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ART IN ENGLAND

NOTES AND STUDIES

BY

DUTTON COOK.

LONDON

SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND ARSTON

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PREFACE.

It will be readily understood that this little volume does not affect to set forth anything like a formal history of the rise and progress of Art in England. The fitting treatment of such a theme would need much more space—not to mention other requirements—than I have here at command. I have designed merely to submit in a manner that may, I trust, be acceptable to the general reader, and not wholly without value to the student, some few excerpts and chapters from the chronicles of the nation's Art, with biographical studies of certain of its artists.

In this way I have felt myself bound so to select my materials as to avoid more travelling over familiar ground than seemed absolutely necessary. I have therefore assumed the reader's acquaintance with the lives and achievements of the great leaders of native Art—Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, for instance—and have forborne to occupy my pages with directly rehearsing their famous memoirs. It seemed to me desirable rather to call attention to the stories of artists who, though less renowned, less prominent in popular estimation, were yet of mark in their periods, and had distinct influence on the character and progress of Art in England. Many of these artists were contemporaries, however, and in dealing with their careers severally, it has hardly been possible to escape repetition of the mention of incidents pertaining to the times in which they conjointly 'flourished,'—to employ the favourite term of Biographical Dictionaries. I must ask the reader's pardon if he should find these repetitions intrusively frequent. But the papers herein contained have, for the most part, already appeared in print, when it was deemed advisable to make each as complete in itself as was practicable. They are now reproduced after revision, and, in some cases, considerable extension, but their original form cannot be wholly suppressed or vitally interfered with. I can only hope that what was a merit in their isolated state may not be accounted too grievous a defect now that they come to be congregated.

Finally, I would suggest—referring with all due modesty to my own efforts in this direction—that the lives and labours of our Art worthies form wholesome as well as curious subjects for popular study. I do not desire to set up the artist—merely in right of his professing himself an artist—as peculiarly or romantically entitled to public regard. But a nation's Art is, in truth, an important matter. To its value and significance the community is more awake than was heretofore the case, and what was once but the topic of a clique has become of very general concern and interest. Sympathy with Art must necessarily with more or less force extend to the professors and practisers of Art. Surveying the past, one cannot but note that often patronage and public favour have been strangely perverted—now cruelly withheld, now recklessly bestowed. Here genius, or a measure of talent nearly amounting to genius, has languished neglected and suffering—here charlatanry has prospered triumphantly. Something of this kind may be happening now amongst us, or may occur again by and by. Acquaintance with the past history of native Art—its struggles, trials, troubles, and successes—will surely prove of worth in considering its present and future position and prospects. As some slight aid to the diffusion of information on the subject, these otherwise unpretending pages are respectfully submitted to the reader.

D.C.

EARLY ART SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND.

harles the First appears to have been the first English Sovereign who regarded art, not merely as an aid to the splendour of the throne, but for its own sake. As Walpole says, 'Queen Elizabeth was

avaricious with pomp, James the First lavish with meanness.' To neither had the position of the painter been a matter of the slightest concern. But from Charles the First dates truly the dawn of a love of art in England, the proper valuing of the artist-mind, and the first introduction into the country of the greatest works of the continental masters.

At the present day a complaint is constantly arising, that artists are found to be deficient in general education, while what may be called for distinction's sake the educated classes are singularly wanting in artistic knowledge. The Universities do not teach art;[1] the Art-schools do not teach anything else. As a result, speaking generally, the painters are without mental culture, the patrons are without art-acquirements. (This supposes the patrons to be of the upper classes; but of course at the present time a large share of art-patronage comes from the rich middle or manufacturing classes, whose uninformed tastes are even less likely to tend to the due appraisement and elevation of art.) Mr. Ruskin, giving evidence before the commissioners inquiring into the position of the Royal Academy (1863), says, 'The want of education on the part of the upper classes in art, has been very much at the bottom of the abuses which have crept into all systems of education connected with it. If the upper classes could only be interested in it by being led into it when young, a great improvement might be looked for;' and the witness goes on to urge the expediency of appointing professors of art at the Universities. Upon the question of infusing a lay-element into the Royal Academy by the addition of non-professional academicians, Mr. Ruskin takes occasion to observe:—'I think if you educate our upper classes to take more interest in art, which implies of course to know something about it, they might be most efficient members of the Academy; but if you leave them, as you leave them now, to the education which they get at Oxford and Cambridge, and give them the sort of scorn which all the teaching there tends to give of art and artists, the less they have to do with an Academy of Art the better.'

It is somewhat curious after this to consider an attempt made by King Charles the First, in the eleventh year of his reign, to supply these admitted deficiencies of University instruction: to found an Academy in which general and fine-art education should be combined.

A committee, consisting of the Duke of Buckingham and others, had been appointed in the House of Lords for taking into consideration the state of the public schools, and their method of instruction. What progress was made by this committee is not known. One result of its labours, however, was probably the establishment of the *Musæum Minervæ*, under letters-patent from the king, at a house which Sir Francis Kynaston had purchased, in Covent Garden, and furnished as an Academy. This was appropriated for ever as a college for the education of nobles and gentlemen, to be governed by a regent and professors, chosen by 'balloting-box,' who were made a body corporate, permitted to use a common seal, and to possess goods and lands in mortmain. Kynaston, who styled himself *Corporis Armiger*, and who had printed in 1635 a translation into Latin verse of Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*, was nominated the first regent of the Academy, and published in 1636 its constitution and rules, addressed 'to the noble and generous well-wishers to vertuous actions and learning.' The Academy—'justified and approved by the wisdom of the King's most sacred Majesty and many of the lords of his Majesty's most honourable privy council,'—its constitution and discipline being ratified under the hands and seals of the Right Honourable the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England and the two Lord Chief Justices—professed to be founded 'according to the laudable customs of other nations,' and for 'the bringing of virtue into action and the theory of liberal arts into more frequent practice.' Its aims were directed to the end that England might be as well furnished for the virtuous education and discipline of her own natives as any other nation of Europe; it being 'sufficiently known that the subjects of his Majesty's dominions have naturally as noble minds and as able bodies as any nation of the earth, and therefore deserve all accommodation for the advancing of them, either in speculation or action.' It was considered that a peculiar institution was required for teaching those 'most useful accomplishments of a gentleman'—the sciences of navigation, riding, fortification, architecture, painting, etc., which, if taught, were yet not practised in the universities or courts of law. Many of these sciences, it was admitted, were taught in London, 'in dispersed places;' but it was convenient to reduce and unite them in one certain place, and not to teach them perfunctorily and rather for gain than for any other respect—desirable, too, that youth should have, in a virtuous society, generous and fitting recreations as might divert them from too much frequenting places of expense and of greater inconvenience. The intention of the Academy was also to benefit gentlemen going abroad, by giving them language and instruction, with other ornaments of travel. 'There is no understanding man,' says the prospectus or advertisement of the institution, 'but may resent how many of our noblemen and young gentlemen travel into foreign countries before they have any language or knowledge to make profit of their time abroad, they not being any way able to get knowledge for want of language, nor language for want of time; since going over so young, their years of license commonly expire before they can obtain to sufficient ripeness of understanding; which no nation is known to do but the English: for what children of other nations come over to us before they are of able age and ripeness?' Another inconvenience arising from the want of the *Musæum Minervæ* was stated to be the necessity many gentlemen were under of sending their sons beyond seas for their education, 'where, through change of climate and dyat, and for want of years of discretion, they become more subject to sickness and immature death.'

It was required of gentlemen admitted into the *Musæum* that they should pay fees of at least £5 each, and should bring a testimonial of their arms and gentry, and their coat armour, 'tricked on a table, to be conserved in the museum.' There was to be a *Liber Nobilium* always kept, in which benefactors and their benefits were to be recorded, beginning with King Charles, 'our first and

royal benefactor;' and it was provided that if any gentleman should have any natural experiment or secret, and should communicate it to the *Musæum* and upon trial it should be found true and good, his name and experiment should be recorded in *Liber Nobilium* for a perpetual honour to him.

The regent was required to instruct personally, or to superintend instruction in 'heraldry, blazon of coates and armes, practical knowledge of deedes, and evidences, principles and processes of common law, knowledge of antiquities, coynes, medalls, husbandry,' etc. The Doctor of Philosophy and Physic was to read and profess physiology, anatomy, or any other parts of physic. The Professor of Astronomy was to teach astronomy, optics, navigation, and cosmography. Instruction in arithmetic, analytical algebra, geometry, fortification, and architecture, was to be given by the Professor of Geometry. A Professor of Music was to impart skill in singing, and music to play upon organ, lute, viol, etc. Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, and High Dutch were to be taught by the Professor of Languages. In addition, a Professor of Defence inculcated skill at all weapons and wrestling (but not pugilism apparently), and ample instruction was to be afforded in riding, dancing, and behaviour, painting, sculpture, and writing. A preparatory school was also to be annexed for the young gentlemen whose parents were desirous of having them brought up in the *Musæum* from their first years. Finally, it was expressly provided that no degrees were to be given, and the Academy was not to be conceived in any way prejudicial 'to the Universities and Inns of Court, whose foundations have so long and so honourably been confirmed.'

For no long time did the *Musæum Minervæ* flourish. The King's troubles began; and in the storms of civil war the Academy for teaching the upper classes science and the fine arts, manners and accomplishments, fell to the ground and disappeared utterly. So bitter and inveterate was the feeling against the King, that, as Walpole says (and Walpole, be it remembered, cherished no reverence for Charles the First—quite otherwise—under a *facsimile* of the warrant for the King's execution, he wrote 'Magna Charta,' and he often found pleasure in considering the monarch's fall), 'it seems to have become part of the religion of the time to war on the arts because they had been countenanced at Court.' So early as 1645, the Parliament had begun to sell the pictures at York House. On the 23d July in that year votes were passed ordering the sale, for the benefit of Ireland and the North, of all such pictures at York House 'as were without any superstition.' Pictures containing representations of the Second Person in the Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary, were judged to be superstitious, and ordered to be burned forthwith. Immediately after the King's death, votes were passed for the sale of all his pictures, statues, jewels, hangings, and goods. Cromwell, however, on his obtaining sole power, made some effort to stay the terrible sacrifice that was being made of the royal collections.

There was thus an end of King Charles's *Musæum Minervæ*. Yet, if not absolutely founded on its ruins, at any rate in some measure following its example, we soon find record of the rise of a similar institution. One Sir Balthazar Gerbier, without Government aid or countenance, but acting entirely on his own responsibility, had opened an Academy 'on Bednall-green without Aldgate.' This was probably in the year 1649.

Sir Balthazar Gerbier, architect and painter, 'excellent in either branch,' says a biographer, had led a somewhat curious life. In a pamphlet published in Paris, in 1646, addressed 'to all men that loves Truth,'—singularly rich, thanks to the French printers, in blunders, orthographic and grammatical,—Sir Balthazar gives some account of his family and himself. He was born about 1591, at Middelburg in Zeeland, the son of Anthoine Gerbier, a baron of Normandy, and Radegonde, daughter-in-law to the Lord of Blavet in Picardy. 'It pleaseth God,' writes Sir Balthazar, 'to suffer my parents to fly the bluddy persecutions in France, against those which the Roman Catholics call the Huguenots. My said parents left and lost all for that cause.' He came to England when about twenty-one, and entered the service of George Villiers, 'newly become favourite to King James, being immediately after Baron, Viscount, Earle, and afterwards created Marquis and Duke of Buckingham.' He accompanied Buckingham to Spain, and was employed in the famous treaty of marriage, though ostensibly acting only as a painter. While in Spain he executed a miniature portrait of the Infanta, which was sent over to King James. The Duchess of Buckingham wrote to her husband in Spain, 'I pray you, if you have any idle time, sit to Gerbier for your picture, that I may have it well done in time.' After the accession of Charles, it appears that Gerbier was employed in Flanders to negotiate privately a treaty with Spain, in which Rubens was commissioned to act on the part of the Infanta; the business ultimately bringing the great painter to England. In 1628, Gerbier was knighted at Hampton Court, and, according to his own account, was promised by King Charles the office of Surveyor-General of the works after the death of Inigo Jones. In 1637, he was employed at Brussels in some private state negotiation with the Duke of Orleans, the French King's brother, and in 1641 he obtained a bill of naturalization, and took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. According to Vertue, he was much hated and persecuted by the anti-monarchic party, for his loyalty and fidelity to the King and his son. At the sale of the royal collection he made purchases to the amount of £350. The suspension of all art-patronage during the Commonwealth, probably necessitated the establishment of his Academy at Bethnal Green, as a means of obtaining a livelihood. Painters did not flourish very much under the rule of the Puritans.

A fly-sheet, undated, which may be found in the British Museum, sets forth the plan of Gerbier's Academy. He addresses himself 'to all Fathers of Noble Families and Lovers of Vertue,' desires public notice of his great labours and exertions, and informs the world that 'the chiefe Famous Forraigne Languages, Sciences, and Noble Exercises' are taught in his establishment. 'All Lovers

of Vertue,' of what age soever, are received and instructed, and each of them may select such studies, exercises, and sciences as are most consonant to his genius. Public lectures are announced to be read gratis every Wednesday afternoon, in the summer at three, in the winter at two o'clock. A competent number of children of 'decayed families' are taught without fee. 'Lovers of Vertue' are stated to be thus freed from the dangers and inconveniences incident to travellers, who repair to foreign parts to improve themselves, and leave the honour of their education to strangers, running 'the hazzard of being shaken in the fundamental points of their religion, and their innate loyalty to their native country.' The nation is therefore exhorted to reflect seriously on Sir Balthazar's proffers; to embrace them vigorously and constantly to countenance and promote them, 'since that the languages declared to be taught in the Academy are:—Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, High Dutch, and Low Dutch, both Ancient and Modern Histories, jointly with the Constitutions and Governments of the most famous Empires and Dominions in the World, the true Natural and Experimental Philosophy, the Mathematicks, Arithmetic and the Keeping of Bookes of Accounts by Debitor and Creditor, all Excellent Handwriting, Geometry, Cosmography, Geography, Perspective, Architecture, Secret Motions of Scenes, Fortifications, the Besieging and Defending of Places, Fireworks, Marches of Armies, Ordering of Battailes, Fencing, Vaulting, Riding the Great Horse, Music, Playing on all sorts of Instruments, Dancing, Drawing, Painting, Limning, and Carving,' etc. Certainly Sir Balthazar's was a sufficient catalogue of arts, sciences, and accomplishments. The lectures 'composed for the good of the public' were afterwards printed, and to be obtained at Robert Ibbitson's house in Smithfield, near Hosier Lane. It may be noted that a lecture upon the art of well-speaking, brought upon the lecturer the derision of Butler, author of *Hudibras*.

In the winter the Academy was moved from Bethnal Green to Whitefriars. Sir Balthazar issued advertisements as to his lectures. It is to be feared his good intentions were not always appreciated by the public of the day. In one of his advertisements we find him complaining bitterly of 'the extraordinary concourse of unruly people who robbed him, and treated with savage rudeness his extraordinary services.' Something of a visionary, too, was Sir Balthazar;—yet, with all his vanity as to his own merits—his coxcombry about his proceedings,—a sort of reformer and benefactor also in a small way. At one time we find him advertising that, besides lecturing gratis, he will lend from one shilling to six, gratis, 'to such as are in extreme need, and have not wherewithal to endeavour their subsistence, whereas week by week they may drive on some trade.' By-and-by, however, Sir Balthazar was probably more disposed to borrow than to lend. His Academy met with little support—with ridicule rather than encouragement; was indeed a total failure; and he left England for America. For some years nothing was heard of him.

In 1660, however, we find him publishing at Rotterdam 'a sommary description, manifesting that greater profits are to be done in the hott than in the cold parts of America.' This contains an account of his journey with his family to settle at Surinam. But there, it seems, he was seized by the Dutch, treated with much violence (one of his children being killed), and brought to Holland. He attempted, but in vain, to obtain redress from the States for this strange treatment of him. He probably returned to England with Charles II., for he is said to have aided in designing the triumphal arches erected at the Restoration.

Gerbier's name is attached to a long list of books and pamphlets. Some of these are of a controversial character; the author was a stout Huguenot, fond of denouncing the Pope; oftentimes alarmed at plots against himself on account of his religion, and now publishing a letter of remonstrance to his three daughters who, in opposition to his will, had entered a nunnery in Paris. Other works relate to architecture and fortifications, the languages, arts, and noble exercises taught in his Academy, or contain advice to travellers, or deal with political affairs. Mr. Pepys records in his diary, under date the 28th May 1663:—'At the Coffee House in Exchange Alley I bought a little book, *Counsell to Builders*, by Sir Balth. Gerbier. It is dedicated almost to all the men of any great condition in England, so that the dedications are more than the book itself; and both it and them,' the diarist adds somewhat severely, 'not worth a farthing!'

Sir Balthazar died in 1667, at Hempsted-Marshall House, which he had himself designed, the seat of Lord Craven, and was buried in the chancel of the adjoining church. Portraits of Gerbier were painted by Dobson[2]—the picture was sold for £44 at the sale of Betterton the actor—and by Vandyke. The work by Vandyke also contained portraits of Gerbier's family, and was purchased in Holland by command of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and brought to Leicester House.

For something like half-a-century after Sir Balthazar Gerbier's time we find no trace of another Art Academy in England.

NOTES:

[1] The Slade Professorship, recently instituted, is a step towards mending this matter, however.

[2] A portrait of Gerbier, Sir Charles Cotterel, and W. Dobson, painted by Dobson, the property of the Duke of Northumberland, was exhibited at South Kensington in 1868.

VERRIO AND LAGUERRE.

Pope, denouncing the vanity of wealth and the crimes committed in the name of taste, visits Lord Timon's villa, and finds plenty of pegs on which to hang criticism—ample scope for satire. With depreciating eyes he surveys the house and grounds, their fittings and garniture, almost as though he were going to make a bid for them. 'He that blames would buy,' says the proverb. Then he passes to the out-buildings, taking notes like a broker in possession under a *fi. fa.*

> 'And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
> That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
> Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
> Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven.
> On painted ceiling you devoutly stare,
> Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
> On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
> And bring all paradise before the eye,' etc.

Who was Verrio? Who was Laguerre?

ANTONIO VERRIO was born in Lecce, a town in the Neapolitan province of Terra di Otranto, in the year 1639. Early in life he visited Venice to study the colouring of the Venetian masters. He returned a successful, not a meritorious painter. In 1660 he was at Naples, where he executed a large fresco work, 'Christ healing the Sick,' for the Jesuit College. This painting, we are told, was conspicuous for its brilliant colour and forcible effect.

Subsequently the artist was in France, painting the high altar of the Carmelites at Toulouse. Dominici says that 'Verrio had such a love for travelling that he could not remain in his own country.'

Charles II., desiring to revive the manufacture of tapestry at Mortlake, which had been stopped by the civil war, invited Verrio to England; but when he arrived the king changed his plans, and intrusted the painter with the decoration in fresco of Windsor Castle. Charles was induced to this by seeing a work of Verrio's at Lord Arlington's house at the end of St. James's Park, the site of Buckingham House. 'In possession of the Cartoons of Raphael,' Fuseli lectured, angrily, on the subject, years afterwards, 'and with the magnificence of Whitehall before his eyes, he suffered Verrio to contaminate the walls of his palaces.' But there was raging then a sort of epidemical belief in native deficiency and in the absolute necessity of importing art talent. In his first picture Verrio represented the king in a glorification of naval triumph. He decorated most of the ceilings of the palace, one whole side of St. George's Hall and the Chapel; but few of his works are now extant. Hans Jordaens' lively fancy and ready pencil induced his critics to affirm of him, 'that his figures seemed to flow from his hand upon the canvas as from a pot-ladle.' Certainly, from Verrio's fertility in apologue and allegory, and the rapidity of his execution, it might have been said that he spattered out his works with a mop. Nothing daunted him. He would have covered an acre of ceiling with an acre of apotheosis. As Walpole writes, 'His exuberant pencil was ready at pouring out gods, goddesses, kings, emperors, and triumphs over those public surfaces on which the eye never rests long enough to criticise, and where one should be sorry to place the works of a better master. I mean ceilings and staircases. The New Testament or the Roman History cost him nothing but ultramarine; that and marble columns and marble steps he never spared.'

He shrunk from no absurdity or incongruity. His taste was even worse than his workmanship. He delighted to avenge any wrong he had received, or fancied he had received, by introducing his enemy, real or imaginary, in his pictures. Thus, on the ceiling of St. George's Hall, he painted Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, in the character of Faction dispersing libels; in another place, having a private quarrel with Mrs. Marriott, the housekeeper, he borrowed her face for one of his Furies. Painting for Lord Exeter, at Burleigh, in a representation of Bacchus bestriding a

hogshead, he copied the head of a dean with whom he was at variance. It is more excusable, perhaps, that, when compelled by his patron to insert a Pope in a procession little flattering to his religion, he added the portrait of the Archbishop of Canterbury then living. In a picture of the 'Healing of the Sick,' he was guilty of the folly and impropriety of introducing among the spectators of the scene, portraits of himself, Sir Godfrey Kneller, and Mr. May, surveyor of the works, all adorned with the profuse periwigs of the period. But he could not transfer to his pictures a decorum and a common sense that had no place in his mind. Hence he loved to depict a garish and heterogeneous whirl of saints and sinners, pan-pipes, periwigs, cherubim, silk stockings, angels, small-swords, the naked and the clothed, goddesses, violoncellos, stars, and garters. A Latin inscription in honour of the painter and his paintings appeared over the tribune at the end of St. George's Hall:—'*Antonius Verrio Neapolitanus non ignobili stirpe natus, ad honorem Dei, Augustissimi Regis Caroli Secundi et Sancti Georgii, molem hanc felicissimâ manu decoravit*.'

The king lavished kindness upon this pretentious and absurd Italian. He was appointed to the place of master-gardener, and lodgings in a house in St. James's Park, to be afterwards known as Carlton House, were set apart for his use. Here he was visited by Evelyn, who records that 'the famous Italian painter' was 'settled in His Majesty's garden at St. James's, which he had made a very delicious paradise.' The artist also dined with the author, and was regaled with 'China oranges off my own trees, as good, I think, as ever were eaten.' For works executed in Windsor Castle between the years 1676 and 1681, he received the sum of £6845, 8s. 4d. Vertue copied the account 'from a half-sheet of paper fairly writ in a hand of the time.' It particularizes the rooms decorated, and the cost. For the king's guard chamber, £300; for the king's presence chamber, £200; for the queen's drawing-room, £250; for the queen's bed-chamber, £100; and so on, until the enormous total is reached. Of his paintings in St. George's Hall Evelyn writes, 'Verrio's invention is admirable, his ordnance full and flowing, antique and heroical; his figures move; and if the walls hold (which is the only doubt, by reason of the salts, which in time and in this moist climate prejudice), his work will preserve his name to ages.' He employed many workmen under him, was of extravagant habits, and kept a great table. He considered himself as an art-monarch entitled to considerable state and magnificence. He was constant in his applications to the Crown for money to carry on his works. With the ordinary pertinacity of the dun, he joined a freedom which would have been remarkable, if the king's indulgence and good humour had not done so much to foster it. Once, at Hampton Court, having lately received an advance of a thousand pounds, he found the king so encircled by courtiers that he could not approach. He called out loudly and boldly—

'Sire! I desire the favour of speaking to your Majesty.'

'Well, Verrio,' the king inquired, 'what is your request?'

'Money, sire! I am so short in cash that I am not able to pay my workmen, and your Majesty and I have learned by experience that pedlars and painters cannot give credit long.'

The king laughed at this impudent speech, and reminded the painter that he had but lately received a thousand pounds.

'Yes, sire,' persisted Verrio, 'but that was soon paid away.'

'At that rate, you would spend more than I do to maintain my family.'

'True, sire,' answered the painter; 'but does your Majesty keep an open table as I do?'

Verrio designed the large equestrian portrait of the king for the hall of Chelsea College, but it was finished by Cooke, and presented by Lord Ranelagh. On the accession of James II. he was again employed at Windsor in Wolsey's tomb-house, which it was intended should be used as a Roman Catholic chapel. He painted the king and several of his courtiers in the hospital of Christchurch, London, and he painted also at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

But soon there was an end of his friends and patrons, the Stuarts. James had fled; William of Orange was on the throne; a revolution had happened little favourable to Signor Verrio's religion or political principles. There is a commendable staunchness in his adherence to the ruined cause: in his abandoning his post of master-gardener, and his refusal to work for the man he regarded as a usurper; though there is something ludicrous in the notion of punishing King William by depriving him of Verrio's art. He did not object, however, to work for the nobility. For some years he was employed by Lord Exeter at Burleigh, and afterwards at Chatsworth. He was true to his old execrable style. He introduced his own portrait in a picture-history of Mars and Venus, and in the chapel at Chatsworth he produced a dreadful altar-piece representing the incredulity of St. Thomas. He painted also at Lowther Hall. For his paintings at Burleigh alone he was paid more money than Raphael or Michael Angelo received for all their works. Verrio was engaged on them for about twelve years, handsomely maintained the while, with an equipage at his disposal, and a salary of £1500 a year. Subsequently, on the persuasion of Lord Exeter, Verrio was induced to lend his aid to royalty once more, and he condescended to decorate the grand staircase at Hampton Court for King William. Walpole suggests that he accomplished this work as badly as he could, 'as if he had spoiled it out of principle.' But this is not credible. The painting was in the artist's usual manner, and neither better nor worse—and his best was bad enough, in all conscience. His usual faults of gaudy colour, bad drawing, and senseless composition were of course to be found; but then, these were equally apparent in all his other works. Later in life his sight began to fail him, and he received from Queen Anne a pension of £200 a year for his life. To

the last royal favour was extended to him, and he was selected to superintend the decorations of Blenheim. But death intervened. The over-rated, overpaid, and most meretricious painter died at Hampton Court in 1707. There is evident error in Dominici's statement that the old man met his death from drowning on a visit to Languedoc. Walpole, summing up his merits and demerits, says, rather curiously, 'He was an excellent painter for the sort of subjects on which he was employed, without much invention and with less taste!'

The father of LOUIS LAGUERRE was by birth a Catalan, and held the appointment of Keeper of the Royal Menagerie at Versailles. To his son, born at Paris in 1663, Louis XIV. stood godfather, bestowing on the child his distinguished Christian name. The young Laguerre received his education at a Jesuit College, with the view of entering the priesthood, but a confirmed impediment in his speech demonstrated his unfitness for such a calling. He began to evince considerable art-ability, and, on the recommendation of the fathers of the college, he eventually embraced the profession of painting. He then entered the Royal Academy of France, and studied for a short time under Charles Le Brun. In 1683 he came to England with one Picard, a painter of architecture. At this time Verrio was in the acme of his prosperity. He was producing allegorical ceilings and staircases by wholesale. He had a troop of workmen under him, obedient to his instructions, dabbing in superficial yards of pink flesh, and furlongs of blue clouds. Verrio was happy to secure forthwith so efficient an assistant as Laguerre, and soon found him plenty to do. In nearly every work of Verrio's after this date, it is probable that Laguerre had a hand. He seems to have been an amiable, kindly, simple-minded man, without much self-assertion or any strong opinions of his own. He was quite content to do as Verrio bid him, even imitating him and following him through his figurative mysteries, and floundering with him in the mire of graceless drawing and gaudy colour and ridiculous fable. He had at least as much talent as his master—probably even more. But he never sought to outshine or displace him.

'A modest, unintriguing man,' as Vertue calls him, he was quite satisfied with being second in command, no matter how ignorant and inefficient might be his captain.

John Tijon, his father-in-law, a founder of iron balustrades, said of him, 'God has made him a painter, and there left him.'

He worked under Verrio in St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and at Burleigh; he executed staircases at old Devonshire House, in Piccadilly, at Buckingham House, and at Petworth; assisted in the paintings at Marlborough House, St. James's Park; decorated the saloon at Blenheim; and in many of the apartments at Burleigh on the Hill 'the walls are covered with his Cæsars.'

William of Orange gave the painter lodgings at Hampton Court, where it seems he painted the Labours of Hercules in *chiaro-oscuro*, and repaired Andrea Mantegna's pictures of the Triumphs of Julius Cæsar.

The commissioners for rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral unanimously chose Laguerre to decorate the cupola with frescoes. Subsequently this decision was abandoned in favour of Thornhill; but, as Walpole says, 'the preference was not ravished from Laguerre by superior merit.'

Sir James Thornhill received payment for his paintings in the dome of St. Paul's at the rate of forty shillings the square yard. The world has still the opportunity of deciding upon the merits or demerits of those works. Vertue thinks that Sir James was indebted to Laguerre for his knowledge of historical painting on ceilings, etc. For decorating the staircase of the South Sea Company's House, Sir James received only twenty-five shillings per square yard. By speculating in the shares of the same Company, it may be stated that another artist, Sir Godfrey Kneller, lost £20,000. But prosperous Sir Godfrey could afford to lose; his fortune could sustain even such a shock as that; at his death he left an estate of £2000 per annum. He had intended that Thornhill should decorate the staircase of his seat at Wilton, but learning that Newton was sitting to Sir James, he grew angry. 'No portrait painter shall paint my house,' cried Sir Godfrey, and he gave the commission to Laguerre, who did his very best for his brother artist.

On the union of England and Scotland, Laguerre received an order from Queen Anne to design a set of tapestries commemorative of the event, introducing portraits of her Majesty and her Ministers. He executed the requisite drawings; but it does not appear that the work was ever carried out.

In 1711 he was a director of an academy of drawing instituted in London, under the presidency of Kneller. On the resignation of Kneller, there was a probability of Laguerre being elected in his place; but he was again defeated by his rival, Thornhill, probably as much from his own want of management and self-confidence, as from any other cause.

He drew designs for engravers, and etched a Judgment of Midas. Round the room of a tavern in Drury Lane, where was held a club of *virtuosi*, he painted a Bacchanalian procession, and presented the house with his labours.

He had many imitators; for there are followers of bad as well as of good examples. Among others, Riario, Johnson, Brown, besides Lanscroon, Scheffers, and Picard, who worked with him under Verrio.

His son and pupil, John Laguerre, manifested considerable ability, and engraved a series of prints of 'Hob in the Well,'[3] which had a large popularity, though they were but indifferently executed. He was fond of the theatre, with a talent for music and singing; painted scenery and stage decorations. He even appeared upon the boards as a singer.

Laguerre, in his age, feeble and dropsical, attended Drury Lane on the 20th April 1721, to witness his son's performance in a musical version of Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Island Princess;' but, before the curtain rose, the poor old man was seized with an apoplectic fit, and died the same night. He was buried in the Churchyard of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The son subsequently quitted the stage, and resumed his first profession. He etched a plate, representing Falstaff, Pistol, and Doll Tearsheet, with other theatrical characters, in allusion to a quarrel between the players and patentees. He died in very indigent circumstances, in March 1748.

Time and the white-washer's double-tie brush have combined to destroy most of the ceilings and staircases of Signor Verrio and Monsieur Laguerre. For their art, there was not worth enough in it to endow it with any lasting vitality. They are remembered more from Pope's lines, than on any other account—preserved in them, like uncomely curiosities in good spirits. To resort to the poet for verses applicable, though familiar:—

> 'Pretty in amber to observe the forms
> Of hair, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms;
> The things we know are neither rich nor rare,
> But wonder how the devil they got there!'

NOTES:

[3] A favourite old ballad farce by Dogget, the comedian.

A SCULPTOR'S LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

Horace Walpole, in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, having deplored the low ebb to which the arts had sunk in Britain during the time of George the First, proceeds to consider the succeeding reign with greater complacency: accounting it, indeed, as a new and shining era. Under George the Second he found architecture revived 'in antique purity;' sculpture redeemed from reproach; the art of gardening, or, as he prefers to call it, 'the art of creating landscape,' pressed forward to perfection; engraving much elevated; and painting, if less perceptibly advanced, still (towards the close of the reign, at any rate) ransomed from insipidity by the genius of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The king himself, it was conceded, had 'little propensity to refined pleasure;' but his consort, Queen Caroline, was credited with a lively anxiety to reward merit and to encourage the exertions of the ingenious.

This glowing picture of the period in its relation to the fine arts, contrasts somewhat violently with what we learn elsewhere concerning the poverty of Richard Wilson, the ill-requited labours of William Hogarth, the struggles and sufferings of James Barry, and generally, of the depressed condition of native professors of art during the eighteenth century. That the portrait-painter (the 'face-painter' as Hogarth delighted contemptuously to designate him) found sufficient occupation is likely enough; but, otherwise, the British artist had perforce to limit the aspirations of his genius to the decoration of ceilings and staircases, and to derive his chief emoluments from painting the sign-boards of the British tradesman: if not a very dignified still a remunerative employment; for in those days every London shop boasted its distinct emblem.

Nevertheless it is certain that in George the Second's reign Fashion began to take up with Taste. Dilettanteism became the vogue. Objects of *virtù* were now, for the first time, indispensable appendages of the houses of the aristocratic and the rich. A rage for 'collecting' possessed the town, and led to an expenditure as profuse as it was injudicious. Of the vast sums disbursed, however, but a small share came to the native artist. His works were passed over as beneath the notice of the *cognoscenti*. The 'quality' gave their verdict against modern art and in favour of the ancient masters. A race of old picture-brokers and jobbers in antiquities sprang into existence to

supply the increasing demand for such chattels. The *London Magazine* for 1737, in an article attributed to William Hogarth, inveighs bitterly against these speculators and their endeavours to depreciate every English work in order to enhance the value of their imported shiploads of Dead Christs, Holy Families and Madonnas: the sweepings of the continental art-markets. Auction-rooms were opened in all parts of London for the exhibition and sale of choice objects of every kind, and became the resort and rendezvous of all pretending to wealth and fashion. Agents were to be found at the chief foreign cities eagerly exhuming antiquities for transmission to England: certain of immediate sale and enormous profit there. The prevailing appetite seemed to grow by what it fed on. And then, of course, unscrupulous people took to manufacturing antiquities; and, so doing, drove a brisk and remarkably remunerative trade.

The neglected British artist naturally made protests and wrote pamphlets more or less angry in tone, according to the state of his purse and his temper and the extent of his self-appreciation. The press of the period raised its voice: a less portentous and sonorous organ than it has since possessed. Even the players ventured to be satirical on the subject. It was early in 1752 that Mr. Foote's comedy of *Taste* was brought upon the stage of Drury Lane Theatre, David Garrick both writing and speaking the prologue. Probably the satire soared rather above the heads of the audience. Foote admits as much in his preface to the published play: 'I was always apprehensive that the subject of the following piece was too abstracted and singular for the comprehension of a mixed assembly. Juno, Lucina, Jupiter Tonans, Phidias, Praxiteles, with the other gentlemen and ladies of antiquity, were, I daresay, utterly unknown to my very good friends of the gallery; nor, to speak the truth, do I believe they had many acquaintances in the other parts of the house.' Accordingly *Taste*, on its first production, was only repeated some four nights, and, though revived once or twice afterwards, never took rank as a stock piece. Yet, as Mr. John Forster says of it, Foote's play is legitimate satire, and also excellent comedy.

There is little or no plot. Foote did not care for continuous story; he could generally secure the favour of the audience by the wit of his dialogue and a quick succession of lively incidents. In the first act Lady Pentweazle sits for her portrait in a broadly humorous scene. Puff is an impudent trader in sham antiquities and objects of *virtù*; Carmine, an artist constrained by poverty to aid and abet him in his nefarious proceedings; Brush is another confederate. In the second act a sale by auction is represented. Carmine appears as Canto the auctioneer; Puff figures as the Baron de Groningen, who is travelling to purchase pictures for the Elector of Bavaria. Lord Dupe, Bubble, Squander, and Novice, are fashionable patrons and collectors of art. The pictures to be submitted for sale are inspected. One of them is particularly admired; but is ultimately discovered to be 'a modern performance, the master alive, and an Englishman.' 'Oh, then,' says Lord Dupe, changing his tone, 'I would not give it house-room!' The antiquities are then brought forward. 'The first lot,' announces the auctioneer, 'consists of a hand without an arm, the first joint of the forefinger gone, supposed to be a limb of the Apollo Delphos. The second, half a foot, with the toes entire, of the Juno Lucina. The third, the Caduceus of the Mercurius Infernalis. The fourth, the half of the leg of the Infant Hercules. All indisputable antiques, and of the Memphian marble.' One critic objects to a swelling on the foot of Juno as a defect in its proportion; but the auctioneer informs him that the swelling is intended to represent a *corn*, and the defect is thereupon pronounced an absolute master-stroke. Presently the auctioneer proceeds: 'Bring forward the head from Herculaneum.... Now, gentlemen, here is a jewel.... The very mutilations of this piece are worth all the most perfect performances of modern artists. Now, gentlemen, here is a touchstone for your taste!' He is asked whether the head is intended to represent a man or a woman. 'The connoisseurs differ,' he answers. 'Some will have it to be the Jupiter Tonans of Phidias, and others the Venus of Paphos from Praxiteles; but I don't think it fierce enough for the first, nor handsome enough for the last.... Therefore I am inclined to join with Signor Julio de Pampedillo, who, in a treatise dedicated to the King of the Two Sicilies, calls it the Serapis of the Egyptians, and supposes it to have been fabricated about eleven hundred and three years before the Mosaic account of the creation.' A bystander inquires what has become of the nose of the bust? 'The nose? What care I for the nose?' cries an enthusiastic amateur. 'Why, sir, if it had a nose I wouldn't give sixpence for it! How the devil should we distinguish the works of the ancients if they were perfect? Why, I don't suppose but, barring the nose, ROUBILIAC could cut as good a head every whit.... A man must know d——d little of statuary that dislikes a bust for want of a nose!'

It must be admitted that this is satire of a good trenchant sort. The reader will find plenty more of it if he will only turn to the comedy for himself. Our immediate purpose is with the sculptor for whose name Mr. Foote has found a place in his play.

The rage for collecting antiquities was only equalled by the passion for 'restoring' them when collected. To disinter a torso *here*, and a head *there*, and then to make a sort of forced marriage of the fragments; to graft new feet upon old legs; to dovetail stray hands upon odd arms; to reset broken limbs, and patch and piece mutilations and deficiencies, constituted the delights and the triumphs of the amateurs. In accomplishing these exploits the services of foreign workmen were extensively employed; for, by a curious piece of reasoning, the foreign sculptor, no matter how limited his capacity, was held to be far more competent to restore antiquities than the English artist of whatever reputation. It was, doubtless, in consequence of this demand for foreign labour, and the liberal manner in which its exertions were recognised and requited, that Louis Francis Roubiliac found his way to this country.

In his account of the sculptor, Walpole is singularly brief; supplies very meagre information; yet when he was compiling his Anecdotes the fame of Roubiliac was at its highest; he was freshly

remembered on all sides, and the facts of his early life could have been collected, one would imagine, without much difficulty. He was born, from all accounts, at Lyons, about the close of the seventeenth century; was a pupil of Balthazar of Dresden, sculptor to the Elector of Saxony, and came to England in 1720. That he was without repute in his native land is evidenced by the fact that no mention of him appears in D'Argenville's *Lives of the most Eminent Sculptors of France*, published in 1787. Of his parentage nothing is known. He had apparently received a fair education; was found to possess a considerable acquaintance with the literature of his native land; more especially was conversant with the works of the best French poets, and himself produced original verse of a respectable quality. Yet, notwithstanding his long residence in England, he never mastered the English language so as to be able to use it freely; and in all the anecdotes extant of him he is represented as employing the broken dialect common to foreigners.

For some years after his arrival in England his occupation would appear to have been little better than that of a journeyman sculptor, employed under various masters in botching antiquities. Mr. John Thomas Smith, in his *Life of Nollekens*, informs us that when Mr. Roubiliac had to mend an antique, he 'would mix Gloucester cheese with his plaster, adding the grounds of porter, and the yolk of an egg: which mixture when dry forms a very hard cement.' Walpole states that the artist had little business until Sir Edward Walpole (Sir Robert's second son: Horace was the third) recommended him to execute half the busts in Trinity College, Dublin; but the date of this act of patronage is not supplied. A story attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and set forth in his Life by Northcote, relates that Roubiliac first secured the patronage of Sir Edward Walpole by picking up and restoring a pocket-book he had dropped at Vauxhall, containing bank-notes and other papers of value. The artist declined to receive any reward for this service, although ultimately he was persuaded to accept the annual present of a fat buck, as a testimony of gratitude and regard; further, he became the object of Sir Edward's constant patronage. Horace Walpole says nothing of this story; but the brothers, it was well known, were not friends, seldom if ever met, and probably were not closely informed of each other's proceedings. In a letter written in 1745 to his friend George Montagu, Horace Walpole gives an amusing description of the patron of Roubiliac, and, incidentally, reveals the not very brotherly terms subsisting between himself and the knight: 'You propose making a visit to Englefield Green' [where Sir Edward lived], 'and ask me if I think it right? Extremely so. I have heard it is a very pretty place. You love a jaunt—have a pretty chaise, I believe, and I dare swear, very easy; in all probability you will have a fine evening; and added to all this, the gentleman' [Sir E.W.] 'you would go to see is very agreeable and good-humoured,... plays extremely well on the bass-viol, and has generally other people with him.... He is perfectly master of all the quarrels that have been fashionably on foot about Handel, and can give you a very perfect account of all the modern rival painters.... In short, I can think of no reason in the world against your going there but one: *do you know his youngest brother?*? If you happen to be so unlucky, I can't flatter you so far as to advise you to make him a visit: for there is nothing in the world the Baron of Englefield has such an aversion for as for his brother!'

It was probably some years before this that Roubiliac had obtained employment from Mr. Jonathan Tyers, who in 1732 had become the proprietor of Vauxhall Gardens. The 'New Spring Gardens at Fox Hall' had in the previous century been a resort of Mr. Samuel Pepys, who has left on record his approval of the place. 'It is very pleasant and cheap going thither,' he writes in 1667, 'for a man may go to spend what he will or nothing, as all one. But to hear the nightingale and the birds, and here fiddles and there a harp, and here a Jew's-trump and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty divertising.' Since the Pepys period, however, the gardens had fallen into disrepute; had indeed been closed during many seasons. Mr. Tyers took the place in hand, bent upon restoring its fame and fashion. He erected an orchestra, with an organ, engaged the best singers and musicians of the day, built alcoves for the company, and secured paintings by Messrs. Hayman and Hogarth for the further embellishment of the gardens. Then he discussed with his friend, Mr. Cheere, as to adding works of statuary. Mr. Cheere dealt largely in painted leaden figures, then much employed in 'the art of creating landscape.' He was 'the man at Hyde Park Corner' of whom Lord Ogleby in the comedy[4] makes mention when he says: 'Great improvements, indeed, Mr. Sterling! Wonderful improvements! The four Seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the basin with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde Park Corner!' Mr. Cheere advised Mr. Tyers to set up a statue of Handel. There was some difficulty about the expense. But Mr. Cheere introduced a clever artist, a Frenchman, content to work upon very moderate terms. This was, of course, Louis Francis Roubiliac; who accordingly produced his statue of Handel: greatly to the admiration of the *habitués* of Vauxhall. It stood, in 1744, on the south side of the gardens, under an enclosed lofty arch, surmounted by a figure playing on the violoncello, attended by two boys; it was then screened from the weather by a curtain, which was drawn up when the visitors arrived. Mr. Tyers's plans were crowned with success. Fashion was enthusiastic on the subject of Vauxhall. Royalty patronized; the nobility protected and promoted; and the general public crowded Mr. Tyers's handsome pleasure-grounds. The ladies promenaded in their hoops, sacques, and caps, as they appeared in their own drawing-rooms: the beaux of the period were in attendance, with swords and powdered bag-wigs, their three-cornered hats under their arms. Read Walpole's account (in another letter to George Montagu) of his visit in 1750. He accompanied Lady Caroline Petersham and little Miss Ashe—or 'the Pollard Ashe,' as it pleases him to describe her. The ladies had just put on their last layer of rouge, 'and looked as handsome as crimson could make them.' They proceed in a barge, a boat of French horns attending, and little Miss Ashe singing. Parading some time up the river they at last debark at Vauxhall, and there pick up Lord Granby, 'arrived very drunk from Jenny's Whim'—a tavern at Chelsea frequented by his lordship and other gentlemen of fashion. Assembled in their supper-box, Lady

Caroline, 'looking gloriously jolly and handsome,' minces seven chickens in a china dish (Lord Orford, Horace's brother, assisting), and stews them over a lamp, with three pats of butter and a flagon of water, stirring, and rattling, and laughing: the company expecting the dish to fly about their ears every minute. Then Betty, the famous fruit-woman from St. James's Street, is in attendance with hampers of strawberries and cherries, waits upon the guests, and afterwards sits down to her own supper at a side table. The company become, by-and-by, a little boisterous in their merriment, and attract the attention of the other visitors; there is soon quite a concourse round Lady Caroline's box, till Harry Vane fills a bumper and toasts the bystanders, and is proceeding to treat them with still greater freedom. 'It was three o'clock before we got home,' concludes Walpole. Such was a fashionable frolic at Vauxhall under Mr. Tyers's management: when Roubiliac's statue of Handel stood in the midst.

