. Baldwin, Engraver."

There existed at this time in Philadelphia an association known as the Penn Society, and one of its objects was to erect some substantial and lasting memorial to the founder of the state and city. It took shape in a design ordered from Haviland, the architect, a monumental obelisk mounted on a pedestal, upon which appropriate inscriptions were to be carved. I saw the model for it in the possession of Mr. Roberts Vaux, father of ex-mayor Vaux, who has since presented it to the society. It was to have been erected on the spot where the Treaty Tree had stood at Shackamaxon, but to raise sufficient funds for a work of such magnitude was at that time by no means easy, so the commemoration was embodied in a less costly shape, and in the meantime the spot was marked by a mon-

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ument of quite modest pretensions. A faithful portrait of the tree itself had been carefully drawn by Thomas Birch, the marine painter, for his father, William Birch, who published an engraving from it in 1800. Thomas could not have been more than fourteen years old at that time, but he assured me in 1830 that he had drawn it with the utmost exactness and in every particular precisely as he saw it. Ten years later it was blown down.

The Penn Society, having decided to relinquish the hopeless project of the Haviland monument, concluded to have a picture painted with the money at command. It was quite natural that this commission should go to the leading artist of the city, who of course could be no other than Sully. He showed me the colour study he had prepared for the composition, which represented Penn holding in his hand the charter he had received from the king, an open door in the background disclosing the brilliant court circle which he had just left. The formal contract for the picture had not been consummated, but what could seem more sure?

Cephas G. Childs, known as Colonel Childs, had a lithographic establishment. To elevate its character and credit he induced Henry Inman to remove from New York to Philadelphia and join him in his enterprise, the firm being known as Childs and Inman, Lithographers. The real inducement to Inman was the

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promise of numerous commissions for portraits in oil, which Childs knew he could procure through his extensive acquaintance. The most important one in view was the order for the picture for the Penn Society, and this Colonel Childs succeeded in diverting from Sully to Inman. It was painted in his studio in the second story of the building at the southeast corner of Fifth and Walnut Streets, and now hangs in the State House.

As soon as Inman had completed the painting of William Penn, the society determined to commission me to engrave a large plate from it, and opened a subscription list for the impressions. But they failed to obtain enough to pay for it, so I volunteered to assume the risk and publish the engraving myself, but it was never remunerative. Afterwards the plate was purchased from me by Mr. James S. Earle.

When this picture was finished, Inman left the city and went to reside in New Jersey, on a place he had bought near Mount Holly. It was here that he painted the small portrait of himself, half his face shaded by the brim of a straw hat, which is now the property of the Pennsylvania Academy. It was done at one brief sitting, to show three young artists how he worked. Two of them, Debeaugh and another whose name I fail to recall, had received an invitation to visit the artist. On their way to the Camden ferry, whom should they meet but Matthew Parker, who hailed

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them with "Whither away, boys?" They told him, when he promptly said he would go too. He was not of the kind to inquire if his company were agreeable, and neither of the two had the courage to try to shake him off.

When the lesson was over Inman gave them the picture, and it was decided by lot which of the three should possess it. To the vexation and mortification of the others, it was the interloper, Matthew Parker, who drew the prize.

The chief inheritance Parker had received from his father was consumption of the lungs. When he was in his last illness the family sent for me, and he told me they would be grateful to me if I would find a purchaser for the little painting by Inman. I took it to Mr. John Towne, who bought it at once, and the fifty dollars he paid for it I carried that same evening to the Parkers. I had supposed that the Academy received the picture direct from Mr. Towne, but Mr. Bonfield says he knows for certain that Colonel Childs owned it after Mr. Towne.

Those who enjoyed viewing works of art were not obliged to go so far west as Tenth Street, to the Academy of the Fine Arts. They could gratify their taste in Sully and Earle's Gallery on Chestnut Street next to the corner of Fifth, opposite the east wing of the State House. It was filled with pictures of fairly good quality, but the north wall held a large painting, the

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finest that up to that time had ever been brought to this country. It was by James Ward of London, a Royal Academician. The artist had sent it as his contribution to the annual spring exhibition of the Royal Academy at Somerset House, and the committee had rejected it. The motive for such an act seems inscrutable, unless they thought the subject too horrible for exhibition before a promiscuous public, for it is doubtful whether any other of the forty Academicians could have produced so powerful a work. It represented a man on horseback in the coils of an anaconda, of full life-size, a piece of terrific realism and unsurpassed mastery of execution.

Mr. Earle met the painter in London while he was smarting under the humiliation of this action of the hanging committee, and he gladly sold the picture for exportation to America, saying that Mr. West had sent a large canvas to Philadelphia and he should like to have one there too. Before the ship which bore it reached its destination, it encountered a violent storm that drove it so far out of its course that it sought refuge in the harbour of Charleston, South Carolina. During the detention there for repairs, Mr. Earle opened an exhibition of his painting, and the success and profit of the display proved equally remarkable. Arrived at length in Philadelphia, Mr. Earle secured an exhibition room in Cook's building at the south-east corner of Third and Market Streets, commonly

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known as Cook's Folly, a sneer usually bestowed upon men at all in advance of their time. I remember it well, my attention having been drawn to it by the novel and pretentious features of its architecture.

In addition to the various paintings Mr. Earle had collected, his gallery contained a number of framed prints from Boydell's folio edition of Shakespeare, which he had purchased in London. Business prospered so well that he built the fine gallery on Chestnut Street in partnership with Mr. Sully, and here exhibited advantageously, under perfect lighting, his great picture by Ward, and a collection of paintings by Sully, Shaw, Birch, Doughty and others. Among them were two by Sir Joshua Reynolds, one of which, a man's portrait, belonged to Mr. Sully. It had been purchased for him in London by Charles R. Leslie, and disappointed him greatly when it reached him, for it was an early work, painted in a hard, laboured, spiritless manner. The other was also early work, and was chiefly interesting as showing what unpromising beginnings may sometimes have been developed by intelligent study and practice into remarkable talent. It was a family group, painted to below the knee only, although on a large canvas. A little girl on the right stood in a ridiculous attitude, her left hand on her hip as if mimicking some military hero, instead of resting in the natural ease of childhood, a pose the more surprising in view of Reynolds's exquisite rendering of

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children in his maturer years. The picture was a poor affair, yet its authenticity is beyond question, for it has never been out of the possession of the George M. Dallas family, for whom it was painted.

The location of the Academy on Chestnut Street beyond Tenth was so far west, as I have said, as to be virtually a solitude. Seldom were visitors seen to pass up the wooden steps of the porch to enliven the loneliness. The entire structure consisted of the original rotunda, built in 1805, of a gallery fifty feet long to the north of it, and of another, sixty feet long, to the east of it, filled with casts from the antique. This fine collection of casts was a donation from the first Napoleon, obtained through the influence of Mr. Nicholas Biddle. They were all destroyed by the fire of 1844, and many valuable and important ones have never been replaced, among them the beautiful *Venus of the Capitol*, the original model of Mephistopheles by Petrick, and a cast of the colossal statue of Milo by Lough, the English sculptor who modelled the group of the Centaurs and Lapithæ now in the Academy.

When the decayed, leaky roof of shingles was replaced by one of slate, the old stuff was stacked as kindling wood under the gallery of casts. And excellent kindling it proved later on, when the lunatic brother of Mrs. Suis, the janitress, stole over to it in the night time from the west side of the building, where he slept, and set it aflame. The fire destroyed the gallery above



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with all its contents, and extended its havoc into the north gallery, among valuable pictures. On the east wall hung Benjamin R. Haydon's enormous canvas, *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*, which had to be cut from its frame by men mounted on ladders, who were deluged meanwhile from the firemen's hose to enable them to stand the heat. It was dragged out of the building like an old blanket, as was also West's big picture of *Death on the Pale Horse*, which hung on the north wall and was rescued in the same manner. The latter only was the property of the Academy. The *Entry into Jerusalem*, which had been deposited by the owner, now adorns the art museum of Cincinnati.

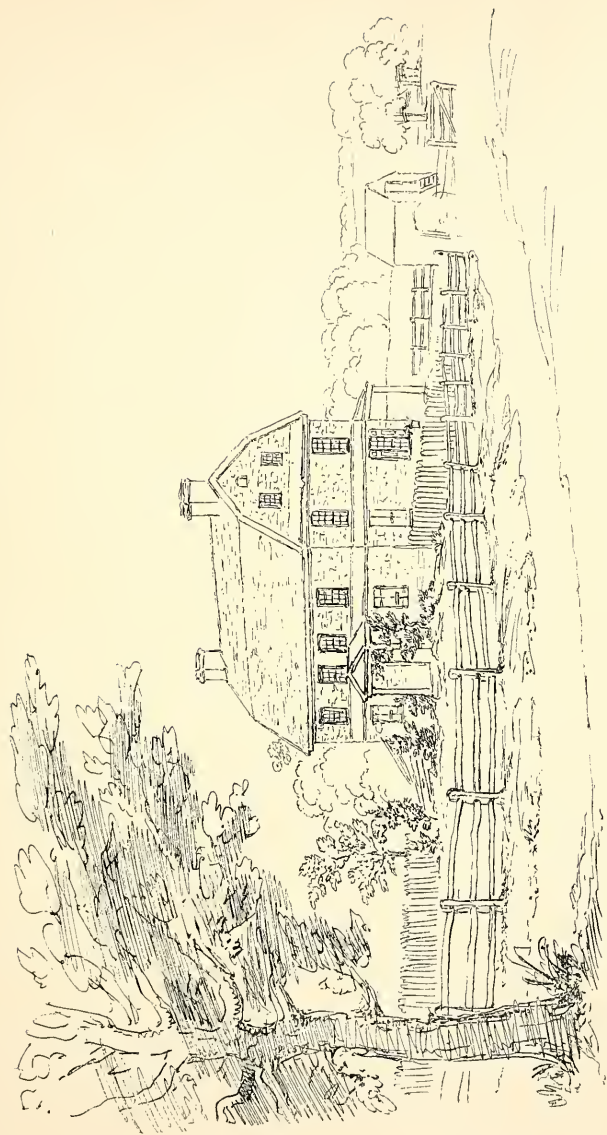
The circular wall of the rotunda was varied above for architectural effect by eight sunken panels, one of which was pierced through to the eastern gallery for ventilation. In front of this opening hung a valuable picture by Murillo, which was quickly and irretrievably destroyed by the fierce flame that poured through from the room behind it. The other paintings in the rotunda were only temporarily damaged by smoke.

The Murillo had belonged to Charles the Fourth, king of Spain, and represented the Roman daughter nourishing her father in the Tullian prison, where he had been condemned to die by starvation. The king presented it to Godoy, "Prince of the Peace," who regarded it as the finest ornament of one of his palaces. At the time of his downfall and the looting of his

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houses by the mob, it came into the hands of an engraver named Enguidarrus, who, when the French in Madrid were sending everything valuable in art to Paris, rolled it up inside another inferior picture, a Virgin destined for the altar of a church of a neighbouring village, succeeded in evading the vigilance of the authorities at the city gate, and got the picture safely to Cadiz. Here it came into the possession of Mr. Meade, and from him it was bought by the academy.

The purchase of West's *Death on the Pale Horse*, by the Pennsylvania Academy, was effected in 1835 through the agency of Cephas G. Childs, who confided the negotiation to Mr. Bacon of London. I have in my possession Mr. Bacon's letters, to Colonel Childs, obtained from the colonel's estate after his death, detailing his progress in the transaction, and also the formal bill of items. At the time of the purchase the canvas had been removed from the stretcher and was rolled up, and appeared to belong to Raffaele West, but was not in his possession. Mr. Bacon surmised that it was held for a loan. Bell's *Weekly Messenger* had stated in its account of the sale of Benjamin West's pictures for settling up his estate, that *Death on the Pale Horse* had been purchased by Mr. Kirshaw, but he may have been bidding as agent only. I saw it at that time in Newman Street, when exhibited for the West sale. It hung on the south wall, and directly opposite was



BIRTHPLACE OF BENJAMIN WEST, P. R. A.  
*From a Drawing made by John Sartain in 1837*



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*Christ Rejected*, now also in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, a present from Mrs. Joseph Harrison. These works were seen to great advantage in the Newman Street gallery, from the manner in which they were lighted. A canopy resting on slender pillars stood in the middle of the room, its opaque roof concealing the skylight from the spectator, who stood thus in a sort of half-obscure dimness, while both pictures received the full flood of light. The effect was very fine and at that time novel.

When the new acquisition of the Academy arrived in Philadelphia it was opened on exhibition to the public; not in the academy building, but by permission of city councils in Independence Hall, in the ground floor room to the east of the central entrance of the State House. It was a great success, and whenever I went there I found a crowd of paying visitors viewing the picture. This was West's last great work, for he died within two years after its completion. It was painted in his eightieth year.

In 1837 I went in search of the farm-house near Darby, Pennsylvania, in which the artist was born. I was directed thither by Mr. Sully, who had gone on a similar pilgrimage many years before, to gratify a wish of West himself, who desired to have a representation of the house and explained to Sully how he might find it. The cut here inserted is a copy of the sketch I then made. The other sketch made at the same time

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represents the Friends' Meeting House in which the congregation discussed the question whether they could conscientiously countenance the boy Benjamin's entering upon so frivolous an occupation as picture-making. The building remains the same to this day, but the tree, a New England elm, has died of old age.

## CHAPTER XII

*Thomas Bishop and Dr. Abercrombie—Joshua Shaw,  
Artists' Fund Society and Academy of the Fine Arts—  
Ivanhoe's Rebecca—John Neagle and David Edwin*

**I**N 1833 I became acquainted with Thomas Bishop, the painter in enamel, who at that time resided but a short distance from where I lived. He was very old, a good deal past eighty, but was yet singularly robust. One day I saw him in the street walking towards me, and felt surprised at his firm steps, almost strides, and his large figure filling the eye as he approached. Yet when sitting in conversation he looked aged, almost feeble; his thin, delicate features, aquiline nose, gray and sparkling eye are so distinctly impressed on my memory that it seems but as yesterday. I was with him a good deal of an evening, because he pressed me so earnestly to come, and when I failed he complained almost reproachfully, so that I felt constrained to go, whether I ought to have been elsewhere or not.

Thus I came to learn much of his eventful history, for he had lived in France, England, and Portugal as well as America, and during stirring times. He resided in Paris at the breaking out of the first French Revolution in 1789. He had studied medicine, and

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had also learned the art of painting in enamel while there. But the turmoil of the struggle in Paris drove him away and he returned to London, the place of his birth.

Had I asked questions or shown curiosity he would have told me everything unreservedly about his life in London, but my habit was to sit quiet and simply listen to whatever he chose to say. One very serious story he told me. An acquaintance of his, a frequent visitor at his house, induced him to undertake the collection of money due him in distant parts of England. On Bishop's return he found his home desolate, his wife, his friend, and most of what he possessed were gone, he knew not whither. The moneys he had collected about balanced his pecuniary losses, but what on earth could console him for the other void? Many years afterwards he heard of his wife again and learned that she had died miserably.

As his life in Paris had been broken up by the rising of the French people against their oppressors, so afterwards in Portugal his peace was again disturbed by the inroad of the all-conquering armies of the Emperor Napoleon. This time he did not return to London, but availed himself of an opportunity that presented of sailing to America, landed at Philadelphia, and made his home in Germantown. I think it was while there that he was received into the Society of Friends, with whom he remained associated until his death.



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During my intimacy with him a most remarkable incident occurred. Thomas Bishop painted in enamel, as I have already said, and I frequently saw many of his productions in this line. Among them were two of such exquisite beauty that I always doubted that they were, as he claimed, his own work, the rest were all so far inferior to them. One was a copy after Boucher of two children, boy and girl, playing shepherd and shepherdess. The other was an upright oval of a female figure seated by a fountain, the body nude, with a reddish-brown drapery thrown across the lap. This Venus, as it was called, was of such striking and wonderful beauty that no one who had once seen it could ever forget it. Mr. James McMurtrie wanted to buy it, but the hundred dollars he offered was only one-fifth the price asked.

An American in Paris remarked to a Mr. Bishop living there that he knew a namesake of his in Philadelphia, a very old man, who possessed an enamel of a Venus, the most beautiful thing of the kind he had ever seen in the course of his life. This was startling information, for Mr. Bishop remembered such an enamel in the possession of his father, of whom he had heard nothing for half a century. A few questions fixed the identity beyond the shadow of a doubt. He hastened across the ocean in search of his long-lost parent, and the artist embraced as a white-haired man the lamented son who had disappeared as a child in

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the flight from the Reign of Terror; and this glad-some reunion was brought about by a little painting only two inches long.

Mr. Bishop's circle of acquaintance was rather limited, but it included old Dr. Abercrombie, whom I knew before I met Bishop. He lived at that time in a brick house dark with age, of a most singular style of architecture, situated on the south side of Union Street, a few doors east of Fourth, which has long since disappeared. During a severe illness of Mr. Bishop, Dr. Abercrombie and I each called every morning to inquire after his condition, and as regularly expected to hear that all was over. I of course discreetly suppressed the surprise I felt at his lingering so long, but it seems Dr. Abercrombie was not always so careful. Mrs. Bishop told me one day that he had hurt her feelings very much. On hearing the usual report he had exclaimed, "What! not dead yet?" He continued, "Well, I am not able to come any more, but I shall be glad if you will let me know when he dies. He and I are old friends, and I should like to attend his funeral." It turned out very curiously that he never had the opportunity to follow him to his grave. Bishop revived and got well, and it was he who attended Abercrombie's funeral.