Vauxhall vanished some ten or a dozen years since. Its latter days were dreary, down-at-heel, and disreputable enough. The statue had departed long previously. 'It was conveyed to the house of Mr. Barrett, at Stockwell,' records Mr. J.T. Smith in 1829, 'and thence to the entrance-hall of the residence of his son, the Rev. Jonathan Tyers Barrett, D.D., of No. 14 Duke Street, Westminster.' Mr. Henry Phillips, in his *Musical and Personal Recollections* (1864), regrets that when Roubiliac's Handel 'was brought to the hammer, and sold by Mr. Squibb on the 16th March 1832, for two hundred and five guineas, the Sacred Harmonic Society did not purchase it in place of its being bought by Mr. Brown, of University Street.' Nollekens used to value the statue at one thousand guineas. The plaster model became the property of Hudson, the preceptor of Reynolds, who possessed a collection of models at his house at Twickenham. Upon the death of Hudson and the sale of his collection, the model was bought for five pounds by the father of Mr. J.T. Smith, a pupil of Roubiliac's, and it then passed into the possession of Nollekens. When Nollekens's effects were sold, the plaster Handel was knocked down by Mr. Christie to Hamlet, the famous silversmith. Its further history has not been traced.

The statue of Handel, the first original work that can, with any certainty, be ascribed to Roubiliac, may be regarded as a fair specimen of the artist's manner. He was of the school of Bernini. He followed the sculptors who infinitely prefer *unrest* to *repose* in art. He dearly enjoyed a *tour de force* in stone. He liked to deal with marble as though it were the most plastic of materials: to twist it this way and that, and rumple and flutter it as though it were merely muslin. To have carved a wig in a gale of wind would have been a task particularly agreeable to this class of artists; they would have done their best to represent each particular hair standing on end. They adored minutiæ: a shoulder-knot of ribbons, the embroidery of a sword-belt, the stitches of a seam, the lace of a cravat, were achievements to be gloried in. And yet, with all this realism in detail, their works are unreal and artificial in general effect; as a glance at any statue by Roubiliac will sufficiently demonstrate.

This arises possibly from the artist's fondness for attitude. He seems to have regarded posture-making as a peculiar attribute of genius. His figures are always in a constrained and over-studied pose: twisting about in the throes of giving birth to a great idea: filled with the divine *afflatus*, even to the bursting of their buttonholes and the snapping of their braces. His Handel is in a state of exceeding perturbation: his clothes in staring disorder, his hair floating in the breeze. The intention was to represent the composer in the act of raptured meditation upon music; but, as Allan Cunningham remarks, he looks much more like a man alarmed at an apparition. But then this exaggeration of demeanour was very much the artist's own manner in actual life. The Frenchman has always a sort of innate histrionic faculty: he is for ever, perhaps unconsciously, playing a part. So Roubiliac was himself incessantly acting and attitudinizing, much after the fashion of his statues. He seemed to hold that it was expedient, for the better preventing of mistakes about the matter, that genius should always in such way advertise itself; there was danger lest it should not be believed in if it left off making grimaces and striking attitudes. Perhaps from his own point of view, and in his own time, the artist was right. It was necessary then to do something to arrest the attention of a public apathetic on the subject of art-talent, unless, as Peter Pindar sang, the artist 'had been dead a hundred years.' Possibly, the only way for a man in those days to gain credit as a genius was by affecting eccentricity and unconventionality: taking heed that all his proceedings were as unlike other people's as possible. Thereupon the world argued: geniuses are not as we are; this person is not as we are; therefore he must be a genius. Q.E.D.

Consequently, we find Roubiliac—a thin, olive-skinned Frenchman, with strongly-marked, arching eyebrows, mobile features, and small, sharp, dark eyes—liable at all times to fits of abstraction, attacks of inspiration. He will drop his knife and fork while at dinner, sink back in his chair, assume an ecstatic expression: the fit is on him; he must abandon his meal and hurry away at once to lock himself in his studio, and place upon record the superb idea which has so inconveniently visited him. His companions make allowances for him: men of genius are often thus. At other times he is absorbed in meditation upon his art: address him, and he makes no reply, fails to hear. While engaged upon his statue of Handel, he decides that the great musician must have possessed an ear of exceeding symmetry, and searches everywhere for a model. He scrutinizes the ears of all his acquaintances. Suddenly he pounces upon Miss Rich, the daughter of the Covent Garden manager. 'Miss Rich,' he cries, 'I must have your ear for my Handel!' In Westminster Abbey he permits himself to be 'discovered'—to use an appropriate theatrical term—lost in contemplation of the kneeling figure at the north-west corner of Sir Francis Vere's monument. His servant, having thrice delivered a message, without receiving a word in reply, finds his arm suddenly seized, and his master whispering mysteriously in his ear, while he points to the statue: 'Hush! hush! he vill speak presently!' At another time he invites a friend to occupy

a spare bed at his house, gives him his candle, and bids him good-night. Presently the friend is heard crying aloud in great excitement and alarm; the bed is already occupied: the dead body of a negress is laid out upon it. 'I beg your pardon,' says the artist, 'I quite forgot poor Mary vas dere. Poor Mary! she die yesterday vid de small-pox. She was my housemaid for five, six years. Come along; I vill find you a bed somevhere else.' All this was but acting up to the idea Mr. Roubiliac had formed of the abstractedness and eccentricity of genius.

Serene, sedate Flaxman, who adored the antique, who held that sculpture should be nothing if not calm and classical, was little likely to sympathize with Roubiliac, or to comprehend his close following of Bernini, or indeed to care at all for his productions. 'His thoughts are conceits; his compositions epigrams,' says Flaxman. And then he is astounded that Roubiliac, who, at the ripe age of fifty, accompanied by Hudson the painter, also arrived at a period of life somewhat advanced for study, visited Italy, should presume to return unmoved and unenlightened by what he had seen. 'He was absent from home three months, going and returning,' relates Flaxman, with an air of indignation; 'stayed three days in Rome, and laughed at the sublime remains of ancient sculpture!' Positively laughed! To Flaxman, who was certainly a bigot in regard to the beauties of the antique, if Roubiliac was something of a scoffer in that respect, this seemed flat blasphemy. Yet it was hardly to be expected that Roubiliac, at the height of a successful career, would admit his whole system of art to have been founded on error—would consent humbly to recommence his profession, and forthwith prostrate himself at the feet of ancient sculpture. His admiration for Bernini—whom of course Flaxman cordially detested—was genuine enough. The Italian's florid manner chimed in with his own French, gesticulating, mercurial notions of art. If excess of self-satisfaction prevented him from rendering due homage to the relics of the past—and possibly his early toils as a 'restorer' further tended to blind him to their value—he was careful to pay tribute to the merits of the artist he had selected for his prototype. Hazlitt mentions, on the authority of Northcote, that when Roubiliac, returned from Rome, went to look at his own works in Westminster Abbey, he cried out in his usual vehement way, 'By God! they look like tobacco-pipes compared to Bernini!' And he was not without honest admiration for the production of other artists more nearly of his own time. Whenever he visited the city he was careful to go round by the gates of Bethlehem Hospital, in Moorfields, over which stood Caius Gabriel Cibber's figures of Raving and Melancholy Madness: Colley Cibber's '*brazen*, brainless brothers,' as Pope called them, ignorant, possibly from their having become so begrimed with London smoke, that they were really carved in stone. Roubiliac highly esteemed these statues. Though in idea evidently borrowed from Michael Angelo, they were yet strictly realistic in treatment, and were reputed to be modelled from Oliver Cromwell's giant porter, at one time a patient in the Hospital. When Bethlehem was removed to St. George's Fields the surface of these figures was renovated by Bacon, the sculptor. They are now deposited in the South Kensington Museum.

Indeed, what Flaxman intended as a reproach, may sound in modern ears much more like approval. 'He copied vulgar nature with zeal, and some of his figures seem alive.' Roubiliac constantly had recourse to the living forms about him; Flaxman preferred instead to turn to the antique. We hear of Roubiliac's fondness for modelling the arms of Thames watermen and the legs of chair-porters: in each case the particular employment inducing great muscular development of the limbs to be moulded. And this desire for independent study was really creditable to the artist. He sought to arrive at the correctness of the ancients by a pathway of his own: to check, by a distinct reckoning, an individual reference to nature, and, if need was, fearlessly to depart from, what they had registered as the result of their investigations. A more legitimate charge against him was that he was negligent in his choice of forms for imitation; undervalued refinement of idea; took altogether a somewhat mean view of nature, or adulterated it with too large an infusion of the dancing-master. Certainly he was fonder of *fritter* than of breadth; and his draperies are often meagre in effect from the multiplicity of their folds, and his attempt at rendering *texture* in marble. This may be noticed in his statue of Sir Isaac Newton, at Cambridge, where an excess of labour, seems expended on the silk mantle of the figure—all the small creases and plaitings of the light material being represented, and the surface highly polished, still further to increase the resemblance.

This statue, however, was highly admired by Chantrey,[5] and to it, in his *Prelude*, Wordsworth has dedicated laudatory lines.

There is no necessity for running through a list of Roubiliac's works. But his statue of Shakespeare is deserving of a passing notice. It of course fails to satisfy the students of the bard, who delight to pay equal homage to his philosophy as to his poetry. There is nothing of the sage about the work: it is wholly of the *stage* indeed. It is replete with Roubiliac's established ecstatic super-elegant manner; with a strong tinge of theatricalism, possibly added by Garrick, for whose temple at Hampton the statue was undertaken; who attitudinized in aid, as he imagined, of the sculptor's labours, with a cry of 'Behold the swan of Avon!' and who, it must be said, at all times entertained a very 'footlight' view of the poet. The price paid for the work was three hundred guineas only. Roubiliac was to supply the best marble he could for the money. Unfortunately the block turned out to be much spotted and streaked; the head was especially disfigured with blue stains. 'What!' cried Garrick, 'was Shakespeare marked with mulberries?' It became necessary to sever the head from the shoulders and replace it with one of purer marble. The statue was completed in 1758. Under the terms of Garrick's will, it became, on the death of his widow, the property of the nation, and it now stands in the entrance-hall of the British Museum. After the purists and the exacting have said their worst against the statue, it will yet be found—from the spirit of its execution, its cleverness, and 'go,' to resort to a vulgarism—charming a very large

class of uncritical examiners.

As Lord Chesterfield said of Roubiliac, 'he was the only statuary of his day; all other artists were mere stone-cutters.' It is very desirable, in estimating his merits, to bear in mind that he stood alone; his rivals, Rysbrach and Scheemakers, he had completely outstripped; and, apart from his following of Bernini, he was clearly an artist of an original and creative kind. What is hard to forgive in him, however, and what indeed has much detracted from his reputation, is the fact that a long list of allegorical monstrosities was in some sort the result of his example. Charmed with certain of his works, and possessed just then by particular memories it deemed deserving of monumental celebration, the nation rushed recklessly to its stone-cutters. The terrible works which blemish and blister the walls of our cathedrals and churches were the consequences. Verrio and Laguerre had long set the fashion of disfiguring ceilings and staircases with their incomprehensible compositions. Roubiliac carved similar parabolic productions in marble and set them up in Westminster Abbey and elsewhere. In these, heathen divinities jostle Christian emblems; Paganism is seen abreast of true religion. In the aisle of a Gothic abbey, John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich, warrior and orator, expires at the foot of a pyramid, on which History, weeping, writes his deeds, while Minerva (or Britannia) mourns at the side, and Eloquence above, tossing white arms in the air, deplores the loss she has sustained. Here we find Hercules placing the bust of Sir Peter Warren upon a pedestal, while Navigation prepares to crown it with a laurel wreath; a British flag forming the background and a horn of plenty emptying its contents beside an anchor and a cannon. In the monument to Marshal Wade, Time is endeavouring to destroy a pillar adorned with military trophies, which fame as zealously protects. The famous Nightingale memorial represents a husband shielding a dying wife from the attack of Death: a grinning skeleton levelling a javelin as he issues from the opening iron door of a tomb. The admirable execution of these works cannot blind the critic to the utter unfitness and folly of their conception.

But Roubiliac's successors far outbid him in absurdity. To a number of people a precedent is always a point of departure—an example to be imitated with violent exaggeration. After our sculptor came a deluge of imbecility. We are then among stone-cutters who shrink from nothing; we are treated then to clouds that look like muffins—to waves that resemble pancakes. Apotheosis becomes preposterous; allegory goes fairly mad. Glancing at certain post-Roubiliac achievements, we long for an earthquake. Nicholas Read, the least competent of his pupils, upon the sculptor's death occupied his studio, advertised himself as successor to Mr. Roubiliac, and, strange to say, was largely employed: the execution of the monuments to Admiral Tyrrell and the Duchess of Northumberland, in Westminster Abbey, being intrusted to him. During his master's life the apprentice had boasted of the great deeds he would do when he had served his time. Roubiliac cried scornfully, in his broken English: 'Ven you do de monument, den de vorld vill see vot von d——d ting you vill make of it!' His words were justified by Read's monument to Admiral Tyrrell: possibly the most execrable work in stone in existence; which is saying a good deal. As Nollekens would often remark of it: 'Read's admiral going to heaven looks for all the world as though he were hanging from a gallows with a rope round his neck.'

As Roubiliac's first work was a statue of Handel for Vauxhall Gardens, so his last was a statue of the same great composer for Westminster Abbey. He died on the 11th January 1762, and was buried in St. Martin's Churchyard, 'under the window of the Bell Bagnio.' His funeral was attended by the leading members of the Society of Artists, then meeting at the Academy in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane: the room they occupied, it may be noted, having been Roubiliac's first workshop. The artists following the funeral were:—Mr. (afterwards Sir Joshua) Reynolds, Moser, Hogarth, Tyler, Sandby, Hayman, Wilton, Bartolozzi, Cipriani, Payne, Chambers (afterwards Sir William), Serres, Ravenet, the elder Grignon, Meyer, and Hudson; and the dead master's three pupils, John Adkins, Nicholas Read, and Nathaniel Smith.

Roubiliac died poor; indeed, seriously in debt. Yet he had married well, it would seem. An old newspaper, under date January 1752, records: 'Married Mr. Roubiliac, the statuary in St. Martin's Lane, to Miss Crossley of Deptford, worth £10,000.' No particulars of his married life have come down to us, however. It is probable that his wife predeceased him. The money was spent in any case. Perhaps she never possessed so much as the world gave her credit for. The sale of his effects, after payment of his funeral expenses, left only about one-and-sixpence in the pound to his creditors. Though constantly employed, the prices he received were small; and a thoroughly conscientious artist, he never spared time or labour upon the commissions he had undertaken. He was not, it is stated, extravagant in his habits; did not waste his means in the support of a pretentious establishment. On the contrary, his method of life was very modest: his tastes were simple enough. Society was not yet prepared to admit the professions to her *salons*; her somewhat costly caresses were reserved for the ingenious of a succeeding generation. Roubiliac was content to live that easy pleasant tavern life favoured by the men of letters and artists of the eighteenth century, and with which Johnson and Boswell have made us so intimately acquainted. A bottle of claret and a game of whist solaced his leisure hours; and these were not numerous: he was constantly to be found in his studio, late at night, hard at work long after his assistants had retired: a vivacious, honest, warm-hearted man, much and justly esteemed by his friends and contemporaries.

He was a familiar acquaintance of Goldsmith, who in his Chinese letters speaks of him kindly as 'the little sculptor.' He was fond of music, and Goldsmith would play the flute to him. As Sir John Hawkins records, the sculptor once tricked the poet by pretending to set down the notes on paper as Goldsmith played them. Goldsmith looked over the paper afterwards with seeming great

attention, said it was quite correct, and that if he had not seen him do it he never could have believed his friend capable of writing music after him. Roubiliac had jotted down notes at random. Neither had any real knowledge of music, and Goldsmith played entirely by ear.

His intimate and fellow-sculptor—a painter also—Adrien Charpentier, executed a characteristic portrait of Roubiliac. He is represented at work upon a small-size model of his Shakespeare. He is touching the eye of the figure with his modelling tool, and the task, one of some delicacy and difficulty, adds to the animation of the operator. His head, where it is not covered by the fanciful loose head-dress affected by poets and artists of the period, is bald: possibly shaven, for the convenience of wig-wearing, after the custom of the time. His dress is disordered, his bosom bare, his wristbands loose. Had Roubiliac carved his own statue in stone, it would probably, in treatment, have closely followed Charpentier's picture.

A portrait of Roubiliac, painted by himself, was sold for three-and-sixpence only at the sale of his effects. The prices, indeed, at this sale seem to have been desperately low. There were no antiquities or objects of *virtù* brought to the hammer: and Mr. Canto was not the auctioneer! A copy by Reynolds of the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare, with seven other pictures, was knocked down for ten shillings only, the father of John Flaxman being the purchaser. Reynolds had painted the picture as a present to his friend, Mr. Roubiliac. It afterwards became the property of Mr. Edmond Malone.

NOTES:

[4] 'The Clandestine Marriage.'

[5] 'Chantrey esteemed highly the works of Roubiliac; he admired his busts; and thought the statue of Newton at Cambridge of the best character of portrait sculpture. The simplicity of the figure, united with the apparent intelligence and thought in the countenance, he considered as quite satisfactory; and although he generally disliked the imitation of any particular material in drapery, he was reconciled to the college dress of the philosopher. From its perfect arrangement, the imitation is so complete that the person who shows the statue at Cambridge always informs the visitor that it only requires to be black to render it a deception. He was inclined to tolerate anything that displayed ingenuity without violating possibility, yet he could never endure such extraneous and uninteresting matter as the shot, the barrel of powder, and the bent chamber of a piece of artillery in the monument to Lord Shannon, in Walton Church, which, with much to commend in the two figures, has a profusion of objects, and a grey marble background, representing a tent, altogether unnecessary and derogatory to the purity of sculpture. Still Roubiliac was rich in thought and reason, for, in his monument in Westminster Abbey, where he has represented Death as a skeleton, he felt that the thin and meagre bones would be as offensive as impracticable; therefore judiciously involved the greater part of the emblem in a shroud or drapery, adding thereby to his allegory and aiding his art. However hostile this style may be to the simplicity of sculpture, the ability of the artist in the conception and execution deserves high praise. The beadle of Worcester Cathedral informed a friend of Chantrey's, that when the sculptor was in that city he always went to see the monument to Bishop Hurd by Roubiliac, and remained a long time in intent observation of the work, for he thought the artist's power over the material surprising, though he disliked polishing the marble.'-*Recollections of Chantrey*, by George Jones, R.A.

The cast taken by Roubiliac from the face of Newton is in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow.

THE RISE OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

he famous artists of the Continent almost invariably organize schools of art, converting their studios into miniature academies, surrounding themselves with pupils and disciples who sit at their feet, listen to their teaching, assist them by painting for them the less important portions of

their works, adopt their processes, and follow their styles of drawing and colouring. There is something to be said for the system. It is an advantage to the young student to be constantly brought into contact with a real master of the art; to have the opportunity of working under his supervision, and, on the other hand, of watching him at his labours, and of witnessing the birth, growth, and completion of his best pictures. The main objection to the plan is that it may develop merely imitative ability rather than stimulate genuine originality; that it inclines the student to follow too scrupulously a beaten track rather than strike out a fresh pathway for himself. He may reproduce the virtues of his exemplar's art, but he will certainly copy its vices as well. And then the difficult question arises: when is he to assert his independence? At what period in his career is he to cease leaning on his teacher, and to pursue his own devices unaided and alone? He may have tied his leading-strings so tightly about him that liberty of thought and action has become almost impossible to him, and the free use of his limbs, so to speak, has gone from him. It is quite true that the artist should be a student all his life; but then he should be a student of art generally, not of any one professor of art in particular, or he will be simply the pupil of a great master to the end of the chapter, never a great master himself.

Objection to a system of instruction that may tend to perpetuate mannerism, to cramp originality, and fetter genius, has of late years led to considerable opposition to art-academies generally, whenever more is contemplated by them than the mere school-teaching of the pupil, and the affording him assistance at the outset of his professional life. Haydon was fond of declaring 'that academies all over Europe were signals of distress thrown out to stop the decay of art,' but that they had failed egregiously, and rather hastened the result they had intended to hinder. Fuseli asserted that 'all schools of painters, whether public or private, supported by patronage or individual contribution, were and are symptoms of art in distress, monuments of public dereliction and decay of taste.' He proceeded afterwards to defend such schools, however, as the asylum of the student, the theatre of his exercises, the repositories of the materials, the archives of art, whose principles their officers were bound to maintain, and for the preservation of which they were responsible to posterity, etc. Dr. Waagen was of opinion that the academic system gave an artificial elevation to mediocrity; that it deadened natural talent, and introduced into the freedom of art an unsalutary degree of authority and interference. The late Horace Vernet entertained similar views, recommending the suppression of the French Academy at Rome. M. Say (the Adam Smith of France) held that all Academies were in truth hostile to the fine arts; and a report of a committee of the English House of Commons (1836) went far in the same direction, venturing to predict the probability 'that the principle of free competition in art as in commerce would ultimately triumph over all artificial institutions,' and that 'governments might at some future period content themselves with holding out prizes or commissions to the different but co-equal societies of artists, and refuse the dangerous gift of pre-eminence to any.'

In England the school of the individual great artist upon the continental plan seems to have had no counterpart. Favourite portrait-painters have, now and then, employed a staff of subordinates to paint the draperies, and fill in the backgrounds of their works, but the persons thus employed have been mechanicians rather than artists. Northcote was the pupil of Reynolds, and Harlowe was taught by Lawrence; but in neither case was there much attempt at maintaining a school of manner, as it would be understood out of England. The works of Northcote and Harlowe contain traces of the teaching of their preceptors little more than do the productions of their contemporaries, and they certainly bequeathed no distinct traditions of style to their successors. In England the foundation of a National Academy, or of an institution in any measure manifesting the characteristics of a National Academy, took place long subsequent to the rise of the foreign Academies. And the English Royal Academy, as at present constituted, cannot be said to occupy a position analogous to that of foreign academies. As was expressed in the Report of the Parliamentary Committee of 1836: 'It is not a public national institution like the French Academy, since it lives by exhibition and takes money at the door, yet it possesses many of the privileges of a public body without bearing the direct burthen of public responsibility.' Or, as was succinctly explained by Mr. Westmacott, himself an academician, before the commissioners appointed in 1863 to inquire into the position of the Royal Academy: 'When we wish not to be interfered with we are private, when we want anything of the public we are public;' and then he goes on to say: 'The Academy is distinctly a private institution, and, admitting it is not perfect, doing great public good all for nothing,' *i.e.*, without charge. Mr. Westmacott was unconsciously pleading guilty to Haydon's accusation that 'the academicians constituted in truth a private society, which they always put forward when you wish to examine them, and they always proclaim themselves a public society when they want to benefit by any public vote.'

For long years the sentiment had prevailed in England that art was no affair of the State, had no sort of interest for the governing power of the country, or indeed for the general public; and it was, of course, left to those persons to whom an Academy of Art was in any way a matter of necessity or importance, to found such an institution for themselves. Certainly the encouragement given to the painter during the first half of the eighteenth century was insignificant enough. He was viewed much as the astrologer or the alchemist; his proceedings, the world argued, were sufficiently foolish and futile, but still harmless; he was not particularly in anybody's way, and therefore it was not worth anybody's while to molest or displace him. But as for patronizing, or valuing, or rewarding him, turning upon him the light of the royal countenance, or cheering him with popular applause, those were quite other matters. King, and Court, and people had vastly different things to think about. He was just suffered, not succoured in any way. He must get on as well as he could, educating, improving, helping himself. As for aid from the State, that was absolutely out of the question.

For the benefit of his brother artists and of himself, therefore, Sir Godfrey Kneller, who had lived in happier times, so far as art was concerned—for the Stuarts had some love for poetry and painting, though the Hanoverian sovereigns had not—instituted a private drawing Academy in London in the year 1711. Of this Academy, Vertue, who collected the materials for the 'Anecdotes of Painting,' which Walpole digested and published, was one of the first members, studying there some years; and it was probably of this institution that Hogarth wrote in 1760, describing it as founded by some gentlemen painters of the first rank, who, in imitation of the Academy of France, introduced certain forms and solemnities into their proceedings which were objectionable to several members, and led to divisions and jealousies in the general body. Finally, the president and his followers, finding themselves caricatured and opposed, locked out their opponents and closed the Academy.

Sir James Thornhill, who had headed the most important of the parties into which the institution had become divided, and who held the appointment of historical painter to George I., then submitted to the Government of the day a plan for the foundation of a Royal Academy which should encourage and educate the young artists of England. He proposed that a suitable building, with apartments for resident professors, should be erected at the upper end of the King's Mews, Charing Cross. The cost of carrying out this plan was estimated at little more than three thousand pounds; but although Lord Treasurer Halifax gave his support, the Government negatived the proposition, and declined to find the necessary means.

Sir James, not altogether daunted by his ill success, determined to do what he could on his own responsibility, and without aid from the Treasury. He opened a Drawing Academy, therefore, at his house in James Street, Covent Garden, on the east side, where, as a writer in 1804 describes the situation, 'the back offices and painting-room abutted upon Langford's (then Cock's) Auction Room in the Piazza,' and gave tickets to all who desired admission. It is to be feared that Sir James's generosity was somewhat abused. Certain it is that dissensions arose in his Academy as in Kneller's; that one Vandrebank headed an opposition party, and at length withdrew with his adherents to found a rival school. According to Hogarth, 'he converted an old meeting-house into an Academy, and introduced a female figure to make it more inviting to subscribers.' But this establishment did not last long, the subscriptions were not forthcoming, and the fittings and furniture of the school were seized for debt. Upon the death of Sir James, in 1734, his Academy was also closed.

But a school had now become indispensably necessary to the artists of the day. After a time they forgot their differences, and again united. Hogarth had become possessed of his father-in-law Sir James Thornhill's furniture, which he was willing to lend to an association of artists founding a new school; a subscription was accordingly arranged, and a room 'large enough to admit of thirty or forty persons drawing after a naked figure,' was hired in the house of Mr. Hyde, a painter in Greyhound Court, Arundel Street, Strand. Hogarth, attributing the failure of preceding academies to an assumption of superior authority on the part of members whose subscriptions were of largest amount, proposed that all members should equally contribute to the maintenance of the establishment, and should possess equal rights of voting on all questions relative to its affairs. For many years this academy, which, in 1738, removed to more convenient premises[6] in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, existed in a most satisfactory manner. To this school of Hogarth's, as we may fairly consider it, the majority of the English painters of the reign of George II. and the early part of George III., owed much of their art education. Perhaps the success of the school was due in great part to the discretion and good management of the artist who had been nominated its chief instructor: George Michael Moser, a gold and silver chaser, enameller and modeller, Swiss by birth. Something also it owed to its unpretentious yet practical and utilitarian character. The artists were bound together by mutual convenience; their school, conferring no degrees, aiming at no distinction, was of equal advantage to all. It was strictly a private institution, in no way attracting to itself public notice or asking for aid from the public purse.

In 1734 there had been founded in England the Dilettanti Society, composed of noblemen and gentlemen who had travelled abroad, and professed a taste for the fine arts. In 1749, this society found itself rich and influential enough to contemplate the establishment of an academy of art, and even took steps to obtain a site on the south side of Cavendish Square, and to purchase Portland stone for the erection there of a building adapted to the purpose, on the plan of the Temple at Pola. The society then put itself in correspondence with the School of Painters in St. Martin's Lane, asking for co-operation and assistance in the carrying out of the project. The painters, however, according to Sir Robert Strange's account of the transaction, held back: they objected to aid in the formation of an academy of art which was not to be under the absolute rule and government of artists. Thereupon the Dilettanti Society declined to find funds for the foundation of an institute over which, when completed, they were to possess no influence whatever, in the management of which they were to be absolutely without voice; and the negotiation was accordingly brought to an abrupt conclusion. (We may note here that, curiously enough, the Royal Commission of 1863 proposed, in some degree, a reversion to this abortive project, and recommended the introduction of a lay element into the governing body of the present Royal Academy.)

The proposal of the Dilettanti Society, though rejected, seems yet, after the lapse of a few years, to have tempted the painters in St. Martin's Lane to enlarge the boundaries of their institution. In 1753 they fancied the time had come when, with the support of the general body of artists in England, an effort might be made to found a national academy. A circular was addressed to all the well-known artists by Francis Milner Newton, the secretary of the school in St. Martin's Lane,

calling their attention to a scheme for establishing a public academy of painting, sculpture and architecture, for erecting a suitable building, receiving subscriptions, appointing professors, making regulations for the instruction of students, etc. The circular concluded by requesting attendance at a meeting to be held at the Turk's Head, in Gerard Street, Soho, when the election of thirteen painters, three sculptors, one chaser, two engravers, and two architects, in all twenty-one, for the purposes of the academy, would be proceeded with. But this scheme met with little support, and was abandoned. Its projectors, defeated and ridiculed—the subjects of several caricatures of the period—had to fall back again among their fellow-artists, probably with little advantage to the harmony of the general body.

Yet the plan of an academy, though it had met with very inconsiderable encouragement, was not suffered to die out absolutely; somehow the thing took root, and even grew, in a measure, making no very great sign of vitality however. But it produced a pamphlet now and then—found unexpected advocates here and there, dragged on a sickly, invalid sort of existence. In 1755, a committee of artists resumed the idea, but this time they appeared to the sympathies of the general public, proposing to raise an academy as charitable institutions are established, by aid of popular benevolence, and to apply for a charter of incorporation from the Crown, the terms of the charter being formally drawn up, and even published. The prospectus made handsome mention of the pecuniary assistance which had been some time before proffered by the Dilettanti Society; whereupon the society renewed its promise of support, and re-opened negotiations with the committee of artists. But difficulties again arose. Sir Robert Strange, who attended the meetings of the parties, found on the part of the Dilettanti Society 'that generosity and benevolence which are peculiar to true greatness;' but on the side of the majority of the artists, he regretted to observe 'motives apparently limited to their own views and ambition to govern.' Again the negotiation was broken off, the project went to pieces, and now the hope of establishing a national academy in England seemed in its worst plight—hopeless—gone down to zero.

In 1757, Hogarth, on the resignation of his brother-in-law, Mr. Thornhill, was appointed, in the sixtieth year of his age, painter to the king. Hogarth, it may be noted, had always opposed the attempt to found an academy. He supported the plan of an art-school, deeming such an institution of practical value to the painter. But he appears to have thought that an academy would only multiply portrait painters, of whom there was quite a sufficiency, would not create a demand for works of real art-value, or improve the taste of patrons in that respect. In 1758, Hogarth's idea of an art-school met with unexpected support in the opening of the Duke of Richmond's Gallery of Casts and Statues at Whitehall. Invitation to students was given by public advertisements. For a time Cipriani gave instruction in the gallery, and it is recorded that the result was a purer taste among British artists in the drawing of the human figure than they had previously displayed.

And now help was to come to the plan of an academy from a most unexpected source, in a most accidental way. In the reign of George II., if little was done for art and artists, great interest was displayed in works of public benevolence. From that period dates the rise of very many national hospitals and charitable institutions of various kinds. Among others, the London Foundling Hospital, which was incorporated in 1739, and received especial favour and support from the legislature and the public. To the sympathy with the objects of this charity displayed by the artists, are attributable the first recognition of them by the nation as a community meriting regard and assistance; and ultimately the rise and progress of an Academy of Art in England.

In 1740, when Handel came forward to aid the funds of the charity by the performance of his oratorios, Hogarth presented to the governors of the institution his famous portrait of Captain Coram, and designed an emblematical decoration to be placed over the chief entrance of the hospital, then in Hatton Garden. In 1745, the west wing of the present edifice in Guildford Street being completed, other artists followed Hogarth's example, and presented, or promised to present, to the hospital specimens of their art. In 1746, the grateful court of the charity elected its artist-benefactors—Hayman, Hudson, Allan Ramsay, Lambert (the scene-painter), Wilson, Moser, Pine, Hogarth, and Rysbrack (the sculptor), among them—to be governors, with leave to dine at the hospital, at their own expense, on the 5th of November in each year, to commemorate the landing of King William III., and 'to consider what further ornaments might be added to the building without expense to the charity.' For many years the artists availed themselves of this opportunity—met, dined, drank claret and punch, and discussed professional affairs to their hearts' content.

The Foundling had become quite a pet charity with Parliament and people. It was assisted by donations from the Crown and grants from Government; while voluntary contributions from the public flowed liberally into its treasury. From 1756 to 1760 nearly 15,000 children were received into the asylum. The open, uninquiring system, still existing on the Continent, then prevailed. A basket hung at the gate, in which to deposit the child, on whose behalf the aid of the institution was to be invoked; a bell was then rung to give notice was forthwith received and provided for. The hospital to the officers of the establishment, and the foundling became the resort and rendezvous of all classes. The public seemed never to weary of watching over and visiting its *protégés*, and the donations of the artists which adorned the walls of the hospital, were greatly admired and talked about, and soon became of themselves a decided source of attraction. The nation began to appreciate the fact that it possessed some really excellent English painters, and the painters made the discovery that there existed a large public interested in them and in their doings, and prepared to give favour and support to an exhibition of works of art.

In November 1759, a meeting was held at the Turk's Head, Gerard Street, Soho, which seems to

have been a sort of house of call for artists, as well as for literary men,[7] when it was resolved that once in every year, at a place to be appointed by a committee, chosen annually, for carrying the design into execution, there should be held an exhibition of the performances of painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, chasers, seal-cutters, and medallists, the profits to be expended in charity—'towards the support of those artists whose age and infirmities, or other lawful hindrances, prevent them from being any longer candidates for fame;' the charge for admittance to be one shilling each person. A committee of sixteen was chosen, consisting of six painters, two sculptors, two architects, two engravers, one seal-cutter, one chaser, one medallist, and the secretary, to which office Mr. Francis William Newton had been appointed, to carry out the views of the meeting.

Application was then made to the Society of Arts, which had been established five years previously by Mr. Shipley, of Northampton (brother of the bishop of St. Asaph), to permit the use of its rooms, then in the Strand, opposite Beaufort Buildings, for the purposes of the proposed exhibition. The Society gave its consent, deciding that the period of exhibition should be from the 21st of April to the 8th of May, and only objecting to the proposal that money should be taken at the doors for admission. This objection was removed by admitting the public gratis, and charging sixpence for the catalogue of the works of art on view. Sixty-nine artists sent works to the exhibition. The number of works exhibited was 130. The Society's rooms were crowded to inconvenience; the exhibition was a great success. There was a sale of 6582 catalogues; the proceeds enabling the committee to defray all expenses, to purchase £100 consols, and to retain a small balance in hand. No record was kept of the number of visitors to the exhibition; the purchase of catalogues was not obligatory, so the amount sold is hardly a clue to the number of visitors. Many doubtless dispensed with catalogues altogether, and many borrowed from their friends. But the results of the exhibition satisfied its warmest well-wishers.

There was but one drawback to the general satisfaction. The Society of Arts conceived itself at liberty to exhibit among the other works the drawings of certain of its students, whose industry and merit had entitled them to gold medals and other rewards. The untutored public, misled by the talk about prizes, persisted in regarding these juvenile essays as the works judged by the *cognoscenti* to be the most meritorious of the whole exhibition, and rendered them the homage of extraordinary attention and admiration accordingly. Mature professors of art had to endure the mortification of finding their best productions passed over by the unskilful multitude, and the highest praises awarded to mere beginners. The newspapers of the day—newspapers have never been very learned in art matters—fell into the same delusion, and in their notices of the exhibition, paid attention only to these most over-rated prize-holders.

But, altogether, the artists had good cause to be satisfied. They had held the first exhibition of works of art in England, and the exhibition had thoroughly succeeded. They had opened up a new source of profit to themselves in the display of their productions. They had obtained from the general public recognition of themselves and their profession. The Crown might be negligent of them, the State might be apathetic as to affairs of art, aristocratic patrons might be led astray by the *ignis fatuus* of love of the old masters, by the fashionable tastes for antiquities; but here was 'the million' on the side of its artist compatriots; the voice of the nation had declared itself in favour of the nation's art. Really there seemed at last to be hope, if not something more, for the English painter, and the long-looked-for English academy appeared fairly discernible on the horizon.

The decided success of the exhibition in the Strand was yet attended by certain disadvantages. Ill-fortune would probably have closely united the artists; prosperity seems to have divided them —to have engendered among them jealousies and dissensions. The proceeds of the exhibition soon proved a source of encumbrance and difficulty to the exhibitors. Their original intention had been to apply their profits to the relief of distressed painters. But now among a certain party a strong feeling was manifested in favour of devoting the money to the advancement of art. Finally it was resolved that the matter should stand over until the funds should have accumulated to the amount of £500, and that a vote of the majority of artists should then decide the question.

Further evidences of disorganization and want of definite aim were to come. While many artists desired to continue relations with the Society of Arts, others regarded the conditions imposed by that Society as vexatious and embarrassing. Particularly they objected to the introduction into their exhibition of the works of the Society's students. They represented further that the exhibition had been 'crowded and incommoded by the intrusion of persons whose stations and educations disqualified them for judging of statuary and painting, and who were made idle and tumultuous by the opportunity of attending a show;' and by way of remedy, proposed that in future the price of the catalogue should be one shilling, and that no person should be admitted without one, but that a catalogue once purchased should serve as a ticket of admission during the season. The Society of Arts, however, distinctly refused assent to these changes. The dispute quickened, waxed warm. Finally a large and distinguished section of the artists, comprising in its ranks the committee of sixteen who had managed the first exhibition, determined to sever their connexion with the Society of Arts, and to assert their independence. They accordingly engaged a room of an auctioneer in Spring Gardens for a display of their works during May 1761. The more timid party still clung to the friendly Society in the Strand, and there held a second exhibition. From the spring of 1761, therefore, there were two exhibitions of works of art in London.

The exhibitors in Spring Gardens styled themselves the 'Society of Artists of Great Britain;' the old committee of sixteen being at the head of the affairs of the new society. The designs on their catalogue by Wale and Hogarth demonstrated their intention to devote their revenue to the relief

of the distressed. Of the catalogue, rendered attractive by these embellishments, 13,000 copies were sold. No charge was made for admission; but the purchase of a catalogue was made imperative. The catalogue, however, was a ticket of admission for the season. The receipts of the exhibition of 1761 amounted to £650.

At the other exhibition in the Strand, to which sixty-five artists contributed, the old system prevailed. Visitors were at liberty to purchase a catalogue or not, as they chose; but a check was placed upon the indiscriminate admission of all classes by requiring from visitors the production of tickets which had been distributed gratuitously by the exhibitors, and were readily obtainable. After defraying all expenses the exhibition produced upwards of £150, which sum was appropriated in benefactions—to the Middlesex Hospital £50, to the British Lying-in Hospital £50, to the Asylum for Female Orphans £50, the small balance remaining after these donations being distributed among distressed artists. In the following year the Strand exhibitors took the first practical measures for founding a provident society for the benefit of British artists by forming themselves into an organized body, with a constitution and rules for their proper government, and assuming the title of 'The Free Society of Artists, Associated for the Relief of the Distressed and Decayed Brethren, their Widows and Children.' The society was to be maintained by the sale of the catalogues of an annual exhibition, or by charging for admission to such exhibition, as a committee of management to be chosen every year should determine; such committee having also power to reject the works sent in that they might deem unworthy of exhibition, and to hang or dispose of accepted works 'without respect to persons.' Every artist who contributed works to the exhibition for five years in succession, intermission by reason of illness or absence from the country not being a disqualification, was to be a perpetual member of the society and entitled to share in its benefits and privileges. In 1763 the institution took legal shape, and was 'enrolled of record in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench,' fifty members signing the roll.

Meanwhile the rival association had not been idle. It had increased the number of its committee from sixteen to twenty-four; this committee exercising absolute authority over the affairs of the society. Vacancies in its numbers were filled up by the remaining committee-men, without reference to the society, while it enjoined upon its members that its transactions should be kept a profound secret from the general body of the society. Already a love of rule seems to have gained upon this committee. Its members began to regard themselves in the light of academicians for life—as perpetual governors, rather than officers of the society, removable at its pleasure: an erroneous view of their position which led to much trouble in the sequel. Other changes had taken place—a charge of one shilling was made for admission to the exhibition of 1762, the catalogue being given gratis, and appended to the catalogue appeared an address written on behalf of the society by Dr. Johnson, explaining the objects of the exhibition, the reason for charging for admission to it, and a change that had been determined upon in regard to the appropriation of the society's revenues. 'The purpose of this exhibition,' declared the address, 'is not to enrich the artists, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered by preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt. Whoever hopes to deserve public favour is here invited to display his merit.' When the terms of admission were low, it was stated, the rooms 'were thronged with such multitudes as made access dangerous, and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired.' A curious plan for appropriating the expected profits was then set forth. The works sent in for exhibition were to be reviewed by the committee of management, and a price secretly set on every work and registered by the secretary. At the close of the exhibition the works were to be sold by auction; if they sold for more than the price fixed by the committee, the artists were to receive the increased amount, but if they sold for less, then the deficiency was to be made up to the artists out of the profits of the exhibition. For the most part the pictures at the subsequent sale by auction did not realize the prices set upon them by the committee, and upwards of £120 had to be paid to the artists out of the exhibition funds. Upon the whole, the plan did not work very well. The society's attempt to come between buyer and seller satisfied neither party. After this one experiment, the scheme was abandoned.