Mr. Smith, the librarian of the Philadelphia Library, insisted one day when I was talking of some incidents of my acquaintance with Dr. Abercrombie, that it was

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impossible that I could have known him, "for," said he, "the doctor corresponded with Boswell, Dr. Johnson's biographer, and *he* died some five years before the close of the last century." When convinced of the fact, Smith assured me I was "no chicken."

Among the odd and quaint anecdotes of his experiences with which old Mr. James Steel, the engraver, often amused me, he related one in connection with Dr. Abercrombie. When he and his brother were boys they agreed that it would be a good thing for them to study grammar, so they went to the doctor to ask his terms for giving them lessons. He resided then on Lombard Street opposite the Universalist church, at number 119 old style. They were shown into the back parlour, where they found the doctor seated at a table piled high with papers. The boys stood silent for some time, feeling shy in the august presence of the great dominie, but at last one of them plucked up courage to say in timid accents, "If you please, sir, do you learn people grammar?" "No," thundered the doctor; then, after a pause, "but I teach it to them." "Oh, thank you, sir," said one, and thoroughly abashed they got themselves out of the house as best they could, and never returned there.

Manuel de França was a good artist with whom I was very intimate in the early days. I gave him a commission to paint my wife's portrait, and afterwards took lessons from him in figure painting in oil. He was a

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Portuguese, and when he first came to Philadelphia, he had difficulty in obtaining orders, as was natural, for he had yet to acquire facility in the English language. He was a native of Funchal in the island of Madeira, and when the liberals revolted against the Don Miguel government, he joined the popular movement. When the insurrection was suppressed he, with a large number of compatriots, was imprisoned and condemned to be shot. Sympathizing friends contrived their escape and smuggled them on board a vessel which landed them in due course safe in Philadelphia. Intimately associated with de França was Joshua Shaw, a landscape painter of excellent talents, who was also the inventor of the percussion cap, wafer priming for cannon, etc. During the first twenty-five years of his career in this country he was the best artist in his branch in the United States. His style was somewhat formal and mechanical, but his touch was firm, his tints pure, and the composition of his larger pictures noble and effective. Those well acquainted with the work of his predecessors saw, however, that he did not scruple to make use of what pleased him. His fine picture of *The Dry Arch* was a free repetition of a painting by Louthenburg, and a large canvas exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy in 1832, representing the chase of a stag, was after Rubens, but the public of that day was none the wiser. In England he had lived in the city of Bath. He came over in 1816, in the same ship

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that brought Benjamin West's *Christ Healing the Sick in the Temple*, presented by the painter to the Pennsylvania Hospital, and West confided to him the unpacking of his picture when it should arrive at its destination, and the placing it in a proper light. Shaw formed his style on that of Ibbetson, a Royal Academician whose freedom and crispness of touch led West to call him the *Berghem of England*. Some artists asked Ibbetson what was his secret by which he imparted such a peculiar quality to his paint, and he answered, "Oh, that's my gumption." He finally agreed to teach it to a very limited number for a certain sum of money, which was subscribed among them. He prepared the vehicle before them, and it came to be called in a jocular way by the word he had used, "gumption." Shaw told me he was one of the group, and he in turn, for a consideration, taught me Ibbetson's secret, which was as follows: Sugar of lead, 1 part; gum mastic (excluding all discoloured grains), 2 parts, in bulk. Mix dry and crush extremely fine with a glass muller on a glass slab. Then grind *exceedingly fine* in raw linseed and poppy oil. After repeated additions of oil during grinding it will solidify and become like hard white soap. Keep it in a vessel under water, and cut off a small portion to mix with every colour you use.

I have good reason to believe that Thomas Stothard must have been one of the same group of disciples,

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for here is Stothard's palette as written out by himself for a friend:

*Sugar of lead* } *Ground dry together, afterwards ground in*  
*Mastic gum* } *oil.*

*Linseed oil.*

*Water as much as it will take.*

1. *F. White.*
2. *Y. Ochre.*
3. *Vermillion.*
4. *L. Red Ochre.*
5. *Lake with a very little Indian Red.*
6. *Dark Ochre.*
7. *Bone Brown.*
8. *Ivory Black.*
9. *Raw Terra di Sienna.*
10. *Antwerp Blue.*

It is my belief that when Stothard used the word water he meant saliva, the effect of which on the artist's palette was taught to John Neagle by Gilbert Stuart. While Neagle was painting Stuart's portrait in Boston in 1824, the weather was very hot and drying, and his colours became ropy and unmanageable. Stuart as he posed saw the trouble the artist was having with his paint, and asked him if he did not know how to remedy it. Neagle acknowledged he did not. "Well, hand me your palette and knife and I will show you." He then spat in the colour and with rapid motion of

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the knife mixed it in thoroughly, treating each pigment in succession in the same way. Neagle told me the effect was magical, the paint afterwards so readily obeyed every touch.

Joshua Shaw was very apt to get into quarrels, and it was this contentious spirit which made him take so prominent a part in organizing the Artists' Fund Society in 1835, in order to antagonize the Pennsylvania Academy. Less than two years after, he quarrelled bitterly with the president of the Artists' Fund Society, John Neagle, and then gathered about him enough of the artistic element to antagonize that body in turn by establishing the Artists' and Amateurs' Association. He succeeded in this by incorporating into it the lottery feature of an art-union. The prospect of disposing of pictures by this means was so attractive that he won over Leutze and de França to his scheme, with a number of others whom he was accustomed to term "small fry." Their exhibition was held in the hall over the Chestnut Street Arcade, where Peale's Museum had previously been. In the second year he started a violent quarrel with the management of his last-formed society, contending with the amateur division over the custody of the funds, which he claimed belonged with the artists' branch, since the money was produced by the display of their works. Shaw, though an excellent artist and inventor, was so disputatious that it seemed impossible to get along with him harmoniously. His

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character and career may be summed up in words applied by Byron to another uneasy spirit:

*His life was one long war with self-sought foes  
Or friends by him self-banished.*

In founding the Artists' Fund Society, Shaw's argument against the Academy of the Fine Arts was that it was organized on the basis of a joint-stock concern managed by a board of directors chosen from among the stockholders, most of whom were not in sympathy with artists and knew little or nothing about art; that it was called an academy and yet gave no instruction; that it depended for support mainly on the profits from annual exhibitions of the works of artists, who yet had no voice in the management. The inaugural meeting of professionals was presided over by Thomas U. Walter, the architect then just appointed to plan the buildings for Girard College; John Neagle was elected president and Thomas Birch vice-president.

Annual exhibitions being at once started, those at the Academy necessarily ceased. After the third successful display a fund was raised, chiefly by subscription of friends, for the construction of a properly lighted gallery with a skylight. The Academy solved the difficulty as to location by granting permission to erect it over the two shops already standing in front of their own lot, on the house-line of Chestnut Street; the Academy itself to be reached through a wide passage



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under the Artists' Fund Society Gallery and between the two shops. A ten years' lease was given, at a rental of three hundred and twenty dollars per annum, the equivalent of the ground rent paid for the entire lot. The first exhibition in the new gallery was held in the spring of 1841, and proved a success, for the location was no longer the solitude it had been eleven years before, the tide of business and popularity having taken a decided trend westward along Chestnut Street.

All attempts to draw Sully into these associations failed. He had grown too wise by experience to part with the peace and tranquillity he so prized, and which he well knew must be the cost of such a step. An amiable and genial gentleman, he shunned the controversy and contention inseparable from active membership in Societies. He had been a director in the Academy, but his views of the best way to create a public interest in the institution were not shared by his colleagues, and seeing no good in prospect he retired. John Neagle, who had been a director, also withdrew.

The disastrous fire in the Academy occurred after the fourth annual exhibition held by the Artists' Fund Society in its new hall, and led to the termination of the lease, under a clause in the agreement which gave the Academy power to remove the building at any time upon payment of one-half the cost of construction. In rebuilding, the directors adopted a plan which increased the old accommodations extensively, adding

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five new galleries to the east, west and north of the rotunda, which had not suffered materially in the conflagration. A substantial front from a design by Haviland was built, and the gallery over the shops was demolished, that the new edifice might be better seen from the street.

The completion of the new additions around the Academy rotunda made such a great improvement that the institution was now better housed than it had ever been before, or had hoped to be. The funds necessary for so large an expenditure were raised in part by subscription and partly from the proceeds of a successfully conducted fair, organized and managed throughout by a committee of ladies. It was held in a large room at the corner of Ninth and Sansom Streets known as the Chinese Museum, which was under the great gallery of the Peale Museum. The ground is now occupied by the Continental Hotel.

From this time on the artists, having no place of their own in which to continue their exhibitions, sent their works to the annual displays of the Academy. But the organization of the Artists' Fund Society has survived to the present day, with its beneficiary features now alone preserved. The artists were represented in the Academy direction, however, by P. F. Rothermel, J. R. Lambdin and myself.

During many years I was secretary of the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine



MISS REBECCA GRATZ

*From a Drawing by John Sartain  
after the Painting by Thomas Sully*



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Arts. One of my colleagues was Mr. Hyman Gratz, with whom I was necessarily much thrown in the transaction of business, he being treasurer and I chairman of the three most important committees. Towards the close of his life he became very feeble, and he would often ask me to come to confer with him at his residence, No. 2 Boston Row, Chestnut Street above Twelfth, to save him the effort of going to the Academy. There I had the great pleasure of meeting his sister, Miss Rebecca Gratz, who was the managing head of his household. She, as is well known, was the prototype of the Rebecca of Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. With the same vividness with which I recall William Blake's widow as she opened to me the street door when I visited my friend, Tatham, the sculptor, in London, I have retained the startling impression made upon me by this celebrated Jewish lady when she performed for me the same service in Philadelphia. I recognized her instantly as the original of the portrait painted by Sully many years before. Her eyes struck me as piercingly dark, yet of mild expression, in a face tenderly pale.

The personal beauty, the noble qualities of character, and some incidents of her history were described to Scott one day by her intimate friend, Washington Irving. Two years later, in 1819, the great novelist sent to Irving a first copy of the story into which he had introduced her as heroine, and wrote to him,

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“How do you like your Rebecca? Does the Rebecca I have pictured compare well with the pattern given?”

The portrait Sully painted of her must have been a remarkable likeness, that so many years after I should recognize her instantly by my remembrance of it. The artist was introduced to her by Washington Irving by means of the following letter:—

**I** HARDLY need introduce the bearer, Mr. Sully, to you, as I trust you recollect him perfectly. He purposes passing the winter in your city, and as he will be “a mere stranger and sojourner in the land,” I would solicit for him your good graces. He is a gentleman for whom I have a great regard, not merely on account of his professional abilities, which are highly promising, but for his amiable character and engaging manners. I think I cannot render him a favour for which he ought to be more grateful than in introducing him to the notice of yourself and your connections.

Mr. Hoffman’s family are all well, and you are often the subject of their conversation. Remember me affectionately to all the family. Excuse the liberty I have taken, and believe me with the warmest friendship,

Ever yours,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

*New York, Nov. 4th, 1807.*

Miss Rebecca Gratz was on intimate terms with the

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Hoffmans and other old families of New York. Matilda Hoffman, Irving's first, last, and only love, was her dearest friend. When she faded away in 1809 at the early age of eighteen, she died in the tender arms of Rebecca. Irving was then twenty-six years old, and for half a century he cherished her memory faithfully. In his private note-book he wrote, "She died in the beauty of her youth, and in my memory she will ever be young and beautiful." It was in the fall of 1817, eight years later, that Irving met Scott for the first time, through an introductory letter from the poet Campbell, who knew Scott's high estimate of Irving's genius.

I myself met Irving in 1858, when I spent a most delightful afternoon with him in his library at Sunnyside on the Hudson. I went with Mr. W. H. Bidwell of New York, proprietor and editor of *The Eclectic Magazine*. He wanted Irving to sit for a portrait to be engraved for his periodical, but Irving said that he had so often declined to pose that he feared he would give too much offence by consenting now. However, he seemed to divine my purpose of attempting a portrait from memory. I observed him closely as I sat in a favourable point of view, studying his habitual position and characteristic expressions, and as we left he gave me a note to a relative in Lafayette Place, New York, requesting him to lend me a small portrait of him painted in his youth. It was of no use, however,

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years had wrought too great a change. I made a drawing entirely from memory which was pronounced so good a likeness that it was ordered to be engraved, and was published in *The Eclectic* in the number for October, 1858.

To return to *Ivanhoe's* Rebecca: I have learned much that is exceedingly interesting about Rebecca Gratz from her grand-nieces, the Misses Mordecai, who have honoured me with their friendship. "She was born on the fourth of March, 1789, and was the daughter of Michael Gratz, a native of Langendorf, Upper Silesia, who emigrated to America in 1758 and settled in Philadelphia. He came well provided with this world's goods, which he greatly increased by trading with the Indians. In 1769 he married Miriam Symon of Lancaster, then a remote settlement in the far wilds of Pennsylvania, and eleven children were born to them. During the closing years of the last century and the early part of this, Rebecca and her two beautiful sisters were the toast of the clubs of the day as the three Graces, a slight twist of their name the three Gratzes. They were as good as they were beautiful. There had been a story in our Aunt Rebecca's life, a struggle between love and religion, in which duty conquered as it always did with her. Walter Scott could not have chosen a nobler type of Jewish maiden."

Another relative writes: "Her eyes were of exquisite



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shape, large, black, and lustrous; her form was graceful and her carriage was marked by great dignity, attractions which were heightened by elegant and winning manners. Gentle, benevolent, and with instinctive refinement and innate purity, she inspired affection in all who knew her. She received the best instruction those early days afforded, and was well fitted for practical and social duties."

Miss Mordecai relates an anecdote she used to hear her grand-aunt tell of her primitive school-days. "I have forgotten the name of her schoolmistress, but it was a large school with rows of pupils sitting on benches the whole length of the room. She told us that each day as the clock struck twelve a short recess would be proclaimed, the door would open and a gentleman would appear. It was the brother of the schoolmistress, dressed in the height of the fashion of the day, cocked hat, powdered hair, queue, blue coat with metal buttons, knee breeches and shoe buckles, white stockings and ruffled shirt. He would walk up between the rows of girls to the platform where his sister stood, take off his hat, bow over her hand and say 'Good-morning.' He would then with great deliberation take out his snuff-box, open it, invite her to take a pinch, close it, and walk back again between the girls to the door, pass through and vanish. This happened every day regularly. She would add, 'I think I can see the old gentleman now.' 'And did he never say anything

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more?' 'No, never; he disappeared just as he came, and never spoke to any one but his sister.'"

During the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia at the beginning of this century, the Gratz family took refuge in the country house of the Bingham on the Lansdowne plateau, in what is now West Fairmount Park. Rebecca Gratz writes to a New York friend under date of August 8, 1802: "We came to Lansdowne on Wednesday afternoon, and the situation and the house surpass the great expectations I had been taught to form of it. We are delightfully situated. . . . The reports are so various concerning the fever, that I must refer you to the papers for true accounts. Great numbers of the citizens have removed, and I hope the fatal disorder will soon be checked."

Interest will be felt in this facsimile of her autograph from a letter addressed to Mrs. Ogden Hoffman, No. 39 Wall Street, New York, step-mother of Irving's fiancée.

*on whom my heavens' Chances sleeping,  
flew most evidently, preyed her most  
affectionate Rebecca Gratz*

Near neighbours to the Gratzes on Chestnut Street, in a retired house deeply shaded with large trees at

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the south-west corner of Tenth, lived Mr. William Meredith and his charming wife, who was niece of Gouverneur Morris of Revolutionary fame. William Morris Meredith, their son, was afterwards Secretary of the Treasury in General Taylor's Cabinet, and I place great value upon two volumes in my library, as memorials of the friendship of that eminent and accomplished gentleman. The Meredith mansion was the centre of all the culture of the day, and distinguished visitors to the city sought admission to its literary gatherings. We have record of a ceremonious call of a Southerner, who had been invited by Mrs. Meredith for a special evening, in response to his desire to be present at one of these intellectual symposia. The hostess had forgotten the engagement and was alone. With quick expedient she exclaimed, "Oh, I forgot all about it; but remain and I will send for Miss Rebecca Gratz, and you will forgive me." Miss Gratz was luckily disengaged, and the untimely guest declared it was the most enjoyable evening he had ever spent.

Miss Gratz's noble and lovable character gave her great personal influence, and one of the happy memories she treasured was that she had been the means of effecting a death-bed reconciliation between an obdurate father and his daughter, Rebecca's grandfather and her aunt, Mrs. Nicholas Schuyler of Albany. Estrangement had ensued after her marriage with a Christian.

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“She whom all honoured in life was full of years. She lived to the blessed age of eighty-eight, and as we are taught that length of days is an heritage from the Lord, we believe He blessed his handmaiden, and gave her many years to be as a beacon and light to her generation. As Abraham was a prince among his people, so was Rebecca Gratz a princess among her own people, who looked up to her with pride in her position among them and among the strangers with whom she sojourned.”

Hyman Gratz, by the way, owned property on Market Street at the south-west corner of Seventh, where Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. The two corner houses were demolished to give place to the new Penn Bank building, on the façade of which is attached a bronze tablet commemorative of the interesting spot on which the present building stands. The arm-chair in which Jefferson sat while writing the Declaration is preserved in the collection of the American Philosophical Society.

I have been drawn into a long digression from my subject of the artists whom I knew in Philadelphia in the second quarter of the century; but to conclude: During the heat of the summer of 1842, there came to Philadelphia a Monsieur Vatimaire, who brought with him a small collection of very excellent drawings in water colours by the best artists of the British school, such as DeWint, Richardson, and others equally emi-

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ment at that time. Among them was one by Sir Edwin Landseer, of the head of a stag, which Vatimaire claimed to be an original drawn from nature after death. Landseer used this study over and over again in successive pictures, as we see in his *Bolton Abbey*, *The Stag at Bay*, and others. We observe the same repeated use of one study from nature by Sir David Wilkie. The dog scratching his ear reappears in several of his pictures.