The society had, however, little reason to complain of want of public support. In 1762 the exhibition produced over £520, and in 1763, £560. In 1764, the receipts rose to £760. But the internal economy of the institution was in a less satisfactory state. Many members expressed discontent at the arbitrary power exercised by the committee—a permanent body, not always recruited from the best sources, for many of the most eminent artists declined to accept office, or were neglectful of their duties as committee-men, so that ultimately there seemed to be danger of the whole government of the society falling into the hands of the least competent, if the most active, of its members. And the society was much in want of a distinct legal status. After all, it was but a private sort of corporation most imperfectly constituted; it was growing rich without its property being regularly secured to it. Enrolment was not regarded as sufficiently answering this object, and it was proposed at a general meeting of the members that the Crown should be solicited to incorporate the society by charter. The committee, content with the existing state of things under which they exercised extreme authority, opposed these projects. However, the general body proved too strong for them; the charter was petitioned for and granted on the 26th of January 1765. In substance it followed the terms of the charter which had been proposed by the artists ten years before, when an attempt had been made to establish an academy 'on general benevolence.' It placed no limit to the number of the society's members, or 'Fellows,' as they were thenceforward to be called; the committee-men being designated 'Directors.' It gave the society arms, a crest, a constitution, power to hold land (not exceeding the yearly value of £1000), to sue and to be sued, etc.; and it authorized the society, every St. Luke's Day, to elect Directors to serve for the ensuing year. In other respects the charter was somewhat indefinite;

but it was presumed that under the power to make bye-laws, all points in dispute might be finally dealt with and adjusted. The 'Fellows' were disposed to be conciliatory. They elected the late committee to be the first 'Directors,' under the charter. Everything seemed to promise well. Two hundred and eleven artists signed the roll of the society, promising to the utmost of their power to observe and conform to the statutes and orders, and to promote the honour and interest of the 'Society of Incorporated Artists of Great Britain.'

But between the Fellows and the Directors there seems to have been but a hollow truce after all. They were bent upon different plans and objects. The Fellows entertained practical views enough. The only academy of art was still the very inadequate private school in St. Martin's Lane —a distinct institution, a common resort of artists, whether members of a society or not. The Fellows desired out of the funds of their society to found a public academy of a high class, that should be of real value to the profession. The Directors, among whom the architects Chambers and Payne were remarkably active, proposed, on the other hand, 'that the funds should be laid out in the decoration of some edifice adapted to the objects of the institution.' The Fellows declared that in this project the society, as a whole, had no interest; and at a general meeting in March 1767, they carried a resolution 'that it should be referred to the Directors to consider a proper, form for instituting a public academy, and to lay the same before the meeting in September next.' An attempt was then made on the part of the Directors to comply with the terms of this resolution, and yet to reserve the funds of the society for the future carrying out of their own pet scheme.

Dalton, an artist of very inconsiderable fame, who held the appointment of librarian to the King, was treasurer to the Incorporated Society, and a leading member of its direction. He had, some time previously, attempted to establish a print warehouse in Pall Mall, but the speculation had signally failed; accordingly the speculator had been left with very expensive premises on his hands. He now conceived that his warehouse might readily be converted into a very respectable academy of arts, and he contrived to obtain the King's encouragement of the plan. Soon, at another general meeting, the Fellows were informed that the King intended to take the fine arts under his special protection, and to institute a public academy under royal patronage. At these good tidings opposition ceased. The resolution passed at the March meeting of the society was at once repealed. Universal satisfaction prevailed; there was great rejoicing among the Fellows at the brilliant prospects dawning upon art and artists. The words 'Royal Academy' were substituted for 'Print Warehouse' over the door of Mr. Dalton's house in Pall Mall. The subscribers to the school in St. Martin's Lane, on the representation of Mr. Moser that they would thenceforward have free access to the Royal Academy, that their school would be thus superseded, and that their furniture would consequently be of no further use to them, were prevailed upon to assign to him their anatomical figures, busts, statues, lamps, and other effects and fittings, which were forthwith removed to Pall Mall. But bitter disappointment was to follow all this hopefulness and satisfaction. It soon appeared that there was no money applicable to the support of the royal establishment. The King had given nothing. The Directors would consent to no outlay from the society's funds. The Royal Academy was to be self-supporting. The artists had in truth gained not at all—were in a somewhat worse position than before. They were required to pay an annual fee of one guinea to an academy in which their comfort and convenience were less studied than in the old school in St. Martin's Lane. For now the disturbing element of non-professional membership was permitted. Any person, not intending to study, was allowed entrance to the academy, on payment of an annual guinea. The discontent of the artists was extreme, and was vehemently expressed.

Public interest in the society, however, had meanwhile in no way abated. The exhibition of 1767 produced over eleven hundred pounds. But the dissensions of the Directors and Fellows had become notorious—- arrested general attention, and attracted the comments and censures of the newspapers. The Fellows forthwith determined to effect a change in the composition of the directorate, whose oppression and mismanagement had been, as they judged, so fatal to the interests of the general body. It was proposed that a bye-law should be passed, rendering compulsory the retirement of eight out of the twenty-four Directors every year, and that the retiring Directors should be replaced by other members of the society. But this not unreasonable proposition was strenuously resisted by the Directors, who argued that by the terms of the charter exclusive authority to originate new laws was vested in them absolutely. It was at length determined between the contending parties that the question should be decided by a reference to the opinion of the Attorney-General. The Directors, after much procrastination, drew up and submitted their case. The Attorney-General (Mr. William de Grey, afterwards Lord Walsingham) was of opinion, in answer to the questions put to him, that under the charter the Directors were to make laws, and the general body to approve or reject the same, and that, therefore, the Directors were not bound to take into consideration a resolution of a general meeting in order to form it into a bye-law. But it was suggested that the Directors should consider how far it might be prudent to accept such a resolution, 'since the same majority that resolved might unite in electing Directors of the same opinion with themselves, especially in the case of resolutions that appeared to be reasonable and proper;' the Attorney-General being further of opinion that the proposed bye-law was not in any way inconsistent with the terms of the society's charter. Upon this opinion the Fellows acted. They submitted to the Directors the enactment of a bye-law rendering no more than sixteen of the existing Directors capable of being re-elected for the year ensuing. The Directors were obstinate: they declared that the proposed law would be an attack on the freedom of elections, a dangerous innovation, and an ungrateful return for all the exertions they had made on behalf of the society. At the general meeting following this, held on St. Luke's day, the 18th of October 1768, the struggle terminated: the Fellows, made less

moderate by opposition, elected sixteen of their number to fill the places of sixteen old Directors, who were superseded and deposed. Mr. Joshua Kirby was appointed president in the room of Mr. Hayman, who had succeeded to that post on the death of Mr. Lambert in 1765; Mr. Newton and Mr. Dalton were removed from the offices of secretary and treasurer. On the 10th November the eight remaining of the old Directors declared that they could not act with their new colleagues, believing them bent upon measures repugnant to the charter and tending to the destruction of the society; and accordingly they placed their resignations in the hands of Mr. Kirby, the new president. They desired to be understood, however, as not objecting to all the new Directors. On the contrary, they professed to entertain the highest esteem for Mr. Kirby himself and 'some others,' who had been elected to their offices without taking part in any intrigue, and who, as being men of honour and ability in their professions, were extremely proper persons to fill the places they occupied. The conflict was thus brought to a close. The Fellows had delivered their society from the persistent misrule under which it had so long suffered. The price of this emancipation was, in the first place, the loss of all the twenty-four Directors. Further and more important results, however, were to be forthcoming.

Meanwhile, brief mention must be made of the transactions of the smaller institution—the Free Society of Artists. Adherence to the Society of Arts, though it brought with it restriction as to charging for admission to the annual exhibitions, and made the sale of catalogues almost its only source of revenue, was yet maintained by the Free Society for four years. But, in 1765, the Free Society no longer availed itself of the premises of the Society of Arts. An independent exhibition was then opened at a large room, hired for the purpose, in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, being part of the warehouse of Mr. Moreing, an upholsterer; and the exhibition of the following year was also held in the same place. In 1767 and 1768 the Society exhibited in two large rooms at the bottom of the Haymarket, Pall Mall. The Society published from time to time statements of its progress. In one of these the growth of the Society, its utility, and purposes, are plainly set forth. Every member afflicted with illness and applying for relief had been assisted with donations of from three, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, up to one hundred guineas. The Society possessed funds applicable to the purposes of benevolence to the amount of £1200. With a continuance of public favour the Society trusted to be able in a few years, not only to provide for its distressed, but 'to found an academy, and to give premiums for the encouragement of every branch in the polite arts.' Up to 1768 one hundred members had signed the Society's roll.

The story of the two societies has thus been brought down to 1768. From that year dates the rise of a third society—the Royal Academy of Arts: an institution which has long outlived its rivals, which has indeed fed upon and gained strength from their decay and decease, as at the outset it owed its existence to the success of their previous efforts, and which, in spite of constant opposition and bitterest attack, flourishes still, as though possessed of that longevity which is proverbially the attribute of the threatened. 'The Academy,' said Haydon, 'originated in the very basest intrigue.' Undoubtedly there was intrigue in connexion with its origin, but not necessarily of the 'very basest' character. Some allowance must be made for 'poor human nature.' The contest dividing the Incorporated Society had been a very keen one—had been distinguished by much angry feeling and acrimonious spirit. It was hardly to be supposed that the defeated party, the sixteen expelled Directors and the additional eight who retired in sympathy with the expulsion of their colleagues, would sit down patiently under their defeat: their disgrace as they considered it. They had declined to regard themselves as members of a fluctuating committee, although such was distinctly their legal position, removable at the will of the society. For eight years they had held the reins of power; the supposition that these were to be theirs for life had some excuse, and they argued that their displacement, if in accordance with the letter of the law, was yet contrary to its spirit. It was true a majority was against them; but they found fault with the composition of the majority. There had been, they declared, too indiscriminate an admission of Fellows. Inferior practitioners, troublesome, pragmatical, jealous, anxious for power, had availed themselves of the loose terms of the charter, to creep into the society, and conspire against the legitimate influence of the respectable members. This was the Directors' view of the case. What was now to be their course? Should they submit, serve where they had once ruled, sink into simple Fellows, and thus, as it were, grace the triumph of their foes? Perish the thought! They would found a rival society!

It must not be understood that the Directors, as opposed to the Fellows, were wholly without friends in the society. Though outnumbered, they had yet a certain small following; while many held aloof from both parties, ill-pleased at the virulence with which their dissensions had been conducted. Reynolds in particular declined all interference in the contentions which were rending in twain the society. He had long withdrawn himself from the meetings of the Directors, declaring himself no friend to their proceedings, and when he discovered their intention 'to raise up a schism in the arts,' as Sir Robert Strange phrases it, and make a separate exhibition, he declared that he would exhibit with neither body.

An exhibition of the works of the ex-Directors in competition with the exhibition of the Fellows would have been fair play enough—a perfectly legitimate and honourable proceeding. It would then have rested with the public to declare which exhibition displayed the greater amount of merit and was the more worthy of their encouragement and support. Further, the attempt on the part of the Directors to obtain the favour of the King for their undertaking was hardly to be blamed. But what was distinctly unjustifiable in their proceedings was their intriguing to secure a monopoly of this favour: to possess themselves exclusively of the royal patronage, to the detriment and ultimate ruin, not merely of the society their own connexion with which had been so violently severed, but of the unoffending and praiseworthy smaller institution—the Free

Society. In this matter, however, it must be said, the ex-Directors were not alone to blame. Other patrons of art may exhibit themselves, if they please, as partisans, but a royal patron should not condescend to a position at once so inequitable and so undignified. To this derogation, however, George III., good-humouredly weak or pertinaciously obtuse, suffered himself to be brought. He became the patron of a clique, and even yielded himself as an instrument to be employed for the injury of that clique's antagonists. Whatever had been the faults of the other societies as against the founders of the Royal Academy—and it must be admitted that the Free Society was, perfectly blameless in that respect,—as against the Crown they had done nothing to merit royal displeasure, but, on the contrary, were entitled, with the other enlightened institutions of the country, to count upon the King's encouragement.

Some such demon as, whispering in the ear of Visto, bade him 'Have a taste!' had been wheedling George in. The King proclaimed himself a patron of the arts, and then proceeded to assume the airs of a connoisseur. Certainly he did not distinguish himself much in that capacity; his pretensions were not backed by any real learning. He made woeful mistakes. For instance, he never appreciated Reynolds,[8] whose merits one would think were sufficiently patent—needed not a conjurer to perceive them—passing him over to appoint Allan Ramsay serjeant painter, when Hogarth dying vacated that honorary office. He preferred West's works, because they were smoother—and Dance's, because they were cheaper!

West was the King's pet painter. Dr. Drummond, Archbishop of York, had obtained for him, in February 1768, the honour of an audience. The artist took with him to the palace a picture, 'Agrippina landing with the Ashes of Germanicus,' which he had executed for the archbishop. The King greatly admired the work, and West forthwith received the royal command to paint 'The Departure of Regulus for Rome.' Later in the year a sketch of the picture was submitted to the King. At this time the newspapers were full of the dissensions of the Incorporated Society. Concerning these the King inquired of West. The artist—one of the eight Directors who had voluntarily quitted the Society after the ejection of their sixteen colleagues—related to the King the history of the Society's proceedings from the Directors' point of view. Whereupon the King stated 'that he would gladly patronize any association that might be found better calculated to improve the arts.'

West returned from the palace full of this royal announcement. He at once put himself in communication with three ex-Directors of the Incorporated Society,—Cotes, a fashionable portrait-painter; Chambers, who had been instructor in architecture to the King when Prince of Wales; and Moser, the gold-chaser and enameller, who had taught the King drawing. These four artists formed themselves into a committee to arrange the plan of an academy. The King, it is stated, took great personal interest in the scheme, and even drew up several laws with his own hand. He expressed great anxiety that the design should be kept a profound secret, lest it should be converted into a vehicle of political influence. The artists did not object to this secrecy; they rather preferred that their plan should, as it were, open fire upon their foes unexpectedly, with the suddenness of a battery promptly unmasked.

We now come to the well-known story of the arrival at Windsor Castle of Kirby, the President of the Incorporated Society, at a time when the King is inspecting West's completed picture of, 'Regulus.' Kirby joins in the general admiration of the work; he turns to West, and trusts that it is the artist's intention to exhibit the picture. West replies that the question of exhibition must rest with his Majesty, for whom the picture has been painted. 'Assuredly,' says the King, 'I shall be happy to let the work be shown to the public.' 'Then, Mr. West, you will send it to my exhibition,' adds the President of the Incorporated Society. 'No!' his Majesty interposes, 'it must go to *my* exhibition—*to the Royal Academy*!' Mr. Kirby is thunderstruck,—the battery had been unmasked. Profoundly humiliated he at once retires from the royal presence, not to survive the shock very long, says the story. However, he lived to 1774.

Mr. Kirby was a landscape painter of repute in his day. Author of a work on perspective, and the friend of Gainsborough, he had risen from quite humble life to a position of some eminence, entirely by his own exertions. It was admitted that he had attained the post of President of the Incorporated Society without intrigue on his part, and that both by reason of his professional skill and his private worth, he was entitled to the respect alike of the friends and foes of that institution. The King condescended to play an ignoble part when he took pains to mortify and distress so honest a gentleman. Rival artists might conspire against the Society from which they had seceded, and seek to mine its position; but his Majesty stooped very low when he lent his royal hand to the firing of the train. However, he had thrown himself heart and soul into the project for founding a new society—the Royal Academy. So that he reared that edifice, he seemed to care little how he might sully his fingers in the process. In this, as in some other occurrences in the course of his reign, he demonstrated sufficiently that he could on occasion be obstinate and fatuous, wanting both in discrimination and in dignity.

After the scene at Windsor Castle, in which poor Mr. Kirby had been demolished, a meeting was held at the house of Wilton, the sculptor, of some thirty artists, including, of course, the twenty-four ex-Directors of the Incorporated Society, to hear Chambers, the architect, read the proposed academy's code of laws which had been prepared under the immediate inspection of the King, and to nominate the officers of the institution. Some uneasiness had been felt during the day as to whether Reynolds would or not join the academy. He had hitherto abstained from all part in the proceedings; but that he should be the first president had been decided by the King in consultation with the other conspirators. Penny, the portrait-painter, had visited Reynolds to sound him on the subject, but found him obdurate. West was then deputed to wait upon the

greatest English painter, and to leave no means untried in the way of persuading him to join the new association. For a time Reynolds was cold and coy enough, but influenced at last by the allurement of probable knighthood, or the force of other arguments, he permitted himself to be carried in West's coach to the meeting at Wilton's. He was at once declared president; Chambers being appointed treasurer, Newton secretary, Moser keeper, Penny professor of painting, and Dr. William Hunter professor of anatomy. Reynolds, however, deferred his acceptance of the post of president until he had consulted his friends Dr. Johnson and Mr. Burke upon the subject, and it was not until a fortnight after his election that he finally consented to fill the proposed office.

The first formal meeting of the Royal Academy was held in Pall Mall on the 14th December 1768. Mr. Chambers read a report to the artists assembled, relating the steps that had been taken to found the Academy. No allusion was made in this report to the secret negotiations and consultations with the King; but it was set forth that on the previous 28th November, Messrs. Chambers, Cotes, Moser, and West had had the honour of presenting a memorial to the Crown, signed by twenty-two artists, soliciting the royal assistance and protection in establishing a new society for promoting the arts of design. The objects of the society were stated to be 'the establishing a well-regulated school or academy of design, for the use of students in the arts, and an annual exhibition, open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they may offer their performances to public inspection, and acquire that degree of reputation and encouragement which they shall be deemed to deserve.' 'We apprehend,' the memorialists had proceeded, 'that the profits arising from the last of these institutions will fully answer all the expenses of the first: we even flatter ourselves they will be more than necessary for that purpose, and that we shall be enabled annually to distribute somewhat in useful charities. Your Majesty's avowed patronage and protection is therefore all that we at present humbly sue for; but should we be disappointed in our expectations, and find that the profits of the society are insufficient to defray its expenses, we humbly hope that your Majesty will not deem that expense ill-applied which may be found necessary to support so useful an institution.' This memorial, so the report went on to state, the King had received very graciously: saying that he considered the culture of the arts as a national concern, and that the memorialists might depend upon his patronage and assistance in carrying their plan into execution; further, he desired that a fuller statement in writing of their intentions might be laid before him. Accordingly, Mr. Chambers had drawn up a sketch of his plan, and, having obtained its approval by as many artists as the shortness of time would allow, had submitted it to the King, who, on the 10th of December 1768, signified his approbation, ordered that the plan should be carried into execution, and with his own hand signed Mr. Chambers's plan—'the Instrument,' as it was then, and has ever since been called. Mr. Chambers then read the Instrument to the meeting, after which the artists present signed an obligation or declaration, promising to observe all the laws and regulations contained in the Instrument, and all future laws that might be made for the better government of the society, and to employ their utmost endeavours to promote the honour and interest of the establishment, so long as they should continue members thereof. The Academy thus obtained its constitution, and assumed such form of legal existence as it has ever possessed.

The Instrument is simply a document on parchment, signed by the King, but unsealed and unattested. It recites that sundry eminent professors of painting, sculpture, and architecture had solicited the King's patronage and assistance in establishing a society for promoting the arts of design, and that the utility of the plan had been fully and clearly demonstrated. Therefore the King, being desirous of encouraging every useful undertaking, did thereby institute and establish the said Society under the name of the 'Royal Academy of Arts in London,' graciously declaring himself the patron, protector, and supporter thereof, and commanding it should be established under the forms and regulations thereinafter set forth, which had been humbly laid before his Majesty, and had received his royal assent and approbation. The rules declared that the Academy should consist of forty members only, who should be called Academicians; they were to be at the time of their admission painters, sculptors, or architects of reputation in their professions, of high moral character, not under twenty-five years of age, resident in Great Britain, and not members of any other society of artists established in London. Under this rule, it will be noted, that engravers could not aspire to the honours of the Academy. Sir Robert Strange regarded this as a direct affront to the members of his profession, and attributed it to his well-known attachment to the Incorporated Society and hostility to the designs of the ex-Directors of that body. The provision that members of other societies were to be disqualified from becoming members of the Academy, was of course aimed at the rival institutions, and undoubtedly a severe restriction upon the general body of artists. Of the forty members who were to constitute the Academy, the Instrument named thirty-six only; a circumstance which justified suspicion that the leaders in the enterprise had so small a following that they could not muster in sufficient force to complete the prescribed number of original members: or they may have purposely left vacancies to be supplied as artists of eminence were detached from the rival societies or otherwise became eligible. Among the thirty-six,[9] while many artists of fame appear, it must also be said that many very obscure persons figure, whose names, but for their registry upon the list of original Academicians, would probably never have been known to posterity in any way. Nearly a third of the number are foreigners. There are two ladies, Mesdames Angelica Kauffman and Mary Moser, the first and last female Academicians. Then there are coach, and even sign-painters, a medallist, and an engraver—Bartolozzi, whose nomination was in direct contravention of the Academy's constitution and an additional injustice to Sir Robert Strange. The originators of the plan must surely have felt that they were marching through Coventry with rather a ragged regiment at their heels. The number of reputable names missing from their list was remarkable: Allan Ramsay, serjeant-painter to the King; Hudson, Reynolds's preceptor, and Romney, his rival; Scott, the

marine painter; Pine, the portrait painter; and the engravers Strange, Grignon, and Woollett; beside such artists as Edward Edwards, Joseph Farington, Ozias Humphrey, John Mortimer, Robert Smirke, Francis Wheatleigh, and many others (members of the Incorporated Society for the most part), who, though ultimately connected with the Academy, had no share in its foundation.

Having named the original members, the Instrument proceeded to lay down rules for the further government of the institution; to prescribe the manner of electing future members, a council, and president, a secretary and keeper (the treasurer was to be nominated by his Majesty, 'as the King is graciously pleased to pay all deficiencies'), the appointment of different professors, the establishment of schools, a library for the free use of students, and of an annual exhibition of works of art to be 'open to all artists of distinguished merit.' New laws and regulations were to be framed from time to time, but to have no force until 'ratified by the consent of the general assembly and the approbation of the King.' At the end of the Instrument the King wrote, 'I approve of this plan; let it be put in execution'—adding his signature.

This Instrument, with the bye-laws and regulations made upon its authority, cannot be said to possess the characteristics or incidents of a charter, still less of an Act of Parliament, or indeed, to present any very formal or legal basis upon which to found a national society. The Commissioners of 1863, while they recommended the grant of a charter to define satisfactorily the position of the Academy, considered the Instrument as a solemn declaration by the original members of the main objects of their society, to which succeeding members had also practically become parties, and were of opinion that its legal effects would be so regarded in a court of law or equity. It did not appear, however, that the Academy itself was in favour of the objects of its institution being more clearly defined by means of a charter. In 1836, Haydon boldly accused the Academicians that they 'cunningly refused George IV.'s offer of a charter, fearing it would make them responsible "to Parliament and the nation."' The charge would seem to have some truth in it. Certainly the Academy has made no attempt to obtain a precise definition of its position in regard to the crown and the public.

The Incorporated Society viewed with natural alarm the rise of a rival institution, favoured in so marked a manner by the patronage of the crown. Sir Robert Strange at once proposed the presentation of a petition, setting forth in plain terms the grievances that would be entailed upon the Society, and upon artists generally, by the illiberal constitution of the Academy and its apprehended monopoly of the royal protection. Sir Robert's proposition was, however, not accepted. A petition of a more cautious nature, from which everything likely to offend had been carefully eliminated, was presented to the King by Mr. Kirby, the president. His Majesty replied to the prayer of the petition, 'that the Society already possessed his Majesty's protection; that he did not mean to encourage one set of men more than another; that, having extended his favour to the Society incorporated by charter, he had also encouraged the new petitioners; that his intention was to patronize the arts; that the Society might rest assured his royal favour should be equally extended to both, and that he should visit the exhibitions as usual.' This reply was gracious enough: but it was not ingenuous. The King was not as good as his word. He *did* mean 'to encourage one set of men more than another.' He visited the exhibition of the Incorporated Society in 1769 *for the last time*. In the same year he presented the funds of the Society with £100, *his last donation*. Meanwhile his visits to the Royal Academy were constant, his preference for that institution clearly manifested; between 1769 and 1780 he presented to its funds from his privy purse upwards of £5000.

The Incorporated Society, shut out from studying in the Royal Academy, determined to open an art-school for themselves and their pupils. Application was made to the Academy for a return of the properties which Mr. Moser had carried away it was now alleged, under false pretences, from the St. Martin's Lane Academy. It was intimated that payment should be made for the chattels in question, or that they should be restored. The Royal Academy, however, took no steps in the matter. Tired of waiting, the Incorporated Society at last fitted up at great expense a new studio for themselves at premises in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, occupied in more modern times by the Cyder Cellars.

Early in 1769 the Academy opened its art-schools in Pall Mall; Reynolds presiding, read his first discourse. One grave defect in the Academy's constitution was then in a measure remedied. The art of engraving was recognised: a law was passed, by which not more than six engravers could be admitted as 'associates of the Royal Academy.' In April the first exhibition was held. The number of works exhibited was 136. Among these were four portraits by Reynolds, seven by Cotes (some of them in crayons, in which he was supposed to excel), and three by Gainsborough. West sent two pictures—the 'Regulus,' of which mention has already been made—the firebrand work which brought about indirectly so much mischief and discussion—and a 'Venus lamenting the Death of Adonis.' There were also landscapes by Barrett, Gainsborough, Sandby, Serres, Wilson, and Zucarelli, and 'poetical and historical works by Cipriani, Bartolozzi, and Miss Kauffman. The exhibitors were fifty in number; Mr. Pye, in his 'Patronage of British Art,' divides them into, 'Members of the Royal Academy, 33; non-members, *having no interest in the revenue*, 17.' A glance at recent catalogues will demonstrate the changed proportion now existing between exhibiting members and exhibiting non-members, as compared with the first exhibition of the Royal Academy.[10] By this exhibition a clear profit of nearly £600 was realized. A sum of about £150 was expended in charity; the surplus was applied towards the general expenses of the Academy. These, however, so far exceeded the receipts as to necessitate a grant from the privy purse to the amount of £900. The King and Queen visited the Academy exhibition in May,

accompanied by a guard of honour. From this incident arose the practice, still existing, of stationing sentries at the doors of the Academy during the exhibition.

In addition to a charge of sixpence for the catalogue, visitors were required to pay one shilling for admission to the exhibition. In explanation of this charge, the following curious advertisement preceded the list of pictures: 'As the present exhibition is a part of the institution of an academy *supported by royal munificence*, the public may naturally expect the liberty of being admitted without any expense. The Academicians, therefore, think it necessary to declare that this was very much their desire, but they have not been able to suggest any other means than that of receiving money for admittance to prevent the rooms being filled by improper persons, to the entire exclusion of those for whom the exhibition is apparently intended.'

This advertisement, which was repeated in the Academy catalogue of 1780, would seem at the first sight to suggest that the Academicians had failed to comprehend their exact position. Or had the King in his enthusiasm for their cause led them to believe that he intended to defray their expenses wholly from the privy purse without aid from the public? However this may be, it has long been understood that the amounts taken at the doors of the exhibition for admission, and the sales of catalogues, form the real support of the Academy. A gross income of at least £10,000 is thus produced, half of which amount, as clear profit, the Academy is enabled every year to add to its ever increasing store of wealth.[11]

Concerning the destinies of the rival institutions but brief mention must suffice. Their downfall dates from the rise of the Royal Academy. Still, they died lingering deaths. The Incorporated Society struggled gallantly though vainly against the superior advantages and the royal preference enjoyed by the Academy. In 1772, the Society built the large room, the Lyceum, in the Strand, at an outlay of £7500. But in a year or two the decrease in its revenues compelled it to part with the building at a sacrifice. In 1776, the Society held no exhibition. In 1777 and 1778 it exhibited at a room in Piccadilly, near Air Street. In 1779, it again did not exhibit. In 1780, it appeared once more at its old quarters in Spring Gardens. But its existence now was of a very intermittent kind. In 1781 and 1782 it made no sign. In 1783, and again in 1790, it held exhibitions at the Lyceum. In 1791, it made its farewell appearance in public at the rooms in Spring Gardens. In 1836, Mr. Robert Pollard, the last surviving member of the Society, being then 81, handed over its books, papers, letters, documents, and charter, to the Royal Academy. This was the formal surrender of the Incorporated Society; but in truth the struggle had been decided against it long and long before.

The Free Society dragged on its existence, making feeble annual exhibitions until 1779 inclusive; but at that time it had long outlived public notice. In 1769, it had built a room next to Cumberland House, Pall Mall. But this, ill-fortune probably compelled it to surrender, as in 1775 its exhibition was held in St. Alban's Street. The provident, praiseworthy, modest aims of the Free Society ought to have saved it from ruin—ought to have excited public sympathy on its behalf. But this was not to be. The Royal Academy was left master of the field. In the success of the King's exhibition, the older institutions were forgotten and lost.

NOTES:

[6] Roubiliac's first workshop.

[7] It was at the Turk's Head that were held the meetings of the famous LITERARY CLUB, founded by Reynolds. Johnson, Burke, Dr. Nugent, Beauclerk, Langton, Goldsmith, Mr. Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins were the other original members.

[8] It has been alleged that the King objected to Reynolds on account of the painter's friendship for Burke and Fox.

[9] The thirty-six members nominated by the Instrument were:—Joshua Reynolds, Benjamin West, Thomas Sandby (architect), Francis Cotes (portrait painter), John Baker (coach panel painter), Mason Chamberlin (portrait painter), John Gwyn (architect), Thomas Gainsborough, J. Baptist Cipriani (Italian), Jeremiah Meyer (German, miniature painter), Francis Milner Newton (portrait painter), Paul Sandby (water-colour painter and engraver), Francesco Bartolozzi (Italian, engraver), Charles Catton (coach panel painter), Nathaniel Hone (portrait painter), William Tyre (architect), Nathaniel Dance (portrait painter), Richard Wilson, G. Michael Moser (Swiss, gold-chaser and enameller), Samuel Wale (sign painter and book illustrator), Peter Toms (portrait and heraldic painter), Angelica Kauffman (Swiss), Richard Yeo (sculptor of medallions, engraver to the Mint), Mary Moser (Swiss, flower painter), William Chambers (architect), Joseph Wilton (sculptor), George Barrett (landscape painter), Edward Penny (portrait painter chiefly), Agostino Carlini (Italian, sculptor), Francis Hayman, Dominic Serres (French, landscape painter), John Richards (landscape painter), Francesco Zucarelli (Italian, landscape painter), George Dance (architect), William Hoare (historical and portrait painter, father of Prince Hoare), and Johan Zoffany (German, historical and portrait painter). The number of forty was not completed until 1772, when were added Edward Burch (gem sculptor and wax modeller), Richard Cosway (miniature painter), Joseph Nollekens (sculptor), and James Barry (historical painter). Seven of the original thirty-six Academicians do not appear on the roll of the Incorporated Society in 1766, viz., Baker, Cipriani, Toms, A. Kauffman, M. Moser, Penny, and Hoare.

[10] 'In the year 1862 there were 1142 works exhibited; of these 146 were the works of academicians, leaving 996 for the non-academicians.'—*Sir Charles Eastlake's Examination before the Royal Academy Commission*, 1863.

[11] Out of its accumulated riches the Academy has defrayed, the cost of its new Galleries in Burlington Gardens, first opened in 1869.

WIDOW HOGARTH AND HER LODGER.

On the 26th day of October 1764, died William Hogarth. Very ailing and feeble in body, but still with his heart up and his mind, as ever, alert and vigorous and full of life, he had moved on the day before from his pleasant snug cottage at Chiswick to his town house in Leicester Fields. He turned now and then in his bed uneasily, as he felt the venomous slanders of Wilkes and Churchill still wounding and stinging him like mosquito bites; else was the good little man at peace. 'I have invariably endeavoured to make those about me tolerably happy.' 'My greatest enemy cannot say I ever did an intentional injury.' So he wrote at the close of his life. And there was much love for him in the world—culminating in his own household. His servants all had been years and years in his service; he had painted their portraits and hung these on his walls; there is credit to both master and servants in the fact. After all, a man may, if he chooses, be a hero even to his valet-de-chambre. None could have dreamt the end was so near. It is not known that any doctor was attending him. He had read and answered a letter in the morning; fatigued with the effort, he had retired to bed. He was alone when the fatal attack came on: the 'suffusion of blood among the arteries of the heart.' Starting up, he rang the bell with a violence that broke it in pieces; they had not thought so much strength remained to him. He fell back fainting in the arms of Mary Lewis, his wife's niece; she had lived in his house all her life, and was his confidential assistant in publishing and selling his prints. She supported the poor creature for two hours, and he drew his last breath in her arms.

Widow Hogarth wore her deep crape, be sure, with an aching void in her heart, and an acute sense of the painful wrench to her life caused by this bereavement. A fine stately, woman still, though she was now fifty-five. But six years back she had sat for Sigismunda: the dreadful mistake in historical art which poor Hogarth had vainly perpetrated in emulation of Correggio. Something of the beauty of the Jane Thornhill, who thirty years before had stolen away with her lover to be married at the little village church of Paddington, must have yet remained. The interment, as all the world knows, took place in Chiswick Churchyard; a quiet funeral, with more tears than ostrich-plumes, more sorrow than black silk. It was not for some six or seven years after, that the sculptured tomb was erected, and Garrick and Johnson calmly discussed the wording of the epitaph. It is 'no easy thing,' wrote the doctor. Time had something numbed their sense of loss when they sat down to exchange poetical criticism; though habit is overpowering, and it would have taken a good deal, at any time, to have disturbed Johnson from his wonted pose of reviewer; just as the dying sculptor in the story, receiving extreme unction from his priest, found time to complain of the mal-execution of the crucifix held to his lips. 'Pictured morals,' the doctor wrote, 'is a beautiful expression, but *learn* and *mourn* cannot stand for rhymes. *Art* and *Nature* have been seen together too often. In the first stanza is *feeling*, in the second *feel*. *If thou hast neither* is quite prose, and prose of the familiar kind,' etc. etc.

Hogarth dead and buried, the window shutters re-opened, and heaven's glad light once more permitted to stream into the rooms, the red eyes of the household a little cooled and staunched, came the widow's dreadful task of examining the property of the deceased, of picking up the fragments that remained. How to live? Survivors have often to make that painful inquiry. There was little money in the house. The painter's life had been hard-working enough; the labourer was willing, but the harvest was very scanty. Such a limited art public! such low prices! The six 'Mariage a la Mode' pictures had been sold for one hundred and twenty guineas, including Carlo Maratti frames that had cost the painter four guineas each. The eight 'Rake's Progress' pictures had fetched but twenty-two guineas each. The six 'Harlot's Progress,' fourteen guineas each. The 'Strolling Players' had gone for twenty-six guineas! O purblind connoisseurs! Dullard dillettanti! Still there was something for the widow; not her wedding portion—that seems to have long before melted away. Sir James Thornhill had been forgiving, kind, and generous after a time—two

years—and opened to the runaway lovers his heart and his purse. But there was little to show for all that now. There hung on the walls various works by the dead hand. Portraits of the Miss Hogarths, the painter's sisters; they had kept a ready-made clothes shop at Little Britain gate. Portraits of the daughter of Mr. Rich, the comedian; of Sir James and Lady Thornhill; of the six servants; and his own likeness, with his bull-dog and palette; besides these there was the great effort, 'Bill Hogarth's "Sigismunda," not to be sold under £500;' so he had enjoined. Alas! who would give it? (At the sale after the widow's death it was knocked down to Alderman Boydell for fifty guineas!) Indeed, it would be very hard to sell all these. And she did not. She clung to the precious relics, till death relaxed her grasp, when the auctioneer's hammer made short work of the painter's remains, even to his maul-stick. But to live? There were seventy-two plates, with the copyright secured to her for twenty years by Act of Parliament. These were hers absolutely under her husband's will. Here at least was subsistence; indeed, the sale of prints from the plates produced, for sometime, a respectable income. And then, too, there was the gold ticket of admission to Vauxhall Gardens (for the admission of six persons, or 'one coach'), presented by the proprietor in his gratitude for the designs of the 'Four Parts of the Day' (copied by Hayman), and the two scenes of 'Evening,' and 'Night,' with representations of Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn.

And the house at Chiswick was a possession of Hogarth's. It was not then choked up with buildings, but stood cosy and secluded in its well-stored garden of walnut, mulberry, and apple trees, with the head-stones to the poor fellow's pets—the bullfinch and dog Dick, who died the same year as his master; and a very old mulberry tree stricken by lightning, and only held together by the iron braces made by his directions, perhaps applied with his own hands. How full of memorials of the dead painter! Pen-and-ink sketches on the panels of the wainscoted room on the ground floor: and the painting-room over the stables, with its large window, probably one of *his* improvements on first taking the house, looking on to the pleasant garden below. Doubtless the widow locked up the painting-room, and kept the key on the ring at her girdle. Years after, Sir Richard Phillips jotted down his memories of Chiswick—how he, a schoolboy then with his eyes just above the pew door, the bells in the old tower chiming for church, watched 'Widow Hogarth and her maiden relative, Richardson, walking up the aisle, draped in their silken sacks, their raised head-dresses, their black calashes, their lace ruffles, and their high crooked canes, preceded by their aged servant Samuel: who after he had wheeled his mistress to church in her Bath-chair, carried the prayer-books up the aisle, and opened and shut the pew.' State and dignity still remained to the widow; and there, up in the organ loft, was the quaint group of choristers Hogarth had so admirably sketched, headed by the Sexton Mortefee, grimacing dreadfully as he leads on his terrible band to discord. A square, ugly church enough, with the great Devonshire pew—a small parlour with the roof off—half blocking up the chancel: a thing to be forgiven *then*, for the lovely Duchess sat there, and the sight of her angel head was surely enough to give new zest to the congregation's prayers and praises. A church such as Hogarth often drew, with its 'three-decker' arrangement of desks: the clerk, the reader, and the preacher, rising one above the other, and, top of all, one of those old-fashioned massive, carved sounding-boards, which gave so queer a Jack-in-the-box aspect to the pulpit, and prompted dreamers in dreary sermons, heedless of George Herbert's counsel that if nothing else, the sermon 'preacheth patience,' to speculate on severing the iron rod that supported the board, letting it fall, and so, by one process shutting up, so to speak, both preacher and preaching.

The house in Leicester Fields also remained: the house on the east side of the square, called the 'Golden Head,' with its sign cut by Hogarth himself from pieces of cork glued together, and gilded over. He often took his evening walk in the enclosure in his scarlet roquelaire and cocked hat, now and then, no doubt, casting admiring glances at his gaudy emblem. The Fields were only just merging into the Square. We learn that in 1745, the streets were so thinly built in the neighbourhood, that 'when the heads of the Scottish rebels were placed on Temple Bar, a man stood in Leicester Fields, with a telescope, to give persons a sight of them for a halfpenny a piece.' Just as *we* are sometimes offered a view of Saturn's rings from Charing Cross! Hogarth's house now forms part of a French Hotel. The lean French cook staggering under the roast beef in the 'Gates of Calais' picture has been amply revenged. The fumes of French ragouts incessantly rise, on the site where the cruel caricature was drawn.[12]

It is hard to say when the widow's income first began to droop—when the demand for William Hogarth's prints slackened. They circulated largely, but their price was never high. The eight prints of the 'Rake's Progress' could be purchased at Mrs. Hogarth's house, in Leicester Fields, for one guinea; 'Lord Lovat,' 'Beer Street,' and 'Gin Lane,' for a shilling each only, and all the others could be obtained upon like easy terms. It cannot be told when the bill first appeared in Widow Hogarth's window—'Lodgings to Let.' But eight years after Hogarth's death there was certainly a lodger in the house in Leicester Fields—a lodger who could exclaim, 'I also am a painter!'

Alexander Runciman was born in Edinburgh in 1736. His father an architect, of course the baby soon began to play with the parental pencils. *That* is not remarkable—but he evidenced rather more ability than the average baby artist. At twelve he was out in the fields with paints and brushes, filling a sketch-book with crude representations of rocks, clouds, trees, and water. At fourteen he was a student under John Norris, whom it pleased the period to regard as an eminent landscape painter. He was the wildest enthusiast in the studio—and there are generally a good many wild enthusiasts in a studio. 'Other artists,' said one of his comrades, 'talked meat and drink, but Runciman talked landscape!' At nineteen he renounced further tutelage, and started on his own account as a landscape painter. He commenced to exhibit his works. Every one

praised, but unfortunately no one purchased. The market seemed to be only for the show, not the sale of goods. The notion prevailed absolutely that art was an absurd luxury, which but very few could afford to indulge in. A middle-class man would have been considered very eccentric and extravagant, who in those days bought a picture, unless it happened to be his own portrait. There was some demand for portrait painting—*that* paid—especially if you, the painter, were nearly at the head of your profession. Poor Wilson had given up portraiture, and soon found himself painting landscapes, and starving the while. So Runciman also discovered quickly enough—and with characteristic un-reason abandoned landscapes and took to historical art, which, being in much less request even than landscape painting, rather enhanced and quickened his chances of ruin. But somehow he struggled on. At thirty it occurred to him that he had never been to Rome, and that the fact had probably confined his powers and limited his prosperity. He packed up his things—an easy task—and, with a very small purse—that he should have had one at all was a marvel—set out for the south. He was soon, of course, on his knees, in the regular way, doing homage to Raphael and M. Angelo. There are always professional conventionalisms. It was as necessary then for the artist to be rapt and deliriously enthusiastic about his calling as for the lawyer to wear a wig and gown.

At Rome he swore friendship with Fuseli. The Scot was the elder, but the Swiss the more learned. They had probably both quite made up their minds about art before they met, and what drew them together was very much the similarity of their opinions. Neither was liable to change of view, let who would be the teacher. Runciman no more took his style from Fuseli, than Fuseli from Runciman, and the unquestionable resemblance between their works was only the natural result of a similarity of idiosyncrasy. They both worked hard together, making painstaking copies of the great masters. 'Runciman I am sure you will like,' Fuseli wrote home, 'he is one of the best of us here.' No doubt Fuseli found him quite a kindred spirit—mad as himself about heroic art—given to like insane ecstasies—like pell-mell execution—like whirling, extravagant drawing—like wild ideas interpreted by a like wild hand, and in a like execrable nankeen and slate tone of colour. Runciman returned in 1771, and proceeding to Edinburgh, arrived just in time to receive the vacant situation of professor of painting to the academy established in Edinburgh College, in the year 1760. The salary was £120 a year. The artist accepted the appointment gleefully, and, had his knowledge and his taste been equal to his enthusiasm, few could have better fulfilled the duties of his office. Soon he began to dream of a series of colossal pictures that should make his name live for ever in the annals of art. The dream took form. There were but two or three men in Scotland who would even hear out the project. Fortunately he lighted on one of these. Sir James Clerk consented to the embellishment of his hall at Penicuik with a series of pictures illustrative of Ossian, by the hand of Runciman.