Vatimaire had obtained these drawings from the artists, not by purchase, but on a plea the nature of which has escaped my memory, and he endeavoured to obtain contributions here by the same method, but without much success. F. O. C. Darley was one of the few who gave him one.

Vatimaire had been famous in England and France as a most accomplished ventriloquist and mimic. His performances given under the name of Alexandre were similar in character to those of Charles Matthews, whom he is reputed to have equalled or perhaps even surpassed. His celerity in change of character, rapidity in altering costume, voice and face, were said to be wonderful. At one time he would be the handsome, modest Sister Celestine, and the next moment, as by magic, a fat, gouty old alderman.

He became quite prominent in Philadelphia, so that the academy directors tendered him a sort of reception in their rotunda, to which only a very few were in-

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vited,—Sully, Fenimore Cooper, Hyman Gratz, and others whose names I cannot now recall, a party of perhaps a dozen in all. After awhile we adjourned, on the invitation of the guest, to his apartment on South Sixth Street, opposite Washington Square. Here he entertained us by showing us curiosities of one kind or another, including various decorations that had been bestowed upon him. Fenimore Cooper made some remark which he answered in so rude and scornful a manner that I was surprised at such unseemly behaviour. Cooper was roughly clad, and I suppose he mistook him for some tiller of the soil.

The last I knew of Vatimaire, he was busying himself in attempting to establish a system for the international exchange of books and so forth, which are many times duplicated in some libraries and museums, and are yet totally wanting in others. How he may have succeeded in accomplishing this desirable purpose I never knew.

With my friend and for many years near neighbour, John Neagle, I was of course on intimate terms. The two most important pictures he ever painted were the whole-length of Pat Lyon, the blacksmith, and that of Henry Clay. The latter was painted at Ashland, the old homestead in Kentucky. Mr. Neagle told me a history of his painting of the former, which I think worthy of being recorded. Pat Lyon, having been awarded a handsome sum of money from a bank as



PAT LYON

*From the Painting by John Neagle in the Possession of  
the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.*





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damages for what was proved to be a false accusation and imprisonment, decided on having a whole-length portrait of himself painted, with a view in the background of the Walnut Street prison in which he had been confined. John Neagle received the commission for the work.

So much time elapsed before a sitting could be arranged that the artist suspected that Lyon was purposely evading it. He told Lyon what he thought, and asked that if he doubted his ability to produce a creditable picture, he would say so frankly. "Well then," said Lyon, "frankly, that is it. You know, Mr. Neagle, you are still a very young man, and it has been shown me that it takes a long experience to produce such a picture as is proposed, and you might not succeed." Neagle contrived to learn from him at length that it was Bass Otis, whose pupil he had been, who had suggested the doubt.

Neagle was stung to exasperation at this check, and appealed earnestly to Lyon to trust him and not to withdraw from him this opportunity for distinguishing himself. Lyon was impressed favourably with the confidence and enthusiasm of the artist, and told him to go on. The result was a success beyond what might have been expected. Neagle told me that his anxiety made him imitate closely all the objects in the smithy that appear in the picture, even measuring them, as well as carefully drawing them. When the work was

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finished it was sent to Boston as a contribution to the annual exhibition of the Athenæum, and it was so much liked that it was purchased for their permanent collection, with Mr. Lyon's consent. Neagle painted for him the duplicate now seen in the gallery of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, but it is not equal to the Boston picture in firmness, decision, and sharp squareness of touch.

In 1825 Neagle painted in Boston a portrait of Gilbert Stuart, who was then in his seventy-second year. An engraving from this was made by my friend David Edwin, who told me of an incident that illustrates Stuart's method of painting. He called at his studio one day on business, and Stuart said, "Well arrived, sit you there," pointing to a chair near him. He then leaned over and pinned to Edwin's coat a decoration that he was about to paint in a picture that was before him on the easel; if I remember aright, a portrait of Governor McKean. Edwin was in a position that enabled him to see every touch that the artist successively made. He deliberated every time before the well-charged brush went down upon the canvas with an action like cutting into it with a knife. He lifted the brush from the surface at a right angle, carefully avoiding a sliding motion. He seems always to have avoided vexing or tormenting the paint when once laid on, and this partly accounts for the purity and freshness that still remains a characteristic of his work.

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One principle which he invariably observed was to keep the lips tender in their tints, so as never to contend with the eyes in strength, nor even with the shadows from the nose, depending for character on a few decisive, expressive, but not dark touches. I once heard Sir Thomas Lawrence lay down this as a rule, although in his own practice he did not carry it so far as Stuart did.

Edwin's engraving after the Stuart portrait was not completed in a manner satisfactory to Neagle, and he employed Thomas Kelly to work upon the plate to add smoothness and finish. Probably Edwin's sight was already too much impaired, but he felt bitterly indignant, and a violent quarrel took place between him and Neagle. When the failure of his eyes finally barred him from the practice of his profession, he opened a grocery store in the neighbourhood of the new settlement in Christian Street, but it was closed through bad debts. It was then that he took the position with Mr. Warren, manager of the Chestnut Street Theatre.

## CHAPTER XIII

*Graham's Magazine—Edgar Allan Poe—Thomas Cottrell Clarke*

**I**N January, 1841, George R. Graham published the first number of his monthly called *Graham's Magazine*. It was based on the subscription lists of three other periodicals, namely, *The Casket*, published by Atkinson, another published in New York with Dr. Robert M. Bird of Philadelphia as editor, the title of which was, I think, *The Atlantic Magazine*, and third and most important, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, published by William E. Burton, the actor. The united lists of all three amounted to only five thousand, five hundred.

The reason Burton parted with *The Gentleman's Magazine* to Graham was that he was about to engage in a new enterprise, which would tax all his energies to the utmost. It was no less a project than the establishment of a new theatre on Chestnut Street, where the Continental Hotel now stands. Burton had been for a long time a member of the stock company of the old Chestnut Street Theatre, next to the corner of Sixth Street, of which Maywood was lessee and manager. Burton often complained to me in doleful tones of repeated studied annoyances and even humiliating

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insults which he was made to suffer. At last, exasperated beyond endurance, he determined to establish a rival theatre of his own, and accomplished his purpose by remodelling Cook's Olympic Circus. I remember this ground before it was built upon, while still a vacant lot utilized as a marble-yard. Cook, the equestrian from London, erected his circus upon it, but a fire in Baltimore, which destroyed his superb stud of beautifully trained horses, ruined him. This created Burton's opportunity. With \$25,000 advanced by the owner of the ground, he turned it into a handsome theatre, and here Charlotte Cushman, Wheatley, and Richings made their first appearances before a Philadelphia audience, quitting for the purpose the Park Theatre, New York, where I had often seen them as members of the stock company.

Up to the time of Graham's new publication it had been an unusual thing for the monthlies to have new plates engraved expressly for them; they were content, when they had pictorial embellishments at all, to use old worn-out plates picked up at a trifling cost. For Dr. Bird, however, I had engraved a view of the entrance to the Mammoth Cave, from a drawing by himself, and for Burton three plates, *The April Fool*, *The Musical Bore*, and *The Pets*, the latter after Edwin Landseer.

Graham decided to have a new plate engraved expressly for every number, and engaged me to execute

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the work. The boldness of the enterprise astonished me, yet I did not give expression to my surprise, or thought I did not, but after two or three months of extraordinary success Graham told me that he could see that I had wondered, and he explained what led him to adopt such a measure. He said that before deciding on the details of his plans he consulted all he could reach whose experience with periodical literature might assist his judgment. Principal among these was Israel Post, of New York. Post's advice was, "Go to John Sartain and get a new plate for every number, and I guarantee success. I sold three thousand extra of that number of Burton's that had his plate of *The Pets* in it."

The success of the magazine was immense and a surprise to Graham himself. Beginning with five thousand five hundred, as I know because I furnished the impressions of the plates I engraved, the edition by the end of the second year had reached forty thousand, and I had to engrave four steel plates of each subject to keep pace in the printing of them with the increased demand. But the very excess of success led to disaster. Graham was solicited on all sides to join in enterprises, and he embarked in some of these. He bought Fry's *National Gazette* and also, in association with Robert M. Bird and Morton McMichael, paid forty-five thousand dollars for Chandler's *United States Gazette*, incorporating the two journals into one, *The North American*.

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The result of all these and other non-literary speculations, such as copper-mining, etc., was failure, for liberty is not the only thing that demands incessant vigilance. Graham's attention thus divided left the magazine to run itself, if it could, without commander or helmsman. Finally in 1848, all had to be sold to satisfy creditors,—magazine, newspaper, shares and everything. It was not until after Graham himself had disappeared from the field that *Sartain's Magazine* began, and it never would have begun but for Graham's misfortune. After a time, however, he resumed his former position with the magazine, but could not revive its prosperity.

It was in connection with Graham's enterprise that I made the acquaintance of Edgar Allan Poe. Burton's time had been so much occupied by his duties at the theatre that he associated Poe with himself as assistant editor, and when the transfer was made to Graham, the editor naturally went over with it. Besides the ordinary duties incident to the position, Poe contributed articles to its pages. Of the stories, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, named in his original manuscript *The Murders in the Rue Trianon-Bas*, appeared in the April number of the first year. In May of the second year came the *Descent into the Maelstrom*. Then, after one or two poetical trifles, the numbers for November and December contained his chapters on *Autography*, in which he presented fac-similes of no less

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than one hundred and nine signatures of popular and distinguished authors, added to which were nineteen others in what he termed an appendix, that appeared in the January number of the year following, 1843. Poe continued with Graham in the capacity of editor for about eighteen months, on a salary of \$800 a year. He then had to withdraw on account of a quarrel with Graham's old friend and associate, Charles J. Peterson, from whom Graham could not part, but Poe continued to write for him occasionally as before.

The article that interested me most of all among his contributions to *Graham's* was that entitled "The Philosophy of Composition," published in the number for April, 1846. In it he says, "Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought—at the true purposes seized only at the last moment—at the innumerable glimpses of ideas that arrived not at the maturity of full view—at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable—at the cautious selections and rejections—at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions—the tackle for scene-shifting—the step-ladders and demon-traps—the cock's feathers, the red paint and black patches, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hun-



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dred, constitute the properties of the literary histrio." He then goes on to describe even to the utmost detail the methods by which he proceeded to "build the lofty rhyme" of his poem entitled *The Raven*.

I have always taken a deep interest in tracing the gradual progressive development of noteworthy pictures by eminent artists from the first crude general plan of the composition to the completed work and the intervening studies from nature for the several parts. These latter, however, were almost always vastly superior to the finished pictures painted from them. Witness, for example, Andrea del Sarto's drawing from nature of Joseph, for his famous fresco known as the *Madonna del Sacco*, in the cloister of the Annunciata at Florence. How poor and tame is this figure in comparison with the preparatory study! The same is equally true of Michael Angelo's studies for the vault of the Sistine Chapel. His figure of Adam as drawn from nature in red chalk is superb, but lost in its copy on the ceiling. Then again, Raffaele's exquisite drawing from nature for the group of women in the foreground of the *Heliodorus* in the Vatican, how much of the charm is gone in its transfer to the fresco! It is also true of his studies from life for his *School of Athens*, in which his uncle Bramante, the Pope's architect, figures frequently. The great gain is between the first jotting down of the composition as a whole, which is generally poor, and the matured work, which is noble.

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I have an instance of remarkable improvement in progressive development and elaboration of the original thought in Edgar Allan Poe's poem of *The Bells*, which he wrote for me in 1849. In its original form it was the merest trifle compared with what he made of it afterwards. It was in all eighteen lines divided into two stanzas, of which this is the first stanza:

### THE BELLS—A SONG.

*The bells!—hear the bells!*

*The merry wedding bells!*

*The little silver bells!*

*How fairy-like a melody there swells*

*From the silver tinkling cells*

*Of the bells, bells, bells!*

*Of the bells!*

It is interesting to compare these lines with what he made of this first stanza in the form it afterwards assumed and as we published it in the November number of *Sartain's Magazine* for 1849.

*Hear the sledges with their bells—*

*Silver bells!*

*What a world of merriment their melody foretells!*

*How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,*

*In the icy air of night!*

*While the stars that oversprinkle*

*All the heavens seem to twinkle*

*With a crystalline delight;*

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*Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme  
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells  
From the bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells—  
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.*

Let us now compare the first draft of the last stanza with the subsequent improvement.

*The bells—ah, the bells!  
The heavy iron bells!  
Hear the tolling of the bells!  
Hear the knells!  
How horrible a monody there floats  
From their throats—  
From their deep-toned throats!  
How I shudder at the notes  
From the melancholy throats  
Of the bells, bells, bells!  
Of the bells!*

These lines are but eleven in number, yet in his recast of this closing stanza there are as many as forty-four. In thus prolonging it he was enabled to produce an impression on the mind of that monotonous repetition of a peal of heavy bells, an echo, as it were, of the reality he describes. The following form is that in which he finally let it remain:

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*Hear the tolling of the bells—*

*Iron bells!*

*What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!*

*In the silence of the night*

*How we shiver with affright*

*At the melancholy menace of their tone!*

*For every sound that floats*

*From the rust within their throats*

*Is a groan.*

*And the people—ah, the people—*

*They that dwell up in the steeple*

*All alone,*

*And who tolling, tolling, tolling,*

*In that muffled monotone,*

*Feel a glory in so rolling*

*On the human heart a stone—*

*They are neither man nor woman—*

*They are neither brute nor human—*

*They are Ghouls;—*

*And their king it is who tolls;—*

*And he rolls, rolls, rolls,*

*Rolls*

*A psan from the bells!*

*And his merry bosom swells*

*With the psan of the bells!*

*And he dances and he yells;*

*Keeping time, time, time,*

*In a sort of Runic rhyme,*

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*To the pæan of the bells,  
Of the bells;—  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme—  
To the throbbing of the bells—  
Of the bells, bells, bells—  
To the throbbing of the bells;—  
Keeping time, time, time,  
As he knells, knells, knells,  
In a happy Runic rhyme  
To the tolling of the bells—  
Of the bells, bells, bells,—  
To the tolling of the bells—  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells—  
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.*

About six months after we received this poem in its primitive form Poe sent it greatly enlarged and altered, but not yet in the final state in which we published it; the latest improvement came a month or so later. It appears that the very last poem he ever wrote was the one entitled *Annabel Lee*. We purchased it from him, but before we were ready to issue it we found that he had also sold it to three other publishers. The last time I saw Mr. Poe was late in that same year, 1849, and then under such peculiar and almost fearful conditions that the experience can never fade

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from my memory. Early one Monday afternoon he suddenly entered my engraving room, looking pale and haggard, with a wild and frightened expression in his eyes. I did not let him see that I noticed it, and shaking him cordially by the hand invited him to be seated, when he began, "Mr. Sartain, I have come to you for a refuge and protection; will you let me stay with you? It is necessary to my safety that I lie concealed for a time." I assured him that he was welcome, that in my house he would be perfectly safe, and he could stay as long as he liked, but I asked him what was the matter. He said it would be difficult for me to believe what he had to tell, or that such things were possible in this nineteenth century. I made him as comfortable as I could, and then proceeded with my work, which was pressing. After he had had time to calm down a little, he told me that he had been on his way to New York, but he had overheard some men who sat a few seats back of him plotting how they should kill him and then throw him off from the platform of the car. He said they spoke so low that it would have been impossible for him to hear and understand the meaning of their words, had it not been that his sense of hearing was so wonderfully acute. They could not guess that he heard them, as he sat so quiet and apparently indifferent to what was going on, but when the train arrived at the Bordentown station he gave them the slip and remained

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concealed until the cars moved on again. He had returned to Philadelphia by the first train back, and hurried to me for refuge.

I told him that it was my belief the whole scare was the creation of his own fancy, for what interest could those people have in taking his life, and at such risk to themselves? He said, "It was for revenge." "Revenge for what?" said I. He answered, "Well, a woman trouble."

Now and then some fragmentary conversation passed between us as I engraved, and shortly I began to perceive a singular change in the current of his thoughts. From such fear of assassination his mind gradually veered round to an idea of self-destruction, and his words clearly indicated this tendency. After a long silence he said suddenly, "If this mustache of mine were removed I should not be so readily recognized; will you lend me a razor, that I may shave it off?" I told him that as I never shaved I had no razor, but if he wanted it removed I could readily do it for him with scissors. Accordingly I took him to the bathroom and performed the operation successfully.

After tea, it being now dark, I saw him preparing to go out; and on my asking him where he was going, he said, "To the Schuylkill." I told him I would go too, it would be pleasant in the moonlight later, and he offered no objection. He complained that his feet hurt him, being chafed by his shoes, which were worn

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down on the outer side of the heel. So for ease and comfort he wore my slippers, which he preferred to my shoes as less ill-fitting. When we had reached the corner of Ninth and Chestnut Streets we waited for an omnibus some minutes, which were passed in conversation, and among the many things he said was that he wished I would see to it after his death that the portrait Osgood had painted of him should go to his mother (meaning Mrs. Clemm). I promised that as far as I could control it that should be done. After getting the omnibus we rode to its stopping-place, a little short of Fairmount, opposite a tavern on the north side of Callowhill Street, at the bend it makes to the northwest to reach the bridge over the river. At that spot a bright light shone out through the open door of the tavern, but beyond all was pitchy dark. However, forward into the darkness we walked. I kept on his left side, and on approaching the foot of the bridge guided him off to the right by a gentle pressure, until we reached the lofty flight of steep wooden steps which ascended almost to the top of the reservoir. There was a landing with seats, and we sat down to rest. All this time I had contrived to hold him in conversation, except while we were labouring breathless up that long, breakneck flight of stairs.

There he told me his late experiences, or what he believed to be such, and the succession of images that his imagination created he expressed in a calm, delib-



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erate, measured utterance as facts. These were as weird and fantastic as anything to be met with in his published writings. Of course it is altogether beyond me to convey even a faint idea of his wild descriptions. "I was confined in a cell in Moyamensing Prison," said he, "and through my grated window was visible the battlemented granite tower. On the topmost stone of the parapet, between the embrasures, stood perched against the dark sky a young female brightly radiant, like silver dipped in light, either in herself or in her environment, so that the cross-bar shadows thrown from my window were distinct on the opposite wall. From this position, remote as it was, she addressed to me a series of questions in words not loud but distinct, and I dared not fail to hear and make apt response. Had I failed once either to hear or to make pertinent answer, the consequences to me would have been something fearful; but my sense of hearing is wonderfully acute, so that I passed safely through this ordeal, which was a snare to catch me. But another was in store.

"An attendant asked me if I would like to take a stroll about the place, I might see something interesting, and I agreed. In the course of our rounds on the ramparts we came to a cauldron of boiling spirits. He asked me if I would not like to take a drink. I declined, but had I said yes, what do you suppose would have happened?" I said I could not guess. "Why, I

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should have been lifted over the brim and dipped into the hot liquid up to the lip, like Tantalus." "Yes," said I, "but that would have killed you." "Of course it would," said he, "that's what they wanted; but, you see, again I escaped the snare. So at last, as a means to torture me and wring my heart, they brought out my mother, Mrs. Clemm, to blast my sight by seeing them first saw off her feet at the ankles, then her legs to the knees, her thighs at the hips, and so on." The horror of the imagined scene threw him into a sort of convulsion. This is but a very faint sample of the talk I listened to up there in the darkness. I had been all along expecting the moon to rise, forgetting how much it retarded every evening, and the clouds hid the light of the stars. It came into my mind that Poe might possibly in a sudden fit of frenzy leap freely forth with me in his arms into the black depth below, so I was watchful and kept on my guard. I asked him how he came to be in Moyamensing Prison. He answered that he had been suspected of trying to pass a fifty-dollar counterfeit note. The truth is, he was there for what takes so many there for a few hours only—the drop too much. I learned later that when his turn came in the motley group before Mayor Gilpin, some one said, "Why, this is Poe, the poet," and he was dismissed without the customary fine. When he alluded to his mother, which was always with feelings of affectionate devotion, it was not his

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own natural mother, who died when he was in his infancy, but Mrs. Clemm, his mother-in-law. To both he referred in the following lines:

*Because I feel that in the Heavens above,  
The angels, whispering to one another,  
Can find, among their burning terms of love,  
None so devotional as that of "mother,"  
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—  
You who are more than mother unto me,  
And fill my heart of hearts, where death installed you  
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.  
My mother—my own mother, who died early,  
Was but the mother of myself; but you  
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,  
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew  
By that infinity with which my wife  
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.*

I suggested at last that as it appeared we were not to have the moon we might as well go down again. He agreed, and we descended the steep stairway slowly and cautiously, holding well to the hand-rails. Being down I kept this time, on our return walk, on his right side, and did not suffer the conversation to flag. On arriving at the omnibus waiting for passengers at the tavern door I pressed gently against him and he raised his foot to the step, but instantly recollecting himself drew back. I urged him in, and being seated

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beside him said, "You were saying?" The conversation was resumed, I got him safe home, and gave him a bed on a sofa in the dining-room, while I slept alongside him on three chairs, without undressing.

On the second morning he appeared to have become so much like his old self that I trusted him to go out alone. Rest and regular meals had had a good effect, although his mind was not yet entirely free from the nightmare. After an hour or two he returned, and then told me he had come to the conclusion that what I said was true, that the whole thing had been a delusion and a scare created by his own excited imagination. He said his mind began to clear as he lay on the grass, his face buried in it and his nostrils inhaling the sweet fragrance mingled with the odour of the earth. While he lay thus, the words he had heard kept running in his thoughts, but he tried in vain to connect them with the speaker, and so the light gradually broke in upon his dazed mind and he saw that he had come out of a dream. Being now all right again he was ready to depart for New York. He borrowed what was needful, and I never saw him again.

In about a month from this, as near as I can make out, Poe lay dead in a Baltimore hospital. In those few weeks how much had happened, and how hopeful seemed the prospects for his future. He had joined a temperance society, delivered lectures, resumed friendly relations with an early flame of his, Mrs. Sarah E.



EDGAR ALLAN POE



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Shelton, and become engaged to her. Dr. John J. Moran, who attended the poet in his last moments, says that Poe parted from her at her residence in Richmond at four in the afternoon of October 4, 1849, to go north. She states that when he said "good-bye" he paused a moment as if reflecting, and then said to her, "I have a singular feeling, amounting to a presentiment, that this will be our last meeting until we meet to part no more," and then walked slowly and sadly away. Reaching the Susquehanna, he refused to venture across because of the wildness of the storm-driven water, and he returned to Baltimore. Alighting from the cars he was seen to turn down Pratt Street on the south side, followed by two suspicious looking characters as far as the south-west corner of Pratt and Light Streets. A fair presumption is that they got him into one of the abominable places that lined the wharf, drugged him, and robbed him of everything. After daybreak, on the morning of the sixth, a gentleman found him stretched unconscious upon a broad plank across some barrels on the sidewalk. Recognizing him he obtained a hack and gave the driver a card, with Mr. Moran's address on it and on the lower right-hand corner the name of "Poe."

At the hospital he was disrobed of the wretched apparel which had been exchanged for his good clothing of the day before, and he was put comfortably to bed.

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After consciousness returned the doctor said to him, "Mr. Poe, you are extremely weak; pulse very low; I will give you a glass of toddy." He answered, "Sir, if I thought its potency would transport me to the Elysian bowers of the undiscovered spirit world, I would not take it." "Then I will give you an opiate to ensure you sleep and rest." He replied, "Twin sister-spectre to the doomed and crazed mortals of earth and perdition." The doctor records he found no tremor of his person, no unsteadiness of his nerves, no fidgetting with his hands, and not the slightest odour of liquor on his breath or person. Poe said after a sip or two of cold water, "Doctor, it's all over." Dr. Moran confirmed his belief that his end was near, and asked if he had any word or wish for friends. He answered, "Nevermore," and continued, "He who arched the heavens and upholds the universe has His decrees legibly written upon the frontlet of every human being and upon demons incarnate." These were his last words, his glassy eyes rolled back, a slight tremor, and the immortal soul of Edgar Allan Poe passed into the spirit world, October 7, 1849, aged thirty-eight. The accepted statement that Poe died in a drunken debauch is attested by Dr. Moran to be a calumny. He died from a chill caused by exposure during the night under a cold October sky, clad only in the old thin bombazine coat and trousers which had been substituted for his own warm clothing.



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Poe's face was handsome. Although his forehead when seen in profile showed a receding line from the brow up, viewed from the front it presented a broad and noble expanse, very large at and above the temples. His lips were thin and very delicately modelled.

Speaking of Poe recalls to me an amusing scene I witnessed in my office between two of the literary fraternity, Rufus W. Griswold and the well-known author of *Ben Bolt*. The latter was chatting delightfully with me when in walked Griswold. I knew of course that they must be acquainted, and yet noticing after awhile that they behaved like strangers I apologized for neglecting to introduce them and for assuming that they knew each other. "Oh yes," said one grimly, "we know one another." So I saw there was bad blood between them. A cheerless talk ensued for a time, when a name was spoken by chance that had a magical effect. It was Poe, and they fraternized at once, giving it to him right and left, agreeing that he was a most unjust critic and a bad fellow every way. The fact is, Poe made himself enemies all around by the cutting severity of his criticisms. Mr. Thomas Cottrell Clarke told me that he started the *Stylus* with Poe as its literary conductor, and the project was ruined by this intensity of his in reviewing the writings of others. He abstained equally, as a general rule, from speaking well of his own work, but on one occasion he said to my friend and neighbour, Thomas

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Buchanan Read, "Anyway, I have written one thing that will live—*The Raven*."

Mr. Clarke's daughter, Miss Anne E. C. Clarke, quotes her father as saying that "it took less liquor to make a maniac of Poe than of any one he had ever known, and that Mrs. Clemm in search of Eddie at all hours of the night was as sad as death." She says, "My first recollection of the Poes is of one of us little children singing the old song of *Gaffer Poe* to pretty Mrs. Poe. When her husband came home at night and found the little tot in his bed, storm-stayed after a day spent with Mrs. Poe and her flowers, she made the child repeat to him in her baby speech the only verse she knew:

*Mr. Poe was a man of great riches and fame,  
And I loved him, I'm sure, though I liked not his name.  
He asked me to wed. In a rage I said, No,  
I'll never marry you and be called Mrs. Poe.*

(Spoken) I think I can hear the little children in the village singing,

*That's Mistress Poe, Goody Poe, Gaffer Poe,  
Oh, I'll never marry you and be called Mrs. Poe.*

Mr. Poe's delight was infinite, and he gave her a pretty box, which his wife filled with trinkets, and it is one of her chief treasures to this day."

Mr. Clarke was always engaged as editor upon some


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daily paper or other, and in those days editing meant something different from what it does now, when the duties are cut up and divided like our grandmothers' patchwork quilts. Then it was real solid, all-day work, with sometimes half the night added, for one man—the editor.

Miss Clarke says of her father, "Writing into the wee hours, he worked in the basement dining-room of his house at Twelfth and Walnut Streets, where he wrote from preference because more accessible to 'the boys,' as he called them, for it could be entered through an area in front. Coming late from their wild evenings down town, they would find this busy worker, who, though he never drank liquor nor used tobacco in any way himself, gladly welcomed them here, where they disturbed his household little with their noise and their smoke. Tapping on the window pane, they would be let in laden like bees with news to be re-hashed and delivered to the printer's devil. And often would Poe drop in on his way home,—he then lived near Locust Street on Sixteenth, at that time named Schuylkill Seventh Street,—and Mrs. Clarke would send him coffee to clear his head before going home to pretty Virginia and his patient mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm."

## CHAPTER XIV

*Sartain's Magazine*—Henry B. Hirst, Thomas Dunn English, R. H. Stoddard, John Howard Payne—*Abolition Society*—*Christ Rejected, King Solomon and the Iron Worker, Battle of Gettysburg, and other Large Plates*—*American Gallery of Art*—*Year in Europe*—Larkin G. Mead

 CERTAIN William Sloanaker had been book-keeper for Atkinson while he published *The Casket*, and afterwards held the same position under Graham and Peterson when that publication was transferred to them. He became business manager and book-keeper on the new venture of Mr. Graham also, and continued on it until Graham's failure in 1848. He then proposed to me to join him on equal shares in the purchase of the subscription list of a New York periodical called *The Union Magazine*, which could be had for five thousand dollars. I was not inclined to agree to it, having a few years before lost several thousand dollars in *Campbell's Foreign Semi-Monthly*. But Sloanaker made such alluring representations, and urged the project so forcibly, that I committed the mistake of embarking on that "fool's errand." It was indeed a disastrous venture to me and to all fish that were caught in my partner's net. He

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and I owned the magazine in equal shares, as we provided the purchase money equally for the *Union Magazine* list, and our duties were also divided. I was to conduct the art department and he the business management, each with a salary. For editor-in-chief we engaged Professor John S. Hart, associated with Mrs. Caroline M. Kirkland, who had been editor of the work we had purchased. The first number was launched January 1, 1849, under the title of *Sartain's Union Magazine*.

The literary friend at whose instance this book of my reminiscences is written insists that I insert in this connection a list of our writers and the prices paid for their articles, as an indication of the change in current rates between now and half a century ago. I should never have thought of doing this but for his urgent insistence, and at best I can only touch upon it in the briefest possible way. To spread out in full all that Mr. Janvier desires would fill a volume and is therefore impossible. Even a mere list of all our contributors would reach a tedious length, and effort to give the prices paid would require much time spent in singling out each particular article from a number by the same author. The whole expenses for the literary department for 1849 were \$7,174, including editors' salaries, and the total cost of everything for that year was \$34,592.75. Among our contributors were Henry W. Longfellow, J. Russell Lowell, Bayard Taylor,

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Harriet Martineau, W. Gilmore Simms, Frederika Bremer, Lydia Maria Child, Edgar Allan Poe, John Neal, Nathaniel P. Willis, Joseph R. Chandler, George H. Boker, Charles G. Leland, George W. Bethune, D. D., Horace Binney Wallace, Thomas Buchanan Read, Prof. Joseph Alden, Henry Tuckerman, Park Benjamin, Henry B. Hirst, Mrs. Sigourney, Dr. William Elder, William H. Furness, D. D., R. H. Stoddard, Fan Featherby, Francis de H. Janvier, Francis J. Grund, Thoreau, John S. Dwight, Fanny Forester, Miss Brown, Silver Pen, Eliza L. Sproat, Edith and Caroline May, Mary Howitt, Thomas Dunn English, Alice and Phœbe Cary, Frances S. Osgood, Miss E. A. Starr, Henry W. Herbert, Mrs. Annie H. Stevens, Mrs. Sedgwick, Ignatius L. Donnelly, Mrs. C. H. Esling, Anna Lynch, Grace Greenwood and others too numerous to mention. As to the prices paid I can mention only a few. Longfellow never received less than fifty dollars each for his numerous articles. Horace Binney Wallace was paid forty dollars for his article on Washington Irving, and Poe received forty-five dollars for *The Bells*. In the form he first submitted it, consisting of eighteen lines of small merit, he received fifteen dollars, but after he had rewritten and improved it to a hundred and thirteen lines he was paid thirty dollars more. Poe received thirty dollars for his article on *The Poetic Principle*.

Dr. Bethune's four-page articles on *Aunt Betsy* brought

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him fifty dollars each. Nathaniel P. Willis and Joseph R. Chandler received fifty dollars each for their five or six page articles, and Francis J. Grund sixty-five dollars for his paper on *Kossuth*. John Neal was paid twenty-five dollars for *What is Poetry?* and Prof. Joseph Alden averaged thirty-five dollars for each of his contributions. Miss Brown and Edith and Caroline May averaged about ten or twelve dollars per poem, and William Dowe was content to receive four dollars per page for his prose, a page holding nearly nine hundred words. Many poems of merit were printed that cost only five dollars each, it being well understood that the name is valued as well as the writing. In connection with this subject of prices paid to authors, the following note from Poe to his publishers, Carey & Lea, is not without interest.

I AM anxious that your firm should continue to be my publishers, and if you would be willing to bring out the book I should be glad to accept the terms you allowed me before—that is—you receive all profits and allow me twenty copies for distribution to friends.

Will you be kind enough to give me an early reply to this letter, and believe me

Yours very respectfully,

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

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I am anxious that your firm should continue to be my publishers, and, if you would be willing to bring out the books, I should be glad to accept the terms which you allowed me before - that is - you receive all profits, and allow me twenty copies for distribution to friends.

Will you be kind enough to give me an early reply to this letter, and believe me

Yours very truly

Edgar Poe

This is in remarkable contrast with the terms he could have secured at the present time, although it must be remembered that the above note relates to the reproduction of matter that had already been published. The sharp competition among the very numerous periodicals of the present day has increased the demand for manuscripts and consequently their money value, while at the same time the greatly enlarged circulation of late years enables publishers to pay more liberally than was possible with the small issues of nearly half a century ago. Gerald Griffin, author of *Colleen Bawn*, was elated at being offered so much as five dollars per page for sketches for the *Literary Gazette*, the pages being quarto and the type small.

Late in the year 1852 it suited the personal and private interests of my partner, who had the business management in his hands, to bring the affairs of the Magazine to a close. The last four numbers of that



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year were supplied to our subscribers by a New York magazine. This set me free once more to give my undivided attention to my proper business of engraving. The consequences of the transaction, however, remained long a heavy burden on me. I was determined to pay in full and with interest all paper that bore my signature, and it was more than seven years and a half before I had paid off the last of my endorsements.

Although my labours connected with the Magazine were often of a vexatious nature and cost me the sacrifice of money and valuable time, and were a hindrance in my proper field of art work, yet they were not without counterbalancing pleasures in the personal acquaintance and friendship of professional writers. My own profession has brought me in contact with the leading men of the country throughout my long career. There are few distinguished men, especially before the day of photography, whose portraits I have not engraved, from the presidents down through all branches of statesmanship, finance, art, and literature. From many I had personal sittings, which often resulted in delightful friendships. I recall one amusing episode in connection with the engraving I made of Charles Sumner. I had received a note which I thought was written by Prescott, making an appointment for Sumner and Prescott to call at my office. When I learned that it was in Sumner's hand he thought my face expressed disappointment, and, long after, he

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spoke of it to me again, showing what a deep impression such a trivial occurrence had made upon him.

As literary men are always of interest to the public, I will devote a few pages to the recollections of my intercourse with some of the contributors to *Sartain's Magazine*. Henry B. Hirst, a rollicking companion of Poe's, to whom recently there has been an effort made to ascribe some of Poe's best poems, wrote for the magazine every month during 1852. In May he began a series called *Rhein Wein, Flagon First*, and so on. The poems were brilliant till the fourth, which showed a sudden breaking down, and he soon gave marked signs of a complete decay of his faculties. Hirst's office was within a stone's throw of my house in Sansom Street, and he would come in on me two or three times every day. Sometimes he would insist on dragging me off to drink absinthe with him, but he succeeded twice only. I then resolutely stopped, for I knew the evil of it. He did not stop, and the end is well known. Every time he left my office he said, "Eau reservoir," with a wave of his hand, and seemed proud of the witticism.