Ossian was the rage—quotations from the blind bard of Morven were in every one's mouth. True, Dr. Samuel Johnson had denounced the whole thing as an imposition 'as gross as ever the world was troubled with.' Dr. Blair wrote in defence, 'Could any man, of modern age, have written such poems?' 'Why yes, sir,' was the answer—'Many men, many women, and many children.' Macpherson wrote offensively and violently to Dr. Samuel, who replied heartily enough—'I received your foolish and impudent letter ...I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian ...I thought your book an imposture. I think so still. Your rage I defy,' etc. etc. What was all this to Runciman? He had no learning—he cared nothing for antiquarianism. He took for granted that Ossian was authentic. Many north of the Tweed looked upon it merely as a national question. Macpherson was a Scotchman, therefore it was the duty of Scotchmen to side with him. His condemners were English, and were jealous, of course, and wrong no doubt. Runciman was hard at work at Penicuik, painting as for his life, while all this discussion was going on, and Macpherson and his friends were striving might and main to produce an ancient manuscript anything like the published poem, and so confute and silence Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Garrick, and lastly Boswell, who did not even *pair* with the doctor on the occasion, though the question *did affect* Scotland. Runciman had sketched out and commenced his twelve great pictures. 1. Ossian singing to Malvina. 2. The valour of Oscar. 3. The Death of Oscar, etc. etc. Who reads Ossian now? Who cares about Agandecca, 'with red eyes of tears'—'with loose and raven locks?' 'Starno pierced her side with steel. She fell like a wreath of snow which slides from the rocks of Ronan.' Who knows anything now about Catholda, and Corban Cargloss, and Golchossa and Cairbar of the gloomy brow? For some time the poems held their own, retained their popularity; their partisans fought with their opponents for every inch of ground, even though discovery was mining them. And some fragments found their way in a fashion to the stage. But a little while ago there was living a ballet-master, who owed his baptismal name to parental success in the grand ballet of 'Oscar and Malvina, or the Cave of Fingal!' But this must have been produced years after Runciman. The poems had merit, and that floated them for a long time; but the leak of falsehood made its way—they sunk at last. And Macpherson? Well, if a poet will be an impostor, he must prepare to be remembered by posterity rather for his fraud than his poetry.

He found time to paint some other subjects as well. An 'Ascension' on the ceiling over the altar of the Episcopal chapel in the Cowgate of Edinburgh—a wild and ungraceful work according to Cunningham, speaking of it from recollection, though Runciman thought very highly of it. And he had patrons and critics loud in their applause. In his picture of 'The Princess Nausicaa and her Nymphs surprised at the river side by Ulysses,' one connoisseur detected 'the fine drawing of Julio Romano,' another, 'the deep juicy lustre of Tintoret,' and a third 'a feeling and air altogether the painter's own;' which last is probable. In 1772 he exhibited some pictures in London. At all events, there was no bill in Widow Hogarth's window then, for the lodgings were let, and Alexander Runciman was the lodger.

'She let lodgings for subsistence:' so runs the story. The demand for William Hogarth's prints was still bringing in some income, however. Lord Charlemont wrote to Edmund Malons from Dublin, June 29th, 1781:—'That men of task should wish for good impressions of Hogarth's prints is not at all surprising, as I look upon him to have been in his way, and that too an original way, one of the first of geniuses. Neither am I much surprised at the rage you mention, as I am by experience well acquainted with the collector's madness. Excepting only the scarce portrait, my collection goes no further than those which Mrs. Hogarth has advertised, and even of them a few are wanting, which I wish you would procure for me, viz., *The Cock-Match*, *The Five Orders of Periwigs*, *The Medley*, *The Times*, *Wilkes*, and *The Bruiser*. As my impressions are remarkably good, having been selected for me by Hogarth himself, I should wish to have these the best that can be had; and if Mr. Stevens, who promised me his assistance, should happen to meet with any of these prints of which I am not possessed—I mean such compositions as do honour to the author, as for instance, *The Satire on the Methodists*, *The Masquerade*, etc.—I should be much obliged to him to purchase them for me..... I have no objection to suffering *The Lady's Last Slake* to be engraved, but, on the contrary, should be happy to do anything which might contribute to add to the reputation of my deceased friend. But then it must be performed in such a manner as to do him honour; for otherwise I should by no means consent. One great difficulty would be to procure a person equal to the making a drawing from it, as the subject is a very difficult one. Hogarth had it for a year with an intention to engrave it, and even went so far as almost to finish the plate, which, as he told me himself, he broke into pieces upon finding that after many trials he could not bring the woman's head to answer his idea, or to resemble the picture.' The lady, let us note, is a portrait of Miss Hester Lynch Salusbury, afterwards Mrs. Thrale and Madame Piozzi. Later his Lordship wrote again:—'I have this moment received a letter from Mrs. Hogarth requesting that if *I should permit any one to make an engraving of 'The Lady's Last Stake,' I would give the preference to a young gentleman who lodged in her house, as by such preference she should be greatly benefited.* On this application I consider it necessary to immediately inform you, as the affection I bore towards her deceased husband, my high regard for his memory, and, indeed, common justice will most certainly prevent me from preferring any one else whatsoever to her in a matter of this nature. At the same time, I must add, that whoever shall make a drawing from my picture must do it in Dublin, as I cannot think of sending it to London.

'Will you, my dear Malone, be so kind in your morning walk as to call on this lady and read to her the above paragraph, as such communication will be the most satisfactory answer I can give to her letter? The same time you will be so kind as to mention the circumstances, and my resolution to the person in whose behalf the postscript in your letter was written. Perhaps matters may be settled amicably between him and Mrs. Hogarth, in which case I have no objection, provided the execution be such as not to disgrace the picture or its author, that the drawing be made in Dublin, and that Mrs. Hogarth be perfectly contented, and shall declare her satisfaction by a certificate in her own handwriting. I know your goodness will pardon all this trouble from,' etc. etc.

These letters are extracted from Prior's *Life of Malone*. To the last letter, it is to be noted, Mr. Prior assigns the date of 1787,—surely a misprint for 1781. Etchings by Runciman are extant, and it is clear that Mrs. Hogarth had looked to his executing an engraving of 'The Lady's Last Stake,' possibly by way of settling an account owing to her for his lodgings. The plan fell through, however. It was perhaps not worth Mr. Runciman's while to journey to Dublin to engrave the picture.

But twenty years after William Hogarth's death the copyrights had expired—the poor woman's income from this source was clean gone. She was then absolutely 'living by her lodgings;' and it was not until three years more 'that the King interposed with the Royal Academy, and obtained for her an annuity of forty pounds.' Poor Widow Hogarth! Yet she would not sell her William's pictures left in his house!

Much of the untamed, unmanageable, heterodox nature of Runciman's art pertained to his life generally. Gay, free-thinking, prankish—with a tendency to late-houred habits that must have often scandalized his landlady—and a talent for conversation rare amongst artists, who, as a rule, express their thoughts better by their brushes than by word of mouth; kind-hearted, sociable, never behind in passing the bottle—no wonder he gathered round him a group of eminent men of his day, most of them with attributes much like his own, who did not flinch from strong outspeaking, who were not shocked by many things. Kames, Monboddo, Hume, and Robertson knocked at the late William Hogarth's door, and paid their respects to Widow Hogarth's lodger. Did *she* ever stand before his easel and contemplate his works? Doubtless often enough when the painter was out firing off his smart cracker sayings, and making away with his port wine. And what did she think of his art? How different from William's! She could understand *him* always. There was always nature on *his* canvas, and meaning and common sense—there was always a story plainly, forcibly told. But Mr. Runciman's meanings were not so clear. What was all the smoke about, and the waving arms, and the distorted features, and the Bedlamite faces, and, oh! the long legs and the flying draperies? Surely draperies never did fly like that—at least William Hogarth never painted them so. And then—really this was too much—he, Alexander Runciman, under that roof had presumed to paint a 'Sigismunda weeping over the heart of Tancred,' with William's treatment of the same great subject actually in the house! To bed, Widow Hogarth, in a rage.

Of course Runciman had *his* opinion about Hogarth and his art, despising both, no doubt, and agreeing with Fuseli in deeming him a caricaturist merely, and his works 'the chronicle of

scandal and the history book of the vulgar.' It was so much nobler to portray wild-contortions from Ossian, demoniac nightmares and lower region revelations, than to paint simply the life around they had but to stretch out a hand to grasp. Yet with all their talk, in the humbler merits of colour, expression, and handling, they were miles behind Hogarth. He has been so praised as a satirist, there is a chance of his technical merits as a painter being overlooked. One only of the 'Mariage à la Mode' pictures, for all that is really valuable in art, might be safely backed against all that was ever done by both Fuseli and Runciman put together. Yet they looked upon him as rather a bygone sort of creature—a barbarian blind to poetic art. Could William Hogarth have seen the works of Fuseli and Runciman, he would probably have had something to say about *them*!

After a time, Runciman was again back at Penicuik. Perhaps his fervour about his subject had a little cooled, or the incessant discussions in regard to it had disturbed his faith. In fact the Ossian swindle was getting to be, in common phrase, a little blown upon. His health was failing him; his mode of life had never been very careful. He fell ill; he neglected himself. He worked on steadily, but with a palpable failure of heart in the business. He achieved his task. Yet the painting of the great ceiling, to effect which he had to lie on his back in an almost painful position, brought on an illness from which he never fairly recovered. Some time he lingered, growing very pale and wan, and his strength giving way until he could barely crawl about. On the 21st of October 1785, he fell down dead at the door of his lodgings in West Nicolson Street.

Four years more of life to Widow Hogarth—still, as ever, true to her husband's memory and herself. Horace Walpole sought to buy forgiveness for his attack on the 'Sigismunda,'—he had called it a 'maudlin fallen virago'—by sending to the widow a copy of his 'Anecdotes;' but she took no heed of him or his gift. Four years more, and then another interment in the Chiswick sepulchre. The widow's earthly sorrows are at an end; and beneath the name of 'William Hogarth, Esq.,' they now engrave on the stone, 'Mistress Jane Hogarth, wife of William Hogarth, Esq. Obiit 13th of November 1789. Ætat. 80 years.' In 1856, on the restoration of the monument, which from the sinking of the earth threatened to fall in pieces, the grave was opened, and there were seen the 'little' coffin of the painter and the larger coffin of his widow. There too was seen, literally, 'the hand' Johnson wrote of in his projected epitaph:—

The hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew the essential forms of grace;
Here closed in death the attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face.

NOTES:

[12] The Sablonière Hotel, however, is now (1869) in course of demolition.

ALLAN RAMSAY, JUNIOR.

Allan Ramsay, the author of the *Gentle Shepherd*,—'the best pastoral that had ever been written,' said Mr. Boswell, whose judgments upon poetry, however, are not final,—Allan Ramsay, the poet, father of Allan Ramsay, principal painter to King George the Third, claimed descent from the noble house of Dalhousie; he was the great-grandson of the laird of Cockpen. His claim was admitted by the contemporary earl, who ever took pride in recognising, as a relative, the 'restorer of Scottish national poetry.' Certainly the poetical branch of the family tree had been in some danger of being lost altogether—the clouds of obscurity had so gathered round it—the sunshine of good fortune had so ceased to play upon it. The laird's descendants appear to have been of the humblest class, dwelling in a poor hamlet on the banks of the Glengoner, a tributary of the Clyde among the hills between Clydesdale and Annandale. The father of the Gentle Shepherd is said to have been a workman in Lord Hopetoun's lead-mines, and the Gentle Shepherd himself, as a child, employed as a washer of ore. Early in the last century he was in Edinburgh, a barber's apprentice. In 1712 he married Christina Ross, daughter of a legal practitioner in that city. In 1729 he had published his comic pastoral, and was then in a bookseller's shop in the Luckenbooths. Here he used to amuse Gay, famous for his Newgate pastoral, with pointing out the chief characters and literati of the city as they met daily in the forenoon at the Cross, according to custom. Here Gay first read the *Gentle Shepherd*, and studied the Scottish dialect, so that, on his return to England, he was able to explain to Pope the peculiar merits of the poem. And the poets, Gay and Ramsay, spent much time and emptied many

glasses together at a twopenny alehouse opposite Queensberry House, kept by one Janet Hall, called more frequently Janet Ha'.

It was at Edinburgh that Allan Ramsay, junior, was born, the eldest of seven children, in the year 1713. Late in life he was fond of understating his age as people somehow *will* do:

'I am old enough,' he said once, with the air of making a very frank avowal, 'I am old enough to have been a contemporary of Pope.' Which was not remarkable, considering that Pope did not die until 1744, when Mr. Ramsay must have been thirty-one.

He had a natural talent for art. He began to sketch at twelve. But his father was poor, with a large family to support,—it was not possible to afford much of an education to the young artist. He had to develop his abilities as he best could. In 1736, the father wrote of him thus simply and tenderly: 'My son Allan has been pursuing his science since he was a dozen years auld: was with Mr. Hyffidg, in London, for some time about two years ago; has since been painting here like a Raphael; sets out for the seat of the Beast beyond the Alps within a month hence to be away two years. I am sweer' (*i.e.*, loath) 'to part with him, but canna stem the 'current which flows from the advice of his patrons and his own inclinations.' This letter was addressed to one John Smybert, also a self-taught artist. He had commenced in Edinburgh as a house-painter, and, growing ambitious, found himself after a time in London, choosing between starvation and the decoration of grand coach-panels in Long Acre factories. In 1728 he settled in Boston, and shares with John Watson, another Scotchman, who had preceded him some years, the honour of founding painting as an art—from a European point of view—in the New World.

Those who had hesitated in their patronage of the poet were not disinclined to aid the painter. It is much less difficult a matter to have one's portrait painted than to be able to appreciate a poem. Means were forthcoming to enable the art-student to quit Edinburgh in 1736 for Rome. He remained there during three years, receiving instruction from Francesco Solimena, called also l'Abate Ciccio, and one Imperiali, an artist of less fame. Of both it may be said, however, that they did little enough to stay the downfall of Italian art.

On the return of Allan Ramsay, junior, to Scotland, we learn little more of him than that he painted portraits of Duncan Forbes, of his own sister, Miss Janet Ramsay, and Archibald, Duke of Argyle, in his robes as Lord of Session. Finally he removed to London.

He was so fortunate as to find many valuable friends. The Earl of Bridgewater was an early patron, followed by Lord Bute, whose powerful position at court enabled him to introduce the painter to the heir-apparent of the crown, Frederick, Prince of Wales. Two portraits of His Royal Highness were commanded—full-length, and one remarkable for being in profile. Still greater fame accrued to him, however, from his portrait of Lord Bute, who was reputed to possess the handsomest leg in England. His lordship was conscious of his advantage, and, during the sitting to Ramsay for his whole-length portrait, engraved by Ryland, was careful to hold up his robes considerably above his right knee, so that his well-formed limbs should be thoroughly well exhibited; while, as though to direct the attention of the spectator, with the forefinger of his right hand he pointed down to his leg, and in this position remained for an hour. The painter availed himself to the full of the opportunity, and humoured the minister to the top of his bent. The picture was a genuine triumph. Reynolds, never popular at court, grew jealous of his rival's success, and alarmed lest it should lead to extraordinary advancement. When the Marquis of Rockingham was posed before Sir Joshua for the full-length picture, engraved by Fisher, the nobleman asked the painter if he had not given a strut to the left leg. 'My lord,' replied Sir Joshua with a smile, 'I wish to show a leg with Ramsay's Lord Bute.'

The painter prospered steadily, and, of course, was well abused; for success is apt to bring with it envy and satire. Mr. William Hogarth, who objected strongly to competitors, sought to jest down the advancing Scotchman with a feeble pun about a Ram's eye! Hogarth was very much less clever when he had a pen in his hand than when he was wielding a brush or an etching needle.

The Reverend Charles Churchill, very angry with North Britons generally, wrote sneering lines in the *Prophecy of Famine*:—

> Thence came the Ramsays, men of worthy note,
> Of whom one paints as well as t'other wrote.

By-and-by these two critics forgot Ramsay, however, they were so busy with each other, bandying abuse and interchanging mud. The court painter heeded little their comments. He was putting money in his purse. There were always sitters in his studio: he had as much work as he could do; while yet he found time for self-cultivation. He must have possessed an active restless mind. He was not content with being merely a clever, hard-working, money-making painter. Even at Rome he had studied other things beside art. As Mr. Fuseli states magniloquently, after his manner, 'he was smit with the love of classic lore, and desired to trace, on dubious vestiges, the haunts of ancient genius and learning.' He made himself a good Latin, French, and Italian scholar; indeed, he is said to have mastered most of the modern European languages, with the exception of Russian. His German he found of no slight service to him in the court of the Guelphs. Later in life he studied Greek, and acquitted himself as a commendable scholar.

Artists, less accomplished, were inclined to charge him with being above his business, and more anxious to be accounted a person of taste and learning than to be valued as a painter. Just as Congreve disclaimed the character of a poet, declaring he had written plays but for pastime, and begged he might be considered merely as a gentleman. There was no one to say to Ramsay,

however, as Voltaire—nothing, if not literary—said to Congreve, 'If you had been merely a gentleman, I should not have come to see you.' On the contrary, the world in general applauded Ramsay for qualities quite apart from professional merits.

'I love Ramsay,' said Samuel Johnson to his biographer. 'You will not find a man in whose conversation there is more instruction, more information, and more elegance than in Ramsay's.'

Perhaps it may be noted that this remark of the Doctor's upon his friend follows curiously close upon his satisfactory comment upon an entertainment at the house of the painter.

'Well, sir, Ramsay gave us a splendid dinner!'

'What I admire in Ramsay,' says Mr. Boswell, 'is his continuing to be so young!'

Johnson concedes: 'Why, yes, sir, it is to be admired. I value myself upon this, that there is nothing of the old man in my conversation. I am now sixty-eight, and I have no more of it than at twenty-eight.' And the good Doctor runs on rather garrulously, it must be owned, ending with—'I think myself a very polite man!'

It was to Mr. Ramsay's house—No. 67 Harley Street—that Mr. Boswell sent a letter for his friend: 'My dear sir,—I am in great pain with an inflamed foot' (why not have said plainly 'the gout,' Mr. Boswell?) 'and obliged to keep my bed, so I am prevented from having the pleasure to dine at Mr. Ramsay's to-day, which is very hard, and my spirits are sadly sunk. Will you be so friendly as to come and sit an hour with me in the evening?'

And it was from Ramsay's house the kind old man despatched his rather stiff reply: 'Mr. Johnson laments the absence of Mr. Boswell, and will come to him.'

After dinner the Doctor goes round to the invalid, laid up in General Paoli's house in South Audley Street, and brings with him Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom it is pleasant to find is a frequent guest at his great rival's hospitable board.

Ramsay prospers—his reputation increases—he is largely employed, not only in portraiture, but in decorating walls and ceilings. He has a staff of workmen under him. A second time he visits Rome, making a stay of some months; and journeys to Edinburgh, residing there long enough to establish, in 1754, 'The Select Society.' He grows wealthy too. Poor Allan Ramsay, senior, dies much in debt in 1757; the painter takes upon himself his father's liabilities, and pensions his unmarried sister, Janet Ramsay, who survived to 1804. He is possessed, it is said, of an independent fortune to the amount of £40,000; and this before the accession of King George the Third, and his extraordinary patronage of the painter.

The office of painter to the crown was one of early date. In 1550 Antonio More was painter to Queen Mary. For his portrait of the Queen sent to Philip of Spain, he was rewarded with one hundred pounds, a gold chain, and a salary of one hundred pounds a quarter as court-painter to their Majesties. There is some obscurity about the appointments of painters to the king during the reign of George the Second. Jervas was succeeded by Kent, who died in 1748. Shackleton succeeded Kent. Yet it is probable that the king had more than one painter at the same time. For we find Hogarth, who is said to have succeeded his brother-in-law, John Thornhill,[13] the son of Sir James, appointed in 1757, while Mr. Shackleton did not die until 1767, when, as Mr. Cunningham relates the story of the London studios, he died of a broken heart on learning that Ramsay was appointed in his stead to be painter to George III. This was certainly about the date of Ramsay's appointment. And now there grew to be quite a rage for portraits by Ramsay—there was a run upon him as though he had been a sinking bank. He was compelled to call in the aid of all sorts of people, painting the heads only of his sitters with his own hand; and at last abandoning even much of that superior work to his favourite pupil, Philip Reinagle. So that in many of Ramsay's pictures there is probably but a very few strokes of Ramsay's brush. The names of certain of his assistants have been recorded. Mrs. Black, 'a lady of less talent than good taste.' Vandyck, a Dutchman, allied more in name than in talent with him of the days of Charles the First. Eikart, a German, clever at draperies. Roth, another German, who aided in the subordinate parts of the work. Vesperis, an Italian, who was employed occasionally to paint fruits and flowers. And Davie Martin, a Scotchman, a favourite draughtsman and helper, and conscientious servant. Mr. Reinagle probably furnished Mr. Cunningham with these particulars. It will be noted that the English artist's employment of foreign mercenaries was considerable. This must have been either from the fact of such assistance being procurable at a cheaper rate, or that the old notion still prevailed as to the necessity of looking abroad for art-talent.

Ramsay succeeded at Court. He was made of more yielding materials than Reynolds; assumed more the airs of a courtier—humoured the king. Perhaps like Sir Pertinax he had a theory upon the successful results of 'booing and booing.' He never contradicted; always smiled acquiescence; listened complacently to the most absurd opinions upon art of his royal master. Reynolds was bent upon asserting the dignity of his profession. He did not stoop to conceal his appreciation of the fact that as a painter at any rate he was the sovereign's superior—he *would* be, to use a popular phrase, 'cock on his own dunghill.' When the painter's friends spoke on the subject to Johnson, he said stoutly 'That the neglect could never prejudice him: but it would reflect *eternal disgrace* on the king not to have employed Sir Joshua.' But Reynolds received only one royal commission: to paint the king and queen, whole-lengths, for the council-room of the Royal Academy, 'two of the finest portraits in the world,' as Northcote declared. The king, who was an early riser, sat at ten in the morning. The entry in Reynolds' pocket-book is 'Friday, May 21

(1779), at 10—the king.' The queen's name does not occur until December. The king, who was near-sighted, and looked close at a picture, always complained that Reynolds' paintings were rough and unfinished. But Reynolds heeded not. Be sure Ramsay and West were careful to paint smoothly enough after that. Northcote said that the balance of greatness preponderated on the side of the subject, and the king was annoyed at perceiving it; and disliked extremely the ease and independence of manner of Reynolds—always courteous, yet always unembarrassed—proceeding with his likenesses as though he were copying marble statues. 'Do not suppose,' adds his pupil, 'that he was ignorant of the value of royal favour. No. Reynolds had a thorough knowledge of the world; he would have gladly possessed it, but the price would have cost him too much.'

The court-painter had soon enough to do, for the king had a habit of presenting portraits of himself and his queen to all his ambassadors and colonial governors. He sat, too, for his coronation portrait, as it was called, in Buckingham Palace. The bland, obsequious, well-informed Ramsay became a great favourite. He always gave way to the king—would have sacrificed his art to his advancement any day. And he was almost the only person about the Court, except the servants, who could speak German, and the queen was especially fond of chatting with him in her native language. Their Majesties soon gave over being dignified. Indeed, few persons were more prone to forget their grandeur, although they did not like anybody else to do so. With his own hands the king would help West to place his pictures in position on the easel. The queen—plain, snuff-taking, her face painted like a mask, and her eyes rolling like an automaton, as eyewitnesses have described her later in life—called on Mrs. Garrick one day at Hampton Court, and found the widow of the Roscius very busy peeling onions for pickling. 'The queen, however, would not suffer her to stir, but commanded a knife to be brought, observing that she would peel an onion with her, and actually sat down in the most condescending manner and peeled onions.' The king, interrupting his sittings to dine off his favourite boiled mutton and turnips, would make Ramsay bring easel and canvas into the dining-room, so that they might continue their conversation during the royal meal. When the king had finished, he would rise and say, 'Now, Ramsay, sit down in my place and take your dinner.' When he was engaged on his first portrait of the queen, it is recorded that all the crown jewels and the regalia were sent to him. The painter observed that jewels and gold of so great a value deserved a guard, and accordingly sentinels were posted day and night in front and rear of his house. His studio was composed of a set of rooms and haylofts in the mews at the back of Harley Street, all thrown into one long gallery.

Peter Pindar, in his 'Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians for 1782,' writes:—

'I've heard that Ramsay when he died,
Left just nine rooms well stuffed with Queens and Kings,
From whence all nations might have been supplied
That longed for valuable things.
Viceroys, ambassadors, and plenipos,
Bought them to join their raree-shows
In foreign parts;
And show the progress of the British arts.
Whether they purchased by the pound or yard,
I cannot tell because I never heard:
But this I know—his shop was like a fair,
And dealt most largely in this ROYAL WARE.
See what it is to gain a monarch's smile,
And hast thou missed it, REYNOLDS, all this while?
How stupid! Pray thee seek the courtiers' school,
And learn to manufacture *oil of fool*.'

According to Dr. Walcot, King George the Third sat to Mr. Dance in preference to Reynolds as a matter of economy. Dance charged fifty pounds for a picture. Sir Joshua's price was over a hundred. The king decided upon patronizing the painter whose charge was the lower. Pindar says:—

'Thank God! that monarchs cannot taste control,
And make each subject's poor submissive soul
Admire the works that judgment oft cries fie on!
Had things been so, poor REYNOLDS we had seen
Painting a barber's pole, an ale-house queen,
The Cat and Gridiron or the Old Red Lion;
At Plympton, perhaps, for some grave Doctor Slop
Painting the pots and bottles of the shop;
Or in the drama to get meat to munch,
His brush divine had pictured scenes for Punch;
While WEST was whelping 'midst his paints
Moses and Aaron, and all sorts of saints,
Adams, and Eves, and snakes, and apples;
And devils, for beautifying certain chapels;
But REYNOLDS is no favourite, that's the matter,
He has not learnt the noble art to flatter.'

The doctor was never weary of launching his satirical shafts at the king. It has been suggested, however, that political considerations influenced the direction of the royal patronage. Reynolds

was on terms of intimacy with Fox, Burke, and other prominent members of the Opposition. This, in the eyes of the king, was a grave offence, hardly to be pardoned, notwithstanding all the great merits of the offender in other respects.

Ramsay kept an open house and a liberal table, but more it would seem for his friends' pleasure than his own; for though fond of delicate eating, and as great a consumer of tea as Doctor Johnson, he had little taste for stronger potations, and we are told that 'even the smell of a bottle of claret was too much for him.' The Doctor entertained different opinions: he spoke with contempt of claret,—'A man would be drowned by it before it made him drunk,' adding, 'Poor stuff! No, sir, claret is the liquor for boys: port for men: but he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy!' Most toper sentiments! But Ramsay did not stint his guests. And these were constantly of a noble order. Lord Bute, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Bath, Lord Chesterfield, and the Duke of Richmond were often at the painter's table, discussing all sorts of political questions with him. Every man was a politician in those days; especially after dinner. But Ramsay was not content to be simply a talker upon the topics of the day—he became also a writer. Many clever papers by him upon history, politics, and criticism were published at various times, under the signature 'Investigator,' and were subsequently reprinted and collected into a volume. Upon the question which had agitated London for some months, as to the truth of the charge brought against the gipsy woman Mary Squire, of aiding in the abduction of the servant girl Elizabeth Canning, Ramsay wrote an ingenious pamphlet. The same subject had also employed the pen of no less a person than Henry Fielding. Ramsay corresponded with Voltaire and Rousseau, both of whom he visited. His letters, we are told, were elegant and witty. The painter to the king was a man of society.

A third time he visits Rome, accompanied on this occasion by his son, afterwards to rise to distinction in the army. He employed himself, however, more as a savant than an artist—in examining and copying the Greek and Latin inscriptions in the Vatican. The President of the Roman Academy introduced the painter to the School of Art, and was rather pompous about the works of his students. Ramsay's national pride was piqued. 'I will show you,' he said, 'how we draw in England.' He wrote to his Scotch assistant, Davie Martin, to pack up some drawings and journey at once to Rome. On his arrival, Ramsay arranged his drawings, and then invited the President and his scholars to the exhibition. The king's painter was always fond of declaring that it was the proudest moment of his life, 'for,' he said, 'the Italians were confounded and overcome, and British skill triumphant!' Perhaps the Italian account of the transaction, could we obtain it, might not exactly tally with that of the king's painter.

Soon Ramsay was again in England resuming his prosperous practice. Then occurred the accident which hindered all further pursuit of his art. Reading an account of a calamitous fire, he was so impressed with the idea of showing his household and pupils the proper mode of effecting their escape, in the event of such an accident befalling his own house, that he ascended with them to the top storey, and pushing a ladder through the loft door, mounted quickly, saying: 'Now I am safe—I can get to the roofs of the adjoining houses.' As he turned to descend he missed his step and fell, dislocating his right arm severely. At this time he was engaged upon the portrait of the king for the Excise-office. With extraordinary courage he managed to finish the picture, working most painfully, and supporting as he best could his right arm with his left. He declared it to be the finest portrait he had ever painted; and his friends echoed his opinion. But it was the last he was ever to put his hand to.

His constitution yielded; his spirits left him; his shoulder gave him great pain; his nights were sleepless. The painter to King George III. was evidently sinking. Yet he lingered for some years—a shattered invalid. Again he visited Rome, leaving his pupil Reinagle to complete his long list of royal commissions. Reinagle's style was so admirably imitative of his master's, that it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. The pupil was instructed to complete fifty pairs of kings and queens at ten guineas each! The task seemed endless, and was six years in hand. Midway, wearied to death with the undertaking, Reinagle wrote to complain that the price was not sufficient. Ramsay trebled it; but the pupil was wont to confess afterwards that he looked back with a sort of horror at his labours in connexion with the royal portraits.

The court-painter never recovered his lost health. He wrote from Italy to many of his friends—the first men of the day, both in France and England. Then came the home-sickness, which so often precedes dissolution. In the summer of 1784 he set out on his journey to England, hoping to reach it by short and easy stages. He reached Paris with difficulty: the fatigue brought on a low fever he had not the strength to support. He died on the 10th of August, at Dover, in the 71st year of his age.

'Poor Ramsay!' Johnson wrote touchingly to Reynolds. 'On which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and now I found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan than I am told that I shall see him no more! That we must all die, we all know. I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate if I now call, dear sir, on you, to remember it!'

A handsome, acute, accomplished gentleman, outstripping all the painters of his age in the extent of his learning and the variety of his knowledge—an artist of delicacy and taste, rather than of energy and vigour—pale in colour and placid in expression, yet always graceful and refined—there was a charm about Ramsay's works that his contemporaries thoroughly understood, though they could not always themselves achieve it. Northcote gave a close and clever criticism on the king's painter in this wise:—'Sir Joshua used to say that he was the most sensible among all the

painters of his time; but he has left little to show it. His manner was dry and timid. He stopped short in the middle of his work because he knew exactly how much it wanted. Now and then we find hints and sketches, which show what he might have done if his hand had been equal to his conceptions. I have seen a picture of his of the queen soon after she was married—a profile, and slightly done: but it was a paragon of elegance. She had a fan in her hand. Lord, how she held that fan! It was weak in execution and ordinary in features—all I can say of it is, that it was the farthest possible removed from everything like vulgarity. A professor might despise it, but in the mental part I have never seen anything of Vandyke's equal to it. I could have looked at it for ever. I don't know where it is now: but I saw enough in it to convince me that Sir Joshua was right in what he said of Ramsay's great superiority. I should find it difficult to produce anything of Sir Joshua's that conveys an idea of more grace and delicacy. Reynolds would have finished it better; the other was afraid of spoiling what he had done, and so left it a mere outline. He was frightened before he was hurt.' This was high praise of the king's painter, coming as it did from his rival's pupil.

NOTES:

[13] Concerning the merits and career of John Thornhill, biography has been curiously silent.

GEORGE ROMNEY.

'A curious book might be written on the reputation of painters,' says Mr. Croker in a note to his edition of Boswell; 'Horace Walpole talked at one time of Ramsay as of equal fame with Reynolds; and Hayley dedicated his lyre (such as it was) to Romney. What is a picture of Ramsay or Romney now worth?'[14]

That fortune is inconstant and that reputation is a bubble, it was hardly necessary for Mr. Croker to assure us. Unquestionably the fame of the painter, as of other people, undergoes vicissitudes: varies very much accordingly as it is appraised by contemporaries or posterity. But it may be open to doubt whether the editor of Boswell does not undervalue the artists specified in illustration of his proposition: more especially Romney. That any benefit has accrued to Romney's fame from the unsafe sort of embalmment it has received in the rhymes of such poetasters as Hayley and Cumberland cannot be contended. Even Pope's verse, though it has saved a name from oblivion, has failed to redeem it from contempt. The great poet condescended to sing the praises of Jervas, the pupil of Kneller; but the renown of the painter, Pope's praises notwithstanding, was fleeting enough. We read of Miss Reynolds marvelling at the complete disappearance of Jervas's pictures. 'My dear,' said Sir Joshua, in explanation, 'they are all up in the garrets now.' For just as humble guests resign their places, content with very inferior accommodation, when more distinguished visitors arrive upon the scene, so bad pictures yield to better works of art, and quit the walls of galleries and saloons to take refuge in servants' bedrooms, back attics, and stable lofts; suffering much neglect and contumely in comparison with their former high estate and fortune.

If we may assume that Romney's pictures are now but lightly valued, it must be conceded that the time has been when they were very differently estimated. For in his day Romney was the admitted rival of Reynolds, whose pupil and biographer Northcote, an unwilling witness, admitting with reluctance anything to his preceptor's disadvantage, says, expressly:—'Certain it is that Sir Joshua was not much employed in portraits after Romney grew in fashion.' Reynolds, it cannot be doubted, was jealous of Romney, and spoke of him always rather acridly as 'the man in Cavendish Square;' just as Barry was at one time fond of designating Reynolds 'the man in Leicester Fields.' 'There are two factions in art,' said Lord Chancellor Thurlow; 'Romney and Reynolds divide the town; and I am of the Romney faction.' In his own day, indeed, the recognition of the artist was remarkable. Flaxman, the sculptor, maintained him to be 'the first of all our painters for poetic dignity of conception.' 'Between ourselves,' wrote Hayley to Romney's son, 'I think your father as much superior to Reynolds in *genius* as he was inferior in *worldly wisdom*.' Upon his death three biographies of Romney were given to the world. Cumberland

wrote a brief but able memoir. Hayley produced an elaborate life, embellished with engravings and epistles in verse. And the Reverend John Romney published an interesting, if not an impartial, account of his father's career. Yet these works have not prevented the painter's name from gradually losing its hold upon the public memory, nor his pictures from sinking far beneath the valuation originally set upon them. Accident, and the want of a permanent public gallery in which the best achievements of English painters may be stored and studied and admired by their countrymen, have contributed to these results. Upon the great occasions when English pictures have been assembled for exhibition, somehow Romney has been but inadequately represented. In the Fine Art Gallery of the Great Exhibition of 1862 there was but one portrait by Romney to thirty-four examples of Reynolds. In the finer and more complete collection at Manchester, in 1857, there were five Romneys to thirty-eight pictures by Reynolds. Altogether Sir Joshua's memory has been amply avenged for any neglect he endured in his lifetime by reason of the undue ascendancy of Romney.

George Romney was born at Beckside, near Dalton, Lancashire, on the 15th December 1734, the son of John Romney, a carpenter and cabinet-maker, who, above his station in taste and knowledge, is alleged to have introduced into the county various improvements in agricultural engineering. Of his union with Ann Simpson, the daughter of a Cumberland yeoman, four sons were born:—William, who died on the eve of his departure to the West Indies, in the employ of a merchant there; James, who rose to the rank of a lieutenant-colonel in the service of the East India Company; Peter, who gave promise of considerable art-talent, but died in his thirty-fourth year; and George, the painter, under mention.

Of a sedate and steady disposition, but somewhat dull and 'backward' at his books, George Romney, in his eleventh year, was taken from school, and, until he arrived at twenty-one, was employed in his father's workshop. The lad had manifested skill as a carver in wood; had constructed a violin for himself, and read with deep interest Da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting*, making copies of the engravings. His natural talent soon further developed itself. His father had a business acquaintance with one Mr. Alderman Redman, of Kendal, upholsterer. The Alderman's sister, a Mrs. Gardner, chanced to see some of young Romney's drawings, was struck with their cleverness, and encouraged him to persevere, and to make his first essay in portraiture by taking her likeness. The boy produced a drawing that was much extolled; further evidences of his enthusiasm for art were forthcoming; and eventually John Romney was induced to take his son to Kendal, and apprentice him to an itinerant painter named Christopher Steele, a showy gentleman, who had been in Paris, aped French manners, wore fantastic clothes, and was popularly known as *Count* Steele—a sort of art-Dulcamara, in fact. Articles of apprenticeship were duly signed, sealed, and delivered between John Romney, cabinet-maker, and George his son, of the one part, and Christopher Steele, painter, of the other part. George Romney was bound for the term of four years, to serve his master faithfully and diligently, to obey his reasonable commands, and keep his secrets; John Romney was to provide his son with 'suitable and necessary clothes, both linen and woollen;' and Christopher Steele, in consideration of twenty-one pounds, covenanted to instruct his apprentice in the art or science of a painter, and to find him meat, drink, washing, and lodging during the said term. Steele was no great artist, though he had studied under Carlo Vanloo, of Paris. He troubled himself little enough as to his pupil's progress, employing him for the most part in grinding colours and in the drudgery of the studio. But George Romney made the best of his opportunities. And he was not unhappy. He had fallen in love with Mary Abbott, one of two sisters living with their widowed mother, in humble circumstances, at Kendal. But soon Steele was bent on quitting Kendal, had made up his mind to move to York, and directed his pupil to prepare to accompany him forthwith. The lovers, of course, were in despair at the thought of their approaching separation. In the end they secured their mutual fidelity by a hasty and private marriage. Reproved for his precipitancy and imprudence, Romney replied that his marriage would surely act as a spur to his application: 'My thoughts being now still and not obstructed by youthful follies, I can practise with more diligence and success than ever.' While at York he zealously devoted himself to his art. His wife, left at Kendal, assisted him with such small sums as she could spare, sending him half a guinea at a time, hidden under the seal of a letter; in return he forwarded to her his own portrait, his first work in oil.

After staying nearly a year in York, Steele and his apprentice moved to Lancaster. Meeting with little encouragement there, Steele, always restless and embarrassed, determined to try his fortune in Ireland. The pupil was now very anxious to be quit of his preceptor; he longed to be practising on his own account. He had at different times lent Steele small sums of money, amounting altogether to ten pounds. He now proposed that both debt and articles of apprenticeship should be cancelled—that the release of the debtor should be the consideration for the freedom of the apprentice. Steele consented, and George Romney became his own master.

His prices until he went to London were certainly not high: two guineas for a three-quarter portrait and six for a whole figure on a kit-cat canvas. The only way of making this poor tariff remunerative was by extreme rapidity of execution; and few men have ever painted so rapidly as Romney. But this rapid manner has its disadvantages. If habitually persisted in, it in time renders thorough finish impossible to the painter. An absolute necessity in Romney's early life, it became a distinct vice in his after works. To this were in part attributable the crowd of incomplete canvases the painter left behind him at his death, and the characteristic sketchiness traceable even in his most esteemed pictures.

At York he disposed of twenty pictures by a lottery, which produced little more than forty pounds.

Among these works was a scene from *Tristram Shandy*, upon which he had bestowed some pains; for at York Romney had attracted the notice of Laurence Sterne (whose portrait Steele had painted), and received at his hands marks of attention and friendship.

Twenty-seven years old, Romney began to weary of provincial triumphs,—to long for the wider field of exertion and the more enlightened recognition he could only find in the capital. He had toiled early and late to acquire money and skill sufficient for a creditable appearance in town. A son and daughter had been born of his marriage, yet his domestic ties could not bind him to the north, while his ambition was prompting him so urgently to seek certain fame and fortune in the south. He managed to raise a sum of one hundred pounds. Taking fifty for his travelling expenses, he left the balance for the support of his wife and children, and without a single letter of recommendation or introduction, set forth to try his chances alone in London. He was soon obliged to send for twenty pounds more, of the fifty he had left with his wife. He started southward on the 14th of March 1762, in company with two other Kendal gentlemen, on horseback. He stayed a day at Manchester, where he met his old master Count Steele, who warmly greeted his pupil, and rode with the party next day as far as Stockport. After much alarm from highwaymen—for in those days country banks were not, and every traveller was his own purse-bearer—Mr. Romney and his friends arrived safely at the Castle Inn, London, on the 21st March. The painter remained at the inn for a fortnight, until he was able to settle down comfortably in lodgings, in Dove Court, Mansion House. He was soon hard at work upon 'The Death of Rizzio,' adorning his walls with pictures he had brought with him or sent for afterwards from Kendal, such as 'King Lear,' 'Elfrida,' 'The Death of Lefevre,' and a few portraits of friends. The Rizzio picture has been represented as 'a work of extraordinary merit, combining energetic action with strong expression.' Its fate was sad enough; attracting no notice, producing no profit, and at length becoming an incumbrance in the studio, the painter destroyed it with his own hands; or, more probably, cut it up and sold it piecemeal, for one of his biographers mentions having seen certain heads by Romney in which terror was strongly depicted, and which had evidently formed portions of some larger work. In the August following his arrival in town he quitted Dove Court for Bearbinder's Lane. Here he executed several portraits at three guineas each, and painted his 'Death of Wolfe,' to which was awarded a prize of fifty guineas by the Society of Arts. Out of this picture arose much controversy. Adverse critics objected that the work could not with propriety be regarded as an historical composition, because, in point of fact, no historian had yet recorded the event it pretended to represent; Wolfe's death, however glorious and memorable, was too recent to be within the legitimate scope of high art! Further, Mr. Romney's work was condemned as 'a mere coat and waistcoat picture,' and much fault was found with his accurate rendering of the regimentals of the officers and soldiers and the silk stockings of the general. A few years later Benjamin West was greatly praised for his treatment of the same subject; Reynolds, after much deliberation and the statement, in the first instance, of a directly contrary opinion, avowing that the young American's picture would occasion 'a complete revolution in art.' It had been the plan, theretofore, in pictures of historical events of whatever period, to portray the characters engaged in the garb (or no garb) of antiquity; but West had declined, in placing upon his canvas an event of the year 1759, to introduce the costume of classic times; altogether disregarding the dislike of the connoisseurs to cocked hats, cross-belts, laced-coats, and bayonets, and their demands for bows and arrows, helmets, bucklers, and nakedness. But, in truth, West was merely following in the footsteps of George Romney, who had already produced a 'Death of Wolfe' in the correct dress of the period. There were few to laud poor Romney, however. Even the decision which gave him the prize was reversed, and the premium ultimately awarded to Mortimer, who had exhibited at the same time a picture of 'Edward the Confessor seizing the Treasurer of his mother.' Romney was obliged to be content with a gratuity of twenty-five guineas.

The painter's friends at once charged Reynolds with an active share in effecting this result; and indeed it seems clear that the reversal of the decision was due to his interference. They averred that he was anything but an impartial judge; that he was well aware the 'Death of Wolfe' was the work of a portrait painter; that he could not bear the thought of a rival near his throne, and had laid down the principle 'that it was impossible for two painters in the same department of the art to be long in friendship with each other.' He would not permit an obscure painter from the country to carry off a prize from a student of Mortimer's pretensions. With Mortimer he was on terms of friendship: his fellow-pupil under Hudson, and, above all, no portrait painter. What measure of truth there may have been in these allegations it is now difficult to decide. Thenceforward Reynolds and Romney were certainly enemies. Between the two painters, indeed, there never existed the slightest intercourse of any kind.