Miss Clarke speaks of him as one of the nightly visitors in her father's editorial sanctum. She says, "Henry B. Hirst would come swaggering in, making rings of cigar smoke and telling yarns galore. 'The most accomplished liar of his day' they used to call him. Among his highly figurative accounts of his own

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talents was one, that it was a common thing for him when a school-boy to commit to memory ten pages or three hundred lines of a Greek or Latin poem while walking up three flights of stairs. He was always falling in love with one or other of the girl visitors at our house, and would spout extempore verses by the yard. Some impromptu verses of his in an album are still preserved. A very pretty girl, now Mrs. Robert Mustin, had begged him to write something for her. He asked her what he should write on. She quickly answered, 'On paper.' Without hesitation he indited the following:

*Fair sheet, whose spotless face I stain,  
Forgive my sinless crime;  
At woman's call I weave my chain  
In very sorry rhyme.  
In very sorry rhyme I weave  
A strain which staggers me,  
And—for the last much more I grieve—  
Somewhat disfigures thee.*

H. B. H.

Another day for the same lady he wrote,

*Cold be my heart when the light of thy beauty  
Departs, and my brow be in sorrow laid low,  
For to love thee, dear maiden, is nought but a duty,  
A duty which brings me more pleasure than woe.*

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*Then how should it bring me, ah, never the glances  
That leap from thine eyes so delightful with light,  
'T would gladden my soul like the brooklet that dances  
The brighter when warmed by the kisses of night."*

Miss Clarke continues, "Among the callers or stoppers-in would be 'Tom' as he was called, Dr. Thomas Dunn English, who, after being *bon camarade* with Hirst and Poe, quarrelled with one or both. All three of them happening in early one evening, they had to be kept apart lest they come to deadly strife. English was put in the parlour, Hirst in the library, where he was in the habit of lying prone on a lounge by the hour, dreaming dreams and seeing visions, and Poe was shown as usual into the dining-room."

In his broken-down condition, result doubtless of the absinthe habit, Hirst would come to see me often and stay until late in the night. Seated beside me he would attempt to write poetry. Purring like a cat and swaying his body to and fro to the rhythm he was trying, he would jot down words here and there with intervals left to be filled up. Sometimes I would suggest an appropriate word, when down it would go with "That 's it, that 's just it." He was in such a dilapidated state physically and mentally that I continued in dread that he might die on my hands then and there.

But before he fell into this sad condition, and while he was still in his prime, we had some pleasant times. I

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well remember a day when my valued friend, R. H. Stoddard, the poet, spent an afternoon in my office with Hirst and me. It was a genuine feast of reason and flow of soul, but Bacchus was not of the company. Mr. Stoddard was always from the first a welcome contributor to the magazine, and continued so to the end. His *Carmen Naturæ Triumphale*, published in the number for May, 1852, was an admirable production, and I had engraved for it a heading after Retsch, as fine a work of art as I esteemed the poem to be. About the same time he read to us some exquisitely beautiful passages from an unfinished poem, *The Search for Persephone*. I do not know whether he ever completed it.

One day I received a visit from John Howard Payne at my home in Sansom Street. After conversing some time on literary subjects, he said that he had received a government appointment as consul at Tunis, Africa, and that it had occurred to him that possibly I might like to have an occasional article from that interesting locality. I said I thought it would be very desirable and wished he would take the trouble to call upon Professor Hart, our editor, who had entire control of his department. With him suitable arrangements could be made if he took the same view of the matter as I did. I knew that he was already overloaded with material, and it was my rule to abstain from interfering with his business. Whether the interview took place I never knew, but certainly nothing ever came of it.

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Before Payne left I asked him to oblige me by accompanying me to Marcus Root's gallery to sit for his portrait. To this he cheerfully consented. The picture was a daguerreotype, for it was before the days of photographs on paper. After it was done he remarked, "This is the last portrait I shall ever sit for." Some years later I lent this picture in New York, and it was never returned to me.

While I was in London as chief of the art department of the American exhibition at Earl's Court in 1887, a portrait of Payne was brought me by its owner, and I hung it on the wall of one of the six picture galleries. It was painted by Charles R. Leslie at a time when both the artist and his subject were young. It represented Payne in the character of Hamlet, and was life-size on a 25x30 canvas. The owner was anxious to dispose of it, and I wrote to my friend, Mr. W. W. Corcoran of Washington. As he had taken so much interest in Payne as to cause his remains to be brought from Africa to the land of his birth and to defray all the expenses attending it, I supposed he would be glad to secure the portrait, but it was declined.

Apropos of literary men I may mention that I have in my collection of autographs a letter from Bayard Taylor written to me when he was a boy of seventeen, asking me to train him to be an engraver. The correspondence ended with my answer that I never took pupils, but his letter chanced to be preserved, and it

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came again under my notice when he had risen into prominence in the world of letters.

It would hardly do to pass over in total silence a condition of affairs that during many years seriously affected my personal interests through my affiliation with the anti-slavery party. The organization of the society that advocated the right of the slave to immediate emancipation occurred on the first day of August, 1835, the date being chosen because it was the first anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the West Indian dependencies of the British Empire. This sudden change had passed off peaceably, notwithstanding the predictions of scenes of violence by those who favoured the continuance in bondage of all people of African descent.

The consequences to all known to belong to that hated and despised association were in various ways extremely damaging. All kinds of obloquy were heaped upon them, and most absurd falsehoods were invented to render them odious. So many people had profitable business relations with the South that they banded together as one man to stamp out an alleged heresy that threatened harm to the pocket, and the large number of southern youths studying in our northern colleges enjoyed the fomenting of riotous tumults whenever opportunity offered. Those were indeed "times that tried men's souls."

Slavery, however, continued to grow in power, and the

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moral suasion principles of the abolitionists looked ridiculous, but still the party did not disband, although they felt the case was hopeless. Little did they think that the very strengthening of slavery was to hasten its destruction. It was said of old, "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad," and the overbearing insolence of the slave-power reached a pitch that passed the bounds of northern endurance. Pennsylvania law made slaves free as soon as they touched her soil, provided they had been brought there by their owners, and cases occurred in which personal slave-servants availed themselves of their right as soon as they were informed of it. Pennsylvanians were not a little proud of this statute, and the new law passed by the United States Congress, by which every one could be converted into a slave-catcher on demand, was the last straw that broke the camel's back. The North was aroused and elected Lincoln president, with the result we know.

One fact stands out prominently in this struggle between right and wrong, and I, as an Englishman and as a sufferer for conscience' sake, have a claim to speak. It is highly discreditable to human nature that as the North for years sided generally with the slave-power, all for the greed of gain, so for the same motive England, after goading America incessantly with irritating sneers about the disgrace of slavery, sided with slavery against freedom as soon as the conflict



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began. During the war I went to Europe with my daughter Emily, and can speak of the feeling in Great Britain from personal knowledge and experience.

The last plate I engraved before leaving in 1862 was from West's large picture known as *Christ Rejected*, which had been brought to this country by Mr. Joseph Harrison, who gave me the commission. The work on the steel was thirty-six inches in length and twenty-five in height, and there were more than seventy heads in the composition. This painting is now in the possession of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, having been presented to it by Mr. Harrison's widow.

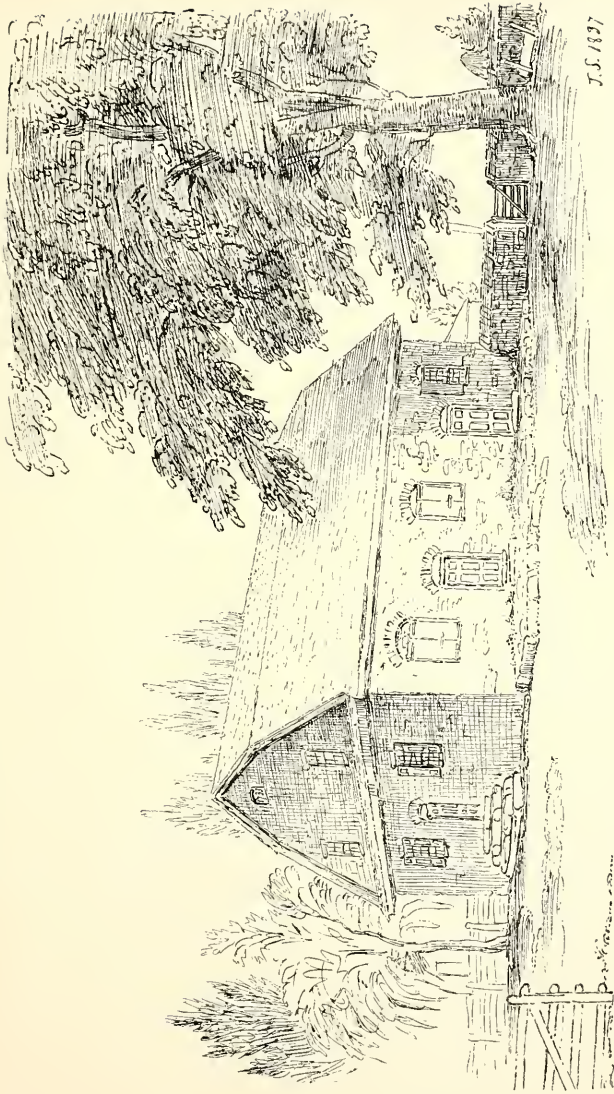
A few years later Mr. Harrison gave me a commission to engrave another plate of the same size, as companion to *Christ Rejected*. It was from a picture painted for him by Christian Schussele, entitled *King Solomon and the Iron Worker*, illustrating a rabbinical legend that at the dedication of Solomon's Temple a blacksmith occupied the seat of honour at the right of the king. While a boy, working in a machine shop, Harrison had come across this legend, and it appealed strongly to him as upholding and typifying the dignity of manual labour. After the successful completion of his contracts with the Russian government for building railways, he realized a lifelong project in giving the order for this picture, and the commission for the engraving followed.

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I engraved two other unusually large plates soon after, *Men of Progress*, a group of American inventors after a painting by Schussele, and the *Battle of Gettysburg* after Rothermel's big canvas painted for the state of Pennsylvania. The *Men of Progress* steel finally came into the possession of the *Scientific American*, and disappeared in the disastrous fire which destroyed their property.

The story of the way the *Christ Rejected* picture came to be brought to this country is worth relating. Richardson, the Philadelphia picture-restorer, was in London, and strolling one day up Rathbone Place, he saw a small written placard in a shop window on the opposite side of that narrow way. He crossed to read it and found that it was a notice that West's great picture of *Christ Rejected* was within and for sale. He went in to see it and make inquiries, but was told that to unroll it and show it would be a work of so much time and labour they would have to charge for it. Asking how much it would cost, the answer was eight pounds, so he went no further in the matter.

After his return to Philadelphia he casually alluded to the incident one day in Mr. Harrison's company, and said to him, "That 's a picture you ought to get," but elicited no rejoinder. Many months later, he asked Mr. Harrison if he had ever given a thought to the West painting, and to his surprise and gratification received the answer, "What if it is already on its



FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE AT SPRINGFIELD (NOW SWARTHMORE), DELAWARE CO., PENN.

*Here Benjamin West received Permission to become a Painter*



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way here?" My plate from it was executed under great difficulties, for the picture hung on the end wall of a long room in Handel and Haydn Hall, which belonged to Mr. Harrison, imperfectly lighted at one side only by a small, double window, while the rest of the canvas, the larger part, was in obscurity.

I have accomplished two other commissions under still greater difficulties, and both resulted successfully. The first was a whole-length portrait of Martin Van Buren, engraved from the painting by Henry Inman that hung in the Governor's Room in the City Hall, New York. The city authorities refused to lend the picture, so I made a sketch by the eye alone, without the aid of any of the usual appliances. After engraving the plate in my studio in Philadelphia, I took a proof to New York and touched on it with white chalk for corrections, and thus finished my work, having had only four days in all with the original. When I submitted the proof to the painter he was very much pleased with it, and had no suggestions to offer for its further improvement. Inman had warned me in advance, when I was about to apply for the loan of the picture, that the chances would be against me, because he, my backer, was a democrat, while the majority of the aldermen were whigs. They were very courteous to me, however, and insisted on my partaking with them of the supper which intervened midway in the evening's business. I learned elsewhere of

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an offence Inman had committed in offering the toast, "Let us democrats hold together, and let the whigs hang together."

The other large plate that I engraved under similar disadvantages was from Leutze's painting of *John Knox and Mary, Queen of Scots*. This picture was adopted as the subject of the annual distribution print of the Philadelphia Art Union, through the advocacy of its president, Mr. James McMurtrie. But the painting was owned by Mr. John Towne, who, although a member of the board of managers, refused to lend the picture, chiefly out of antagonism to McMurtrie, who had scoffed contemptuously at his knowledge and judgment in art matters. Some peacemakers intervened, however, and I was permitted to make a sketch, and the plate was engraved in the same way as the Van Buren had before been done.

As a general thing I did an enormous amount of work at my own proper business, in addition to a great deal from which I ought to have kept myself free. During my editorship of my *Foreign Semi-Monthly* I accomplished my regular amount of engraving in orders from publishers and others, besides finishing a plate every two weeks for my own periodical, frequently ending my day's stint by correcting printers' proof at one o'clock in the morning. I engraved for E. H. Butler in one summer season as many as forty-five plates for the annuals he published himself or prepared for Bos-

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ton publishers, as well as the quarto plates for Carey and Hart's annual, *The Diadem*, edited by the Rev. William H. Furness.

In 1847 I owned and edited a quarto volume entitled *The American Gallery of Art*. As it is now out of sight and entirely a thing of the past, I may be excused for quoting a review of it by Dr. William Elder. "The work before us, the first volume it ought to be called, is in quarto, very elegantly bound, a hundred and ten pages of letter-press and eleven engravings, all executed by the editor's own unsurpassed skill. Mr. Sartain to the genius and industry of eminent art adds its richest enthusiasm and most generous spirit, and the heart of the man liberalizes the work of the artist. In his personal character the public has the best assurance of the worthiest work which his high and broad range of talent qualifies him to achieve."

When the large plate of *Christ Rejected* was finished, as I have said, my daughter and I departed for Europe, going by the way of Canada. At Quebec our trip and my life's journey came very near being brought to a full stop. On the morning of sailing I went out for a short stroll before breakfast, and descended to a street between the water and the foot of the Mount. Here I walked along forgetfully so far that I inquired of a cottager if there were no short way back. He said I could climb the path which zigzagged up from just where I stood, and he pointed to a couple of men

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near the top, but it was "mighty onconvenient." I remarked that where they could go I could, and started. Unfortunately, when near the top I missed the path, mistaking a watercourse for it. This soon became so steep that I could advance only by fitting my breast against the surface of the earth and wriggling myself forward like a worm. I caught a glimpse under my armpit of the top of the tall mast of a large ship far below me. Goethe says, "Courage gone, all's gone," and so it seemed with me. By slow degrees I reached the true path above, and, arrived at the top, I lay down on the grass, face to the sky, and panted, my heart beating more violently than it ever did before or since. Such a childish panic had taken possession of me, that I came near letting myself go down the cliff to death in sheer despair.

We had been on the ship only seven days when we landed at Londonderry in the north of Ireland,—a short passage for those days. Thence we went to Belfast and across to Glasgow, then to Edinburgh by way of the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, and through the most interesting places of England to London, where we made a long stay, studying the International Exhibition, then open, and the other attractions of the great modern Babylon. When later we went to Florence, taking Paris on the way, we travelled over, not under, Mont Cenis, as the mountain had not then been tunnelled. I had with me an order to engrave a



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large plate after Schussele's *Zeisburger preaching to the Indians*. The steel, and a black-and-white copy of the painting by the artist himself, were forwarded to meet us on our arrival at Florence, and there we settled down for a delightful season of work and enjoyment in that beautiful city. Its broad mediæval walls, now represented by the gates only, were standing intact. Donatello's St. George still stood in the niche in the outside wall of Or San Michele where the sculptor himself had placed it; the Old Market, the Ghetto, and many other characteristic features of the Florence of Dante and Savonarola were as yet unmolested by the modern spirit of change. We had apartments in the Via Maggio, Street of May, and not far away was the house immortalized by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her *Casa Guidi Windows*. Hart, the American sculptor, had rooms in Casa Grazzini, as had also Larkin G. Mead, who was then only beginning as an artist, but has now attained so high a rank in his profession as to be professor in the Florentine Academy of San Marco, although an American sculptor. It was through Mr. Hart's interest that we were lodged in the same house with him. About the year 1842, when he was in Philadelphia with his marble bust of Cassius M. Clay, I had the opportunity of being of some service to him, and he never forgot it. Hart was a kind-hearted man, and when young Mead arrived in Florence he invited him to make use of his

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studio in the Piazza Indipendenza, in the newly-built portion of the city. Here, as a study, Mead modelled in clay a copy of an antique, a female torso. On Mr. Hart's suggestion that it would be good practice, he added a head and arms and legs according to his judgment of what should be the movement, with successful result. The final pose and name of his completed statue originated in a novel and entertaining fashion. He was at that time unacquainted with the Italian language, and hearing the waiters in the restaurants constantly exclaiming "Ecco" as they placed before the guests the dishes that had been called for, the sound suggested the idea of naming his figure *Echo*, which he rendered appropriate by slight modifications of the action to make her appear as if listening. Some Washington friends, who had accompanied us abroad, and with whom we had travelled considerably in Europe, joined us later at Casa Grazzini, and their intimate friend and neighbour, Mr. W. W. Corcoran, was a frequent visitor. He thus became acquainted with Mead and his work, and I took occasion to say to him that a commission to an artist just beginning his career, even if it amounted to but a few hundred dollars, was of more importance than as many thousands would be later on. He acted upon it and gave Mead an order to put his *Echo* into marble for him. Mead's first effort in art, and that which decided his future, was both romantic and ingenious. One cold

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night, in Brattleboro, Vermont, the last of December, after all the townspeople were buried in slumber he conceived the idea of building up out of snow a colossal statue, to symbolize the Recording Angel noting the good and the bad actions of the year just dead. By hard labour the figure grew through the hours of the night, and as it grew, water was thrown on it from time to time, which froze immediately, and gave it strength to stand as it rose stage by stage to its final completion. Judge of the surprise of the neighbours in the morning when they wakened and beheld the artistic creation which the evening before had no existence: the snow angel, pen in hand, recording on a scroll the deeds of the past year.

In 1887, there was held at Earl's Court, near London, an American exhibition, and the department of fine arts was confided to me. In the collection of sculpture there was a beautiful figure by Larkin G. Mead. It was a reproduction of his *Recording Angel*, only this was the finished work of the matured artist, realizing the crude suggestion of the novice's initial performance.

Through Mead's introduction, we made the acquaintance of his brother-in-law, William D. Howells, at that time consul to Venice, who came on a brief visit to Florence. His literary work was then realistic pictures of Venice and its people. When we afterwards went to the city of the sea, we spent some most agree-

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able hours with him and his wife in their hospitable home overlooking the Grand Canal. Soon after our arrival, we started to call upon them, but the difficulty of finding one's way in those labyrinthine streets made frequent inquiry necessary, and the answers obtained in the clipped dialect of the Venetians were not easy to understand. We scarcely recognized the name of the Casa Marino Faliero we sought, abbreviated as it was by our boy guide into the Ca' Fayare.

## CHAPTER XV

*Stanfield, Ruskin, Eastlake, Cornelius, Schnorr, 1863—New Academy of the Fine Arts—American Exhibition in London, 1887—Encaustic Painting*

**A**S I was about to start on this extended trip over the larger part of Europe, I proposed to my colleagues in the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts that it would be a good opportunity to present in person the diplomas to its honorary members abroad, free of expense to the institution. They gladly availed themselves of my suggestion, and the engraved certificates were filled up, and Mr. Caleb Cope, then the president, signed them. With some of these honorary members I had extremely interesting interviews, especially with Sir Charles Eastlake, John Ruskin, Clarkson Stanfield, and George Doo, the engraver. On the occasion of my visit to Mr. Doo, whose residence was in a village a short distance north of London, I was received by a lady to whom I was afterwards introduced as Mrs. Doo. Before Mr. Doo appeared she talked with me about engravers, asking many questions as to my likings, and dwelt particularly on James Heath. I assured her how much I admired his work, and said that among my possessions

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I had not only an impression of his large plate of *The Death of Major Pierson* after Copley, but a progress-proof of its etched stage. I perceived that she was gratified, and presently she said quietly, "I am his daughter." Mr. Doo was a very handsome old gentleman, his hair perfectly white and his manners most courteous. It was interesting to me to compare his appearance then with what I remembered of him when young.

Our call upon Mr. Stanfield was an extremely pleasant one. He lived at Hampstead Heath on very elevated ground, and he spoke of the remote places that were visible from the windows of the upper stories of his house. He took us into his painting room and showed us his picture then in progress. Talking over professional matters he said, "We artists are entirely in the hands of the dealers nowadays. Mr. Gambart will see a painting on my easel half done, and he'll say, 'What will be your price for that when finished?' Perhaps I may answer, 'Six hundred guineas.' He'll promptly say, 'Consider it mine.' After a time the same thing will occur with another canvas, and so on. But he will frankly tell me of the large profits he makes on each sale, and smilingly approve when I raise the price of the next picture I sell him."

Mr. Stanfield spoke despondingly of his health, complaining chiefly about his legs. He was tall, but fairly well proportioned in breadth. I remember seeing him

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in 1821, and he looked taller then, for when he was young he was thin. I carried a note to him, ordering a picture that was wanted for an obscure recess among the shrubbery of Vauxhall Gardens, and I can clearly recall his appearance as he stood on his canvas on the floor of the Coburg Theatre.

In the course of conversation he asked us what minor cities of Italy we expected to visit, and on hearing our itinerary he exclaimed, "Ah, how I envy you!" He also asked me if I chanced to know anything of a scene-painter named Jones, who had emigrated to America. He knew him as an artist of talent, painting in a theatre in Edinburgh. I had never met him, and what little I knew I had learned from my friend Heilge, the scene-painter employed by William E. Burton, from whom I had obtained quite a number of sketches by Jones. All but one were in colour, wild, dreamy things, the prevailing tones being broad masses of bluish tint contrasted with masses of brown, a combination always safe. At one time he painted for the Tremont Theatre in Boston, and produced for it a drop-curtain so dazzling and splendid in effect, that when it was first uncovered the entire audience burst into spontaneous applause. Jones had a very pretty young daughter, who used to dance on the stage of the same theatre, in the interval between the serious play of the evening and the afterpiece, a practice prevailing in those early days of stage management. She

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afterwards married a wealthy Bostonian. Jones had painted one season at the Arch Street Theatre in Philadelphia before going to Boston. He was a man of very few words, and Russell Smith, the artist, told me that Barrymore, the actor, when about to introduce him to a friend, thought it best to forewarn the man of this peculiarity, for Jones would perhaps have almost nothing to say.

Strange things sometimes occur that it is impossible to account for, and I cannot refrain from telling a wonderful experience of my own connected with this visit to Mr. Stanfield. When a boy I was familiar with all parts of Hampstead Heath, and one night I dreamed of standing at a certain spot, and assisting a lady to alight from a carriage. Unlike most dreams, this one remained fixed and clear in my memory, and as I handed my daughter from the carriage at Mr. Stanfield's door, the whole picture of my dream was realized before my eyes, after a lapse of more than forty years. I stood bewildered with surprise.

The residence of Mr. John Ruskin was a little south of the built-up part of London, in the quarter known, I think, as Denmark Hill. In conformity with the prevailing custom in England among well-to-do people, the house, which was large, was concealed from outside gaze by a dead wall. It was built of brick, dark with age, and the effect was rendered all the more impressive and solemn by the deep shade of



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noble old trees. The centre of the front projected forward in the form of a half hexagon, and on entering through the door in the middle, it was seen that the same form was repeated inside, and, thus doubled, it made a spacious, six-sided vestibule. On one of its walls hung a large drawing by Mr. Ruskin, the group of the two children in Paul Veronese's *Supper at Emmaus*, in the long gallery of the Louvre.

Our interview with the owner of this fine establishment was most agreeable, and in a measure instructive. He showed us a number of drawings by Turner, some of them bold, dashing schemes in black-and-white for the effect of pictures, others small and so elaborately minute in finish as to need the aid of a magnifying glass. He said that to enjoy the full charm of Turner's paintings it was necessary to see them fresh, and sometimes even before they went to the exhibition, so rapidly did their pristine beauties fade, for Turner would use any pigment whatever that would produce the desired effect, no matter how fleeting and transitory the hue. I spoke in praise of his admirable characterization of the qualities of Turner's work, in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, when he exclaimed, "Oh, that was a very juvenile performance. I wrote it when I was only twenty." He made some remarks on our Civil War, which he termed our "wow in America," for he had difficulty with the letter "r." "Before you leave," he said, "I want you to take a glass of my

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father's wine." I did not then know that his father had been a wine merchant, and so understood his words in a different sense. We drank the fine sherry in his study on the first floor, where he had taken us to see the Turners and some sketches by his Pre-Raphaelite friends. Over the mantel hung a spirited copy by himself of the Bacchus from the Titian in the National Gallery; "the old man's god," he called him. He also showed us a full-size copy of a life-size figure from a fresco in Venice, which he had just made in aid of a Parliamentary Inquiry into the causes of the rapid deterioration of the frescoes in the Houses of Parliament. He said that he had reproduced exactly and minutely this mural painting in Venice, to show its good condition after three centuries of exposure to the exhalations of a body of water much larger than the Thames.

Sir Charles Eastlake, the president of the Royal Academy, I found to be a most charming gentleman. His residence was a stone-fronted house in Fitzroy Square. He said that he felt highly honoured by this mark of appreciation on the part of the Academy of Arts in Philadelphia, and he especially admired the beauty of the vignette on the diploma, which represented the Academy building on Chestnut Street as reconstructed after the fire, from Haviland's design. It was engraved by myself from a drawing by James Hamilton. In the course of conversation I spoke to him of his exquisite

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picture, owned by the Philadelphia Academy through the donation of the Carey Collection, his *Hagar and Ishmael*. I expressed my admiration of that perfect work, but not what is and always has been my conviction, that it is equal to Raphael's best, lest he should regard my words as mere flattery. I told him that I had engraved it, and if I could find an impression of my plate after my return home, I would send it to him. He desired earnestly that I should do so, but unfortunately none were left in my folios.

This mention of my estimate of Eastlake's *Hagar and Ishmael* reminds me of a conversation I had with Washington Allston at his home in Cambridge. I was speaking of my own admiration of the works of Thomas Stothard in contrast with John Phillip's scorn of them, who said, "He had little dolls dressed up and drew them into his pictures." Now mark what was Allston's comment: "Stothard? Good as Raphael!"

In Berlin we saw the venerable Cornelius, who belonged less to that city than to Munich, which possesses the most important of his great works. But the last fifteen years of his life were spent in Berlin, on the pressing invitation of William the Fourth of Prussia, to enrich the walls of the Campo Santo or Royal Mausoleum, destined to form one of the wings of the new cathedral. We visited him at his studio and found him just setting out with his wife to call on us at our hotel, he having received a letter from me with the

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Academy diploma. Like all the others, he expressed with warmth the gratification he felt at the honour conferred. He showed us his drawings for portions of the Campo Santo pictures, which I thought more beautiful than any of his works I had seen at Munich. I asked him whether he used the modern German method of fresco, to which he answered emphatically "No! I would not trust my work to any but the ancient, true and genuine fresco. There is a man painting in that way in the new library" (meaning Kaulbach), "but not I." At the date of this interview, 1863, Cornelius must have been about sixty-five years of age, his wife less than half that.

We had a letter of introduction to Kaulbach, but he was away from the city and we presented it to his wife, who put us in the way of seeing her husband's great work in progress in the grand stairway of the library. We thus had an opportunity of seeing the modern method that Cornelius despised, in actual process of execution. It surely has certain advantages over the old method, in which the work had to be finished in sections and could not be retouched, while here the artist could work up his effect in its entirety, retouching at will, and only when it pleased him spray on with an atomizer the water-glass or liquid silica, which unites with the lime of the wall and hardens the work into stone.

When we arrived in Dresden, Julius Schnorr von

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Karolsfeld was there, and we sent to his residence at once his diploma with an explanatory letter, and then hastened to the famous picture gallery. Professor Schnorr called immediately at our hotel, and followed us to the gallery, differentiating us from the crowd chiefly by the colour of my daughter's dress, which he had taken the precaution to ascertain. He was a tall man with a prominent aquiline nose, and a benign expression of countenance that was very charming. He seemed proud of the compliment the American Academy had paid him, and wondered how they could have acquired a knowledge of him and his work. The honorary members on the continent of Europe had in fact been selected by virtue of their position as presiding heads of the art institutions of their city or state, but the great works this artist had accomplished were widely known. Those done for King Ludwig at Munich he must have been aware were of world-wide repute, and his admirable illustrations of Bible history, published by the Literary and Artistic Institution of Munich, had obtained large circulation and hearty appreciation in America, both in the original and in copies. He was much gratified by my assurance of this. I found him one of the pleasantest men I have had the fortune to meet. In every art of Europe, we had interesting interviews with the honorary members of the Academy, but I fear to become tedious and will let the preceding suffice.

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This was my second visit to Europe, for I had gone abroad in 1855, chiefly drawn there by the International Exhibition in Paris, and I went again for the next of the great French expositions. On this last occasion, in 1868, I had hoped to meet in Paris my friend Christian Schussele, a French artist, pupil of Paul Delaroché, who had settled in Philadelphia, and won the high esteem of his fellow artists and of his adopted fellow citizens. Overwork had broken down his health, and he was now seeking a restoration of vigour in his native air. On my arrival, I found that Schussele and his wife had gone to Strasburg, so I followed them there, and was pained to see that my friend's paralytic affliction had grown much worse. The time could not be far distant when he would be unable to paint, but he would not be incapacitated for teaching, and I conceived a plan for establishing a proper art school at the Pennsylvania Academy, with Christian Schussele as professor.

There had never yet been in the Academy an organized school with regular paid instructors. Its collection of casts from the antique, destroyed in the fire, had not been replaced until some twelve or thirteen years after, when the affairs of the institution awakened into a state of livelier interest. The artists began to contribute freely to the annual spring exhibitions, and the public attended in paying numbers, especially in the evening, the galleries being well lighted. A number of

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casts were then procured from London and Paris, and a well-lighted room for study and their display was provided under the north picture gallery. Here students of art drew from the casts, and when sufficiently advanced were admitted into the life-class, a class carried on at their own expense, the Academy merely lending them the use of the room under the south-east gallery. I was always a contributing member of this life-class, and one of its committee.

Now seemed the opportunity for organizing the schools upon the proper basis. After maturing the entire plan in my mind, I suggested it to Schussele. He was pleased with the idea, and we arranged together the terms that would be acceptable, and many of the details. Upon my return to Philadelphia, the committee of instruction and the board in turn concurred most heartily in the scheme, and thus in 1870 began the art schools of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

About this time the institution began to feel cramped for space, and as the adjacent property could not be obtained, it seemed advisable to look around for another site. This action was precipitated by an offer of one hundred and forty thousand dollars for its ground to build a theatre. The transfer was to take place without delay, so the Academy stored its pictures and found temporary quarters for its schools. A lot one hundred feet front by two hundred and sixty feet

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deep was secured on Broad Street, at the corner of Cherry, and plans were invited. The designs submitted, however, while pretty enough in exterior effect, were within altogether unsuited to the uses required, notwithstanding full printed instructions as to what was needed. So all were rejected, the one thousand dollars offered in prizes were divided among the three best, and the drawings returned to the owners.

My long practical experience in the working of the institution having made me better acquainted than any one else with its needs, I was then asked to prepare plans for the distribution of the class-rooms and galleries on both floors, irrespective of course of the architectural forms, which were the province of the architects selected, Messrs. Furness and Hewitt. Thus commissioned I entered on the task with all my heart, and was enthusiastic to the degree that I felt as if the design and my individuality were merged into one. I could have breathed the prayer of Socrates: "O my beloved Pan, and all other gods, grant me to be beautiful within!"

The corner stone was laid December 7, 1872, at the northeast angle of one of the courses, over a cavity containing a collection that cannot fail to be interesting to explorers of the remote future. It was hoped that the building might be erected for a quarter of a million dollars, but it cost double that, including the price of the ground, ninety-five thousand dollars. It



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was completed, ready for occupancy, by the spring of 1876, so that its first exhibition opened simultaneously with the Centennial International Exhibition in Fairmount Park. The schools were installed in their new, well-lighted quarters under Professor Schussele's direction, and all the branches of the institution soon settled again into their usual order in their new home.

This was, however, with some exceptions. The by-laws, or a resolution of the board of directors having the force of a by-law and adopted without one dissenting voice, had established a body of Pennsylvania Academicians, and had provided that the exhibition committee should be composed of three Academicians elected by their own body, and three directors appointed in like manner by their own board. The committee of instruction was composed the same way. The financial management remained, of course, with the board of directors, which was elected by the stockholders. But after I ceased to be chairman of the committee of exhibitions in 1877, this was all ignored.

In my opinion, the Academy would gain character and respect by returning to that rational arrangement, established by the directors while Mr. Cope was president, thus buttressing itself by a phalanx of Academicians comprising the best resident talent of the city. It would then no longer be at loose ends, liable to have its exhibitions capriciously controlled by outside irresponsible cliques, encouraging nonsensical va-

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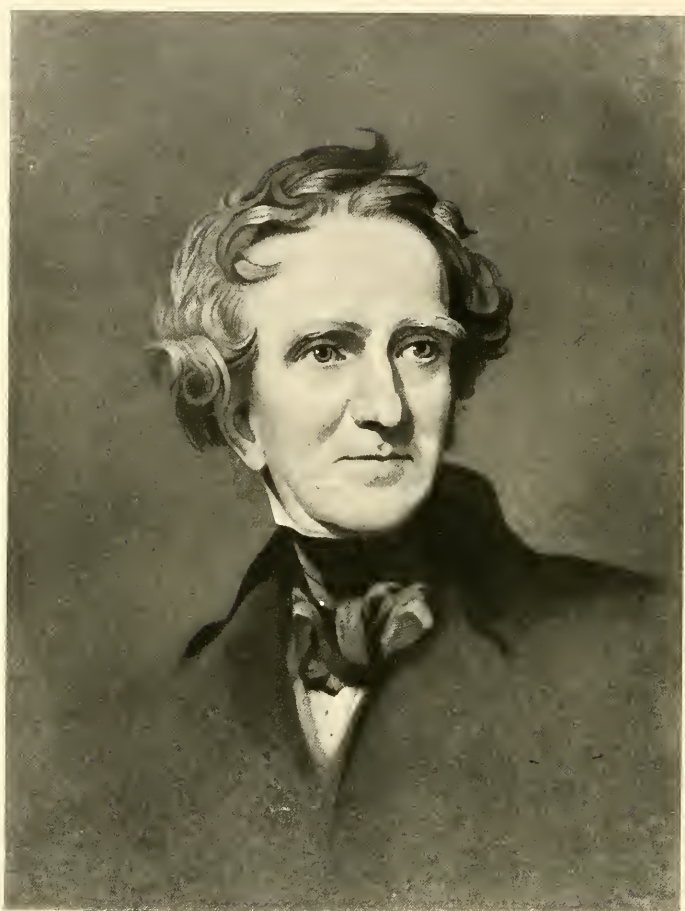
garies and temporary fads to the detriment of true, honest art.