The curious treatment he had received from the Society of Arts made much stir, however, and brought the young painter friends and patrons. Probably the next best thing to securing the friendship of the future President of the Academy was the reputation of having incurred his enmity. 'The Death of Wolfe' was purchased by Mr. Rowland Stephenson, the banker, who presented it to Governor Varelst, by whom it was placed in the Council-Chamber at Calcutta. Romney moved from the city to the Mews-gate, Charing Cross, probably to be nearer the exhibition in Spring Gardens, and the Artists' Academy in St. Martin's Lane. At this time, it may be noted, Dance and Mortimer were living in Covent Garden, while Hogarth and Reynolds had set up their easels in Leicester Fields. Romney now raised his prices for portraits to five guineas, and saved money sufficient to enable him to pay a long-dreamt-of visit to Paris. He was absent six weeks; and on his return took chambers in Gray's Inn, where he painted several portraits of Members of the legal profession, including Sir Joseph Yates, one of the judges of the Court of the King's Bench. In Gray's Inn, too, he painted his picture of the 'Death of King Edmund,' which, in

1765, obtained a prize of fifty guineas from the Society of Arts. For this work, however, he was unable to find a purchaser. In 1767 his circumstances had so far improved that he felt himself justified in moving to a house in Great Newport Street, within a few doors of Reynolds, where he remained until his visit to Italy, in 1773. Meanwhile his friends were loud in their laudation of the prodigy who, in historical works, they declared, promised to rival the great masters, and in portraiture threatened to wrest the palm from Reynolds himself. He now raised his prices again, charging twelve guineas for a three-quarter portrait, and found no lack of sitters at the increased rate. Whether or not he sought for academic honours is not clear; certain it is they were not conferred upon him: and he invariably chose to send his pictures to the rooms of the Chartered Society, in Spring Gardens, rather than to the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Artists, in every way his inferiors, were welcomed to the ranks of 'the forty;' but to Romney never were granted even the poorer dignities of associateship. This neglect of him he always ascribed to the sinister influence of Reynolds and his followers, among whom, in this instance, must be numbered Fuseli, who was much given to sneering at Romney as 'a coat and waistcoat painter,' and who, in his edition of *Pilkington*, says, pertly, 'Romney was made for his times, and his times for him.' Allan Cunningham suggests, what is probably true, that Romney was a man likely to take a sort of morbid pleasure in his isolation, and in the odium which would necessarily devolve upon the Academy by its neglect of an artist of his eminence. His name has gone to swell the list of painters of mark who have ventured to defy the influence and opposition of the Academy, and have single-handed fought their way to success notwithstanding.

In 1771, through the introduction of Cumberland, Mrs. Yates, the actress, sat to Romney for a picture of the 'Tragic Muse.' Of course, this work was completely eclipsed by Reynolds's 'Tragic Muse,' painted some thirteen years later. Notwithstanding the demerits of the President's picture, the plagiarism of the pose and draperies from Michael Angelo's Joel in the Capella Sistina, the incongruities of the theatrical state-chair in the clouds, the gold lace, plaited hair, imperial tiara and strings of pearls,—still the majestic beauty of his model, her classical features, broad brow, grand form and superb eyes, enabled him to surpass immeasurably the effort of his younger and less favoured rival. Mrs. Yates, though an accomplished actress, was far from possessing the personal gifts of the Kembles' sister. To Romney's studio Cumberland also brought Garrick, with some hope that the great actor might interest himself in favour of the painter. But Garrick was too closely allied with Sir Joshua; he was wilfully blinded to the merits of Romney. He criticised with most impertinent candour the works he found in the studio, pausing before a large family group of portraits and with an affected imitation of the attitude of the chief figure, saying, 'Upon my word, Mr. Romney, this is a very regular, well-ordered family; and this is a very bright-rubbed mahogany table, at which that motherly, good lady is sitting; and this worthy good gentleman in the scarlet waistcoat is doubtless a very excellent subject—to the state, I mean (if all these are his children)—but not for your art, Mr. Romney, if you mean to pursue it with that success which I hope will attend you!' His 'pasteboard Majesty of Drury Lane,' in truth, knew nothing of the painter's art; and from any other than Romney would have incurred, as he well merited, most unceremonious ejection from the studio. He was safe enough with Romney, however, as he probably well knew. The painter, deeply mortified, silently turned the family picture with its face to the wall. He was extremely sensitive: a curious diffidence mingled with his conviction of his own cleverness. He was readily disconcerted: at a laugh, a jest, a few words of satiric criticism, he lost faith in himself, interest in his works; the subject which had promised so much pleasure now seemed to him fruitful only in pain and disappointment; he would seek at once a new occupation, and add another to a growing pile of canvases which the ridicule and captiousness of others, and his own weakness and caprice, had combined to leave for ever incomplete. Perhaps it was by way of balm for the wound he had unwittingly inflicted, by bringing Garrick to the studio, that Cumberland published in the Public Advertiser his verses upon the painters of the day, with especial mention of Romney and his picture of 'Contemplation,' which work, the poet says in a note, 'the few who attended the unfashionable exhibition in Spring Gardens may possibly recollect.' Already the success of the Royal Academy was telling disastrously upon the 'Society of Artists of Great Britain' to which Romney had attached himself.

In 1773, our painter, in his thirty-ninth year, and in receipt of an income of some twelve hundred pounds, derived solely from his profession, set sail for Italy, bearing with him letters of introduction from the Dukes of Gloucester and Richmond to the Pope, and accompanied by his close friend, Humphrey, the miniature-painter. His Holiness gave gracious permission to the artist to erect scaffolds in the Vatican, the better to make copies of the Raphaels which decorate the palace.

Among the pictures executed during Romney's Italian tour was a portrait of the eccentric Wortley Montagu (Lady Mary's son), who had assumed the manners and attire of a Turk, and who, shortly after his sitting to the painter, died from a bone sticking in his throat. Another work which he brought back with him to England was a daring attempt to represent 'Providence brooding over chaos.' In later years, when Lord George Gordon and his mob were sacking the Roman Catholic chapels throughout London, and plundering the houses of all suspected of sympathy with the Latin Church, Romney became alarmed lest his picture should attract the attention of the rioters, and, regarded by them as an evidence of idolatrous devotion, lead to the destruction of his house and property. The canvas was at once removed out of sight. At the sale of his works, on the death of the painter, his son changed the name of the picture to 'Jupiter Pluvius,' under which more marketable guise it soon found a purchaser.

On the 7th of June 1775, Romney arrived again in England: his return being celebrated by glowing strains from Cumberland's ready muse. As Gibbon said of the poetic praises of the

painter's friends—'If they did not contribute much to his professional prosperity, they might be justly called an elegant advertisement of his merit.' Sitters of all ranks now crowded to his studio. If his absence from England had done nothing else for him, it had wonderfully enhanced his reputation. But persons of taste and quality were of opinion that his visit to Italy had wrought marvels. They pretended to see a striking improvement, not merely in the mechanical, but also in the mental part of his work; his conceptive powers were found to be strengthened and enriched, and his method of painting benefited beyond measure by his Italian studies; he was no longer cold, and harsh, and heavy; all was now warmth and light, tenderness and beauty. It was at this time that Reynolds began to speak of Romney as 'the man in Cavendish Square.' He had established himself in the spacious mansion which the death of Cotes, the Royal Academician, had left vacant, and which, it may be noted, after the expiry of Romney's tenancy, was occupied by Sir Martin Archer Shee. Not without considerable anxiety, however, did Romney enter upon possession of his new abode. He was seized with an irrepressible misgiving that he was embarking upon a career of far greater expense than his success had warranted, or than the emoluments of his profession would enable him to maintain. 'In his singular constitution,' his biographer Hayley here finds occasion to observe, 'there was so much nervous timidity united to great bodily strength and to enterprising and indefatigable ambition, that he used to tremble, when he walked every morning in his new habitation, with a painful apprehension of not finding business sufficient to support him. These fears were only early flutterings of that hypochondriacal disorder which preyed in secret on his comfort during many years, and which, though apparently subdued by the cheering exhortations of frendship and great professional prosperity, failed not to show itself more formidably when he was exhausted by labour in the decline of life.' His trepidation was quite groundless, however. He had no lack of patrons or employment; the Duke of Richmond gave him generous encouragement and support, sat for his own picture, in profile, and commissioned portraits of Admiral Keppel, Mr. Burke, the Honourable Mrs. Damer, Lord John Cavendish, Lord George Lennox, and others. The painter's income soon sprung up to between three and four thousand a year, produced by portraits only. In 1776 he was seriously ill from a violent cold caught by standing in the rain, amongst the crowd outside Drury Lane Theatre, waiting to witness Garrick's farewell performance. He was cured, however, by Sir Richard Jebb, the eminent physician, who prescribed a bottle of Madeira to his patient, and attended him from that time forward in every illness, but generously declined to accept a fee for his services.

And the Mary Abbott whom George Romney had married years before and left behind at Kendal, with his son and daughter and thirty pounds, while he sought his fortune alone in London—the wife, his union with whom was to be as 'a spur to his application'—was she to be denied the sight of her husband's success, a share in his prosperity, a place in his house in Cavendish Square? It is hard to understand the utter unmanliness and heartlessness of Romney's conduct in this respect. There is no word of accusation against her—- no hint affecting her character—no question as to her being in any way unworthy of his love and trust, and of her rightful position by his side. His separation from her, in the first instance, was, under all the circumstances of the case, no doubt justifiable; and it is hardly possible to believe that his original withdrawal from Kendal was in pursuance of a plan of deliberate abandonment of his family. But for the protraction of this separation, after the first necessity for it had passed away, there would seem to be absolutely no excuse. His son, the Rev. John Romney, with a laudable desire to serve his father's memory, urges, as some faint apology for the painter's cruelty, that his affairs were at all times less prosperous than they seemed; that his brothers were a heavy burden upon him and drained him of his savings; that his professional journeys to Paris and Rome consumed all the money he could raise; and that thus a 'succession of untoward circumstances threw impediments in the way of good intent, till time and absence became impediments also.'

In truth, Romney appears to have been always curiously timid and reticent; to have suffered from excessive moral cowardice. On his first arrival in London and association with the young painters of the day, he began to feel some shame at his early imprudence, and some alarm lest it should present any hindrance to his professional advancement. He had given 'hostages to fortune,' and dreaded the result. He was thus persistently silent on the subject; and, as time went on, it became more and more difficult for him to avow the marriage he had from the first made so much a matter of mystery. And then, too, the prosperous unions of other artists, his contemporaries, excited his jealousy and increased his apprehensions. He began to think it indispensable to the success of a painter that he should marry well. Nathaniel Dance had been united to Mrs. Drummer, known as 'the Yorkshire fortune,' with eighteen thousand a year. John Astley had secured the hand of Lady Duckenfield, with an income of almost equal value. Then, from his literary and poetic friends he was little likely to receive encouragement to act justly in such a matter. Laurence Sterne was no especially good exemplar of conjugal fidelity. Mr. Hayley and the rest indulged in extremely poetic views concerning the privileges and prerogatives of genius; were opposed to trammels and scruples of any kind in such respect; and poured round the painter dense showers of versified adulation, so infused with ideality and Platonism that the simple rules of right and wrong were quite washed away by the harmonious and transcendental torrent. Romney, weak, vain, selfish, suffered himself to be led down paths which, however flowery and pleasant, were yet mean and contemptible enough, and listening to the twanging of Hayley's lyre, turned a deaf ear to the pining of the poor woman fading away, alone and deserted in the north—the Mary Abbott whom he had vowed in his youth until death should them part to love, honour, and cherish. For some thirty years the husband and wife never set eyes upon each other—were absolutely separated.

He had now as much work as he could possibly execute. He was often at his easel for thirteen

hours a day, beginning at eight in the morning, lighting his lamp when the daylight had gone, and toiling on sometimes until midnight. He had five, and occasionally six, sitters a day. He generally completed a three-quarter portrait in three or four sittings, and could accomplish this easily, provided no hands were introduced into the picture. The sittings varied in duration from three-quarters of an hour to an hour and a half each. His only time now for ideal or historical art was in the interval between the departure and arrival of his sitters, or when they failed to keep their engagements with him; but he would regard such disappointments with pleasure, having always at hand a spare canvas upon which he could employ himself with some fancy subject. Of course, this close application was not without injurious effect upon him in the end. 'My health,' he wrote, at a later period of his life, 'is not at all constant. My nerves give way, and I have no time to go in quest of pleasure to prevent a decline of health. My hands are full, and I shall be forced to refuse new faces at last, to be enabled to finish the numbers I have in an unfinished state. I shall regret the necessity of forbearing to take new faces; there is a delight in novelty greater than in the profit gained by sending them home finished. But it must be done.' His annual retirement for a month's holiday to Hayley's house at Eartham was of little real service to his health. He was compelled the while to attitudinize incessantly as a genius. Hayley, in globose language, was always entreating his guest to moderate his intense spirit of application, conjuring him to rest from his excess of labour 'in the name of those immortal powers the Beautiful and the Sublime,' etc., while he was at the same time urging the painter to new and greater toils, teasing the jaded man with endless suggestions, bewildering him with a jabber of sham sentimentality and hazy æstheticism. 'Whenever Romney was my guest,' writes Hayley, 'I was glad to put aside my own immediate occupation for the pleasure of searching for and presenting to him a copious choice of such subjects as might happily exercise his powers.' Poor Romney was permitted no rest. Hayley was for ever in close attendance gratifying his own inordinate vanity at the painter's cost. He produced four representations of Serena, the heroine of Hayley's *Triumphs of Temper*. He painted a scene from the *Tempest* for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, which project Romney always claimed to have originated, and Hayley was in the studio sitting for Prospero. At Hayley's house a small coterie of poetasters, male and female, assembled for purposes of mutual glorification in the most windbag sort of verse, and were glad to buy portraits and sketches from the painter with such small coin as sonnets and stanzas, and poetic epistles. Romney executes a likeness of Mrs. Hayley, and is rewarded with eighty-eight glowing lines by her husband, who calls to his aid Eolus, Orion, Boreas, Auster, Zephyr, Eurus, Famine, and Ceres for the better decoration of his verse. He paints a portrait of Miss Seward, and the lady's gratitude gushes forth in eulogy of

> ....the pleasures of the Hayleyan board,
> Where, as his pencil, Romney's soul sublime
> Glows with bold lines, original and strong, etc.

'Beloved and honoured Titiano!' she wrote, some years later; 'how that name recalls the happy, happy hours I passed with you at Eartham; when by the title 'Muse' you summoned me to the morning walk!' Amongst the drossy twaddle which passed current as poetry at Eartham, a sonnet in Romney's honour by a true poet—William Cowper—may be counted as pure gold.

In the beginning of 1782 Emma Lyon, then known as Mrs. Hart, afterwards as Lady Hamilton, first sat to Mr. Romney. Painters and poets enough had already been busy celebrating her loveliness, the lady nothing loth. She took pleasure in the full display of her charms: holding probably that her beauty was not given her for herself alone, but that the whole world, if it listed, might at least look on it and adore. At one time indeed she was rumoured to have personated the Goddess of Health, when the 'celestial' Doctor Graham was giving his strange and indecorous lectures in Pall Mall; but that scandal has been contradicted. Certain it is, however, that her witcheries effectually subjugated Romney and Hayley. The painter went fairly mad about her; could not see her often enough; was restless and miserable out of her presence; reduced the number of his sitters, and admitted no visitors until noon, that he might have time sufficient to devote to the beautiful Emma and her portraits. This infatuation endured for years. 'At present,' he wrote to Hayley, in 1791, 'and the greatest part of the summer, I shall be engaged in painting pictures from the *divine lady*. I cannot give her any other epithet; for I think her superior to all womankind.' For a long time he seemed to be able only to paint Emma Lyon. His son enumerates some two dozen portraits, in which she appears as Circe, Iphigenia, St. Cecilia, Sensibility, a Bacchante, Alope, the Spinstress, Cassandra (for the Shakespeare Gallery), Calypso, a Pythoness, Joan of Arc, a Magdalen, etc.; some of these were left unfinished. But at one time the form and features of his beautiful model appeared upon the painter's canvas, let him try to paint what he would. The fair Emma had absolutely enthralled him. Absent from the object of his adoration, he was reduced to despair. He writes to Hayley, complaining that he has discovered an alteration in his Emma's conduct: 'a coldness and neglect seemed to have taken the place of her repeated declaration of regard.' Hayley sends up some verses for the painter to copy and sign, beginning 'Gracious Cassandra,' and asking pitifully,

> .... what cruel clouds have darkly chilled
> Thy favour that to me was vital fire?
> Oh, let it shine again: or worse than killed
> Thy soul-sunk artist feels his art expire!

The poet seems to have been not less love-stricken. 'Her features,' he writes, 'like the language of Shakespeare, could exhibit all the feelings of nature and all the gradations of every passion with a most fascinating truth and felicity of expression.' Presently the lady has given her hand to Sir

William Hamilton and set sail for Naples. She makes peace with the painter, however, before her departure; calls upon him, resumes her former kindness of manner, is as cordial with him as ever, and sits to him for a portrait he is to paint *as a present to her mother*. Poor Romney!

In 1794 there were symptoms of decay in the painter's constitution; his mental infirmities increased. He became the victim of a sort of intellectual superfetation. He was perpetually planning labours of a magnitude which, from the first, rendered them hopelessly impracticable. His brain was morbidly active, while his hand grew tremulous and uncertain, and his sight dimmed. His manner became irritable, and more than ever timid and suspicious. He wrote to his son: 'I have made many grand designs; I have formed a system of original subjects, moral and my own, and I think one of the grandest that has been thought of; but nobody knows it. Hence, it is my view to wrap myself in retirement and pursue these plans, as I begin to feel I cannot bear trouble of any kind.' He quits his house in Cavendish Square and becomes the purchaser of a retreat at Holly Bush Hill, Hampstead, after abandoning a project he at one time entertained for the purchase of four acres near the Edgware Road, and covering them with a group of fantastic buildings of his own design. To the house at Hampstead he made many whimsical additions, however, erecting a large picture and sculpture-gallery, a wooden arcade or covered ride, a dining-room close to the kitchen, with a buttery hatch opening into it, so that he and his guests might enjoy beefsteaks 'hot and hot' upon the same plan as prevailed at the Beefsteak Club, then occupying a room in the Lyceum Theatre. The cost of these changes amounted to nearly three thousand pounds. With quite a childish eagerness he took possession of his new house before the walls were dry, and while the workmen were still completing the changes he had ordered. Still he had not room enough for his numberless art-treasures. His pictures were crammed and huddled away any and everywhere. Some were arranged along the wooden arcade, where, exposed to the open air, and to the alternate action of moisture and frost, they were almost entirely destroyed in the course of the winter, while some were deliberately stolen. The painter could do little work now: he could begin, but was unable to finish or even to resume his undertaking. His appetite for art seemed to fail him; he ceased to have faith in himself; he was preyed on by nervous dejection; weighed down with dark alarms and vague forebodings. Soon his head is swimming and his right hand numb with incipient paralysis. Hayley visits him for the last time in April 1799, and had 'the grief of perceiving that his increasing weakness of body and mind afforded only a gloomy prospect for the residue of his life.' He lays down his brush for ever. Suddenly, without a word to any one of his intentions, he takes the northern coach and arrives at Kendal. Fainting and exhausted, he is received with the utmost tenderness and affection by his wife. No word of reproach for the neglect and solitude to which he had doomed her for so many years escapes her lips. With unremitting solicitude, with religious earnestness, this loving, forgiving woman tends the sick-bed of the sinking man. His mind expires before his body; for months he remains hopelessly imbecile, free from suffering, but wholly unconscious; breathing his last at Kendal on the 15th of November 1802, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

The inconsistency manifest between Romney's wanton cruelty in his domestic character, and his reputation among his intimates and contemporaries for great kindliness of nature, generosity, and general worth, is remarkable enough. There are many men, however, who appear to the least advantage when seen by the light of their own fireside. Hayley says much of his friend's *extreme sensibility*:' his lips,' writes the poet, 'quivered with emotions of pity at the sight of distress or at the relation of a pathetic story.' Cumberland mentions that the painter was, 'by constitution, prone to tears.' Yet his charity was not for home wear; the distress he did not see troubled him very little. It is vain to seek for any sufficient apology for Romney's shameful treatment of his wife and children. If it were possible to forget this deep stain upon his character he would seem, in all other relations of life, to be entitled to esteem and commendation. For the poor and needy he was ready, not merely with his sensibility, but with his purse. To his friends he was ever faithful and liberal. After attaining professional eminence he was almost indifferent to the emoluments of his art, prizing money much less for its own sake than for the recognition of his position and abilities that it demonstrated; while to all young artists he was especially kind and indulgent. He was the first to encourage Flaxman, and to appreciate and applaud his works; was ever the cordial and loving friend of the sculptor, as their correspondence amply testifies. 'I always remember,' says Flaxman, 'Mr. Romney's notice of my boyish years and productions with gratitude; his original and striking conversation; his masterly, grand, and feeling compositions are continually before me; and I still feel the benefits of his acquaintance and recommendations.'

Romney's historical pictures are very numerous; though comparatively few of them can be considered as completely finished works. According to Allan Cunningham's estimate, for one really finished there are five half done, and for five half done there are at least a dozen merely sketched out on the canvas. The painter was all impulse; very eager and impatient at the beginning, but soon wearied, and only by painful efforts and extraordinary labour ever arriving at the conclusion of his undertakings. There was a want of concentrative power about him; he was ever frittering away his undeniable abilities upon a number of hastily adopted projects, crudely conceived, and remorselessly abandoned when the temperature of his enthusiasm lowered, or any unlooked-for difficulties appeared in his path. How the erratic and desultory nature of his mind was fostered and aggravated by Hayley's mischievous efforts has already been shown. That the glowing eulogium pronounced by Flaxman upon his friend's productions will be endorsed by modern critics is hardly to be expected. Indeed, the characteristics upon which Flaxman especially dwells as worthy of the highest praise will be rather accounted as defects in the present day. The severe imitation of the antique; the artificial simplicity of composition; the bare background; the bas-relief style of treatment; the pseudo-purity which rejected natural feeling and action in favour of a conventionally ideal expression—these were precious gifts in Flaxman's

eyes; to modern artists they will appear rather errors of judgment pertaining to a past school of art: false fashions which the present generation of painters have happily outgrown and abandoned. At the same time, however, it should not be forgotten that the majority of Romney's works of this class will bear comparison with the best productions of his contemporaries, and that some of them evince in a remarkable degree his grace of manner, skill in expression, and loftiness of aim.

As a portrait painter Romney will be more prized and remembered, although it is not likely that any existing connoisseurs will be found to proclaim themselves with Lord Thurlow, of 'the Romney faction,' as opposed to the school of Reynolds. In contrasting the works of the rival painters, it is easy to see that however close a race for fame they seemed to be running in their own time, there exists in truth a wide distance between the president of the Academy and 'the man in Cavendish Square.' It is not only that Romney had not the variety of Reynolds; that he could not give to portrait painting the new life with which Reynolds had so happily invested it:—he did not hit character nearly so well; he could not endow his sitters with the air of repose, ease, and elegance peculiar to the Reynolds portraits; he failed to give interest to his backgrounds, generally too near and flat, and heavily painted; and he had not Sir Joshua's success in subduing the eccentricities of costume of the day, and bestowing a certain grace and beauty upon even the most exuberant capes, cuffs, ruffles, wigs, cravats, and frills, prevalent a century ago. There is an air of *fashion* about many of Romney's portraits as opposed to the look of *nobility*, which is the especial attribute of Reynolds's pictures. In contemplating a Sir Joshua there will be found a propriety, an integrity about the work which effectually prevents all thought of the parts played by the tailor or the milliner at the toilet of the sitter. This is not always the case with Romney's portraits; pattern, and cut, and vogue do not fail to assert themselves. In colour Romney is very unequal; in his own day it was notoriously inferior to Reynolds's, though in spite of some instances of chalkiness and thinness, generally rich, pure, and lustrous. But the President's recourse to meretricious methods of obtaining beauty of tint has ruined the majority of his works, rendering their glories fleeting as photographs. Romney prudently adhered to a safer manner. Many of his pictures can even now be hardly less fresh and glowing in colour than when they first left his easel. His carnations and flesh tints are often singularly fine. His small portraits possess dignity, with force and manliness, however, rather than absolute ease or refinement. But his chief success was in his female heads. In quick and distinct appreciation of beauty he was not behind Reynolds; while, occasionally, he attained a certain poetic height of expression it would be difficult to parallel among Sir Joshua's works.

The fluctuation in fame which Romney has suffered has, of course, fallen to the fate of many of his professional brethren. We read, for instance, that Sir Godfrey Kneller sometimes received in payment for a portrait a considerable sum in hard cash, with a couple of Rembrandt's thrown in by way of makeweight. Yet now a single specimen of Rembrandt exceeds in value a whole gallery of Knellers. And Rembrandt died insolvent, while Sir Godfrey amassed a fortune! No one will dispute the justice of the reversal of judgment which has taken place; the elevation of Rembrandt at the expense of Kneller. But it may be a question whether George Romney has not been unfairly abased, even though it may be agreed on all hands that Sir Joshua Reynolds has not been unduly exalted. Possibly, however, when a man rises or is lifted up to a high pitch of celebrity, it is inevitable that he should in some degree mount upon the prostrate and degraded reputations of his contemporaries.

NOTES:

[14] The remark has reference to certain odes by Cumberland in honour of Romney, and to Johnson's comment thereupon:—'Why, sir, they would have been thought as good as odes commonly are if Cumberland had not put his name to them; but a name immediately draws censure, unless it be a name that bears down everything before it. Nay, Cumberland has made his odes subsidiary to the fame of another man. They might have run well enough by themselves; but he has not only loaded them with a name—he has made them carry double.'

COSWAY, THE MINIATURE-PAINTER.

Biographers seem often to choose between two weaknesses. They are fond of asserting that the hero of their narration comes in truth of a gentle stock, however the clouds of misfortune may for a time have veiled from general observation the glories of his family tree,—or, failing this, they take a sort of pride in dwelling upon and exaggerating the humbleness of his descent and condition. He is a somebody, or he is a nobody; a gentleman of distinguished origin or an utterly unknown creature with the vaguest views about his lineage: a waif of the wayside, a stray of the streets, his rise from obscurity to eminence being entirely attributable to his own intrinsic merits and exertions.

To this last-mentioned method of biographical treatment has been subjected Richard Cosway, painter and Royal Academician of the last century: a man of fame in his day, though that fame may not have come down to us in a very good state of preservation. The fact that in his prime he was a man of fashion, a 'personage' in society, the companion of princes, and an artist of eminence, has given a sort of impetus to the fancy of tracing him back to a vastly inferior state of life. Writers dealing with the painter's story, and prepared to point to him presently as the occupant and ornament of a 'gilded saloon,' have found a preliminary pleasure in dilating upon his earlier and humbler position as an errand-boy in a drawing academy. The contrast was effective, picturesque—dramatic. Contemplate this scene of gloom and degradation; now turn to this other canvas, all sunshine and prosperity. Is not the comparison impressive? But then it ought to be true.

This black and white view of the vicissitudes of Cosway's career is due, in the first instance, to Mr. J.T. Smith, engraver, antiquarian, and author of the *Life of Nollekens* and other books. Mr. Shipley, from Northampton, brother of the Bishop of St. Asaph, and founder of the Society of Arts, had established a drawing school at No. 229 in the Strand. Cosway, when quite a lad, says Smith, obtained the notice of Shipley, and was engaged by him to attend in the studio and carry to and fro the tea and coffee with which the housekeeper of the establishment was permitted to provide the students at a cost of threepence per head. Nollekens and the father of Smith were among the students, and good-naturedly, the story goes on to say, gave the boy Richard Cosway instruction in drawing, and encouraged him to compete for the prizes he afterwards obtained from the Society of Arts. These particulars probably Smith obtained from his father or from Nollekens—if indeed they be not wholly due not so much to his own invention as to the confusion of names and misconception of incidents to which every one is liable who puts too great a strain upon his memory. Allan Cunningham, it may be observed, relates facts concerning Cosway's origin and youth which go far towards controverting the errand-boy episode in his life, as chronicled by Smith.

Richard Cosway was born in 1740, at Tiverton, in Devonshire, a county singularly productive of famous artists, having given birth among others to Haydon, Northcote, and Reynolds. The father of Cosway was the master of the grammar-school at Tiverton: his uncle was for some time mayor; and the family, originally Flemish, and engaged in woollen manufactures, was possessed of considerable property in the town and neighbourhood. To the connexion of the Cosways with Flanders was ascribed their ownership of certain valuable works by Rubens, which first lit up a love of painting in the heart of young Cosway, and made him an idle schoolboy and an indefatigable artist. The master of Tiverton school was naturally indignant at the want of scholarly application of his son and pupil; was for birching him into better behaviour, forbidding him to ply his pencil at all under heavy penalties. The boy's uncle, the mayor, and a judicious friend and neighbour, one Mr. Oliver Peard, seem to have better appreciated the situation. They interposed on behalf of the young artist, and succeeded in obtaining for him permission to make drawings during such times as he could be spared from the grammar-school. But at last it appears to be agreed on all hands that the boy must close his books: he is wilful, and must have his way—become an artist: there is no hope whatever of his succeeding in any other line of life. He is to be humoured to the top of his bent. His passion is to be cured by indulging it. If he succeeds—well and good,—there is nothing more to be said. If he fails, his failure will sober him, his friends argue: render him docile and tractable, obedient to parental commands for the future.

He was sent up to London, at thirteen, to study under Hudson, Reynolds's preceptor (and more remarkable on that account than on any other, though his merits as a portrait-painter are less contemptible than many suppose); all expenses were to be defrayed by the Mayor of Tiverton and kindly Mr. Oliver Peard. After a year under Hudson, young Cosway entered Shipley's Academy, already mentioned. Probably he was a somewhat puny, insignificant-looking lad, and was therefore made the butt and fag of the robuster students, compelled to attend upon them and obey their behests, even to performing menial offices, just as younger boys do in other academies

—for might is right in the world of school—and thus Mr. Smith's errand-boy story may have originated. But it can be scarcely said to be substantiated by the further facts he proceeds to narrate: how that young Cosway in the course of a few years obtained no less than five premiums, some of five and one of ten guineas, from the Society of Arts: the first awarded when he was only fourteen years old, the last when he was under four-and twenty. The unskilled errand-boy could scarcely have received a prize instantly on his commencing to study.

Quitting Shipley's, he became for a time a teacher at Parr's Drawing School, but was soon busily employed on his own account in supplying the jewellers' shops with miniature paintings on ivory; pretty heads and fancy subjects or mythological scenes to be framed with gold or set with diamonds; the beau of the day was incomplete without a costly snuff-box adorned with a lid, the prettiness of which, perhaps, somewhat surpassed its pudicity. Cosway seems to have been just the artist to supply a demand of this sort. He was industrious, fond of money,—but rather because it ministered to habits, which were inclined to be extravagant, than for any very sordid reasons—and was without high views as to his art. He did not mind debasing it a little, accommodating his friends the shopkeepers, and filling his own pockets. And his execution was very rapid and adroit; he could put just as much work into his subjects as would give them in uneducated eyes the effect of high finish, while in truth they occupied but little of his time, and provided him with most ample profits. But, if slight, they were certainly elegant; if not very pure in art, they were unquestionably pleasing to a large and important class. The demand for specimens of Mr. Cosway's ingenious taste became at last almost in excess of his powers of supply.

First, by his snuff-box subjects, and afterwards by his portraits—on ivory or in red and black chalk—after the manner Bartolozzi had introduced—Cosway earned large sums. For many years he was reputed to have been in possession of a handsomer income than could be secured by the efforts of all his artist-brethren put together. But it must be said for him that he worked very hard. At the height of his fame he would sometimes boast as he sat down to dinner, that he had during the day despatched some twelve or fourteen sitters. He would often complete portraits at three sittings of half an hour each. But then his finish was of the slightest kind, and many of his miniatures can only be regarded, from a modern point of view, as tinted sketches, after allowance has been made for the perishable nature of the pigments he employed. He seems to have possessed a trick of enriching the colours of the eyes, lips, and cheeks of his sitters, by reducing every other hue in the picture to a cold blue-grey tone. By this system of violent contrast any hint of positive colour gained in warmth and brilliance to a remarkable degree. The miniature painter can hardly help improving and refining the subjects he deals with; for one reason, because the delicate nature of the material upon which he works, its exquisite surface and delicate texture, imparts a marked purity to all his tints. The coarsest complexion gains in lustre and smoothness when attempt is made to render it upon ivory; the dainty groundwork gleams through and gives beauty and clearness to the swarthiest hues. And then, in addition to this, Cosway had in full the portrait-painter's faculty of flattering his sitters. He could hardly fail to please them. He understood thoroughly how, while preserving a real resemblance, to catch the happiest expression; to subdue unattractive lines; to modify plain features; to conceal weaknesses; bringing out the really good points of a face; to light up dull eyes, and flush pale lips and cheeks. The faults of his portraits consist in their over-conscious graciousness; they smile and sparkle and are arch and winning to an excess that sometimes approaches inanity. And he was disposed, perhaps, to record the fashions of his time with too intense insistence. There was a rage then, as we know, for a piling up on the head of all sorts of finery: feathers, lace, ribbons, velvet hats, mob-caps, and strings of pearls. Cosway will hold back from us none of these adornments, rather he will force upon us a redundancy of them, and contemplating the aspects of the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of the present generation as they appear to us according to Cosway's art, we are led to the conclusion that the dear old ladies were in truth most killing coquettes, with quite an extravagant regard for the dictates of their fashion-books, and occupied by a passion for ogling their fellow-creatures to an extent that was decidedly reprehensible.

But it must be allowed that Cosway suited his customers, and, moreover, in the main satisfied the art-demands of his period. However stern critics might censure, or rival painters scoff, his success was assured. And in artistic facility and accuracy of drawing, when he cared to be particular in that respect, he could hardly be said to be behind his contemporaries. His copies from the antique were both graceful and correct, owing to his frequent practice in the Duke of Richmond's gallery, and his outlines received the fervent admiration of Bartolozzi and Cipriani. He tried his hand now and then at the high historic order of art of Barry and Fuseli, but his ambition was probably limited to a less pretentious range,—'the little pleasing paradise of miniature,' as Allan Cunningham phrases it; he cared rather for the caresses of the world of fashion than the applause of the cognoscenti. In society he was a power; for could he not by means of his pencil bestow, as it were, a certificate of beauty upon whom he would? Have not many of his sitters acquired, thanks to him, a reputation for good looks which has survived even to our day, and which, but for his skilful flattery, they never could have possessed at all? So, in drawing-rooms and boudoirs he was fêted, and fondly greeted, and made much of, while plenty of money was slipped into his pocket, and so, according to one of his biographers, from the gold he gained and the gaiety of the company he kept, he rose from one of the dirtiest of boys to be one of the smartest of men.

He was, indeed, coxcombical in his smartness. But then he lived in days when, among a large class, a love of fine clothes had risen to quite a passion. Patronized by the Prince of Wales, what could he do but imitate his patron—who was nothing if not 'dressy?' 'The Macaronis' were

furnishing the sensation of the hour. A party of young gentlemen who had made the grand tour had formed themselves into a club, and from their always having upon their table a dish of macaroni—a comestible then but little known in England—they acquired the name of the Macaroni Club; at least their name has been generally thus accounted for. The Macaroni Club was to the last century what Crockford's was to this. 'It was composed,' says Walpole, 'of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying glasses.' In matters of fashion the Macaronis claimed absolute supremacy. They ruled the world of *ton*—especially interesting themselves in toilet matters. To wear a style of dress that had not been sanctioned by the Macaroni Club was to be scouted as an outer barbarian. For a time everything was '*à la Macaroni*.' It became the phrase of the hour—springing into existence as suddenly, possessing the town as wholly, and disappearing at last as completely as such phrases always do. Of course Cosway must be in the fashion,—must chime in with the universal humour. He dressed in the height of the Macaroni vogue. His small plain person was to be seen in all public places clothed in a mulberry silk coat profusely embroidered with scarlet strawberries, with sword and bag and a small three-cornered hat perched on the top of his powdered toupée. He assumed a mincing, affected air—a tone of excessive refinement and exquisite sensibility. He pretended to an absurd superiority over his fellows, and striving to conceal his real and more honest situation as a hard-working artist, posed himself incessantly as a creature of fashion. Of course in the end he disgusted his brother painters, while he did not really conciliate 'the quality.' The former scorned him, his fine clothes, splendid furniture, and black servants—the more satirical holding him up to ridicule in the shop windows, by laughable caricatures, such as 'The Macaroni Miniature Painter; or, Billy Dimple sitting for his picture:' the latter came to his feasts, drank his wines, won his money from him at hazard, stimulated his extravagance to the utmost, while they made mouths at him behind his back, and condemned in secret and among themselves the folly of his conduct. It must be said for the artist, however, that he toiled earnestly and successfully to make his professional earnings keep pace in some sort with his lavish private habits. Cipriani used to relate, that after whole nights had been wasted by Cosway in the most frivolous and worthless of pursuits, he was yet to be found at an early hour in his studio, sedulously toiling to redeem lost time and money, very penitent for the past, full of the best intentions for the future: all of course to be abandoned and forgotten when the evening came, the chandeliers were lighted, the cards strewed the table, and the world of society gathered round him in his drawing-room again.

A less honest source of emolument than his own pencil provided, Cosway found in helping to supply the demand then existing for specimens of the old masters. The love of the connoisseurs for ancient art, even to its most suspicious examples, had survived the satire of Hogarth and the indignation of Barry. The patrons of the day were warmer friends to the picture-dealers than to the painters. Modern works of any pretence were at an alarming discount: the productions of the past were at high premium. Cosway skilfully contrived to reap profits in the double capacity of dealer and painter. He joined the ranks of those whom Barry, in a tone of bitter complaint, describes as 'artful men both at home and abroad [who] have not failed to avail themselves of this passion for ancient art ... for vending in the name of those great masters the old copies, imitations, and studies of all the obscure artists that have been working in Italy, France, and other places, for two hundred years past.' Cosway went into the market of doubtful old masters, and purchased largely; about many of his specimens there was probably no doubt whatever. These he repaired, re-touched, re-varnished, re-framed, and sold for good prices, as 'masterpieces of ancient art,' to such noble and gentle patrons as had galleries to fill, or walls to cover, and money to part with. This method of proceeding was doubtless profitable rather than honourable. Cosway's apologists—Hazlitt among them—say for him, that he was 'Fancy's child,' the dupe of his own deceptions, that he really believed in the genuineness, the pure originality of the old masters he had with his own hand worked upon, almost past identification. But self deception which is so decidedly a source of profit to the deceiver has, to say the least of it, a suspicious element about it.

Cosway at first occupied a house in Orchard Street, Portman Square; but as his income improved, he moved to No. 4 Berkeley Street, opposite the Duke of Devonshire's wall, and at that time, according to Smith, he was attended by a negro servant remarkable for having published an octavo volume on the subject of slavery. It was in Berkeley Street that Cosway was first noticed by the Prince of Wales and his royal brothers, whose liberal patronage of the painter brought him into fashionable and general estimation. He was appointed painter in ordinary to the Prince; and in 1771 he was elected a Royal Academician.

Cosway married Maria Hatfield, the daughter of an Englishman who had made a fortune by keeping an hotel at Leghorn. There is a tinge of tragedy about the lady's story. Four elder children had been secretly murdered by a half insane maid-servant, whose crime remained undiscovered until she was overheard threatening the life of the child Maria. Upon interrogation, the murderess confessed her guilt, and was condemned to imprisonment for life. Other children were subsequently born to the Hatfields. Charlotte, who lived to become the unhappy wife of Coombe, the author of Dr. Syntax, and a son, afterwards known as an artist of some promise. Maria Hatfield was educated in a convent, where she learnt music and drawing. Subsequently she studied painting at Rome, and there made the acquaintance of Battoni, Maron, Fuseli, Wright of Derby, and other artists. Upon her father's death she had resolved to return to the cloister; but her mother brought her on a visit to London, and a friendship she then formed with the popular Angelica Kauffman induced her finally to renounce all idea of a nun's life. Soon she became the wife of Richard Cosway. The marriage took place at St. George's, Hanover Square; Charles Townley, of Townley Marble celebrity, giving away the bride.

She possessed beauty,—she was a fair Anglo-Italian with profuse golden hair—talent, and money. The year of her marriage she exhibited certain highly-admired miniatures at the Royal Academy. Her fame spread. The youth, the loveliness, the genius of Mrs. Cosway became town talk. Her husband's house was thronged with people of fashion who came to see, admire the lady artist, and purchase specimens of her art. But Cosway, probably from pride, though it might be from an acute perception of the greater advantages to be derived from reserve in such a matter, would not permit his wife to paint professionally. A favoured few might now and then become the possessors of some slight sketches by Mrs. Cosway; occasionally she might honour a lady of rank by painting her portrait; but Mrs. Cosway's ability, it was to be distinctly understood, was not placed at the service of the general public. Of course this exclusive system enhanced the market value of the lady's works considerably, and while the majority of people were lauding Mr. Cosway as a husband too fond and indulgent to permit his sweet wife to ruin her health by harassing work at her easel, a judicious minority were perhaps doing Mr. Cosway stricter justice in accounting him a very cunning practitioner indeed, in the way of making the most of Mrs. Cosway's talent.

For this, it must be said, however, that as the times went, it did not really need such careful nursing; it was strong enough, or very nearly so, to run alone: it was of a highly respectable order. The lady possessed poetic feeling, with considerable artistic facility. Her sketches of scenes from Spenser, Shakespeare, Virgil, and Homer compare not unfavourably with the designs of many of her contemporaries. And her portraits were of real merit; one of the fair Duchess of Devonshire, painted as the Cynthia of Spenser, extorted unbounded admiration from the critics and connoisseurs of the period.

From Berkeley Street Cosway removed to the south side of Pall Mall, occupying part of the large mansion originally erected by the Duke of Schomberg—that 'citizen of the world,' as Macaulay calls him, who was made a Duke, a Knight of the Garter, and Master of the Ordnance by William the Third, and falling by his master's side at the battle of the Boyne, was, according to Lord Macaulay, buried in Westminster Abbey; but, in truth, it would seem that his remains were deposited in the Cathedral of St. Patrick, Dublin, Dean Swift and the Chapter erecting there a monument to his memory, and the Dean writing *more suo* a sarcastic epitaph[15] on the heirs who had neglected to do their duty by their great ancestor. Schomberg House—after the Duke's death divided into three separate houses, and still existing, though in a somewhat changed and mutilated form, part of it being now occupied by the War Office—has sheltered many artists of fame under its roof. Here Jervas painted—the pupil of Kneller, and the admired of Pope, whose deformity the painter in his portrait of the poet did his best to mend and conceal; here lived mad Jack Astley, who made so prosperous a marriage with the rich Lady Duckenfield; and Nathaniel Hone, the Royal Academician, retaining on the premises a negress model, famous for her exquisite symmetry of form; then Cosway—and, greatest of all, Thomas Gainsborough, dying in an upper room on the 2d of August 1778. In the spacious saloons of Schomberg House, Cosway thought he should find ample room and verge enough both for himself and his fashionable friends.