As soon as the galleries were opened to the public with the annual exhibition of 1877, I resigned my membership in the board of directors, having, as I considered, given my full share of time to its service during a period of twenty-three years, though still feeling as warm an interest in its welfare as ever.

When in 1886 a project for holding an American exhibition in London took shape, an art department necessarily formed a prominent feature of the enterprise, needing at its head one of large experience in work of that nature. Accordingly I was selected for the task, and was made chief of the bureau of art.

Having collected American pictures in Philadelphia, New York and Boston, I afterwards added more from Paris and London, and American works of sculpture from Rome and Florence. The collection was good in quality and filled six galleries, each forty feet square. I had frequent opportunities of perceiving that the superior merit of the works was a surprise to the London visitors. I give one instance as an example. A gentleman remarked to me, "These pictures are not all by American painters, are they?" I assured him that they were, or they could not have been admitted. "Well, they are copies of English pictures, are they not?" I said that no copies were accepted. He said, "Oh, but, my dear sir, look at that portrait of the Queen; that, of





THOMAS SULLY

*After an Engraving by John Sartain  
from the Painting by Thomas Sully*

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course, can only be a copy!" I surprised him by assuring him that it was an original, painted by an American artist, Mr. Thomas Sully, for the American Society of the Sons of St. George in Philadelphia, of which I was a member, and that the Queen sat expressly for it. The liberality with which public bodies responded to my application for the loan of important works under their control was most gratifying. Not only did the Society of the Sons of St. George allow their valuable picture of the Queen to be risked in a transit to London, but the State authorities at Harrisburg passed resolutions authorizing the commissioners of Fairmount Park to lend Rothermel's great picture, *The Battle of Gettysburg*, owned by the State, but temporarily in the keeping of the Park Commission at Memorial Hall. Of course, it was conditioned that satisfactory guarantees were furnished for its safe return or its value in money. It being taken into consideration that as the artist was still living, the work, if lost, would be reproduced by him from studies and photographs of its parts and as a whole, it was insured for thirty thousand dollars.

The commissioners for the erection of the public buildings for Philadelphia also lent their magnificent and costly model, the property of the city. It was necessarily taken apart and packed in no less than thirty-five separate cases. Fortunately for us, the packing was done by or under the direction of the owners, for its

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seeming perfection caused the demolition of nearly three-fourths of the model. After each portion was in its case it was filled up solid inside and around with sawdust. The model, being of plaster of Paris, yielded and broke under the weight of this packing, in the inevitable rolling of the boxes from side to side at sea. On opening them in the Earl's Court Galleries at London, Casani was able to find only enough of the wreck to build up the north front, together with a portion of the return angles. The tower was fortunately complete, and was erected with the aid of a derrick. I delineated upon the platform the ground-plan of the whole, and one of the corner pavilions standing remote from the front assisted in completing the idea of the extent of the entire edifice. At the end of the exhibition, Brucciani's experienced men repacked the fragments, and ensured their safe return without further breakage.

About this time I became very much interested in what was termed a lost art, encaustic painting as practised by the ancient Greeks. These tablet pictures, as they were called, could be moved from place to place at pleasure, like our modern works in oil or water-colour. This interest took me again to southern Italy. I had long been acquainted with the general character of the art from two books on the subject in my library, brought to this country in 1839 by Mr. Carey, one by Count de Caylus, Anne Claude Philippe de Tu-

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bières, Paris, 1755, the other a free translation of it into English by J. H. Müntz, printed at the Bible and Crown near Chancery Lane, Holborn, 1760.

The ancients appear to have dropped the practice soon after the time of Christ, and all memory of the process disappeared till the attention of Count de Caylus was attracted to a passage in the writings of Pliny, which translated would read about thus: "Who first invented to paint with (or in) wax, and burn (or fix) the picture with fire is not certainly known. Some think Aristides invented it and Praxiteles brought it to perfection; but there were pictures by masters of a much earlier date, such as Polygnotus and Nicanor and Arcesilaus of Paros. Lysippus, on his picture at Ægina, inscribed that he burnt it in, which he could not have done if encaustic had not been in use already."

There can now be no doubt that the art was practised by the Egyptians long before it was known to the Greeks, and that the latter people derived their knowledge of it from Egypt; also that wax formed only one-third of the vehicle in which the pigments were ground, two-thirds being of mastic resin. Up to the last decade or so, only two examples of antique encaustic painting had been found, and one of these, the Muse Polyhymnia now in the Museum of Cortona, had been discovered some thirty years before Count de Caylus published his treatise, but he had not happened to hear of it. It was turned up in ploughing a field

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near Centoja, between Chiusi and Montepulciano, by a peasant who first enshrined it as a Madonna, and then, when enlightened by his priest, "condemned the pagan to purgatory," making the slate slab serve as door to his oven. It was rescued from this barbarous treatment in 1735 by the Chevalier Tomaso Tommasi, in whose family it remained for a century, till the Signora Louisa Bartolotti Tommasi presented it to the Tuscan Academy of Cortona, when it was deposited in the Etruscan Museum, where I examined it. I later made an engraving of it after a photograph.

The other encaustic was of Cleopatra in the act of applying the naja to her breast. It is believed to be the picture painted by the order of Augustus Cæsar to be carried in his triumph in Rome, in lieu of the queen herself, who escaped this degradation by her suicide. It was discovered in 1818 at Hadrian's Villa, among the ruins of the Egyptian temple to the god Serapis, under the canopy as shown in the cut. Like the Muse of Cortona, it is painted on slate. When found it was broken into sixteen pieces, but they have been closely fitted together and securely cemented at the back. It is the property of my friend the Baroness de Benneval, and is preserved in her villa at the Piano di Sorrento opposite Naples.

While I was examining the picture I complained of the imperfect light, and it was removed into the garden in the glaring Italian daylight, that I might have



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every facility for thorough inspection. I made drawings of some of the details, and a photographer sent for from Sorrento made a copy from which I engraved a plate, as I had previously done of the Muse. I also wrote and published a book on the subject, for which I am largely indebted to the learned German savant, Dr. R. Schoener. Readers interested in encaustic painting will find his exhaustive articles in the four supplements to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1882, Nos. 227, 228, 229, 230.

It adds to the interest attached to these ancient Greek encaustic tablet pictures to read of the enormous prices paid for them. For two pictures by Timomachus the Byzantine, Julius Cæsar paid the equivalent of \$350,000, one being of Ajax, the other of Medea, the latter unfinished. He presented them to the Temple of Venus Genetrix as a votive offering. A picture by Apelles, painted for the city of Cos, was accepted three centuries later by Augustus Cæsar in the place of a tribute of \$100,000. It was a Venus Anadyomene rising from the sea, and it had suffered irreparable injury in the lower part of the figure.

The interval between individuals widely remote in time is sometimes bridged over by a single life, if that life is linked in youth with an aged person, and in age with a youthful one. For example, I possess objects of Shakspearean interest; bits of his desks as schoolboy and playwright, pieces of his mulberry tree,

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of Herne's oak, and of the crab tree at Shottery, yet some of these were removed from Stratford one hundred and twenty-eight years ago by Mr. Palmer, and only a single life has intervened between his life and my own. Palmer was with Garrick when he went to Stratford in 1769, to get up his famous Shakspeare Jubilee, and while Robert Balmanno was still a young man he received them as a gift from Palmer, and in turn, when past eighty, bequeathed them to me. Another of his interesting relics is now in the possession of Dr. Horace Howard Furness, the famous Shakspearean scholar, a large block of the mulberry tree that Shakspeare is known to have planted in the garden of his house, New Place, at Stratford. While it was in Mr. Balmanno's collection, I used to think that it left Stratford at the time of the jubilee, but when it was purchased from his widow it was proved by the accompanying documents that the block was presented to Garrick by the corporation of Stratford in 1762, seven years earlier than the jubilee. It is not improbable that the idea of the jubilee may have arisen in Garrick's mind through the presentation of this relic. Garrick's widow, who survived him forty-three years, cared nothing for such things, and in consequence it reposed in an attic among dust and lumber until her death in 1822. It was then brought to light by her executor, Mr. George F. Beltz, with the two seals intact that Garrick had impressed upon it in red

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wax. That gentleman's brother presented it to Mr. Crofton Croker, in 1844, who in turn presented it to Mr. Balmanno in 1854.

## CHAPTER XVI

*Centennial Exhibition, 1876—Stuart's Washington*

**A**LTHOUGH the preliminary steps for celebrating at Philadelphia the one hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence were taken as early as March, 1871, the Bureau of Art was not organized until September, 1875, and in the month following I received the appointment of chief. A building was already in course of erection at the joint expense of the city and state, which was to be lent to the exhibition company for an art gallery, and to be known as Memorial Hall. This cost a million and a half dollars, two-thirds of which were furnished by the state, and the rest by the city. The design, by a private understanding, was planned to be suitable for the accommodation of the state legislature in case a possible removal of that body from Harrisburg to Philadelphia could at any time be effected, and this understanding assisted in obtaining so large an appropriation from the state towards its construction.

At first it was expected that the galleries into which the building was to be divided would be more than sufficient for all the works of painting and sculpture likely to be contributed to the exposition, but the

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applications for space were so numerous that an art annex was ordered, and was erected to the north of Memorial Hall. It was equal to it in length and breadth, and contained thirty galleries, each forty feet square, besides a larger gallery, one hundred feet by fifty-four.

When the architect submitted to me his plan, the doors were all placed in the centre of the walls. I showed him that they occupied precisely the space most valuable for the display of pictures, and left only the corners for that use. I made a sketch for him with the opening in each room at its angle, cutting it across diagonally to the line of the walls. Upon this plan the annex was built, and the effect of the large, unbroken wall spaces was excellent. When eleven years later the art department of the American exhibition in London was placed in my charge, I had the galleries there built in the same way, and the novel plan was much admired.

Italy was later than other nationalities in making known her desire to participate in the International Exhibition, and in consequence I had already allotted most of the space of the art department before her application was received. But after the art annex was added I was able to enlarge her space-allotment to the extent she desired. Count Giuseppe Dassi was the commissioner who presided over the art exhibit of his nation, a most estimable and patriotic gentleman, who

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has honoured me with his friendship from that day. It was my good fortune to find opportunities of largely promoting the interests of the Italian artists, and in consideration of Count Dassi's representation of these services, King Umberto conferred on me the title of "Cavaliere," creating me "Officer of the Royal Equestrian Order of the Crown of Italy," sending the jewel of the order and my diploma through the Italian Minister at Washington, who in turn forwarded them to me through the Italian consul resident in Philadelphia.

It almost always happens at the close of these great international exhibitions that numbers of contributors neglect to send for the objects they have had in display, which after a reasonable time are removed to some place of storage at the owner's expense and risk. This difficulty I fortunately escaped through the establishment in the main building of a permanent exhibition, and as an art department placed in my charge was included in the plan, there was a home of refuge provided for what was left over from the Centennial collection. Here the estrays rested until called for by the owners from time to time during the next few succeeding years.

A gentleman in New York, named A. H. Reitlinger, wrote me that he had four pictures from Paris consigned to his care that were intended for the Centennial Exhibition. They were the works of the noted communist Gustave Courbet, and he had hesitated to

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send them until he was advised they would be accepted and would find a place on the wall. He was assured that the pictures would be welcomed, and that the reputation of so distinguished an artist would certainly secure them a good place. The pictures were sent thus through a private channel instead of in the regular way with the French collection, which would have freed them of customs duty and other expenses, in order to evade confiscation by the government of France. Courbet had been a member of the communistic government which ordered the demolition of the Napoleon Column in the Place Vendôme. All his property that could be found was therefore attached to help pay the cost of rebuilding it. After the close of the exhibition the Courbet pictures were, of course, returned to the agent from whom we had received them. Subsequently French newspapers raised a complaint against the American exhibition management for defrauding the artist's widow by not returning her pictures. No doubt Mr. Reitlinger retained the pictures only until he had been refunded the amount of the expense he had incurred.

Few would imagine the difficulties and trials that beset a man in a position of such responsibility as I had assumed, owing to the jealousies and selfishness of those with whom one has to deal. My resolve to be strictly impartial in the discharge of my arduous duties brought me into frequent antagonism with one

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and the other, making it difficult to preserve an outward appearance of calm. If this is true of one who had but a single department to care for, what must have been the trials of General Goshorn, bearing on his shoulders the weight of the entire responsibility? His equipoise and serenity under all conditions of affairs was admirable. It is very gratifying to receive from him a recent letter endorsing my management of the department confided to my care. It is as follows:

MY DEAR MR. SARTAIN:

THE enclosed slip from one of our daily newspapers recalls pleasant incidents of our connection with the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. Your trials, difficulties and final success come fresh to my memory as though it were but yesterday. No one ever succeeded more acceptably in a similar position. The best test of the genuine good feeling after it was all over was the friendly manifestation toward you by the exhibitors in the department, and the hearty approval of the public. Your mild, equable temper, modest bearing and unselfish interest in the work were admirable; rarely are such good qualities of disposition and administrative ability happily combined.

I cannot recall those days which tested our patience and endurance without a feeling of grateful acknowledgment to all who were associated with me in the administration, and especially do I turn to you. I have



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only the most agreeable recollection of the part you took in that memorable exhibition.

Now, my dear Mr. Sartain, that you have arrived at a ripe old age with all your faculties remaining, you are truly to be congratulated. When I last saw you at the Paris exhibition in 1889, you seemed vigorous and full of health and spirit. Since then I have been bereaved sorely by the loss of my wife. She too greeted you cordially, and expressed her surprise at meeting one so young.

But time rolls on,—soon the summons will come to us as it has to many of our associates in the Centennial. I again congratulate you on your good health and venerable age, and trust you may have many years of happiness in the full enjoyment of life.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. D. Hoar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

*Cincinnati, February 10, 1897.*

Some idea of the magnitude of the display in the Centennial art department alone may be formed from the fact that it was found by careful measurement that the length of wall covered with pictures was but little short of two miles and a half, while the floor-space actually covered with sculpture measured ten thousand, nine hundred and sixty-two superficial feet.

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As soon as I had received the appointment of chief of the bureau of art, Mr. William D. Lewis, whom I had known nearly fifty years, from the time when he was cashier or president of the Girard Bank, asked me whether I would like to have a painting owned by a relative of his in London, the original Lansdowne picture of Washington painted by Gilbert Stuart for Mrs. Bingham. It is needless to set down my answer. He said he believed he could obtain it, and he did succeed. The painting came out packed among the British contribution, and although it was the work of an American artist, it thus got hung in a central position in the collection of British art. I tried persistently to reclaim it, but in vain, so I wrote to Mr. Lewis and he came to the rescue from his home at Florence Heights on the Delaware. We went together to the British residence within the enclosure of the exhibition grounds, and Mr. Lewis presented the case so forcibly to Sir Herbert Sandford, that resistance ended and I transferred the picture to the American department, where it properly belonged. By this time the galleries had all been arranged and catalogued, so that the best place I could find for it was in the rotunda, where the light was not so strong as the painting needed.

Mr. Lewis sent with the picture an autograph note from General Washington to Stuart, dated, I think, April 4, 1795, but I am not quite sure about the

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date. It stated that Mrs. Bingham had asked him to "set" for his portrait, but that he was uncertain whether it was to be at the State House or at the artist's rooms on Chestnut Street. On the lower margin was written by Stuart in a very tremulous hand a note to the then owner, Mr. Williams, saying that the above was the best autograph of Washington's that he could find for him, and that it was especially appropriate in this instance "because it relates to the picture that you own." He went on to say that there were but two portraits of Washington in existence that he had painted from life. "One you have, the other is in my possession. I did paint a third in the winter season, but I rubbed it out." The second one he mentions is now owned by the Boston Athenæum. This interesting document I had fixed securely behind a thick plate glass and fastened below the canvas. There it remained till the close of the exhibition at the end of October, when it went back with the picture to the owner. I regret exceedingly that I did not have a photographic copy made of it.

It must have been somewhere about 1826 that I saw the Lansdowne Washington in London, in the gallery of an auctioneer on the east side of old Bond Street, about midway between Burlington Gardens and Piccadilly. There was no other picture in the room. I suppose it was sold at that time to the gentleman (whose name I have not learned) who later fell into

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financial difficulties, so that the painting had to be disposed of again for the benefit of his estate. A purchaser could not be found at the price he had paid, and recourse was had to a raffle, the chances being placed at fifty pounds each. It was through this raffle that it came into the possession of Mr. Delaware Lewis, who lent it to the Centennial. He got it for fifty pounds, the cost of the lottery ticket which had the good luck to draw it. This had been bought for him by a subordinate member of the firm during his absence from London, and when he learned of the purchase he had been greatly incensed, and threatened to repudiate the transaction. He was calmed by a warning whispered in his ear that he was risking by this course the loss of a lucrative trade with America. The insurance value he placed on the picture when it came to the Centennial Exhibition was something enormous. The canvas next appears to have been inherited by Mr. Herman LeRoy Lewis. The present owner, Lord Rosebery, paid two thousand guineas for it in 1890. In 1805 it had been sold for five hundred and forty pounds, and was bought later for four hundred pounds by the Mr. Samuel Williams to whom was addressed the note before alluded to, appended by Stuart in 1823 to the letter from General Washington.

As is well known, Mrs. Bingham had this portrait painted expressly to present to her friend Lord Shel-

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burne, afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne. What is still known as the Lansdowne Plateau in West Fairmount Park was named by the Bingham in compliment to him, and I well remember the stately Bingham mansion which stood in these beautiful grounds. It was here, the reader will recollect, that the family of Ivanhoe's Rebecca took refuge during the yellow fever epidemic in 1802. The Bingham town-house, on the west side of Third above Spruce Street, was not demolished till much later than their country house, and must be remembered by many.

The exhibition in Philadelphia of the original Lansdowne Washington furnished an opportunity, so far as was practicable without seeing them side by side, for comparison between the two whole-length life-size portraits of Washington painted for Mrs. Bingham by Gilbert Stuart in 1796. My own impression is that the painting in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the one ordered by Mrs. Bingham for herself, is the fresher and more brilliant of the two, but that the other is the more elaborate. The subdued tone of the English canvas may be caused in part by the smoky atmosphere of London, which darkens everything exposed to it.

## CHAPTER XVII

*Washington Monument—Monument Cemetery, Philadelphia*

**A** YEAR or two before the breaking out of the southern rebellion, a movement was made toward the erection in Philadelphia of the long-desired monument to Washington. A committee of eighteen was formed, into which I was drawn, and which included the treasurer of the fund raised by the Society of the Cincinnati for that purpose, and the chairman of the committee in charge of what was known as the Chauncey Fund, which had been subscribed in the burst of renewed patriotic enthusiasm excited by the visit of Lafayette to this country in 1823. The preliminary agreement now arrived at was that these two funds, which had been nursed up into respectable proportions, should be united, and that to the sum thus obtained the committee of eighteen should add a sum equal at least to the amount of the combined funds.

The committee being regularly organized with Joseph R. Ingersoll as president and John Sartain as secretary, it was agreed that the centre of Washington Square was the most suitable site. A general competition was opened for designs for the work, and all appeared settled except obtaining from the State Legislature an act

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of incorporation, and the necessary steps were accordingly taken to that end. When, however, the charter came from Harrisburg, it was found to our astonishment and dismay that the names of the gentlemen who were about to open their purses in furtherance of the scheme were stricken out, and others substituted, of Tom, Dick and Harry whom nobody knew. Our disgust may be imagined; the whole thing was dropped, and there was an end of the project for the time being. The Civil War and its consequences then came to occupy every one's attention to the exclusion of other things, and in the meanwhile both funds were silently augmenting, until that of the Society of the Cincinnati had grown to one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and its custodians concluded that the means at their command were sufficient to warrant immediate action. They invited designs, and in course of time a model by the distinguished sculptor Semering was received from Berlin, which was of such exceptional merit that it left no choice but to adopt it.

When the estimate of its cost arrived, however, it called for an expenditure of fifty thousand dollars more than the amount of the Cincinnati fund, and they felt that there was nothing to do but to wait. But I reminded them of the existence of the Chauncey fund, which had been entirely forgotten by the younger generation, and of which my memory alone retained cognizance, because of all those actively engaged in

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the earlier movement I was the only one still living. I advised them to have me summoned, as sole survivor of the committee of eighteen, to testify that the two funds were formerly merged into one for the purpose of erecting a monument. It was so done, and by order of the court the Cincinnati fund committee was authorized to draw upon the Chauncey fund, which had increased in the guardianship of a trust company to more than the needed amount.

I was consulted about material for the likeness. I told them that the Houdon head was a safe reliance, declared so by such good authority as Gilbert Stuart, but that in the year 1831 I had held in my hand a death-mask cast direct from Washington's face, and if this cast could be found,—and I thought I knew where to look for it,—a mould could be made from it and a duplicate sent to Semering. I was successful in my search, and sent to Berlin one of the two replicas made; the other I have framed in my library. Washington had first been enclosed in a wooden coffin, but was afterwards removed to one of lead, and at the time of the change from one to the other this cast of his face was made for Judge Peters. The mould drew out several hairs from the eyebrows, and the cast in turn had drawn them out of the mould. It did not look like a death-mask, but rather as if made during life. A little over thirty years after his death, Washington's face was again open to view, when he was



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placed in the great marble sarcophagus presented by Mr. John Struthers of Philadelphia. He still remained unaltered in appearance, but some one stooped over to kiss him on the forehead, and at that instant the features fell suddenly away. The unaccustomed exposure to the air crumbled the face to dust.

When the Monument Cemetery on Broad Street, Philadelphia, was established in 1838, the wide portion of the street terminated at Poplar Lane, which ran thence in a northwesterly direction. The rest of Broad Street was so only in name, for it was but fifty feet wide, narrowed in still further by a ditch on either side, behind which was a post-and-rail fence, the boundary of the adjacent fields. Between the hills at Poplar Lane and at the cemetery were two valleys crossing the street, and at the bottom of these flowed small streams wending their way eastward to the river Delaware. In the spring of the year, when the frost was coming out of the ground, there was no other way to pass these hollows than to do as I used to do, namely, quit the road and take to the fence, moving sideways on the lower rail until the slough of despond was left behind.

A design for the entrance to the projected cemetery had been adopted, but before building it was thought best to devise some way of getting the street widened at once. The managers agreed that the cemetery should give thirty feet six inches of ground, provided the

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other land owners on both sides of the street would do the same, and the donors further agree to plant and keep a double row of trees along each sidewalk. The proposition was accepted and the work accomplished, and thus was North Broad Street widened to its present breadth, one hundred and thirteen feet, extending this noble avenue thirteen miles in length, straight as a ray of light.

By the time the managers of the cemetery were prepared to erect the entrance lodge in the new position, they had become dissatisfied with the design, and asked me to prepare a new one, which I did in the Gothic style. As originally built it was in conformity with my drawings. It was afterwards spoiled by a member of the board of managers who was a carpenter, and who considered that every building must have a projecting cornice. During my absence in Europe, he persuaded his colleagues to let him put one in place of the Gothic parapet and pinnacles, so that my original design is now travestied.

The name of Monument Cemetery is derived from a monument to Washington and Lafayette, which from the beginning was destined to occupy the centre of the grounds. A design of mine was selected from a number sent in competition, but lack of funds delayed the execution of the work. After a few years, a new competition was announced, inviting designs of a less costly character. Again mine was pronounced the best, and

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it was finally erected in 1869. It is of granite, with bronze ornamentation. Two bronze plates, nine feet long, contain inscriptions surrounding large profiles of Washington and Lafayette, both inscriptions and medallions being by myself.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *An Unexecuted Project—Some XIIIth Century Woodcuts*

**L**OCALITIES associated with distinguished men of the past are always interesting, and of all peoples the Florentines of Italy are especially conspicuous in their care to preserve the memory of these associations. Casa Niccolò Machiavelli, Casa Amerigo Vespucci, Casa Guidi and the like, all bear inscriptions engraved on marble tablets inserted in their front walls. But the most singular tablet is to be found in the small triangular piazza overlooked by the Casa Guidi windows, for it commemorates a vaporous intention that never materialized, an unrealized project to erect there a monumental column. It is a curious pushing to extremes of a commendable practice, to record not only things done, but also things once intended.

The foregoing serves as preamble or excuse for recording an unfulfilled purpose of my own, a darling project nursed for some seventy years. It involved a stay in Rome of uncertain duration, and although I have visited that city thrice, I have never been able to devote sufficient time to the pursuit of this my cherished hope, and now at my time of life it is too late. I have always entertained the conviction that in the library of

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the Vatican could be found a set of woodcuts, eight in number, representing the Triumph of Alexander of Macedon, and a ninth containing a coat-of-arms and a dedication. They were designed and engraved about the year 1284 by a brother and sister, twin children of Count di Cunio, Podestà of Imola, a city not far from Venice. The dedication was to a relative on the maternal side of the Savilli family, who was then cardinal, but became Pope in 1285, with the title of Honorius the Fourth. Is it not reasonable to assume with certainty that he would have placed this work in the papal library, where I have hoped to search for it? Honorius died at the end of the second year of his pontificate.

A copy of the book was last seen in the library of a Captain Greder of the Royal Swiss Guard, who resided in the village of Bagneux near Mont Rouge, not far from Paris. It was there, however, only as a loan from a Mr. Spirchtvel, his friend, who was a descendant on the mother's side of Jan. Jacq. Turene. The work had been held as a kind of heirloom in the family, and was especially valued because some old writing in it recorded that it was a gift from Count di Cunio himself, the father of the talented twins who designed and engraved the woodcuts.

Upon the blank leaf that followed the eighth cut were these words, badly written in old Swiss characters, with ink so faded as to be scarcely legible:

“This precious book was given to my grandfather

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Jan. Jacq. Turene, a native of Berne, by the illustrious Count di Cunio, Podestà of Imola, who honoured him with his liberal friendship. Of all the books I possess I esteem this the most, on account of the quarter from whence it came into our family, the science, the valour, the beauty of the amiable twins Cunio and their noble and generous intention of thus gratifying their relatives and friends. Behold their singular and curious history in the manner in which it was several times related to me by my venerable father, and according to which I have caused it to be written more legibly than I myself could have done it."

Then followed in blacker ink, but in the same kind of letters, though better formed:

"The young and amiable Cunij, twin brother and sister, were the first children of the son of the Count di Cunio, that he had by a noble and beautiful Veronese lady allied to the family of Pope Honorius the Fourth, when he was still Cardinal. This young nobleman had espoused the young lady clandestinely, without the knowledge of the relatives of either of them; who, when the consequences could no longer be concealed, caused the marriage to be annulled and the priest who married them banished. The noble lady fled for refuge to an aunt, who lived not far from Ravenna, and there the twins were born. Nevertheless the Count di Cunio, out of regard to his son, whom he had compelled to espouse another noble lady of higher grade

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in the social scale, permitted him to bring up these children in his house, which was done with every tenderness possible, not alone on the part of the Count, but also of his son's wife, who conceived such an affection for Isabella Cunio that she loved and cherished her as if she had been her own daughter; loving equally Alessandro Alberico Cunio, her brother, who, like his sister, was full of talent and of the most amiable disposition. Both of them made rapid advances in various sciences, profiting by the instruction of their masters; but especially Isabella, who, at thirteen years of age, was considered a prodigy, for she perfectly understood and wrote Latin, composed verses, and acquired a knowledge of geometry, was skilled in music and played upon several instruments; moreover she was practised in drawing, and painted with taste and delicacy. Her brother acknowledged that he could never attain so high a degree of perfection in these arts, nevertheless he was one of the finest young men in Italy; he equalled his sister in beauty of person, was every way accomplished in all military exercises and skilled in the use of arms, and at fourteen could master a restive horse. Both of them constituted the delight of their family, and they loved each other so perfectly that the pleasure or chagrin of one or the other was divided between them.

“At the age of sixteen he accompanied his parent to the wars, and performed such acts of bravery that his

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father in admiration of his prowess declared on the field of battle that there was nothing he could ask for that should not be accorded. He asked permission to visit his mother; it was granted, and she experienced the joy of his company for two days.

“But in the action he received wounds that made a period of rest needful to restore his health, and he spent some time in Ravenna with his sister Isabella, for they were inseparable; during this time they together produced the eight cuts referred to, and the ninth as a dedication to their relative the Pope. At the age of nineteen the brother was again engaged for the fourth time in battle, and was then slain. His sister so grieved at his loss that she languished and died before she was twenty.”

Such is the story found written on flyleaves inserted by the grandson of the first recipient of the book, as told him by his father. There are some persons, however, who doubt that such a book ever existed, because no other copy of it is now to be found. “But that is a poor argument,” writes the Abbé Zani, who discovered the Finiguerra print that had been lost for more than three centuries, “for there is only one copy known to exist of the book entitled *Meditationes Reverendissimi patris domini Johannis de Turrecremata*, printed at Rome by Uric Han in 1467. Now suppose this copy to perish by some accident, could those who come after us deny that it ever existed? . . . And so great is the



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rarity of ancient prints that in all my researches I have not chanced to find a second copy of many engravings of the fifteenth century, an age far less remote than that of Honorius IV." Of the *Donatus* printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz in 1464, and of which three hundred copies are known to have been published, not a single copy is now to be found. The extreme youth of the two artists who produced the woodcuts is no argument against their existence, for it is well known that of the numerous works of Lucas van Leyden the finest and most finished were done before he had completed his fifteenth year.

The few fragments of the ancient classics that have survived the general destruction had narrow escapes from total loss. Roman and Greek writings, once deemed immortal, were obliterated to give place to monkish legends. At Rome a book of Livy, only half effaced, was found between the lines of a later writer, and a copy of Cicero's *De Republica* was discovered concealed under newer, valueless writing. A page of the second decade of Livy was found on a parchment stretched on a battledore, and all the rest had been consumed by the artisan in similar uses. The history of Phœnicia by a contemporary of Solomon now consists only of a few fragments preserved by Eusebius. So it is vain to claim that the work of the two Cunii never existed because it is not now to be found.

Payne Collier rendered us a valuable service in caus-

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ing to be reprinted certain rare books which seemed about to perish. It was by a fortunate chance that a copy came to be preserved of what Michael Angelo had painted on the upper part of the end wall of the Sistine Chapel, afterwards effaced to give room for heightening his fresco of the Last Judgment, now covering the entire space. As originally carried out, the unbroken series represented the descent of Christ from Abraham, through his father, the carpenter of Nazareth. Some unknown artist, however, had happened to make a copy of the portion of the work afterwards obliterated. In course of time this unique treasure drifted into the possession of Samuel Rogers, the poet banker, whose friend William Young Ottley had an engraving made from it, an impression of which I am so fortunate as to own. The art-world knew from the recorded history that a part of the original work had been effaced, but wondered what had been its pictorial features.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *Conclusion*

**H**AVE now arrived at the last chapter of these reminiscences, and it is natural to pause and take a retrospective survey of the various experiences glanced at in the preceding pages. While chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies, the spectre of reproach arises for things done that ought not to have been done, and of others left undone that ought to have been done, and all past help.

I have a distinct memory of things of a public nature extending from the year 1814 to this year of 1897, and the changes that I have seen evolve, were I to tell them all, would seem incredible. In the single item of illumination, what progress from whale oil lamps and candles, lighted in no other way than by making a spark by striking flint and steel together ! The diverse phases that painting has passed through, too ; how many fads and fashions have been in vogue since my student days, when the art of Reynolds, Gainsborough and Lawrence prevailed. I quote a few words from a letter addressed by J. L. Gérôme, the French artist, to my friend, Stephen J. Ferris, the Philadelphia painter and etcher. It is dated May 18, 1897. "You say a few bitter words about modern art so-called, and I agree

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with you. Things are seen that make reason and art shudder, for it was here that the movement began which is spreading further and further. It might be thought that we are in an insane asylum, for it is evident to me that a breeze of insanity is blowing upon us, and works that cannot be named seem to find admirers! The more stupid a thing is, the more welcome it appears. It is hard to believe. But there is no cause to be uneasy about such productions, as they will soon pass away, for only works founded on reason are lasting."

In May, 1893, he had written, "We are living in an age that is out of joint, in which we see the strangest things. Simplicity, naturalness, truth are no longer in fashion. We are living in a fictitious and ugly world, and I am glad that I am at the end of my career, as I would never enter those ways of which I disapprove."

But in the material world the progress has been steadily forward. I have before me a letter from my esteemed friend John A. Clark, congratulating me on the last anniversary of my birthday, in which he says, "Your life has been spread over the most magnificent period of the world's history, for more has been accomplished for civilization during the years you have lived than during the preceding eighteen hundred years of the Christian era. This is a most surprising statement, but it is certainly true. On the day of your birth, men were travelling upon the land and the sea with little better

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facilities than existed several centuries before, and as far as land was concerned with no greater speed than in the time of Julius Cæsar. Steam, electricity and machinery have in your lifetime changed the face of the globe."

I began these memoirs only in fulfilment of a promise, as I have said, to my friend Thomas A. Janvier, and I finish them now in my eighty-ninth year; but in bringing them to a close there is satisfaction in a deed accomplished, and I cannot but remember what Longfellow has said so nobly on the subject of old age:

*It is too late ! Ah, nothing is too late  
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.  
Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles  
Wrote his grand Œdipus, and Simonides  
Bore off the prize of verse from his compeers,  
When each had numbered more than fourscore years,  
And Theophrastus, at fourscore and ten,  
Had but begun his Characters of Men.  
Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales,  
At sixty wrote the Canterbury Tales;  
Goethe at Weimar, toiling to the last,  
Completed Faust when eighty years were past.  
These are indeed exceptions; but they show  
How far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow  
Into the arctic region of our lives,  
Where little else than life itself survives.*

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. . . . .  
*What then? Shall we sit idly down and say  
The night hath come; it is no longer day?  
The night hath not yet come; we are not quite  
Cut off from labour by the failing light;  
Something remains for us to do or dare;  
Even the oldest tree some fruit may bear;  
Not Ædipus Coloneus, or Greek ode,  
Or tales of pilgrims that one morning rode  
Out of the gateway of the Tabard Inn,  
But other something, would we but begin;  
For age is opportunity no less  
Than youth itself, though in another dress,  
And as the evening twilight fades away  
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.*

FINIS

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