And room was becoming very necessary; for Mrs. Cosway's receptions were now the town rage—were crowded to inconvenience. They were marked by what was then a speciality; though it has since become a common enough characteristic of such assemblies. 'Lions' were to be met with there—literary, artistic, and otherwise. The last new poets, painters, players, were to be seen with their honours in their newest gloss; the latest discoverers, navigators, and travellers—freshly escaped from shipwreck or cannibals—the rising stars of the House of Commons—anybody and everybody of the least note, with the provision, possibly, that they should be 'elegant and ingenious,'—these thronged the charming Mrs. Cosway's drawing-rooms. The elect of society, for the first time on the same floor and under the same roof, met and shook hands, deriving a curious piquant sort of pleasure from the proceeding, with—*Bohemia*; the word must be used, though not an agreeable one, much misused and liable to be misinterpreted, and above all, though in the Cosway period it was altogether unknown and unheard of. Especially were to be noted among the guests the Whig adherents of the Prince of Wales, the politicians of the buff and blue school: little Cosway, busy in the midst of them, attempting a statesman-like attitude, sympathizing with revolution, and affecting to discover in the convulsions of the French nation the dawn of an empire of reason and taste, in which genius and virtue alone would be honoured. Possibly the painter expressed too unreservedly his views in these respects. A prince may be permitted to masquerade as a *prolétaire*; but for a bystander to talk red republicanism to a royal heir-apparent is rather doubtful taste, to say the least of it. By-and-by wild Prince Hal came to power, and shrunk from his old associates. The Regent abandoned his buff and blue friends, looked coldly upon his whilom political companions: withdrawing his favour from Cosway among the rest. The painter troubled himself little about the matter. He was too proud or too indifferent to make any effort to regain the royal patronage. If he had done little to merit its bestowal upon him in the first instance, certainly he had done nothing to deserve its withdrawal from him at last.

A frequent guest at Mrs. Cosway's during the last ten years of his life was Horace Walpole, very pleased at receiving 'little Italian notes of invitation' from the winning lady. He relates to the Countess of Ossory, in 1786, his meeting 'la Chevalière d'Eon,' after many years' interval, at Mrs. Cosway's. He found 'la Chevalière' noisy and vulgar; 'in truth,' he writes, 'I believe she had dined a little *en dragon*. The night was hot, she had no muff or gloves, and her hands and arms seem not to have participated of the change of sexes, but are fitter to carry a chair than a fan.' At another time he admits: 'Curiosity carried me to a concert at Mrs. Cosway's—not to hear

Rubinelli, who sang one song at the extravagant price of ten guineas, and whom, for as many shillings, I have heard sing half-a-dozen at the Opera House; no, but I was curious to see an English Earl [Cowper] who had passed thirty years at Florence, and who is more proud of a pinchbeck principality and a paltry order from Wirtemberg than he was of being a peer of Great Britain when Great Britain was something.' Elsewhere he speaks admiringly of Mrs. Cosway, and describes her reception as a Diet at which representatives of all the princes of Europe assemble.

From Pall Mall Cosway moved to a larger mansion at the south-west corner of Stratford Place, Oxford Street. A carved stone lion stood on guard at the entrance—a fact which incited some wag to affix to the door the following lines, generally attributed to Peter Pindar:—

'When a man to a fair for a show brings a lion,
'Tis usual a monkey the sign-post to tie on.
But here the old custom reversed is seen,
For the lion's without, and the monkey's within.'

According to Smith, a certain ape-like look in Cosway's face in a measure justified the satire. Irritated by the attack, the painter moved once more—to No. 20 in the same street.

Dr. Wolcot (Peter Pindar), who had been busy throwing mud and stones at the Royal Academicians, did not of course spare either Cosway or his wife. In the lines beginning—

'Fie, Cosway! I'm ashamed to say,
Thou own'st the title of R.A.'

he recommends the painter to find some more honest calling, and bids Mrs. Cosway mend shirts and stockings, and mind her kitchen, rather than expose her daubs to the public. Then, as though repenting of his rudeness, he proceeds:—

'Muse, in this criticism I fear
Thou really hast been too severe:
Cosway paints miniatures with decent spirit,
And Mrs. Cosway boasts some trifling merit.'

The furniture and fittings of Cosway's house in Stratford Place seem to have been of a most extravagant kind. He surrounded himself with suits of armour, Genoa velvet, mother-of-pearl, ebony and ivory, carving and gilding. His rooms were crowded with mosaic cabinets set with jasper, bloodstone, and lapis-lazuli, ormolu escritoires, buhl chiffoniers, Japanese screens, massive musical clocks, damask ottomans, with Persian carpets and Pompadour rugs on the floor, and costly tapestries on the walls; enamelled caskets set with onyxes, rubies, opals, and emeralds loaded the tables; the chimney-pieces, sculptured by Banks, were decked with bronzes, cut-glass, models in wax and terra-cotta, Nankin, Dresden, and Worcester china: altogether the place must have been quite a broker's paradise. Yet the painter was immensely proud of it; never seemed to weary of adding new curiosities to his overcrowded collection.

The failing health of his wife compelled him at last to tear himself away from his splendid and beloved upholstery. He carried the ailing lady to Flanders and to Paris. During the tour his conduct was of the most lordly kind. He possessed, and highly prized, certain cartoons attributed to Julio Romano, having refused a liberal offer for them from Russia, because, as he explained, 'he would not sell works of elegance to barbarians.' Impressed with the size and emptiness of the Louvre Gallery, however, he now offered his cartoons to the French King as a gift. They were accepted, and four splendid specimens of Gobelin tapestry were bestowed upon the painter in token of royal recognition and gratitude. These tapestries Cosway, objecting to retain them, possibly lest they should seem to represent a price paid for his cartoons, forthwith presented to the Prince of Wales. It was the humour of the grand little man to oblige royalty, the while he was moved by a keen regard for his own dignity. While at Paris he painted, by desire of the Duchess of Devonshire, portraits of the Duchess of Orleans and family, and the Duchess of Polignac; yet, when applied to for portraits of the King or Queen, he declined the commission, stating that he had come abroad for the sake of his wife's health and his own amusement, and not with professional objects in view.

For a season Mrs. Cosway seemed benefited by the change, and returned home; but a second attack of illness compelled her again to leave England, this time accompanied by her brother—a young artist whose skill in design had gained him the gold medal of the Royal Academy. Walpole writes to the Miss Berrys at Florence: 'I am glad Mrs. Cosway is with you.... but surely it is odd to drop her child and husband and country all in a breath!' The lady was absent three years, constantly expecting her husband to rejoin her; but he was prevented by various causes from quitting England. During her stay abroad her daughter died, an only child. It was some relief to the grieving mother to resume her art-labours, and she painted several large pictures for foreign churches. At Lyons she was persuaded by Cardinal Fesch to attempt the founding of a college for young ladies, but the war hindered her efforts, although she succeeded subsequently in carrying out a similar design at Lodi.

To their one child the parents were tenderly attached, although Walpole, while he admits Mrs. Cosway's affliction to be genuine, goes on to say rather cruelly,—'the man Cosway does not seem to think that much of the loss belonged to him.' According to Smith, however, he was dotingly fond of his little girl; was for ever painting her picture; and in one portrait of her asleep, he introduced the figure of a guardian angel rocking the cradle. The body of the child was embalmed and preserved in a marble sarcophagus which stood in the drawing-room in Stratford Place. It

was not until the return of Mrs. Cosway to England that the interment took place in Bunhill Row Burial Ground.

Of Cosway and his wife, it is stated by the biographer of Mrs. Inchbald, who numbered them among her most intimate friends, that they were both 'mystics,' and 'could say almost as much of the unintelligible world as of this.' Hazlitt describes the painter as a Swedenborgian, a believer in animal magnetism—professing to possess the faculty of second sight, crediting whatever is incredible. Had he lived in these our days, he would probably have been a spiritualist, an electro-biologist, a table-turner. He was wont to proclaim his ability to converse with the dead or the distant, 'to talk with his lady at Mantua,' says Hazlitt, 'through some fine vehicle of sense, as we speak to a servant down-stairs through a conduit pipe.' Smith tells us that he had often heard Cosway relate quite seriously, and with an air of conviction that was unimpeachable, conversations he professed to have held with King Charles the First! Sometimes he would startle sober people by asserting that he had just come from interviews with Apelles and Praxiteles. Four years after Pitt's death, Cosway, at the dinner of the Royal Academy, professed to have been that morning visited by the deceased minister, who declared himself prodigiously hurt, that during his sojourn upon earth he had not given greater encouragement to the artist's talents. Another Academician, however, rather outdid this story. 'How can you talk such trash, Cosway?' he asked. 'You know all you have uttered to be lies; I can prove it. For this very morning, after Pitt had been with you he called upon me and said, "I know Cosway will mention my visit to him at your dinner to-day, but don't believe a word he says, for he'll tell you nothing but lies."' This unlooked-for counter-statement took Cosway by surprise, and left him without a reply.

Walpole once said of him, happily, that 'he romanced with his usual veracity.' Hazlitt thought a 'mystic' character was common to artists, instancing Loutherbourg, Sharp, Varley, Blake, and others, 'who seemed to relieve the literalness of their professional studies by voluntary excursions into the regions of the preternatural, to pass their time between sleeping and waking, and whose ideas were like a stormy night with the clouds driven rapidly across, and the blue sky and stars gleaming between.'

For Cosway's wonderful collection of articles of art, antiquarianism, and *vertû*, Hazlitt has only good-natured banter. Of what a strange jumble of apocryphal treasures the painter believed himself the possessor! And he was without the doubts and anxieties of ordinary collectors. They strive to believe and to cast aside all suspicion. But Cosway believed without the slightest effort; he was troubled by no hint of suspicion. His relics and curiosities were in his eyes absolutely and unquestionably genuine. His was the crucifix that Abelard prayed to; a lock of Eloisa's hair; the dagger with which Felton stabbed the Duke of Buckingham; the first finished sketch of the Jocunda; Titian's colossal outline of Peter Aretine; a mummy of an Egyptian king; a feather of a Phoenix; a piece of Noah's Ark, etc. 'Were the articles authentic?' asks Hazlitt; and he answers his own question—'What matter? Cosway's faith in them was true!'

Credit is due to the painter for his indomitable good spirits and buoyancy of heart. His later years were passed in much pain. He had been twice stricken with paralysis, and the use of his right hand had gone from him. Though removed from want, his old extravagant habits had considerably impaired his fortune. He had long left Stratford Place for a humbler, cheaper house in the Edgeware Road. And he had somewhat outlived his reputation. He had to endure severe criticism upon his artistic merits: much calling in question of his position as a painter. Still he was always bright and gay and kindly. He would hold up the crippled, wasted hand that had painted lords and ladies—the kings and queens of society—for some sixty years, and smile with unabated good humour at the vanity of human wishes. So Hazlitt relates: going on to say of him —'His soul appeared to possess the life of a bird; and such was the jauntiness of his air and manner, that to see him sit to have his half boots laced on, you would fancy (by the help of a figure) that instead of a little withered old gentleman, it was Venus attired by the Graces.' His nature was generous and frank. He gave liberally and cheerfully to almost everybody who applied to him for money. The number of letters he received requesting pecuniary assistance was stated to be almost incredible. Of borrowers who never repaid what they borrowed of him, and of patrons in default, of whom he was too proud to make repeated claims for what was strictly his due, a long catalogue might have been made.

He died suddenly at last of a third attack of paralysis, on the 4th day of July 1821. The seizure occurred as he was taking a carriage drive to Edgeware, and he expired without a groan in a few minutes. He had long been in doubt as to whether he should prefer to be buried in his native Devonshire or with his favourite Rubens at Antwerp. But struck with the orderly plan of a funeral in the vaults of a London Church, he had said, 'I prefer this to Antwerp or St. Paul's: bury me here.' He was interred accordingly at Marylebone New Church (the work of young Smirke, son of his brother academician), a select number of his professional and personal friends, and a long line of the carriages of his aristocratic patrons, following the funeral.

Mrs. Cosway erected, on the north wall, under the gallery of the church, a monument by Westmacott, to her husband's memory. The following indifferent epitaph by the painter's brother-in-law, 'Syntax' Coombe, was inscribed upon the marble:—

> 'Art weeps, Taste mourns, and Genius drops the tear
> O'er him so long they loved who slumbers here.
> While colours last, and Time allows to give
> The all-resembling grace, his name shall live.'

After the death of her husband Mrs. Cosway quitted England, and took up her abode at her

Ladies' College at Lodi, where she was much loved and respected. How long she survived seems uncertain. Some accounts relate that she died the same year as Cosway. But Allan Cunningham, writing in 1833, described her as still living.

NOTES:

[15] This epitaph may be read in Mr. Samuel Lucas's *Secularia; or, Surveys on the Mainstream of History*, p. 293.

THE STORY OF A SCENE-PAINTER.

When, in the middle of the seventeenth century, Sir William Davenant, manager of the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, discarded the 'traverses' and tapestries which had theretofore been accepted as sufficient for the purposes of stage illusion, and substituted regular scenes 'painted in perspective,' without doubt there were to be found many conservative old playgoers who lifted up their voices against the startling innovation, and prophesied the approaching downfall of the drama. If the grandsons present marvelled how elder generations could for so long have gone without such useful and necessary appliances, assuredly the grandsires were complaining that now things had come to a pretty pass indeed, when a parcel of beardless, empty-pated boys, not content with stage fittings such as had been esteemed good and sufficient by the late Mr. William Shakespeare and his great brother-dramatists, demanded foolish paintings and idle garniture, that diverted attention from the efforts of the players and the purpose of the playwrights, and had never been dreamt of, and would never have been tolerated in the good, and simple, and palmy days gone by. Unquestionably, the first 'painting in perspective' brought upon the boards was, in the judgment of many,[16] the thin end of a wedge, which, as it thickened, was certain to drive forth and destroy all that was intellectually and vitally precious in the drama, and to lead the way to a last scene of all in the eventful history of the stage, which should be 'second childishness and mere oblivion.'

But the scene-painter having set foot within the theatre was not to be expelled. The intruder soon won for himself a large popularity; held his ground against criticism and opposition. He was no mere journeyman dauber. From the first he had taken distinct rank as an artist. Lustrous names adorn the muster-roll of scene-painters. Inigo Jones planned machinery and painted scenes for the masques, written by Ben Jonson, for performance before Anne of Denmark and the Court of James the First. Evelyn lauds the 'very glorious scenes and perspectives, the work of Mr. Streeter,' serjeant-painter to King Charles the Second. In February 1664, the Diarist saw Dryden's *Indian Queen* acted 'with rich scenes as the like had never been seen here, or haply, except rarely, elsewhere on a mercenary theatre.' Mr. Pepys—most devoted of playgoers—notes occasionally of particular plays, that 'the machines are fine and the paintings very pretty.' In October 1667, he records that he sat in the boxes for the first time in his life, and discovered that from that point of view 'the scenes do appear very fine indeed, and much better than in the pit,' to which part of the house he ordinarily resorted. The names of the artists who won Mr. Pepys' applause have not come down to us. But previously to 1679, one Robert Aggas, a painter of some fame, was producing scenes for the theatre in Dorset Gardens. Nicholas Thomas Dall, a Danish landscape-painter, settled in London in 1760, was engaged as scene-painter at Covent Garden Theatre, and was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1771. For the same theatre, John Richards, a Royal Academician, appointed secretary to the Academy in 1778, painted scenes for many years. Michael Angelo Rooker, pupil of Paul Sanby, and one of the first Associates of the Academy, was scene-painter at the Haymarket. Other names of note might be mentioned before the modern reputations of Roberts and Stanfield, Beverley and Callcott, Grieve and Telbin are approached; and especially over one intermediate name are we desirous of lingering a little. The story of the scene-painter of the last century, who was well known to his contemporaries as 'the ingenious Mr. De Loutherbourg,' presents incidents of singularity and interest that will probably be found to warrant our turning to it for purposes of inquest and comment.

The biographers of Philip James de Loutherbourg are curiously disagreed as to the precise period of his birth. Five different writers have assigned five different dates to that occurrence: 1728, 1730, 1734, 1740, and 1741; and it has been suggested, by way of explanation of this diversity, that the painter's fondness for astrological studies may have induced him to vary occasionally the date of his birth, in order that he might indulge in a plurality of horoscopes, and in such way better the chance of his predictions being justified by the actual issue of events. He was born, at

Strasbourg, the son of a miniature painter, who died at Paris in 1768. Intended by his father for the army, while his mother desired that he should become a minister of the Lutheran Church, he was educated at the College of Strasbourg in languages and mathematics. Subsequently he chose his own profession, studying under Tischbein the elder, then under Vanloo and Francesco Casanova; the latter, a painter of battle pieces after the style of Bourgognone. By his landscapes exhibited at the Louvre, De Loutherbourg acquired fame in Paris, and in 1763 was elected a member of the French Academy of Painting, being then eight years below the prescribed age for admission to that distinction, say the biographers who date his birth from 1740. Quitting France, he travelled in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, and in 1771 came to England, moved hitherward probably by the opinion then prevalent both at home and abroad, that (as Edwards puts it in his Anecdotes of Painting) 'some natural causes prevented the English from becoming masters either in painting or sculpture.' Shortly after his arrival in England he was engaged by Garrick to design and paint scenes and decorations for Drury Lane Theatre, at a salary of £500; a sum considerably larger than had been thitherto paid to any artist for such services.

Of gorgeous scenery and gay dresses Garrick was as fond as any manager of our own day; he knew that these were never-failing allurements to the general public. Yet as a rule he confined his spectacle to the after-pieces; did not, after the modern fashion, illustrate and decorate what he regarded as the legitimate entertainments of the theatre. For new as for old plays, the stock scenery of the house generally sufficed, and some of the scenes employed were endowed with a remarkable longevity. Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790, mentions a scene as then in use which he remembered so far back as the year 1747. 'It has wings and flat of Spanish figures at full length, and two folding doors in the middle. I never see those wings slide on but I feel as if seeing my old acquaintance unexpectedly.' Of the particular plays assisted by De Loutherbourg's brush, small account has come down to us. They were, no doubt, chiefly of a pantomimic and ephemeral kind. For the 'Christmas Tale,' produced at Drury Lane in 1773—the composition of which has been generally assigned to Garrick, though probably due to Charles Dibdin—De Loutherbourg certainly painted scenes, and the play enjoyed a considerable run, thanks rather to his merits than the author's. Some years later, in 1785, for the scenery of O'Keeffe's *Omai*, produced at Covent Garden Theatre, the painter furnished the designs, for which he was paid by the manager one thousand pounds, says Mr. J.T. Smith; one hundred pounds, says Mr. O'Keeffe; so stories differ! The scenery of *Omai* was appropriate to the then newly discovered islands in the South Pacific, and the play concluded with a kind of apotheosis of Captain Cook. In the course of *Omai*, Wewitzer, the actor who played a chief warrior of the Sandwich Islands, delivered a grand harangue in *gibberish*, which of course, for all the audience knew to the contrary, was the proper language of the natives; a sham English translation of the speech being printed with the book of the songs. The harangue was received with enormous applause!

As a scene-painter, De Loutherbourg was decidedly an innovator and reformer. He was the first to use set-scenes, and what are technically known as 'raking pieces.' Before his time the back scene was invariably one large 'flat' of strained canvas extending the whole breadth and height of the stage. He also invented transparent scenes, introducing representations of moonlight, sunshine, fire, volcanoes, etc., and effects of colour by means of silk screens of various hues, placed before the foot and side lights. He was the first to represent mists, by suspending gauzes between the scene and the audience. He made something of a mystery of the artifices he had recourse to, was careful to leave behind him at the theatre no paper or designs likely to reveal his plans, and declined to inform any one beforehand as to the nature of the illusions he desired to produce. He secretly held small cards in his hand which he now and then consulted to refresh his recollection, as his assistants carried out his instructions.

After Garrick had quitted the stage (in 1776) and sold his share in the management of Drury Lane to Sheridan and his partners, it was proposed to De Loutherbourg to continue in his office of chief scene-painter, his salary being reduced one half. This illiberal scale of remuneration the artist indignantly declined, and forthwith left the theatre. He is said, however, by Parke in his *Musical Memoirs*, to have painted the scenes for the successful burletta of *The Camp*, produced by Sheridan, at Drury Lane, in 1778.[17] But he now devoted himself more exclusively to the production of easel-pictures. He had, in 1773, become a contributor to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. In 1780 he was elected an Associate; in the following year he arrived at the full honours of academicianship. Peter Pindar, in his 'Lyrical Odes to the Royal Academicians for 1782,' finds a place for De Loutherbourg. Having denounced the unlikeness of Mason Chamberlin's portraits, he satirizes the style of art of the landscape painter:—

'And Loutherbourg, when Heaven so wills,
To make brass skies and golden hills,
With marble bullocks in glass pastures grazing:
Thy reputation too will rise,
And people gaping with surprise,
Cry "Monsieur Loutherbourg is most amazing!"'

And in another ode he derides the artist's pictures as 'tea-boards,' 'varnished waiters,' and avows that his rocks are 'paste-board,' while his trees resemble 'brass wigs,' and his fleecy flocks 'mops.'

Probably the quiet of his studio oppressed our painter somewhat. The simple effects attainable in an easel-picture did not satisfy him. He missed the appliances of the stage: the coloured lights, the transparent scenes, the descending gauzes, and cleverly combined set-pieces. He would not go back to Drury Lane, however; as to that he was fully determined. He would not toil for

ungrateful managers, or paint backgrounds merely to supplement and enrich the exertions of the actors. He decided upon providing London with a new entertainment; upon opening an exhibition that should be *all* scene painting.

Charles Dibdin, the famous sea song writer, who was also a dramatist, a composer of music, an actor, a scene painter, and a manager, had constructed in Exeter Change what he whimsically called 'The Patagonian Theatre:' in truth, a simple puppet-show, upon the plan of that contrived years before by Mr. Powell, under the Piazza, Covent Garden, and concerning which Steele had written humorously in the *Spectator*. Dibdin, assisted by one Hubert Stoppelaer, humorist and caricaturist, wrote miniature plays for the doll performers, recited their parts, composed the music, played the accompaniments upon a smooth-toned organ, and painted the scenes. The stage was about six feet wide and eight feet deep; the puppets some ten inches high; the little theatre was divided into pit, boxes, and gallery, and held altogether about two hundred persons. For half a century no exhibition of the kind had appeared in London. The puppet show was old enough to be a complete novelty to the audience of the day. For a time it thrived wonderfully; then managers and public seem both, by degrees, to have grown weary. Dibdin and his friend departed; the exhibition fell into the hands of incompetent persons; then closed its doors. The dolls, properties, scenery, and dresses were brought to the hammer by merciless creditors; and there was an end of the puppet-show. In 1782 De Loutherbourg took the theatre for the exhibition of his EIDOPHUSIKON.

De Loutherbourg had professedly two objects in view: to display his skill as a scene-painter well versed in dioramic effects, and to demonstrate to the English people the beauties of their own country. He averred 'that no English landscape-painter needed foreign travel to collect grand prototypes for his study.' The lakes of Cumberland, the rugged scenery of North Wales, and the mountainous grandeur of Scotland, furnished, he said, inexhaustible occupation for the pencil. He opposed the prejudice then rife among artists and amateurs alike, that England afforded no subjects for the higher display of the painter's art. He confined the Eidophusikon for the most part to the exhibition of English landscapes under different conditions of light and shadow.

A chief view exhibited was from the summit of One Tree Hill, Greenwich. There was cleverness evinced in the selection of this landscape. A large public are always prepared to be pleased when they are shown something with which they are well acquainted. Each spectator found himself, as it were, individually appealed to. Each had seen One Tree Hill, and could bring to bear upon the subject his own personal knowledge and observation, and so test and certify to the painter's skill. The view was a set-scene with a moveable sky at the back: a large canvas twenty times the surface of the stage, stretched on frames, and rising diagonally by means of a winding machine. De Loutherbourg excelled in his treatment of clouds; he secured in this way ample room and verge enough to display his knowledge and ingenuity. By regulating the action of his windlass he could control the movements of his clouds, allow them to rise slowly from the horizon and sail obliquely across the heavens, or drive them swiftly along, according to their supposed density and the power to be attributed to the wind. An arrangement of set-pieces cut in pasteboard represented the objects in the middle distance: the cupolas of Greenwich Hospital, the groups of trees in the park, the towns of Greenwich and Deptford, and the shipping in the Pool; due regard being had to size and colour, so that the laws of perspective in distance and atmosphere might not be outraged; the immediate foreground being constructed of cork broken into rugged and picturesque forms, and covered with minute mosses and lichens, 'producing,' says a critic of the period, 'a captivating effect amounting indeed to reality.'

In his method of illuminating his handiworks, De Loutherbourg was especially adroit. He abandoned the unnatural system (introduced by Garrick on his return from the Continent in 1765) of lighting the stage by means of a flaming line of footlights, and ranged his lamps above the proscenium, out of sight of the audience. Before his lamps he placed slips of stained glass—yellow, red, green, blue, and purple; and by shifting these, or happily combining them, was enabled to tint his scenes so as to represent various hours of the day and different actions of light. His 'Storm at Sea with the loss of the *Halsewell*, East-Indiaman,' was regarded as the height of artistic mechanism. The ship was a perfect model, correctly rigged, and carrying only such sail as the situation demanded. The lightning quivered through the transparent canvas of the sky. The waves, carved in soft wood from models made in clay, coloured with great skill and highly varnished to reflect the lightning, rose and fell with irregular action, flinging the foam now here, now there, diminishing in size and fading in colour as they receded from the spectator. Then we read—'De Loutherbourg's genius was as prolific in imitations of nature to astonish the ear as to charm the sight. He introduced a new art: *the picturesque of sound*.' That is to say, he simulated thunder by shaking one of the lower corners of a large thin sheet of copper suspended by a chain; the distant firing of signals of distress he imitated by striking, suddenly, a large tambourine with a sponge affixed to a whalebone spring—- the reverberations of the sponge producing a curious echo, as from cloud to cloud, dying away in the distance. The rushing sound of the waves was effected by turning round and round an octagonal pasteboard box, fitted with shelves, and containing small shells, peas, and shot; while two discs of strained silk, suddenly pressed together, emitted a hollow, whistling sound, in imitation of loud gusts of wind. Cylinders loosely charged with seed and small shot, lifted now at one end, now at the other, so as to allow the contents to fall in a pattering stream, represented the noise of hail and rain. The moon was formed by a circular aperture cut in a tin box containing a powerful Argand lamp, which was placed at the back of the scene, and brought near or carried far from the canvas as the luminary was supposed to be shining brightly or to be veiled by clouds. These contrivances, from a modern point of view, may strike the reader as constituting quite the A B C of theatrical illusion. But then

it must be remembered that they were, for the most part, distinctly the inventions of De Loutherbourg, and, upon their first introduction, were calculated to impress the public of his day very remarkably.

For two seasons De Loutherbourg's Eidophusikon, exhibited at the Patagonian Theatre in Exeter Change, and afterwards at a house in Panton Square, was attended with singular success. Crowds flocked to the new entertainment; the artist world especially delighting in it. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was a frequent visitor, loudly extolled Mr. De. Loutherbourg's ingenuity; recommending him to the patronage of the most eminent men of the time, and counselling all art-students to attend the exhibition as a school of the wonderful effects of nature. Gainsborough's ready sympathies were completely enlisted. For a time, after his manner, he could talk of nothing else, think of nothing else; and he passed evening after evening at the exhibition. He even constructed a miniature Eidophusikon of his own—moved thereto by De Loutherbourg's success and the beauty of a collection of stained glass, the property of one Mr. Jarvis—and painted various landscapes upon glass and transparent surfaces, to be lighted by candles at the back, and viewed through a magnifying lens upon the peep-show principle. But at last the fickle public wearied of the Eidophusikon, as it had been wearied of Mr. Dibdin's puppets. The providers of amusement had, in those days, to be ever stirring in the production of novelties. The sight-seeing public was but a limited and exhaustible body then, little recruited by visitors from the provinces or travellers from the Continent. Long runs of plays or other entertainments—the rule with us—were then almost unknown. The Eidophusikon ceased to attract. The amount received at the doors was at last insufficient to defray the expenses of lighting the building. It became necessary to close the exhibition and provide a new entertainment. Soon the room in Exeter Change was crowded with visitors. Wild beasts were on view, and all London was gaping at them.

Meanwhile De Loutherbourg prospered as an artist. His reputation grew; his pictures were in request; he was honoured with the steady patronage of King George III., and was personally an acknowledged favourite at court: a thoroughly successful man indeed. Then we come down to the year 1789, and find the artist of the Eidophusikon assuming a new character. He has become a physician—a seer—a fanatic—and, it must be said, a quack; a disciple of Mesmer, a friend of Cagliostro; practising animal magnetism, professing to cure all diseases, and indulging in vaticination and second sight.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, credulity and imposition shook hands heartily and held a great festival. Throughout civilized Europe a sort of carnival of empiricism prevailed. Quack was king. A spurious leaven of charlatanism was traceable in politics, in science, in religion—pervaded all things indeed. The world was mad to cheat or to be cheated. The mountebank enjoyed his saturnalia. Never had he exhibited his exploits before an audience so numerous and so sympathetic—so eager to be swindled, so liberal in rewarding the swindler. Gravely does Miss Hannah More address Mr. Horace Walpole, concerning what she terms the 'demoniacal mummery'—'the operation of fraud upon folly' which then occupied the country. 'In vain do we boast of the enlightened eighteenth century, and conceitedly talk as if human reason had not a manacle left about her, but that philosophy had broken down all the strongholds of prejudice, ignorance, and superstition; and yet, at this very time, Mesmer has got a hundred thousand pounds by animal magnetism in Paris, and Mainaduc is getting as much in London. There is a fortune-teller in Westminster who is making little less. Lavater's physiognomy books sell at fifteen guineas a set. The diving [divining?] rod is still considered as oracular in many places. Devils are cast out by seven ministers; and, to complete the disgraceful catalogue, slavery is vindicated in print and defended in the House of Peers! Poor human nature, when wilt thou come to years of discretion?' Mr. Walpole writes back (he has always a *proper* tone for Miss More, reserving his levity and license for less staid correspondents):—'Alas! while Folly has a shilling left, there will be enthusiasts and quack doctors;' and he adds, airing his pet affectation—a hatred of royalty, a love for republicanism—'and there will be slaves while there are kings or sugar-planters.'

Joseph Balsamo—more generally known by his pseudonym of Count Alexander De Cagliostro, expelled from France, after nine months' durance in the Bastille, on account of his complicity in the diamond necklace fraud and scandal—had taken refuge in England, bringing with him a long list of quackeries and impostures; among them, his art of making old women young again; his system of 'Egyptian freemasonry,' as he termed it, by virtue of which the ghosts of the departed could be beheld by their surviving friends; and the secrets and discoveries of the great Dr. Mesmer in the so-called science of animal magnetism. Walpole at once proclaims the man a rascal, and proposes to have him locked up for his mummeries and impositions. Miss More laments that people will talk of nothing else. 'Cagliostro and the cardinal's necklace,' she writes, 'spoil all conversation, and destroyed a very good evening at Mr. Pepys's last night' A discussion of such subjects was by no means compatible with Miss More's notion of a good evening.

What could have induced simple-minded Mr. De Loutherbourg to put trust in this arch-juggler? Can it have been that from the painter's native Strasbourg had come to him unimpeachable accounts of Cagliostro's feats during his stay there, which had preceded his nefarious expedition to Paris? But the artist is ever excitable, receptive, impressible—the ready prey of the dealer in illusion and trickery. De Loutherbourg is soon at the feet of the quack Gamaliel; soon he is proclaiming himself an inspired physician, practising mesmerism. Cosway and his wife declared themselves clairvoyants. Other painters of the period were dreaming dreams and seeing visions. Nor was it only the artist world that took up with, and made much of, Count Cagliostro and his strange doings. Wiser people than Mr. De Loutherbourg were led astray by the mountebank,

though they did not wander so far from the paths of reason and right, nor publish so glaringly the fact of their betrayal into error. Cagliostro was the rage of the hour. The disciples of Dr. Mesmer were without number. It was in ridicule of general rather than class credulity that Mrs. Inchbald wrote (or adapted) her comedy of *Animal Magnetism*, produced on the stage of Covent Garden in 1788.

A curious fanatical pamphlet, by one Mary Pratt, of Portland Street, Marylebone, was published in 1789. It was entitled, *A List of Curses performed by Mr. and Mrs. de Loutherbourg, of Hammersmith Terrace, without Medicine: By a Lover of the Lamb of God*, and was dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury in very high-flown terms. Mr. De Loutherbourg was described as 'a gentleman of superior abilities, well known in the scientific and polite assemblies for his brilliancy of talents as a philosopher and painter,' who, with his wife, had been made proper recipients of the 'divine manuductions,' and gifted with power 'to diffuse healing to the afflicted; whether deaf, dumb, lame, halt, or blind.' The Archbishop was therefore entreated to compose a form of prayer to be used in all churches and chapels, that nothing might prevent the inestimable power of the De Loutherbourgs from having its free course, and to order public thanksgiving to be offered up for the same. In her preface, Mrs. Pratt stated that her pamphlet had been published without the consent of Mr. De Loutherbourg, and that he had reprimanded her on account of it, and enjoined her positively to suppress it; but that on mature reflection she had considered it more advisable to offend an individual rather than permit thousands of her fellow-creatures to remain strangers to the precious gifts of the painter. 'I judged by my own private feelings,' she writes, 'that had I any relative either deaf, dumb, blind, or lame, how thankful I should be to find a cure (*more especially gratis*); therefore I suffered the pamphlet to be sold, in hopes that by circulating these most solemn truths, many poor afflicted people might come and be healed.'

The cures enumerated in Mrs. Pratt's list would be marvellous enough if the slightest credit could be attached to the lady's wild statements. De Loutherbourg's treatment of the patients who flocked to him was undoubtedly founded on the practice of Mesmer, though Horace Walpole appears to draw a distinction between the curative methods of the two doctors, when he writes to the Countess of Ossory in July 1789: 'Loutherbourg the painter is turned an inspired physician, and has three thousand patients. His sovereign panacea is barley water. I believe it is as efficacious as mesmerism. Baron Swedenborg's disciples multiply also. I am glad of it. The more religions and the more follies the better: they inveigle proselytes from one another.' In a subsequent letter he writes, in reference to a new religion advocated by Taylor the Platonist: —'He will have no success. Not because nonsense is not suited to making proselytes—witness the Methodists, Moravians, Baron Swedenborg, and Loutherbourg the painter—but it should not be learned nonsense, which only the literate think they understand after long study. Absurdity announced only to the ear and easily retained by the memory has other guess operation. Not that I have any objection to Mr. Taylor for making proselytes: the more religions the better. If we had but two in the island they would cut one another's throats for power. When there is plenty of beliefs the professors only gain customers here and there from rival shops, and make more controversies than converts.' This letter was also written to the Countess of Ossory. It was hardly in so free a vein on such a subject that the writer would have ventured to address Miss Hannah More; with whom Mr. Walpole was fond of corresponding about this period.

In Mrs. Pratt's List we read of a lad named Thomas Robinson, suffering from the king's evil, and dismissed from St. Bartholomew's Hospital as incurable, brought before Mr. De Loutherbourg, who 'administered to him yesterday in the public healing-room, amidst a large concourse, among whom were some of the first families of distinction in the kingdom,' and wholly cured the sufferer. The two daughters born deaf and dumb of Mrs. Hook, Stable Yard, St. James's, waited upon Mrs. De Loutherbourg, 'who looked upon them with an eye of benignity and healed them.' 'I heard them both speak,' avers Mrs. Pratt, by way of settling the matter. Among other cures we find 'a man with a withered arm which was useless, cured in a few minutes by Mr. De Loutherbourg in the public healing-room at Hammersmith;' 'Mr. Williams, of Cranbourne Street, ill of a fever, had kept his bed ten weeks, was cured instantly;' 'a gentleman, confined with gout in his stomach, kept his bed, was cured instantly;' 'a green-grocer in Weymouth Street, Marylebone, next door to the Weavers' Arms, cured of lameness in both legs—went with crutches —is perfectly well;' 'a Miss W——, a public vocal performer, cured,—but had not goodness of heart enough to own the cure publicly;' 'a child cured of blindness, at Mr. Marsden's, cheesemonger, in the borough.' Other cases are set forth; but the reader will probably consider that specimens enough have been culled from Mrs. Pratt's pamphlet.

That the proceedings of the De Loutherbourgs attracted extraordinary attention is very certain. Crowds surrounded the painter's house at Hammersmith, so that it was with difficulty he could go in or out. Particular days were set apart and advertised in the newspapers as 'healing days,' and a portion of the house was given up as a 'healing-room.' Patients were admitted to the presence of the artist-physician by tickets only, and to obtain possession of these, it is said that three thousand people were to be seen waiting at one time. Mrs. Pratt recounts 'with horror and detestation 'the wickedness of certain speculators in the crowd, who, having procured tickets gratis, unscrupulously sold them, at a profit ranging from two to five guineas, to buyers who were tired of waiting. De Loutherbourg complained bitterly that out of the thousands he professed to have cured, but few returned to thank him for the great benefits he had conferred upon them. He preferred to believe in the ingratitude of his patients rather than adopt the more obvious and reasonable course of questioning the perfect virtue of his curative powers, Mrs. Pratt, in concluding her pamphlet, entreats the magistracy or governors of the police to wait on Mr. De

Loutherbourg and consult with him as to a proper mode of promoting his labours, and suggests that a 'Bethesda' should be forthwith built for the reception of the sick, and that officers should be appointed to preserve decorum, and to facilitate the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. De Loutherbourg, 'without so much crowding.' Finally she exhorts the world at large to contribute generously to the promotion of these beneficial objects.

But even at the date of Mrs. Pratt's pamphlet the tide was turning—had turned. The nine days' wonder was over. The mania was dying of exhaustion. Incidentally, the lady relates that 'having suffered all the indignities and contumely that man could suffer,' the inspired physician had for a time retired from practice into the country. 'I have heard,' she continues, 'people curse him and threaten his life, instead of returning him thanks.' In truth, as the public credulity waned, the doctor's cures failed. His labours were of no avail; his prophecies were falsified. His patients rose against him; the duped grew desperate; the mob became exceeding wroth. The house in Hammersmith Terrace was attacked; stones were thrown, and windows smashed. Not much further mischief was done, however. De Loutherbourg and his wife prudently withdrew from public observation—quitted the kingdom. They were next heard of in company with their friend Count Cagliostro in Switzerland; Madame Cagliostro having accompanied them in their journey from England. But Count Cagliostro's career of jugglery and fraud was nearly over. On the night of the 27th December 1789, he was arrested in Rome, and shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo, whence he never emerged alive.

In the curious and scarce *Life and Adventures of Joseph Balsamo, commonly called Count Cagliostro*, translated from the Italian, and published in London in 1791, copies are given of certain strange papers found in his possession, concerning which he was examined by the Inquisition during his imprisonment. In one of these documents there is unquestionable reference to De Loutherbourg, though the painter's name is not given at length, and appears surrounded by the jargon of Cagliostro's so-called system of Egyptian freemasonry, of which it is not possible to render any satisfactory interpretation. We extract from the paper the following:—

> '*On the twentieth day of the eighth month*—
>
> 'The Grand Master being employed in his operations, after the usual ceremonies, the Pupil, before seeing the angel, said, "I find myself in a dark room.
>
> '"I see a golden sword suspended over my head.
>
> '"I perceive Louth—g arrive.
>
> '"He opens his breast and shows a wound in his heart; he holds out a poniard to me."
>
> '*Grand Master*. "Is he employed in the service of the Grand Cophte?"
>
> '*Pupil*. "Yes."
>
> '*G. M.* "What else do you see?"
>
> '*P.* "I see a star.
>
> '"I see two.
>
> '"I see seven."
>
> '*G. M.* "Proceed."
>
> '*P.* "Louth—g has retired—the scene changes, I see seven angels," etc. etc.

Cagliostro was ordered by the Inquisition to explain the meaning of this paper. He professed the profoundest ignorance as to its purport. There will probably be no great harm in concluding, therefore, that it did not possess meaning of any kind. But the reader is left to form his own opinion on the subject.

Soon De Loutherbourg was found to be again in England. But he practised no more as an inspired physician; he now followed sedulously his legitimate profession. His eccentricities and escapades were overlooked; it seems to have been agreed that he had been more fool than knave—that he had imposed upon himself quite as much as upon other people.

A highly esteemed painter, he was permitted to resume his place in society. In proof of the regard in which he was held, it may be noted that the guardians of the De Quinceys deemed it worth while to pay De Loutherbourg a premium of one thousand guineas, to receive as a pupil William, the elder brother of Thomas De Quincey, who had given promise of skill in drawing. The young fellow died, however, in his sixteenth year, about 1795, in the painter's house at Hammersmith. A more moderate sum had some years previously been demanded of Mr. Charles Bannister, the actor, for the art-education of his son John. For a payment of fifty pounds per annum for four years, it was agreed that John Bannister should be taught, boarded, and lodged. But the arrangement came to nothing. De Loutherbourg demanded the payment of the money in advance. He mistrusted the players. They had caricatured him on the stage as 'Mr. Lanternbug,' in General Bourgoyne's comedy, *The Maid of the Oaks*; and then his mocking artist brethren caught at the nickname, corrupting it, however, to 'Leatherbag.' Mr. Bannister was unable or unwilling to comply with the painter's requirements: so young John was sent to the school of the Royal Academy, which he soon deserted, and finally trod the boards, and charmed the town as an

actor. Another pupil of De Loutherbourg, and a close imitator of his worst manner, who is yet worthy of public notice as the founder of the Dulwich Gallery, was Francis Bourgeois, knighted by the King of Poland. Edward Dayes, artist, critic, and biographer of artists, is said to have exclaimed eccentrically in reference to Sir Francis: 'Dietricy begat Casanova, Casanova begat De Loutherbourg, De Loutherbourg begat Franky Bourgeois, a dirty dog, who quarrelled with nature, and bedaubed her works!'

By his pictures of 'Lord Howe's Victory on the 1st of June 1794,' and 'The Storming of Valenciennes,' De Loutherbourg acquired great popularity.[18] For Macklin's Bible (most luxurious of editions, in seven folio volumes, published in seventy parts at one guinea each!) he painted 'The Angel destroying the Assyrian Host,' and 'The Deluge;' the latter a particularly spirited and effective performance. Dayes, his contemporary, suggests, however, that he was made a historical painter by the printsellers, rather than by the sufficiency of his own genius in that respect. For the higher purposes of art, his composition was too defective, his drawing not masterly enough, and his execution too small and delicate. But Dayes greatly admired De Loutherbourg's 'Review of Warley Camp,' in the Royal Collection; especially praising the animals introduced, and the cool grey of the general effect; the painter as a rule being prone to a somewhat coppery tone of colour.

In 1808, Turner, appointed Professor of Perspective to the Royal Academy, went to live at Hammersmith, in order, it has been suggested, to be near De Loutherbourg, of whose works he was known to be an admirer. That he should have aided in the art-training and forming of the greatest of landscape painters is a real tribute to the merits of De Loutherbourg. It is something to have been even the fuel that helped the fire of a great genius to burn the more brightly.

The characteristics of the old scene-painter's art which attracted the attention of Turner, were doubtless the boldness and strength of his effects: his rolling clouds and tossing waters; his sudden juxta-positions of light and shade; his bright and transparent, if occasionally impure and unnatural, system of colour. He was of another and inferior school to Richard Wilson, Gainsborough, and Constable, who, differing widely in their points of view and in their methods of art, are yet linked together by a common love of the natural aspects of the objects they studied, and a preference for a tender and temperate over what may be called a hectic and passionate rendering of landscape. But succeeding or failing, De Loutherbourg certainly aimed at the reproduction of certain pictorial *tours de force* which they would never have attempted. He was an innovator in the studio as on the stage. According to modern modes of thought he was not, of course, a conscientious worker. His landscapes were indeed begun, continued, and completed in his painting-room. A few crude pencil lines upon a card were enough for him to take home with him; for the rest he relied upon his memory or his invention. But in such wise was the general method of his time. Painters produced their representations of land and sea after close toil by their firesides. There was not much taking of canvases into the open air in the days of De Loutherbourg. Pursuing such a system, he became, necessarily, very mannered; and yet, with other and greater men, he helped to destroy a conventional manner in art. Rules had been laid down restricting the artist to an extent that threatened to oust nature altogether from painting. It had been decreed, for instance, that in every landscape should appear a first, second, and third light, and, at least, *one* brown tree. Departure from such a principle was, according to Sir George Beaumont and others, flat heresy. De Loutherbourg avowed himself a heretic. And he ventured to object to the old-established, well-known classically-composed landscape, which was becoming an art nuisance. The thing has disappeared now, but the reader has probably a dim acquaintance with the classically-composed landscape. It was somewhat in this wise: in no particular country, a temple of ruins on the right hand was balanced by a trio of towering firs on the left. In the middle distance was raised another temple in a more tenantable state of repair, above a river crossed by a broken bridge, the ragged arches strongly reflected in the water; at the back, in the centre of the horizontal line (gracefully waved with lilac mountains), was the sun, rising or setting, it was never quite certain which; whilst little ill-drawn, inch-high figures straggled about in the foreground, and furnished a name to the picture: Æneas and Dido, Venus and Adonis, Cephalus and Aurora, Apollo and Daphne, etc. etc. De Loutherbourg's dashing sea-views and stormy landscapes, although they might savour a little of the lamp and the theatre, did service in hindering the further production of the 'classical compositions' of the last century.

De Loutherbourg died on the 11th March, 1812, at the house in Hammersmith Terrace, which had been the scene of his exploits as an inspired physician. He was buried in Chiswick churchyard, near the grave of William Hogarth.

NOTES:

[16] 'I decidedly concur with Malone in the general conclusion that painted moveable scenery was unknown on our early stage; and it is a fortunate circumstance for the poetry of our old plays that it was so: the imagination of the auditor only was appealed to, and we owe to the absence of painted canvas many of the finest descriptive passages in Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and immediate followers. The introduction of scenery gives the date to the commencement of the decline of our dramatic poetry.'—*Annals of the Stage*, by J. Payne Collier, vol. iii. p. 366.

[17] Mr. Puff in the *Critic*, giving a specimen of 'the puff direct' in regard to a new play, says: 'As to the scenery, the miraculous powers of Mr. De Loutherbourg are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of

the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers.'

[18] 'July 25th, 1798. Went with Geiseveiller to see the picture of the "Siege of Valenciennes" by Loutherbourg. He went to the scene of action accompanied by Gilray, a Scotchman, famous among the lovers of caricature; a man of talents, however, and uncommonly apt at sketching a hasty likeness. One of the merits of the picture is the portraits it contains, English and Austrian. The Duke of York is the principal figure as the supposed conqueror; and the Austrian general, who actually directed the siege, is placed in a group, where, far from attracting attention, he is but just seen. The picture has great merit; the difference of costume, English and Austrian, Hulan, etc., is picturesque. The horse drawing a cart in the foreground has that faulty affected energy of the French school, which too often disgraces the works of Loutherbourg. Another picture by the same artist, as a companion to this, is the victory of Lord Howe on the first of June; both were painted at the expense of Mechel, printseller at Basle, and of V. and R. Green, purposely for prints to be engraved from them. For the pictures they paid £500 each, besides the expenses of Gilray's journeys to Valenciennes, Portsmouth, etc'—*Diary of* THOMAS HOLCROFT.

THE STORY OF AN ENGRAVER.

The father of John Keyse Sherwin was a hard-working man, living humbly enough at Eastdean, Sussex, earning his subsistence by cutting and shaping wooden bolts for shipbuilders. Up to his seventeenth year the son, born in 1751, helped the father in his labours. A fine, sturdy, well-grown lad, with abundant self-confidence, young Sherwin seems to have acquired, now one knows exactly how, an inclination for art. Shown one day, at the house of a rich employer, a miniature painting of some value, the youth stoutly asserts his conviction that, if provided with proper materials, he can produce a fair imitation of the work before him. Drawing-paper is given him, and a pencil is thrust into a hand that has grown so hard and horny with constant hewing of wood that it scarcely possesses sensitiveness sufficient to grasp and ply the slim little art-implement. The young fellow perseveres, however, and finally produces a tolerable copy of the picture.

Much surprise and interest are excited by this achievement of the woodcutter's son. In Sherwin's days 'the patron' was a part which rich people were rather fond of playing. The fact of having discovered a new artist was in itself a sort of certificate of the discoverer's acumen and taste. If the patronized succeeded, the patron forthwith took high rank as a connoisseur; while on the other hand, if the efforts of the protégé resulted in failure, no great harm accrued to any one; a little money was spent to no purpose: that was all. The mania for patronizing was harmless enough; if based upon some vain glory, there was still a fair leaven of kindliness about it. In the present case, the patron had lighted upon a really clever fellow. Young Sherwin was well worth all the money and pains spent upon him by his first employer and friend, Mr. William Mitford, of the Treasury; and but for some inherent flaw in his moral constitution, would have done his patron and himself unquestionable credit.

The young man was taken from wooden bolt-making, sent up to London, and placed under Bartolozzi, an accomplished and very thriving designer and engraver, who formed one of the original members of the Royal Academy on its institution in 1768. Bartolozzi found his pupil apt. He made, indeed, rapid progress, and about 1772 received the Academy gold medals for drawings of 'Coriolanus taking leave of his family,' and 'Venus soliciting Vulcan to make armour for her son.' From 1774 to 1780 his name is to be found in the catalogues of the Academy as an exhibitor of various drawings, original and copied, in red and black chalks, after the manner his master had rendered popular. Sherwin had proved himself a vigorous, dashing draughtsman, standing high in his preceptor's good opinion, higher still in his own, and surely gaining the applause of the town.

Quitting Bartolozzi, he set up for himself, taking an expensive house in St. James's Street. He there commenced a desultory system of designing, painting, and engraving; doing less engraving than anything else, however. It was his most legitimate occupation, but it was laborious, took time, was not very highly remunerated, and he wanted to make money—as much and as quickly as possible. He had patrons in plenty, eager for his graceful, facile drawings, prepared to pay good prices for them; and the man himself became a favourite in society. He was handsome, ready, good-natured; well pleased to array his shapely person in smart raiment, disport himself in the drawing-rooms of the noble and rich, and add his name to the unprofitable list of fashion's votaries.

He had fallen upon 'dressy' times. A handsome young Prince of Wales was preaching, by example, that costliness of attire was indispensable among gentlemen; and the woodcutter's son set up decidedly for being a gentleman. A record of his costume on one occasion, when he was engaged to dine at his friend Sir Brook Boothby's, has come down to us. A superfine scarlet lapelled coat, with gilt dollar-sized buttons; a profuse lace frill frothing over the top of his white satin, jasmin-sprigged waistcoat; small-clothes of the glossiest black satin, with Bristol diamond buckles; silk stockings, tinged with Scott's liquid-dye blue, and decorated with Devonshire clocks; long ruffles, falling over hands once so worn with rude labour; extravagant buckles covering his instep; and his hair piled up high in front, with three rows of side curls, pomatumed and powdered, and tied into a massive club at the back of his head. Be sure that Mr. Sherwin, thus adorned, presented an imposing aspect; while his morning dress was scarcely less striking. Scarlet and nankeen were the colours chiefly favoured for the spring costume of the exquisites of the period. To the taste of a man of fashion, Mr. Sherwin added an artist's discrimination. He was very difficult to please in regard to shades of colour. It is told of him that he had four scarlet coats made for him before his delicate perception in this respect could be altogether satisfied. He would have the right tone of scarlet, or none at all. 'Fortunately,' observes a critic personally acquainted with the fastidious gentleman, 'he had as many brothers as rejected coats.' And Sherwin was really kind-hearted and generous. There seems to have been no false pride about him. With all his success and prosperity, his airs of fashion and pretentiousness, he was not ashamed of his less fortunate relatives—his wood-cutting father and brothers. He befriended them as long as he was able; tried to lift them up to his own position; brought them up to town, and did what he could to make fine gentlemen of them. His efforts were not attended with much success, however. Possibly the world of fashion found that one member of the Sherwin family was quite as much as it wanted. Besides, by reason of his abilities, the artist had a right to notice and distinction; his relatives were without any such title. They were simple labouring people, much amazed at the luxury and splendour with which they found their kinsman surrounded. A story is told of their dining with the successful artist; when one of the younger lads, without waiting or asking for a spoon, thrusts his fingers into a dish of potatoes to help himself. The father of the family, however, was quick to perceive his son's offence against good manners, and corrected him in a loud whisper: 'Moosn't grabble yer han' 'moong the 'tators *here*!'

At this time Sherwin was making about twelve hundred pounds a year. With industry he might have doubled that sum. But he was incorrigibly idle; was without rule or system. For one day that he worked he would waste three in sauntering about, calling on his friends, and in all sorts of frivolous pursuits. And then the dissipations of the evening were as so many heavy mortgages upon the labour of the morning. His expenditure was profuse. He gave away money liberally in charity; was especially fond of relieving the distressed widows and orphans of clergymen, observing that the children of a poor curate were more to be pitied than those of a London artist—since the latter generally had some qualification by which they could gain a livelihood. All this had been well enough if Mr. Sherwin had been a man of independent fortune, or had even pursued prudently his own profession. But, his plan of life considered, he had, in truth, no money to give away. His charity was only another form of prodigality, He was a gambler, too. Such money as he gained when he would condescend to work was quickly swept from him at the hazard-table. He was soon deeply in debt; his creditors growing more and more impatient and angry every day.

As an artist, his rapidity and cleverness were remarkable. The late Mr. J.T. Smith, who was for some years keeper of the prints in the British Museum, was in early life a pupil of Sherwin's, and bore testimony to the singular ability of his master. He was ambidexterous. Occupied upon a large engraving, he would often commence a line with his right hand, then, tossing the graver into his left, would meet and finish the line at the other end of the plate with marvellous accuracy. He had great knowledge of the human form, and would sometimes begin a figure at the toe, draw upwards, and complete it at the top of the head in a curiously adroit manner. If he had but worked! Commissions poured in upon him, yet he left them unexecuted. He undertook contracts, yet could seldom be persuaded to execute them. Sometimes when the fit seized him, or when his need of ready money was very urgent, he would apply himself with extraordinary energy, commencing a plate one day, sitting up all night, and producing it finished at breakfast-time the next morning. But this industry was only occasional and accidental. Speedily he relapsed again into slothfulness and self-indulgence.

People of note and fashion at one time thronged Mr. Sherwin's studio. It was his boast, that from five to five-and-twenty of the most beautiful women in London were to be seen every spring morning at his house. For one day he hit upon a notable device, which would probably have made his fortune if he had but given the thing fair play. He had made a drawing of the finding of Moses. No ordinary illustration of a scene from Biblical history, however. Mr. Sherwin did not depend upon merely the intrinsic merits of his design; for Pharaoh's daughter was a portrait of the Princess-Royal of England, and grouped round her were all the most distinguished ladies of the English court—the Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Rutland, Lady Duncannon, Lady Jersey, Mrs. Townley Ward, and others—some fifteen in all. Even tiny Moses was said to be a portrait of some baby of distinction, born conveniently at the time. The picture was a great success. Popular taste had been cunningly measured and fitted. This ingenious interleaving of the Bible and the Peerage found a host of admirers. There were some malcontents, of course: ladies whose claims to be ranked among court beauties had been summarily passed over by the painter; for he has rather an invidious task before him who undertakes to decide who are the fifteen most beautiful of English women of quality. He is certain to make hundreds of enemies if he makes fifteen friends; and he cannot rely for certain upon doing even that much, for, as happened in the

present instance, jealousies may spring up among the chosen fifteen. Mr. Sherwin was charged by certain of the ladies portrayed in the picture with partiality and favouritism. One beauty had been shown too prominently in the design, greatly to the prejudice of other beauties, who were unfairly restricted to the background. And why should one lady be displayed so advantageously—in a light so brilliant—while other ladies not less attractive, as they opined, were exhibited in so strangely subdued a way, with ugly shadows marring the lustre of their loveliness? And then why, was indignantly asked, why had the artist arranged the portraits so cruelly? Why was this charming fair one, whose graces were of an irregular pattern—whose nose has a heavenward inclination—who pretends to no strictness of beauty, according to absurd rules laid down in drawing-books—why is she brought into such fatal juxtaposition with this other severe and classical-looking and statuesque lady! To be merely a foil? Much obliged, Mr. Sherwin! The offended belle expressing angry and ironic gratitude sweeps from the painter's studio, gathering her rustling skirts together that they may not be soiled by the least contact with the canvases and plaster casts, and other art-paraphernalia and rubbish about the place.

The picture was without real artistic value, though undoubtedly pretty and graceful. It was a mere acted charade of the 'Finding of Moses,' got up impromptu as it were; the ladies being in ball-room attire, with high powdered heads, strung with pearls and surmounted with feathers; their silken dresses trimmed with laces, and frills, and furbelows; their faces well whitened and rouged, according to the mode of the day. It was more like a plate from a fashion-book than a scene from Scripture history. True, some small attempt at imparting 'local colour' and air of truth to the thing was just discernible. There was an affectation of Orientalism about the background—a line of palm-trees and plenty of pyramids and temples, presumed to be Egyptian, their style of architecture being nondescript otherwise; but these only made the foreground figures appear more utterly preposterous. Still, the picture pleased the town. It was something to see in one group portraits of the prettiest women in the country. There was a great demand for copies of the engraving. And yet it was with difficulty the harebrained artist could be induced to complete the plate, and supply his patrons and subscribers with prints in return for their guineas. The thriftless, flighty fellow seemed to persist in misconceiving his situation, undervaluing his artist abilities; forgetting that but for these he would still have been peg-cutting in the Sussex woods. He *would* regard himself as a gentleman of independent property, with whom art was simply a pastime—not at all an indispensable means of winning his sustenance. He seemed, indeed, to treat his talent as a sort of obstacle in his path, blamed the world for having made him an artist, and was fond of asserting that, for his own part, he should have preferred the army as a profession!

He was a sort of Twelfth-Night King of Art. For a brief span his success seemed to be without limits. His house was daily besieged by beaux and belles of quality. 'Horses and grooms,' says Miss Hawkins in her Memoirs, 'were cooling before the door; carriages stopped the passage of the street; and the narrow staircase ill sufficed for the number that waited the cautious descent or the laborious ascent of others.' But, of course, this state of things did not last very long. Mr. Sherwin, by his indolence—and indolence in his situation was a sort of insolence—soon put himself out of fashion. Fortune showered her gifts at his feet, but he was too superb a gentleman to stoop and pick them up; so the goddess, wearying of conferring favours that were so ill-appreciated, turned away from him in quest of more reverential votaries. When the footmen of the quality had done with playing fantasias upon his doorknocker, the duns took their turn, and brought less pleasant music out of it.

A troublesome time had the fashionable artist. He had to give all his attention now to the question how his creditors could be evaded. For he preferred evasion to payment. It never seems to have occurred to him that the last was as efficacious a mode of silencing a dun's complaint as keeping out of his way; while it was infinitely preferable to the creditor. But either he had not the money by him at the right moment, or he wanted it for some other purpose—to spend in punch, probably—for he was now devoting himself steadily to the consumption of that deleterious compound. He had become too idle now to work for more than the necessities of the moment—to supply himself with pocket-money sufficient for his immediate requirements. His argument was, that if he could only postpone payment, he was quite justified in postponing work. The main thing was to avoid, put off, and distance his duns. Curious stories are told of his efforts and exploits in this respect. An old engraver, one Roberts, purblind from incessant poring over copper-plates, after repeated calls, finds at last his mercurial debtor at home, and demands the settlement of his little bill for work done. Sherwin is very civil and obliging, promises to settle forthwith the account against him; then, taking base advantage of his creditor's defective vision, he makes good his escape, leaving Roberts confronting the lay-figure of the studio decked for the occasion with its proprietor's coat and wig. Imagine the indignation of the creditor upon the discovery of the imposture! Upon another occasion the artist, splendidly attired—for he is engaged to dine at Sir Brook Boothby's—is prisoned in his room, prevented from stirring forth by the fact that a German tailor, a determined creditor who will take no denial, who will listen to no more excuses, has sat down at the chamber door, to starve the debtor into surrender. Time passes; there is no exit from the house but through the studio, and there is posted the inexorable dun, who has already waited five hours, who will wait five more—fifty more, if need be—but he will see his debtor. And Mr. Sherwin has no money. What is he to do?

Presently the siege is raised. Good-natured Lord Fitzwilliam enters, appreciates the situation, produces his pocket-book, and satisfies the tailor's demand. 'Here, Mr. Sherwin,' says his lordship to the relieved and grateful engraver, 'here is a present for you. Your tailor's receipt for making a fine gentleman!' And Mr. Sherwin is free at last to go to his dinner-party with what

appetite he may.

We have another glimpse of the artist—mad with drink, and up all night, alarming the neighbourhood by firing off pistols out of the window to testify his devotion to his patrons of the house of Cavendish, his joy that an heir had been born to the titles and honours of the dukedom of Devonshire—and then he falls, disappears. Invitations no longer come from Sir Brook Boothby and other grand friends; or, if they come, they don't find Mr. Sherwin at home. As long as he can he keeps his creditors at bay; then takes to flight—hides to escape arrest. He binds himself to work for a publisher who harbours and supports him. But it is too late; he cannot work now if he would. He is greatly changed, his constitution has yielded at last to his repeated and reckless attacks upon it. His sight is dim, and his hand is palsied. He has yielded all claim to be accounted an 'exquisite;' the fashions are nothing to him now; he is simply a broken-down, worn-out, prematurely old man. His courage has left him, his gay air of confidence has quite gone; he cannot look his misfortunes in the face; he shrinks from, shivers at, and, in his weakness and despair, exaggerates them wildly; they prey upon him, go near to driving him mad. Pursued and tracked to his publisher's house—or is it merely his fears that mislead him?—he quits his place of refuge, breaks cover, and flies he hardly knows whither. George Steevens, the editor of Shakespeare, wrote on the first October 1790 to a correspondent at Cambridge: 'I am assured that Sherwin the engraver died in extreme poverty at "The Hog in the Pound," an alehouse at the corner of Swallow Street; an example of great talents rendered useless by their possessor.' Miss Hawkins follows this narrative, and the artist's decease is announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the same year. It is proper to state, however, that Mr. Smith, his pupil, has recorded a less melancholy account of Sherwin's death, which took place, he says, 'at the house of the late Mr. Robert Wilkinson, the printseller in Cornhill, who kindly attended him, afforded him every comfort, and paid respect to his remains, his body having been conveyed to Hampstead and buried in a respectable manner in the churchyard, near the east corner of the front entrance.'

He was barely forty when he died. Prints from his engravings are still highly esteemed by collectors. If his talent was not of the very first class, it was still of too valuable a kind to be flung in the kennel—utterly degraded and wasted.

SIR JOSHUA'S PUPIL.

A young apprentice with very little heart in the study of his craft, after the manner of young apprentices, toiling in a watch and clock-maker's shop in the town of Devonport, heard one day the fame of great Sir Joshua's achievements in London sounding through the county—became conscious that the good folks of the shire took pride in the son of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, Master of Plympton Grammar School. Why should not he, the apprentice, become as great, or nearly so, a credit to Devonport, his birthplace, as was Sir Joshua to Plympton, *his* birthplace? Could one man only have art abilities and ambitions, and make for himself the opportunity to employ and gratify them? So the apprentice asked himself. And he must have been a clever fellow that apprentice! He soon convinced himself—that was easy: but he convinced his family; he convinced several of his townsmen—a more difficult task,—that the best thing they could do with him was to send him up to town to study under his countryman, Sir Joshua, and to become, like him, a great painter. He had his way at last. In his twenty-fifth year he was painting in the studio of Reynolds, living under his roof.

After all, his dearest wishes gratified, perhaps the pupil was little better off. If cleverness, like fever, were contagious, it had been all very well. But the master was but an indifferent master. He could not, or would not, instruct. He was himself somewhat deficient in education—had few rules—only a marvellous love and perception of the beautiful, and an instinctive talent for its reproduction on his canvas. It was as certain as it was innate, but not to be expressed in words, or communicated or reasoned upon in any way. The deeds of genius are things done, as of course, for no why or wherefore, but simply because there is no help for it but to do them. So the pupils painted in the studio of their pseudo-preceptor for a certain number of years, copying his works; or, when sufficiently advanced, perhaps working at his backgrounds, brushing away at draperies, or such conventional fillings in of pictures, and then went their ways to do what they listed, and for the most part to be heard of no more in art chronicles. They had probably been of more use to the painter than he had been to them. Certainly our friend the clockmaker's apprentice was. For when there arose a cry of 'Who wrote Sir Joshua's discourses, if not Burke?' this pupil could give satisfactory evidence in reply. He had heard the great man, his master, walking up and down in the library, as in the intervals of writing, at one and two o'clock in the

morning. A few hours later, and he had the results in his hands. He was employed to make a fair copy of the lecturer's rough manuscript for the reading to the public. He had noted Dr. Johnson's handwriting, for *he* had revised the draft, sometimes altering to a wrong meaning, from his total ignorance of the subject and of art: but never a stroke of Burke's pen was there to be seen. The pupil, it must be said for him, never lost faith in his master. Vandyke, Reynolds, Titian—he deemed these the great triumvirate of portraiture. Comparing them, he would say, that Vandyke's portraits were like pictures, Sir Joshua's like the reflections in a looking-glass, and Titian's like the real people. And he was useful to the great painter in another way, for he sat for one of the children in the Count Ugolino picture (the one in profile with the hand to the face). While posed for this, he was introduced as a pupil of Sir Joshua's to Mr. Edmund Burke, and turned to look at that statesman. 'He is not only an artist, but has a head that would do for Titian to paint,' said Mr. Burke. He served, too, another celebrated man. With Ralph, Sir Joshua's servant, he went to the gallery of Covent Garden Theatre, to support Dr. Goldsmith's new comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, on the first night of its performance. While his friends are trooping to the theatre, the poor author is found sick and shivering with nervousness, wandering up and down the Mall in St. James's Park. He can hardly be induced to witness the production of his own play. Johnson's lusty laugh from the front row of a side box gives the signal to the worthy *claque*, who applaud to an almost dangerous extent, in their zeal for their friend, because there runs a rumour that Cumberland and Ossian Macpherson and Hugh Kelly are getting up a hiss in the pit.

'How did you like the play?' asked Goldsmith of the young painter, who had been clapping his hands until they ached, in the gallery by the side of good Mr. Ralph.

'I wouldn't presume to be a judge in such a matter,' the art-student answered.

'But did it make you laugh?'

'Oh, exceedingly.'

'That's all I require,' said Goldsmith, and sent him box tickets for the author's benefit night, that he might go and laugh again.

Sir Joshua's pupil was James Northcote, a long-lived man, born at Devonport in 1746, and dying at his London house, in Argyll Place, Regent Street, in 1831. If he had a Titianesque look in his youth, he possessed it still more in his age. Brilliant eyes, deeply set; grand projecting nose; thin, compressed lips; a shrewd, cat-like, penetrating look; fine, high, bald forehead, yellow and polished, though he often hid this with a fantastic green velvet painting cap, and straggling bunches of quite white hair behind his ears. A little, meagre man, not more than five feet high, in a shabby, patched dressing-gown, almost as old as himself, leading a quiet, cold, penurious life. He never married. He had never even been in love. He had never had the time, or he had never had the passion necessary for such pursuits, or he was too deeply devoted to his profession. He was always, brush in hand, perched up on a temporary stage, painting earnestly, fiercely, 'with the inveterate diligence of a little devil stuccoing a mud wall!' cried flaming Mr. Fuseli.

Haydon, with a letter of introduction from Prince Hoare, called upon Northcote. He was shown first into a dirty gallery, then up-stairs into a dirtier painting-room, and then, under a high window, with the light falling full on his bald grey head, stood a diminutive wizened figure in an old blue striped dressing-gown, his spectacles pushed up on his forehead. Looking keenly with his little shining eyes at his visitor, he opened the letter, read it, and with the broadest Devon dialect, said—

'Zo you mayne tu bee a peinter, doo 'ee? What zort of peinter?'

'Historical painter, sir.'

'Heestoricaul peinter! Why, ye'll starve with a bundle of straw under yeer head.'

Presently he read the note again.

'Mr. Hoare zays you're studying anatomy; that's no use—Sir Joshua didn't know it. Why should you want to know what he didn't?'

'But Michael Angelo did, sir.'

'Michael Angelo! what's he tu du here? You must peint portraits here!'

Haydon was roused to opposition.

'But I won't!'

'*Won't*,' screamed the little man, 'but you *must*! Your vather isn't a moneyed man, is he?'

'No, sir, but he has a good income, and will maintain me for three years.'

'Will hee? Hee'd better make 'ee mentein yeerzelf.'

'Do you think, sir, that I ought to be a pupil to anybody?'

'No,' said Northcote. 'Who's to teach 'ee here? It'll be throwing your vather's money away.'

'Mr. Opie, sir, says I ought to be.'

'Hee zays zo, does hee? ha, ha, ha, ha! he wants your vather's money.'

He received many visitors in his studio. He was constantly at home, and liked to talk over his work, for he never paused on account of the callers. He never let go his palette even. He went to the door with a 'Gude God!' his favourite exclamation in his west country dialect, 'what, is it *you*? Come in:' and then climbed his way back to his canvas, asking and answering in his cool, self-possessed way, all about the news of the day. Yet he was violent and angry, and outspoken sometimes, was Sir Joshua's loyal pupil.

'Look at the feeling of Raphael!' said some one to him.

'Bah!' cried the little man. 'Look at Reynolds; he was all feeling! The ancients were *baysts* in feeling, compared to him.' And again: 'I tell 'ee the King and Queen could not bear the presence of *he*. Do you think he was overawed by *they*? Gude God! He was poison to their sight. They felt ill at ease before such a being—they shrunk into themselves, overawed by his intellectual superiority. They inwardly prayed to God that a trap-door might open under the feet of the throne, by which they might escape—his presence was too terrible!'

Certainly he was possessed by no extravagant notions of the divinity of blood-royal.

'What do you know,' he was asked, 'of the Prince of Wales, that he so often speaks of you?'

'Oh, he knows nothing of me, nor I of him—it's only his *bragging*!' the painter grandly replied.

He could comprehend the idea of distinction of ranks little more than old Mr. Nollekens, who would persist in treating the royal princes quite as common acquaintances, taking them by the button-hole, forgetful altogether of the feuds of the king's family, and asking them *how their father did*? with an exclamation to the heir-apparent of, 'Ah! we shall never get such another when he's gone!' Though there was little enough veneration for the king in this, as Nollekens proved, when he measured the old monarch, sitting for his bust, from the lip to the forehead, as though he had been measuring a block of marble, and at last fairly stuck the compasses into his Majesty's nose. Even the king, who was not very quick at a joke, could not fail to see the humour of the situation, and laughed immensely.

Modern taste prefers Northcote's portraits to his more pretentious works. The glories of Mr. Alderman Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery have pretty well passed away. However, Northcote's pictures were among the best of the collection. His 'Arthur and Hubert,' and the 'Murder of the Princes in the Tower,' and 'The Interment of the Bodies by torchlight,' were very forcible and dramatic works of art, and possessed more natural attractions than the pictures of many of his competitors. His pupilage with Sir Joshua prevented his falling into the washed leather and warm drab errors of tone that then distinguished the English school of historical painting. In the picture of the Burial of the Princes, Fuseli criticised—

'You shouldn't have made that fellow holding up his hands to receive the bodies. You should have made him digging a hole for them. How awfully grand; with a pickaxe, digging, dump, dump, dump!'

'Yes,' Northcote answered; 'but how am I to paint the sound of dump, dump, dump?'

The Boydell pictures were for a long time very popular, and the engravings of them enjoyed a large sale.

Of course, Northcote despised Hogarth. Abuse of that painter seemed to be one of the duties of the British historical artist of that day. Yet he paid him homage; he painted a series of pictures, Hogarthian in subject, and proved to the satisfaction of everybody, one would think, the absolute superiority of Hogarth. Mr. Northcote's moral subjects, illustrative of vice and virtue, in the progress of two young women, are not to be mentioned in the same breath with the 'Mariage à la Mode.' Not merely were they deficient in expression—they were not equal in point of art-execution, though of course the more modern painter had planned to excel in both these qualities. But Northcote's portraits are really admirable—broad and vigorous—with much of Sir Joshua's charm of colour, if not his charm of manner exactly.

For fifty years he lived in Argyll Place, passing the greatest part of that time in his studio—a small room not more than nine feet by twelve, crowded with the conventional articles of *vertu* that were then considered to be the indispensable properties of a painter. His maiden sister —'Northcote in petticoats,' she was often called, she was so like him in face, figure, and manner —superintended his frugal household. Its economy was simple enough. The brother and sister were of one opinion. 'Half the world died of over-feeding,' they said. They went into an opposite extreme, and nearly starved themselves. When there was a cry in the land about scarcity of food, they did not heed the panic; they were accustomed to a minimum of sustenance, they could hardly be deprived of that. Fuseli, who sowed his satire broadcast, exclaimed one day: 'What! does Northcote keep a dog? What does he live upon? Why, he must eat his own fleas!' But the painter did not attempt to force his opinions upon others, so the kennel and the kitchen fared better than the parlour. The servants were indulgently treated, permitted to eat as they pleased, and die in their own fashion—of repletion or apoplexy, if it seemed good to them.

If he was cold and callous and cynical to the rest of the world, he was ever good and kind to the pinched elderly lady his sister. By his will he gave directions that everything in his house should remain undisturbed, that there should be no sale of his property in her lifetime. He was counselled by considerate friends to have all his pictures sold immediately after his funeral while

his name was fresh in the memory of the public; it was urged that his estate would benefit very much by the adoption of such a course. 'Gude God, no!' the old man would cry; 'I haven't patience with ye! Puir thing! d'ye think she'll not be sufficiently sad when my coffin be borne away, and she be left desolate! Tearing my pictures from the walls, and ransacking every nook and corner, and packing up and carting away what's dearer to her than household gods, and all for filthy lucre's sake! No; let her enjoy the few years that will be spared to her; when she walks about the house let her feel it all her own, such as it be, and nothing missing but her brother. I'd rather my bones were torn from my grave, and scattered to help repair the roads, than that a single thing should be displaced here to give her pain. Ye'll drive me mad!'

One day there was a great crowd in Argyll Place. Not to see the painter, not even to see a royal carriage that had just drawn up at his door, nor a popular prince of the blood who occupied the carriage, but to catch a glimpse of one about whom the town was then quite mad—raving mad: a small good-looking schoolboy, a theatrical homunculus, the Infant Roscius, Master William Henry Betty. Of course rages and panics and manias seem to be very foolish things, contemplated by the cool grey light of the morning after. It seems rather incredible now, that crowds should have assembled round the theatre at one o'clock to see Master Betty play Barbarossa in the evening; that he should have played for twenty-eight nights at Drury Lane, and drawn £17,000 into the treasury of the theatre. He was simply a handsome boy of thirteen with a fine voice, deep for his age, and powerful but monotonous. Surely he was not very intellectual, though he did witch the town so marvellously. 'If they admire me so much, what would they say of Mr. Harley?' quoth the boy, simply. Mr. Harley being the head tragedian of the same strolling company—a large-calved, leather-lunged player, doubtless, who had awed provincial groundlings for many a long year. Yet the boy's performance of Douglas charmed John Home, the author of the tragedy. 'The first time I ever saw the part of Douglas played according to my ideas of the character!' he exclaimed, as he stood in the wings; but he was then seventy years of age. 'The little Apollo off the pedestal!' cried Humphreys, the artist. 'A beautiful effusion of natural sensibility,' said cold Northcote; 'and then that graceful play of the limbs in youth—what an advantage over every one else!' As the child grew, the charm vanished; the crowds that had applauded the boy fled from the man. Byron denounced him warmly. 'His figure is fat, his features flat, his voice unmanageable, his action ungraceful, and, as Diggory says (in the farce of *All the World's a Stage*), "I defy him to extort that d——d muffin face of his into madness!"' Happy Master Betty! Hapless *Mister* Betty!

Opie had painted the Infant as the shepherd so well known to nursery prodigies watching on the Grampian Hills the flocks of his father, 'a frugal swain, whose constant care,' etc. etc. His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, who was a patron of the stage—or the people on it, or some of them—brought the boy to Northcote, to be represented in a 'Vandyke costume retiring from the altar of Shakespeare,'—rather an unmeaning ceremonial. But the picture was a great success, and the engraving of it published and dedicated to the duke. He was then about forty—a hearty, bluff gentleman, supposed to be free and breezy in his manliness from his service at sea,—kindly and unaffected in manner, had not the slightest knowledge of art, but regarded Northcote as 'an honest, independent, little, old fellow,' seasoning that remark with an oath, after the quarter-deck manner of naval gentlemen of the period.

The prince sat in the studio while the artist drew the Infant. Northcote was not a man to wear a better coat upon his back for all that his back was going to be turned upon royalty. He still wore the ragged, patched dressing-gown he always worked in. The painting of Master Betty was amusing at first, but it seemed, in the end, to be but a prolonged and tedious business to the not artistic looker-on. He must divert himself somehow. Certainly Northcote's appearance was comical. Suddenly the painter felt a twitching at his collar. He turned, frowned angrily, but said nothing. The prince persevered. Presently he touched lightly the painter's rough white locks.

'Mr. Northcote, pray how long do you devote to the duties of the toilet?'

It was very rude of his Royal Highness, but then he was *so* bored by the sitting.

The little old painter turned round full upon him.

'I never allow any one to take personal liberties with me. You are the first that ever presumed to do so. I beg your Royal Highness to recollect that I am in my own house.'

He spoke warmly, glanced haughtily, then worked at his canvas again. There was silence for some minutes. Quietly the duke opened the door and left the room. The painter took no notice.

But the royal carriage had been sent away. It would not be required until five o'clock. It was not yet four; and it was raining!

The duke returned to the studio.

'Mr. Northcote, it rains. Will you have the kindness to lend me an umbrella?'

Calmly the painter rang the bell.

'Bring your mistress's umbrella.'

Miss Northcote's umbrella was the only silk one in the house. The servant showed the prince down-stairs, and he left the house protected from the shower by Miss Northcote's umbrella.

'You have offended his Royal Highness,' said some one in the room.

'*I* am the offended party,' the painter answered with dignity.

Next day he was alone in his studio when a visitor was announced.

'Mr. Northcote,' said the duke, entering, 'I return Miss Northcote's umbrella you were so kind as to lend me yesterday.'

The painter bowed, receiving it from the royal hands.

'I have brought it myself, Mr. Northcote,' the duke continued, 'that I might have the opportunity of saying that I yesterday took a liberty which you properly resented. I am angry with myself. I hope you will forgive me, and think no more of it.'

The painter bowed his acceptance of the apology.

'Gude God!' he exclaimed, afterwards telling the story, 'what could I say? He could see what I felt. I could have given my life for him! Such a prince is worthy to be a king!'

More than a quarter of a century passed, and then the Duke of Clarence was the King of England —William the Fourth. The old painter was still living, at work as usual, though weak and bent enough now: but with his brain still active, his tongue still sharp, his eyes still very brilliant in his lined shrunken face. 'A poor creature,' he said of himself, 'perhaps amusing for half an hour or so, or curious to see like a little dried mummy in a museum.' He employed himself in the preparation of a number of illustrations to a book of fables published after his death. He collected prints of animals, and cut them out carefully; then he moved about such as he selected for his purpose on a sheet of plain paper, and, satisfying himself at last as to the composition of the picture, he fixed the figures in their places with paste, filled in backgrounds with touches of his pencil, and then handed the curious work to Mr. Harvey, the engraver, to be copied on wood and engraved. The success of the plan was certainly as remarkable as its eccentricity.

He employed his pen as well as his pencil: contributed papers to the *Artist*, and published, in 1813, a life of Sir Joshua. A year before his death he produced a *Life of Titian*, the greater part of which, however, was probably written by his friend and constant companion Hazlitt. About the same time Hazlitt reprinted from the *Morning Chronicle* his *Conversations with Northcote*, a work of much interest and value.

He was in his small studio, brush in hand, very tranquil and happy, within two days of his death. It seemed as though he had been forgotten. 'If Providence were to leave me the liberty of choosing my heaven, I should be content to occupy my little painting-room with the continuance of the happiness I have experienced there, even for ever.' He spoke of his works without arrogance. 'Everything one can do falls short of Nature. I am always ready to beg pardon of my sitters after I have done, and to say I hope they'll excuse it. The more one knows of the art, and the better one can do, the less one is satisfied.'

Sir Joshua's pupil—'Of all his pupils I am the only one who ever did anything at all'—died on the 13th July 1831, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

HOPPNER AND LAWRENCE.

I.

There have always been factions in art; and while the schools have battled separately, there has been no lack of single combats between individual painters.

Pordenone painting his frescoes in the cloisters of St. Stefano at Venice with his sword drawn and his buckler at hand, prepared for the violence of Titian, is a sample of the masters who found it necessary to combine profession of the fine arts with the business of a bravo. Domenico Veniziano was brutally assaulted by Andrea del Castagno; Annibale Caracci, Cesari, and Guido were driven from Naples, and their lives threatened by Belisario, Spagnoletto, and Caracciolo. Agostino Beltrano, surpassed in painting by his own wife, Amelia di Rosa (the niece of an artist of eminence), murdered her in a fit of jealous rage; Michael Angelo was envious of the growing fame of Sebastiano del Piombo; Hudson[19] quarrelled with his pupil Reynolds, who in his turn was made uneasy by the progress of his rival Romney; and Hoppner, on his deathbed, writhed under the polite attentions of Sir Thomas Lawrence. 'In his visits,' said the poor sick man bitterly, 'there is more joy at my approaching

death than true sympathy with my sorrows.'

II.

The mother of JOHN HOPPNER was one of the German attendants at the Royal Palace. He was born in London in the summer of 1759. George the Third took a strong personal interest in the bringing up and education of the child, whose sweet musical voice and correct ear soon won for him the post and white stole of a chorister in the royal chapel. Of course there were motives attributed in explanation of the king's kindness and benevolence, and the boy himself, it would appear, was not eager to contradict a slander which ascribed to him illustrious, if illicit, descent. The world chose to see confirmation of the rumours in this respect, in the favour subsequently extended to the young man by the Prince of Wales, who supported him actively against such formidable rivals as Lawrence, Owen, and Opie, and was the means of directing a stream of aristocratic patronage to his studio. He entered as a probationer the school of the Royal Academy —passing gradually through the various stages of studentship, and emerging at last a candidate for the highest prizes of the institution. He underwent few of the privations of the beginner—knew little of the trials and struggles of the ordinary student. Almost 'a royal road' was opened for him. So soon as he could draw and colour decently, patrons were ready for him. Mrs. Jordan sat—now as the Comic Muse—now as Hippolyte; a 'lady of quality' was depicted as a Bacchante. Then came portraits of the Duke and Duchess of York, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Clarence. He lived in Charles Street, close to Carlton House, and wrote himself 'Portrait painter to the Prince of Wales.' The king and queen were quite willing to favour their son's favourite, particularly as they believed, with many other people of the time, that the heir-apparent 'had a taste.' But soon obstacles came between them and the painter. They had never liked Reynolds. Hoppner, full of honest admiration of Sir Joshua, did not hesitate to sound his praises even in the unwilling eyes of royalty. The question, as he held, was one of art, not of kingly predilection. It was uncourtierlike, and the monarch was much displeased. He could not endure contradiction or opposition even in regard to matters of which he knew nothing whatever, such as art for instance. Then the giddy proceedings of the minor and rival court at Carlton House were desperately annoying to plain 'Farmer George;' and in a small way Hoppner had become celebrated in the Prince's circle: for the painter was gaily disposed, witty, and high-spirited. The Prince of Wales having thrown himself into the open arms of the Whigs, Mr. Hoppner must needs become a zealous politician, espousing the principles of the party opposed to the king. He could expect little from their most gracious majesties after that. He obtained nothing. Certainly he was imprudent. What had a painter to do with politics? He thus diminished gravely the area of his prospects. It became quite impossible for Tory noblemen and gentlemen of distinction to bestow patronage upon, sit for their pictures to, a Whig portrait-painter. Why, he might caricature them! And after painting all his Whig friends and associates, what was he to do? with a rival in the field by no means to be despised or held cheaply.

III.

In the last century it behoved everybody who desired to be accounted 'a personage,' or to be ranked amongst 'people of quality,' to quit London at a certain season of the year, and repair to the city of Bath, or 'the Bath,' as it was frequently called. Now a journey to Bath in those days was no trifling matter: it involved frequent stoppages by the way, and the inns and posting-houses upon the road became, necessarily, *very* important, and oftentimes very profitable concerns. Miss Burney, the author of *Evelina*, records in her diary the particulars of her journey to Bath with Mrs. Thrale, in the year 1780. She stopped the first night at Maidenhead Bridge; slept at Speen Hill the second, and Devizes the third; arriving at Bath on the fourth day of her journey. The inn patronized by Miss Burney at Devizes was the Black Bear, of which one Thomas Lawrence was the landlord. It is in regard to this establishment we have to request that the reader will give us his attention for a few minutes.

Mr. Lawrence had been by turns a solicitor, a poet, an artist, an actor, a supervisor of excise, a farmer, an innkeeper, and, of course, a bankrupt. Probably he might have retired from the Black Bear with a fortune, but that he had a numerous family of sixteen children to support, and that he was not particularly well qualified to succeed as an innkeeper. He seems to have set up for being 'a character,' and his neighbours were inclined to ridicule and censure him for giving himself airs. A bustling, active, good-humoured man, he was prone now and then to play the scholar and the fine gentleman, the while he lost sight of his more recognised position as a landlord. He wore a full-dress suit of black, starched ruffles, and a very grand periwig; was ceremonious and stately in his manners, affected an inordinate love of literature and an air of connoisseurship that contrasted rather strangely with his calling. Certainly there was not such another landlord to be seen upon the road between London and Bath; if, indeed, anywhere else. He was proud of his elocutionary powers, and in a full, sonorous voice he would read aloud select passages from Shakespeare and Milton to all such persons as evinced an inclination to listen to him—sometimes, indeed, to people who did not in the least wish to hear him. It is hardly to be wondered at that divers of the Black Bear's customers occasionally felt indignant and outraged when, travel-worn and hungry, eager for the bill of fare and supper, they were met by the landlord's proposal to expatiate for their benefit upon the beauties of the poets, or to recite for their entertainment certain most elegant extracts. It was food for the body they desiderated, not solace for the mind; and it was, perhaps, only natural that they should treat Mr. Lawrence's suggestions rather curtly. Not that the innkeeper was prompt to take offence. The man who rides a hobby-horse seldom heeds or perceives the criticism of bystanders upon the paces or proportions of his steed. Mr.

Lawrence could obtain a hearing from other quarters. Once a week he visited Bath, and passed an evening in the green-room of the theatre there. The actors would listen to him, or pretend to do so; some of them would permit him to read their parts to them, and give them counsel as to the manner in which these should be rendered on the stage, purposing to revenge themselves afterwards, the rogues, by availing themselves of the comforts of the Black Bear, without calling for their accounts when they quitted that hostelry.

But even a greater celebrity at Devizes than Mr. Lawrence was his son Thomas, born in 1769, youngest of the sixteen children. He seems to have been regarded on all hands as a sort of infant prodigy of great use in attracting visitors to the inn. He could stand on a chair and recite poetry, or he could wield his blacklead pencil and take the portrait of any one who would condescend to sit to him. 'A most lovely boy,' writes Miss Burney,—with long, luxuriant, girl-like tresses, that tumbled down and hid his face when he stooped to draw. 'He can take your likeness, or repeat you any speech in Milton's *Pandemonium*,' the proud father would cry, 'although he is only five years old.' And at this age he is stated to have produced a striking likeness of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Kenyon. At seven the portrait of the prodigy was taken, and engraved by Mr. Sherwin, the artist. At eight, it seems, his education was finished. His recitations—he had no doubt been carefully instructed by his father—were pronounced to be 'full of discrimination, feeling, and humour, set off by the various tones of a voice full, harmonious, and flexible.' Pretty well this, for such a mere baby as he was at the time! He recited on various occasions before Garrick, Foote, John Wilkes, Sheridan, Burke, Johnson, Churchill, and other famous people, resting for the night or to change horses at Devizes on their road to Bath. Old Lawrence lost no opportunity of talking to his customers, and of exhibiting his wonderful son. All are alleged to have been charmed with him. Mr. and Mrs. Garrick passing through the town, would retire to a summer-house in the garden of the Black Bear, and amuse themselves for some time with the recitations of the little fellow. 'Tommy has learned one or two new speeches since you were here, Mr. Garrick,' the father would exclaim, bringing forward his precocious boy. 'There was something about him,' says an authority, 'which excited the surprise of the most casual observer. He was a perfect man in miniature; his confidence and self-possession smacked of one-and-twenty.'

Young Lawrence, however, was not able at this time to read at random any passages from the poets that might be selected for him. He had been instructed in particular speeches, and to these, as a rule, he was obliged to restrict his efforts. For a long time he had been wishing to learn 'Satan's Address to the Sun,' a favourite recitation of his father's; but old Lawrence had declined to intrust him with so important a subject. Nevertheless the boy had acquainted himself with the tone and manner appropriate to the piece, and announced that he was prepared to deliver it in imitation of the elder orator. A family in Devizes, known to the Lawrences, giving a party one evening, requested that the boy might be permitted to attend and entertain the company with his readings and recitations. Old Lawrence consented, on condition that the child was not asked to read other than the pieces with which he was acquainted, and cautioned his son by no means to attempt anything in which he was not perfect, and particularly to avoid the address of Satan. In the evening young Lawrence walked to the house with Shakespeare and Milton under his arm, and went through his performances amid general applause. He was then asked which was his favourite recitation in Milton? He replied that he preferred 'Satan's Address to the Sun,' but that his father would not permit him to repeat it. On this account, and to ascertain whether the child merely performed parrot-fashion, the company were especially anxious to hear the forbidden reading. Young Lawrence's dutiful scruples, however, were not overcome until all present had promised to intercede on his behalf and obtain for him his father's forgiveness. As he turned to the interdicted page a slip of paper fell from the book. A gentleman picked it up and read aloud —'Tom, mind you don't touch Satan.' It was some time before the astonished boy could be induced to proceed; yet he is said to have eventually dealt with the subject very creditably and discreetly.

They were strange people these Lawrences, and the Black Bear must have been a curious kind of inn. Miss Burney was greatly surprised at hearing the sounds of singing and pianoforte-playing while she was beneath its roof. It was only the Miss Lawrences practising—but the inn-keepers' daughters of the last century were not generally possessed of such accomplishments. Then, still very wonderful for an inn, 'the house,' says Miss Burney, 'was full of books as well as paintings, drawings, and music, and all the family seem not only ingenious and industrious, but amiable; added to which they are strikingly handsome. I hope,' the lady concludes, 'we may return the same road, that we may see them again.'

As Garrick said of him, young Lawrence's walk in life was at this time 'poised between the pencil and the stage.' To which did he incline? Would he be a player or a painter? It was hard to say. He had been taken to town on a visit to Mr. Hugh Boyd (who at one time was supposed to be one of the authors of 'Junius'), introduced to the great painters of the day, and most kindly received by them. Sir Joshua Reynolds had pronounced him 'the most promising genius he had ever met with.' Mr. Hoare had been so charmed with the boy's drawings, that he proposed to send him to Italy with his own son. On the other hand, he had been a frequent visitor in the green-room of the Bath Theatre. Placed upon the table there, the centre of a group of amused actors, he would recite 'Hamlet's Advice to the Players,' and other passages. On one of these occasions, Henderson the tragedian was present, and expressed warm approval of the child's efforts. Then, in return for the civilities and compliments he received, young Lawrence would beg that he might take the portraits of his friends among the company. We are told of his attempt to draw the face of Edwin, the comedian, who the while grimaced and distorted his features, constantly shifting the expression of his countenance, greatly to the bewilderment of the boy artist. Finally he stood

silent and motionless, watching his model with a kind of despair, until it became necessary to explain the joke that had been practised. It should be said, however, that stories are current in relation to similar jokes played by humourists upon other artists.

Old Lawrence had been compelled to abandon the Black Bear, and had retreated to Bath with his family. 'Bath,' we are informed, 'was at that time London devoid of its mixed society and vulgarity. It contained its selection of all that was noble, affluent, or distinguished in the metropolis; and amongst this circle our artist was now caressed.' It became a kind of fashion to sit to him for oval crayon likenesses at a guinea and a half apiece. Portraits from his pencil of Mrs. Siddons and Admiral Barrington were now engraved, the artist being as yet only thirteen years of age. His success as a portrait-painter seemed quite assured; he was making money rapidly, largely contributing to the support of his family. Yet he was not satisfied. He was greatly tempted to try his fortune on the stage. His view was, that he could earn more, and so could further assist his father by deserting the studio for the theatre. Possibly, too, the display and excitement and applause which pertain to the career of the successful player—and of course he thought he should succeed—were very alluring to the young gentleman. He was now little more than sixteen. He took counsel of a friendly actor, Mr. John Bernard,[20] and favoured him with a private recitation of the part of Jaffier in the tragedy of *Venice Preserved*. Mr. Bernard, it seems, was not much impressed by this performance; at least he did not detect sufficient dramatic ability in the young man to justify his proposed change of profession. The actor, however, did not openly express his opinion on the subject, but merely said he would bear the case in mind and speak to his manager, Mr. Palmer, in regard to it. Meanwhile he disclosed what had passed to old Lawrence. Acquainted by experience with the precariousness of an actor's fortunes, and appreciative also of the value of his son's talents as an artist, Lawrence entreated Bernard to exert all his influence in dissuading the young man from his design. It was determined at last to cure the stage-struck hero by means of a trick—to pre-arrange his failure, in fact. Palmer, the manager, entered into the plan. An appointment was made at Bernard's house, in order that young Lawrence might have a private interview with the manager. In an adjoining room were secreted his father and a party of friends. Bernard introduced the young man to Palmer, who presently desired a specimen of the aspirant's dramatic abilities, and took his seat at the end of the room in the character of auditor and judge. A scene from *Venice Preserved* was selected, and young Lawrence commenced a recitation. For several lines he proceeded perfectly, but soon he became nervous, confused—he stammered, coughed, and at last stopped outright. Bernard had the book in his hand, but he would not prompt, he withheld all assistance. Young Lawrence began again, but his self-possession was gone—his failure was more decided and humiliating than before. At this juncture his father abruptly entered the room, crying out, 'You play Jaffier, Tom? Hang me if you're fit to appear as a supernumerary!'—or some such speech—and then young Lawrence found that his mortification had not been without witnesses.

It was very trying to his vanity. He had to listen to remonstrances and appeals of all kinds. Palmer, the manager, assured him that he did not possess the advantages requisite for success on the stage. Bernard spoke with bitter truthfulness of the trials and sorrows of an actor's life. Other friends drew attention to the brilliant prospect open to the successful painter. Young Lawrence gave way at last. The theatre may thus have lost an agreeable player, but, thanks to the manœuvre of old Lawrence, Bernard, and Palmer, a famous portrait-painter was secured to the world of art.

IV.

In 1785 he received a medal from the Society of Arts for his crayon drawing of 'Raphael's Transfiguration.' In 1787, being then seventeen, he exhibited seven pictures at the Royal Academy. He painted his own portrait, and wrote concerning it to his mother, 'To any but my own family I certainly should not say this; but, excepting Sir Joshua for the painting of the head, I would risk my reputation with any painter in London.' The picture was broadly painted, three-quarter size, with a Rembrandtish effect, as Sir Joshua detected when the canvas was shown to him. 'You have been looking at the old masters; take my advice and study nature.' He dismissed the young artist with marked kindness, however. In 1789, Martin Archer Shee described him as 'a genteel, handsome young man, effeminate in his manner;' adding, 'he is wonderfully laborious, and has the most uncommon patience and perseverance.' About this time he painted the Princess Amelia, and Miss Farren, the actress, afterwards Countess of Derby, 'in a white satin cloak and muff;' and full-length portraits of the King and Queen, to be taken out by Lord Macaulay as presents to the Emperor of China. In 1791 he was, at the express desire, it was said, of the King and Queen, after one defeat, admitted an associate of the Royal Academy by a suspension of the law prohibiting the admission of an associate under the age of twenty-four. He was opposed by many of the academicians, and bitterly attacked by Peter Pindar.

Dr. Wolcot was especially angry at the alleged interference of royalty in the election. In his satiric poem *The Rights of Kings*, he expostulates ironically with certain academicians who ventured to oppose the nominee of the Court:—

> 'How, sirs, on majesty's proud corns to tread!
> Messieurs ACADEMICIANS, when you're dead,
> Where can your impudences hope to go?
>
> 'Refuse a monarch's mighty orders!
> It smells of treason—on rebellion borders!

'S death, sirs! it was the Queen's fond wish as well,
That *Master* LAWRENCE should come in!
Against a queen so gentle to rebel!
This is another crying sin!

'Behold, his majesty is in a passion,
Tremble, ye rogues, and tremble all the nation!
Suppose he takes it in his, royal head
To strike your academic idol dead—
Knock down your house, dissolve you in his ire,
And strip you of your boasted title—"SQUIRE."[21]

'Go, sirs, with halters round your wretched necks,
Which some contrition for your crime bespeaks,
And much-offended majesty implore:
Say, piteous, kneeling in the royal view,
"Have pity on a sad abandoned crew,
And we, great king, will sin no more;
Forgive, dread sir, the crying sin,
And *Mister* LAWRENCE shall come in!"'

The academicians had, it seems, in the first instance, elected FRANCIS WHEATLEY, painter of rural and domestic subjects, in preference to Lawrence. There had been then sixteen votes for Wheatley, and but three for Lawrence.

'Yet opposition, fraught to royal wishes,
Quite counter to a gracious king's commands,
Behold the ACADEMICIANS, those strange fishes,
For WHEATLEY lifted their unhallowed hands.
So then, these fellows have not leave to crawl,
To play the spaniel lick the foot and fawn.'
Etc. etc. etc.

In 1792, he attended the funeral of Sir Joshua in St. Paul's Cathedral, when Mr. Burke attempted to thank the members of the Academy for the respect shown to the remains of their president, but, overcome by his emotions, was unable to utter a word. In 1795, Mr. Lawrence was elected a full member of the Academy, having previously succeeded Sir Joshua as painter in ordinary to the King—Benjamin West being elected to the presidential chair.

'Sir Joshua,' writes Northcote in his *Life of Reynolds*, 'expected the appointment [of painter in ordinary] would be offered to him on the death of Ramsay, and expressed his disapprobation with regard to soliciting it; but he was informed that it was a necessary point of etiquette with which he complied, and seems to have pleased Johnson by so doing.'

Burke, reforming the King's household expenses, had reduced the salary of King's painter from £200 to £50 per annum. But the office was nevertheless a valuable source of emolument, derived in great part from the number of State portraits of the sovereign, required, by usage, for the adornment of certain official residences, and the duty and profit of executing which devolved, as of right, on the painter in ordinary. Thus the mansion of every ambassador of the crown, in the capital of the foreign court to which he was accredited, exhibited in its reception rooms whole-length portraits of the King and Queen of England. And these works were not fixtures in the official residence, but were considered as gifts from the sovereign to the individual ambassador, and remained his property—his perquisites on the cessation of his diplomatic functions. Each new appointment among the *corps diplomatique*, therefore, brought grist to the mill of the painter in ordinary in the shape of a new commission for a royal whole-length, usually a *replica* of a previous work, but to be charged and paid for according to the artist's usual scale of prices for original pictures. When Reynolds, late in his career, accepted the appointment, its pecuniary advantages were a matter of indifference to him, or he did not care to be for ever reduplicating or reproducing the 'counterfeit presentment' of the sovereign, and a fashion sprung up of compensating the ambassador with a fixed sum of money, the estimated market value of the royal portrait; his excellency not being in the least unwilling to accept the specie in lieu of the picture. But Lawrence did not find it expedient to follow Sir Joshua's example. He claimed a right to execute the portraits, however numerous, of the sovereign, let the diplomatists be ever so willing to take money instead. This claim was admitted, and he reaped large profits accordingly.[22]

Add to his unquestionable art-abilities, that he was courtly in manner, an accomplished fencer and dancer, with a graceful figure and a handsome face; that he possessed an exquisitely modulated voice; and large, lustrous expressive eyes—the light in which seemed to be always kindling and brilliant.

George the Fourth, indeed, pronounced him 'the most finished gentleman in my dominions.' And then, though he had abandoned all thought of the stage as a means of obtaining profit, there was

nothing to prevent his distinguishing himself in back drawing-rooms as an unprofessional player. He was certified by no less a person than Sheridan to be 'the best amateur actor in the kingdom.' Lawrence had greatly distinguished himself in that respect at a theatrical *fête* given by the Marquis of Abercorn in 1803. 'Shall I give you an account of it?' writes the painter to his sister. 'It was projected by a woman of great cleverness and beauty—Lady Caher.... It was determined to do it in a quiet way, and more as an odd experiment of the talents of the party than anything else; but this and that friend would be offended; and at last it swelled up to a perfect theatre (in a room), and a London audience. The Prince, the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, Lord and Lady Melbourne, their sons, Lord and Lady Essex, Lord and Lady Amherst, with a long *et cetera*, and, amongst the rest, Sheridan, were present.' The plays performed were *The Wedding Day*, and *Who's the Dupe?* Lawrence represented Lord Rakeland in the one, and Grainger in the other. The orchestra was behind the scenes. Lady Harriet Hamilton played the organ, Lady Maria the piano; Lady Catherine the tambourine, the Honourable Mr. Lamb the violoncello; other instrumentalists were hired—'a most perfect orchestra—with admirable scenery, and light as day.' 'The Prince then came in, and of course the orchestra struck up "God save the King." Then a little terrifying bell rang—the curtain drew up—and *The Wedding Day* began. At first, I will own to you, Sheridan's face, the grave Duke of Devonshire, and two or three staunch critics, made me feel unpleasantly: for I opened the piece. However, this soon wore off; our set played extremely well—like persons of good sense without extravagance or buffoonery, and yet with sufficient spirit. Lady Caher, Mr. J. Madox, and G. Lamb were the most conspicuous—the first so beautiful that I felt love-making very easy. A splendid supper closed the business.' Lawrence seems to have fancied that the propriety of his joining in the theatricals might be questioned. Although his father and mother had both been dead some years, their admonitions in respect of his old love for the stage were still sounding in his ears. So he writes with an air of apology to his sister—his senior by some years—'You know me too well, dear Anne, to believe that I should be of such a scheme under any but very flattering circumstances; as it is, I was right to join in it. Lord Abercorn is an old Jermyn Street friend—a staunch and honourable one, and particularly kind to me in real services and very flattering distinctions. These all formed one strong reason for joining in the thing; and another secret one was, that whatever tends to heighten a character for general talent (when kept in prudent bounds) is of use to that particular direction of it which forms the pursuit of life. I have gained, then, and not lost by this (to you) singular step. I am not going to be a performer in other families. I stick to Lord Abercorn's: and for the rest I pursue my profession as quietly and more steadily than ever.' Certainly Lawrence seemed a likely man to achieve successes, both social and artistic. And he *did* succeed unquestionably.

Byron did not criticise leniently his contemporaries, but he records in his diary: 'The same evening (he is writing of the year 1814) I met Lawrence the painter, and heard one of Lord Grey's daughters play on the harp so modestly and ingenuously, that she looked music. I would rather have had my talk with Lawrence, who talked delightfully, and heard the girl, than have had all the fame of Moore and me put together. The only pleasure of fame is, that it paves the way to pleasure, and the more intellectual the better for the pleasure and us too.'

V.

It is clear that Mr. Hoppner, 'portrait-painter to the Prince of Wales,' had no mean opponent in Mr. Lawrence, 'portrait-painter in ordinary to His Majesty.'

For a time the rivalry was continued in a spirit of much moderation. The painters were calm and forbearing, and scrupulously courteous to each other. Lawrence was too gentle and polite ever to breathe a word against his antagonist, if, indeed, he did not respect his talents too highly to disparage them. Perhaps he was conscious that victory would be his in the end; as Hoppner might also have a presentiment that he was to be defeated. He was of a quick temper; was a husband and a father; entirely dependent on his own exertions, though he could earn five thousand a year easily when fully employed. But certainly the innkeeper's son was stealing away his sitters: even his good friends the Whigs. He chafed under this. He began to speak out. He denounced Lawrence's prudent abstinence from all political feeling as downright hypocrisy. He thought it cowardice "to side with neither faction, and be ready and willing to paint the faces of both." And then he commenced to talk disrespectfully of his rival's art. He claimed for his own portraits greater purity of look and style. 'The ladies of Lawrence,' he said, 'show a gaudy dissoluteness of taste, and sometimes trespass on moral as well as professional chastity.' This was purposed to be a terrible blow to Lawrence. Of course there was plenty of repetition of the remark, and people laughed over it a good deal. But in the end it injured Hoppner rather than Lawrence. The world began to wonder how it was that the painter to the purest court in Europe should depict the demure and reputable ladies of St. James's with such glittering eyes and carmine lips—a *soupçon* of wantonness in their glances, and a rather needless undraping of their beautiful shoulders; while the painter to the Prince was bestowing on the giddy angels of Carlton House a decency that was within a little of dull, a simplicity that was almost sombreness, a purity that was prudery! The beauties of George III.'s court were not displeased to be pictorially credited with a levity they did not dare to live up or down to; and the ladies of the Prince's court, too honest to assume a virtue they had not, now hastened to be represented by an artist who appeared so admirably to comprehend their allurements. Poor Mr. Hoppner was deserted by the Whig ladies; he had only now the Whig lords to paint: unless he took up with landscape art, for which he had decided talent, as many of the backgrounds to his pictures demonstrate. He grew peevish and irritable. He took to abusing the old masters, and cried out at the neglect of living men. Examining a modern work, he would say: 'Ay, it's a noble picture, but it has one damning

defect—it's a thing of *to-day.* Prove it to be but two hundred years old, and from the brush of a famous man, and here's two thousand guineas for it.' Northcote tells of him: 'I once went with him to the hustings, to vote for Home Tooke, and when they asked me what I was, I said, "A painter." At this Hoppner was very mad all the way home, and said I should have called myself "a portrait-painter." I replied that the world had no time to trouble their heads about such distinctions.'

Hoppner now produced but few pictures, and these met with small success. He looked thin and haggard, talked incoherently, gave way to bitter repinings and despondency. He resented and misinterpreted, as has been shown, Lawrence's inquiries as to his health. Certainly there is every appearance of feeling in Lawrence's letter, where he writes to a friend, 'You will be sorry to hear it. My most powerful competitor, he whom only to my friends I have acknowledged as my rival, is, I fear, sinking to the grave. I mean, of course, Hoppner. He was always afflicted with bilious and liver complaints (and to these must be greatly attributed the irritation of his mind), and now they have ended in a confirmed dropsy. But though I think he cannot recover, I do not wish that his last illness should be so reported by me. You will believe that I can sincerely feel the loss of a brother-artist from whose works I have often gained instruction, and who has gone by my side in the race these eighteen years.' Hoppner died on the 23d January 1810, in the fifty-first year of his age. To quote Lawrence's letters again: 'The death of Hoppner leaves me, it is true, without a rival, and this has been acknowledged to me by the ablest of my present competitors; but I already find one small misfortune attending it—namely, that I have no sharer in the watchful jealousy, I will not say hatred, that follows the situation.' A son of Hoppner's was consul at Venice, and a friend of Lord Byron's in 1819.

'Hoppner,' says Haydon, 'was a man of fine mind, great nobleness of heart, and an exquisite taste for music; but he had not strength for originality. He imitated Gainsborough for landscape, and Reynolds for portraits.' He held Northcote, Sir Joshua's pupil, however, in great aversion. 'I can fancy a man fond of his art who painted like Reynolds,' Hoppner would say; 'but how a man can be fond of art who paints like that fellow Northcote, Heaven only knows!' There was no love lost between them. 'As to that poor man-milliner of a painter Hoppner,' said Northcote, 'I hate him, sir, I ha-a-ate him!'

According to Haydon, he was bilious from hard work at portraits and the harass of fashionable life. And his post of portrait-painter to the Prince had its trials. The Carlton House porter had been ordered to get the railings fresh painted. In his ignorance the man went to Hoppner to request his attention to the matter. Wasn't he the Prince's painter? Hoppner was furious!

VI.

The factions of Reynolds and Romney lived again in the rivalry of Hoppner and Lawrence. The painters appeared to be well matched. Hoppner had the advantage of a start of ten years, though this was nearly balanced by the very early age at which Lawrence obtained many of his successes. Hoppner was also a handsome man, of refined address and polished manner; he, too, possessed great conversational powers, while in the matter of wit and humour he was probably in advance of his antagonist. He was well read—'one of the best-informed painters of his time,' Mr. Cunningham informs us—frank, out-spoken, open-hearted, gay, and whimsical. He had all the qualifications for a social success, and was not without some of those 'Corinthian' characteristics which were indispensable to a man of fashion, from the Prince of Wales's point of view. With Edrige, the associate miniature-painter, and two other artists, he was once at a fair in the country where strong ale was abounding, and much fun, and drollery, and din. Hoppner turned to his friends. 'You have always seen me,'he said, 'in good company, and playing the courtier, and taken me, I daresay, for a deuced well-bred fellow, and genteel withal. All a mistake. I love low company, and am a bit of a ready-made blackguard.' He pulls up his collar, twitches his neckcloth, sets his hat awry, and with a mad humorous look in his eyes, is soon in the thickest of the crowd of rustic revellers. He jests, gambols, dances, soon to quarrel and fight. He roughly handles a brawny waggoner, a practised boxer, in a regular scientific set-to; gives his defeated antagonist half a guinea, rearranges his toilet, and retires with his friends amidst the cheers of the crowd. It is quite a Tom-and-Jerry scene. Gentlemen delighted to fight coal-heavers in those days. Somehow we always hear of the gentlemen being victorious; perhaps if the coal-heavers could tell the story, it would sometimes have a different *dénouement*. Unfortunately for Hoppner, he had to use his fingers, not his fists, against Lawrence—to paint him down, not fight him.

He was a skilful artist, working with an eye to Sir Joshua's manner, and following him oftentimes into error, as well as into truth and beauty. Ridiculing the loose touches of Lawrence, he was frequently as faulty, without ever reaching the real fascination of his rival's style. He had not the Lawrence sense of expression and charm; he could not give to his heads the vivacity and flutter, the brilliance and witchery, of Sir Thomas's portraits. They both took up Reynolds's theory about it being 'a vulgar error to make things too like themselves,' as though it were a merit to paint untruthfully. And painting people of fashion, they had to paint—especially in their earlier days—strange fashions; and an extravagant, and fantastic, and meretricious air clings as a consequence to many of their pictures; for the Prince of Wales had then a grand head of hair (his own hair), which he delighted to pomatum, and powder, and frizzle; and, of course, the gentlemen of the day followed the mode; and then the folds and folds of white muslin that swathed the chins and necks of the sitters; and the coats, with fanciful collars and lapels; and the waistcoats, many-topped and many-hued, winding about in tortuous lines. It is not to be much marvelled at that such items of costume as 'Cumberland corsets,' 'Petersham trousers,' 'Brummel cravats,'

'Osbaldistone ties,' and 'Exquisite crops,' should be only sketchily rendered in paint. Of course, Mr. Opie, who affected thorough John Bullism in art, who laid on his pigments steadily with a trowel, and produced portraits of ladies like washerwomen, and gentlemen liking Wapping publicans—of course, unsentimental, unfashionable Mr. Opie denounced the degeneracy of his competitor's style. 'Lawrence makes coxcombs of his sitters, and they make a coxcomb of him.' Still 'the quality' flocked to the studios of Messrs. Hoppner and Lawrence, and the rival easels were long adorned with the most fashionable faces of the day.

VII.

For twenty years Lawrence reigned alone. After the final defeat of Napoleon, the artist was commissioned by the Regent to attend the congress of sovereigns at Aix-la-Chapelle, and produce portraits of the principal persons engaged in the great war. These European portraits—twenty-four in number—now decorate the Waterloo Hall at Windsor. In 1815 he was knighted by the Regent; in addition he was admitted to the Academy of St. Luke in Rome, and became in 1817 a member of the American Academy of the Fine Arts, an honour he repaid by painting and presenting to the Academy a portrait of their countryman Benjamin West. The Academies of Venice, Florence, Turin, and Vienna subsequently added his name to their roll of members, while, through the personal interposition of King Christian Frederick, he was presented with the diploma of the Academy of Denmark. He was nominated a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in France, George IV. giving him permission to wear the cross of the order. Charles X. further presented the painter with a grand French clock nearly two feet high, and a dessert service of Sèvres porcelain, which Sir Thomas bequeathed to the Royal Academy. From the Emperor of Russia he received a superb diamond ring of great value; from the King of Prussia a ring with his Majesty's initials, F.R., in diamonds. He also received splendid gifts from the foreign ministers assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle, and from the Archduchess Charles and Princess Metternich at Vienna; from the Pope a ring and a colosseum in mosaic with his Holiness's arms over the centre of the frame; from the Cardinal Gonsalvi, besides other presents, a gold watch, chain, and seals of intaglios, and many beautiful bon-bon boxes of valuable stones set in gold; gold snuff-boxes, etc.; a breakfast set of porcelain from the Dauphin in 1825, with magnificent casts and valuable engravings from Canova at Rome. Was ever painter so fêted and glorified! And then he had been, on the death of West, in 1820, elected to the presidentship of the Academy. 'Well, well,' said Fuseli, who growled at everything and everybody, but was yet a friend to Lawrence, 'since they *must* have a face-painter to reign over them, let them take Lawrence; he can at least paint eyes!' In 1829, he exhibited eight portraits; but his health was beginning to decline. He died on the 7th June 1830. He had been painting on the previous day another portrait of George IV. in his coronation-dress.

'Are you not tired of those eternal robes? asked some one.

'No,' answered the painter; 'I always find variety in them—the pictures are alike in outline, never in detail. You would find the last the best.'

In the night he was taken alarmingly ill. He was bled, and then seemed better; but the bandage slipped—he fell from his chair into the arms of his valet, Jean Duts, a Swiss.

'This is fainting,' said the valet, in alarm.

'No, Jean, my good fellow,' Sir Thomas Lawrence politely corrected him, 'it is dying.' And he breathed his last.

VIII.

The obsequies of the departed President were of an imposing kind. His remains were removed from his house in Russell Square to Somerset House. There the body was received by the Council and officers of the Academy, and deposited in the model-room, which was hung with black cloth and lighted with wax candles in silver sconces. At the head of the coffin was raised a large hatchment of the armorial bearings of the deceased; and the pall over the coffin bore escutcheons of his arms, wrought in silk. The members of the Council and the family having retired, the body lay in state—the old servant of the President watching through the night the remains of his master.

The body was interred in St. Paul's Cathedral, in the 'Painters' Corner' of the south crypt, near the coffins of the former Presidents, Reynolds and West. The Earl of Aberdeen, Earl Gower, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Dover, Sir George Murray, the Right Honourable J.W. Croker, Mr. Hart Davis, and Earl Clanwilliam were pall-bearers. Etty, who followed with the other academicians, writes: 'Since the days of Nelson there has not been so marked a funeral. The only fine day we have had for a long time was *that* day. When the melancholy pageant had entered the great western door, and was half way up the body of the church, the solemn sound of the organ and the anthem swelled on the ear, and vibrated to every heart. It was deeply touching.... The organ echoed through the aisles. The sinking sun shed his parting beams through the west window—and we left him alone. Hail, and farewell!'

The produce of the sale by auction of his collection of art works and treasures, etc., was between fifteen and sixteen thousand pounds. The estate of the dead man was only just equal to the demands upon it, however. His popularity ought to have brought him wealth, but, strange to say, he was always embarrassed. Yet he did not gamble, was never dissipated, never viciously

extravagant; but he kept no accounts, was prodigal in kindness to his brother-artists, and in responding to the many appeals to his charity. Perhaps, too, he rather affected an aristocratic indifference to money. He spent much time in gratuitous drawing and painting for presents to his friends. It is probable that his death was hastened by his incessant work, to meet the demands made upon him for money. Washington Irving saw him a few days before his death, and relates that 'he seemed uneasy and restless, his eyes were wandering, he was as pale as marble, the stamp of death seemed on him. He told me he felt ill, but he wished to bear himself up.' In one of his letters the painter wrote: 'I am chained to the oar, but painting was never less inviting to me —business never more oppressive to me than at this moment.' Still he could play his courtier part in society, and was always graceful and winning. Haydon, who never loved a portrait-painter much, yet says of Lawrence, that he was 'amiable, kind, generous, and forgiving.' Further on he adds: 'He had smiled so often and so long, that at last his smile had the appearance of being set in enamel.' But then, Mr. Haydon prided himself on his coarseness, defiance, and hatred of conventionality, deeming these fitting attributes of the high artist.

It is only as a portrait-painter that Sir Thomas can now be esteemed; and, as a portrait-painter, his reputation has much declined of late years. His drawing was often very incorrect, and his execution slovenly. His colour was hectic and gaudy; and in composition he possessed little skill. He was a master of expression, however. His heads are wonderfully animated, and he invested his sitters with an air of high life peculiar to himself. Conscious and a little affected they might be, but certainly, through his art, they proclaimed themselves people of quality and distinction. His attempts in another line of art were few and not successful. His 'Homer reciting his Poems' was chiefly remarkable for its resemblance to Mr. Westall's manner, and for containing a well-drawn figure of Jackson the pugilist. Of his 'Satan calling up the Legions,' Anthony Pasquin cruelly wrote, that 'it conveyed an idea of a mad German sugar-baker dancing naked in a conflagration of his own treacle.' Over an attempt at a Prospero and Miranda, he subsequently painted on the same canvas a portrait of Kemble as Rolla.

And was he a male coquette? 'No,' answers a lady —and it is a question that requires a lady's answer—'he had no plan of conquest.... But it cannot be too strongly stated that his manners were likely to mislead without his intending it. He could not write a common answer to a dinner invitation without its assuming the tone of a *billet-doux*. The very commonest conversation was held in that soft low whisper, and with that tone of deference and interest which are so unusual, and so calculated to please. I am myself persuaded that he never intentionally gave pain.'

Perhaps he was not capable of very deep feeling, and liked to test the effects of his fine eyes. He wooed the two daughters of Mrs. Siddons, never being quite clear in his own mind which he really loved. He tired of the one and was dismissed by the other, or so rumour told the story; however, his friendly relations with the family do not appear to have ceased. One of the sisters died. 'From the day of her death to that of his own,' writes a biographer, 'he wore mourning, and always used black sealing-wax. Uncontrollable fits of melancholy came over him, and he mentioned not her name but to his most confidential friend, and then always with tenderness and respect.' It would have been more desirable, perhaps, that he should have exhibited a little more feeling during the lifetime of the lady; but perhaps marriage was not in the programme of Hoppner's courtly rival, of the painter 'that began where Reynolds left off,' as the sinking Sir Joshua is reported to have declared of him, rather too flatteringly.

IX.

Haydon notes in his diary, under date 25th May 1832, 'I passed Lawrence's house (Russell Square). Nothing could be more melancholy or desolate. I knocked, and was shown in. The passages were dusty; the paper torn; the parlours dark; the painting-room, where so much beauty had once glittered, forlorn; and the whole appearance desolate and wretched—the very plate on the door green with mildew.

'I went into the parlour, which used to be instinct with life; "Poor Sir Thomas; always in trouble," said the woman who had the care of the house, "always something to worrit him." I saw his bed-room—small —only a little bed—the mark of it was against the wall. Close to his bed-room was an immense room (where was carried on his manufactory of draperies, etc.), divided, yet open over the partitions. It must have been five or six small rooms turned into one large workshop. Here his assistants worked. His painting-room was a large back drawing-room; his show-room a large front one. He occupied a parlour and a bed-room; all the rest of the house was turned to business. Any one would think that people of fashion would visit from remembrance the house where they had spent so many happy hours. Not they. They shun a disagreeable sensation. They have no feeling—no poetry. It is shocking. It is dirty!'

Bitter Mr. Haydon. Perhaps it was not that he loved Lawrence more, but that he loved his patrons less. For the people of fashion who were caring so little about the dead Lawrence, cared not at all for the living Haydon.

NOTES:

[19] A story to this effect has been generally credited; but in the *Life of Reynolds* by Messrs. Leslie and Taylor, 1865, a different version is given of the relations subsisting between Sir Joshua and his preceptor, and the notion of the one regarding the other with any sort of animosity is rejected, if not altogether disproved.

[20] The father of Mr. Bayle Bernard the dramatist.

[21] The diplomas of the Academicians constituted them ESQUIRES. In the last century this designation was conferred and employed by society with more scrupulousness than obtains at present.

[22] See *Life of Sir M.A. Shee*, vol. i. p. 441.

THE PUPIL OF SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

In St. James's Street, London, on the 10th June 1787, was born George Henry Harlow. His father, an East India merchant for a time Resident at Canton, had been dead about four months. The widowed mother, only twenty-seven, and of remarkable personal attractions, was fortunately left with an ample dower. Mourning her husband, she devoted herself to her children—five very young girls and the new-born son. Perhaps it was not unnatural that to the youngest child, born under such circumstances—the only boy—the largest share of her maternal affection and solicitude should be given.

He was first placed at the classical school of Dr. Barrow in Soho Square, then under the tuition of Dr. Roy in Burlington Street; for some time he was at Westminster. In after-life, in boastful moments, he was pleased to speak grandly of his classical attainments; of these, however, he could never adduce any notable evidence. It is probable that he was at no time a very eager student; he had tastes and ambitions not compatible with school-learning, and an over-indulgent mother was little likely to rebuke his want of application, or to desire that her darling's attention should be fixed upon his books in too earnest a manner. Certainly before he was sixteen he had left school, and even then he had devoted much of his time to other than scholastic pursuits.

He was a smart, clever boy, with a lively taste for art, a constant visitor at the picture-galleries, already able to ply his pencil to some purpose; yet bent, perhaps, upon acquiring the manner and the trick of others rather than of arriving at a method of his own by a hard study of nature. He almost preferred a painted to a real human being—a picture landscape to a view from a hill-top. He was satisfied that things should come to him filtered through the canvases of his predecessors—content to see with their eyes. He was apt to think painting was little higher than legerdemain, was a conjurer's feat to be detected by constantly watching the performer, was a secret that he might be told by others or might discover for himself by examining their works: not a science open under certain conditions to all who will take the trouble to learn. These were not very noble nor very healthy opinions to entertain upon the subject; but at least at the foundation of them was a certain fondness for art, and there was without doubt promise in the performances of the young man. Of this Mrs. Harlow was speedily satisfied, and the friends she consulted confirmed her opinion. It was determined that he should enter the studio of a painter. Not much care was exercised in the selection of a preceptor. A Dutch artist, named Henry De Cort, had settled in London; he produced landscapes of a formal, artificial pattern—compositions in which Italian palaces and waterfalls and ruins appeared prominently, formal in colour, neat in finish, the animals and figures being added to the pictures by other Dutchmen. There was rather a rage at one time for Italian landscape seen through a Dutch medium: a fashion in favour of which there is little to be said. It was not a very good school in which to place George Henry Harlow. De Cort was pretentious and conceited—worse, he was dull. The student loved art, but he could not fancy such a professor as De Cort. He began to feel that he could learn nothing from such a master—that he was, indeed, wasting his time. He quitted De Cort, and entered the studio of Mr. Drummond, A.R.A. He applied himself assiduously, 'with an ardour from which even amusements could not seduce him,' says a biographer. For, alas! young Mr. Harlow was becoming as noted for his love of pleasure as for his love of his profession. He remained a year with Mr. Drummond, and then commenced to sigh for a change.

There is a story that the beautiful Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire interested herself in the studies of the young man, and that owing to her influence and interposition he was admitted into

the studio of Sir Thomas Lawrence in Greek Street. Another account has it that Mr. Harlow and his mother visited the various painters with the view of selecting one with whom the student would be content to remain until his period of pupilage was at an end, and that he himself finally selected Sir Thomas Lawrence. A premium of one hundred guineas was paid. For this sum the student was to have free access to his master's house 'at nine o'clock in the morning, with leave to copy his pictures till four o'clock in the afternoon, but was to receive no instruction of any kind.' It was supposed, apparently, that the example of Sir Thomas was instruction enough. But it is possible that Lawrence, while, with his innumerable engagements, he was unable to bestow much time upon a pupil, was also, like Sir Joshua, unable to communicate art instruction. He knew very little of rules, he was little imbued with academic prescriptions, he painted rather from an instinctive love of beauty and from a purely natural quickness in observing expression. Harlow might have said of Lawrence as Northcote said of Reynolds: 'I learnt nothing from him while I was with him.' Though it seems hard to say that a student could be long in the studio of either master and benefit in no way.

The friends of the late Mr. Harlow were greatly distressed that his son should follow the unprofitable business of the Fine Arts. They hastened to rescue him from ruin, as they believed. They offered him a writership in India. He declined their assistance. 'I care not for riches,' he said; 'give me fame and glory!' They could not comprehend an ambition so absurd; they thought the young man out of his senses, and left him accordingly. They were even angry with their friend's son that he would not permit them to tear him from the profession of his choice.

Harlow was excitable, impulsive, enthusiastic. He was well acquainted with his own ability; indeed he was inclined to set almost too high a value upon it. He could bear no restraint. If Lawrence had attempted to impart instruction to him, he would probably have resisted it with all his might; he was ill at ease under even the semblance of pupilage; he declined to recognise his own inferiority; he was angry with the position he occupied in the studio of Sir Thomas. It would seem to have been difficult to quarrel with one who was always so courtier-like in manner, so gentle and *suave* and forbearing as was Lawrence. But it is possible these very characteristics were matters of offence to Harlow. He could not give credit for ability to a man who was so calm and elegant and placid amidst all the entrancements of his profession. He thought a great painter should gesticulate more, should sacrifice the gentlemanly to the eccentric as *he* did, should be feverish and frothy and unconventional and absurd as *he* was. And then he possessed a quick mimetic talent. He had soon acquired great part of Lawrence's manner. People are always prone to think themselves equal to those they can imitate, and he was far ahead of all the other young gentlemen who entered the studio; indeed it may be said that no one has ever approached more closely to the peculiar style and character of Lawrence's art than his pupil Harlow. The master admitted this himself—if not in words, at least in conduct. He employed Harlow upon his portraits, to paint replicas, and even to prepare in dead colours the originals. Of course the painting of backgrounds and accessories was the customary occupation of the pupils.

For eighteen months Harlow remained in the studio of Sir Thomas. A portrait had been painted of Mrs. Angerstein. In this Lawrence had introduced a Newfoundland dog, so skilfully represented as to excite the warmest admiration. Harlow, perhaps, had had a share in the painting of this dog, and he loudly claimed credit for it. He is said even to have intruded himself upon the Angerstein family, and to have represented to them how greatly the success of the picture was due to his exertions. Of course this conduct on the part of a pupil amounted to flat mutiny. Sir Thomas informed of it, sought out his pupil, and said to him: 'You must leave my house immediately. The animal you claim is among the best things *I* ever painted. Of course you have no need of further instruction from me.' Harlow withdrew abruptly. In a day or two afterwards he was heard of, living magnificently, at the Queen's Head, a small roadside inn on the left hand as you leave Epsom for Ashstead. When the host approached with the reckoning, it was found that the painter was without the means of liquidating it. It was agreed that the account should be paid by his executing a new sign-board. He painted both sides: on one a full-face view of Queen Charlotte, a dashing caricature of Sir Thomas's manner; on the other a back view of the Queen's head, as though she were looking into the sign-board, while underneath was inscribed 'T.L., Greek Street, Soho.' Sir Thomas, informed of this eccentric proceeding, said to Harlow:—

'I have seen your additional act of perfidy at Epsom, and if you were not a scoundrel I would kick you from one end of the street to the other.'

'There is some privilege in being a scoundrel, then,' answers the pupil, 'for the street is very long.'

So we read of the quarrel of Lawrence and Harlow, one of those stories so easy to relate and so difficult to disprove. But there are incoherencies about it. The portrait of Mrs. Angerstein was exhibited at the Royal Academy in the year 1800, some years before Harlow had become a pupil of Lawrence's. The speech about the kicking is a very unlikely one to have proceeded from Lawrence, while it is still more unlikely that Harlow would have received it so quietly. Had such language passed between them it is hardly possible they could have been on the footing of anything like friendship afterwards, yet we find Lawrence assisting Harlow in his picture of the Kemble family in quite an intimate way. Certainly there was a quarrel, and Harlow quitted Sir Thomas. A living writer says, in reference to the sign-board story:—

> 'I remember to have seen it as early as 1815. Some twenty years after, missing this peculiar sign from the suspensory iron (where a written board had been substituted), I made inquiry at the inn as to the fate of Harlow's Queen's Head, but

could not learn anything of its whereabouts.'

It is not probable that Lawrence was disposed to condemn this more severely, than as one of those artistic freaks which clever caricaturing students are every day indulging in.

Thenceforth Harlow determined to set up as a painter on his own account. He would be a student no longer. He refused to avail himself of the advantages offered by the Academy—he would not draw there—would not enrol himself as a student. He would toil no more in the studios of others—he was now a full-blown artist himself. So he argued. 'Naturally vain.' writes J.T. Smith, one of his biographers, 'he became ridiculously foppish, and by dressing to the extreme of fashion was often the laughing-stock of his brother artists, particularly when he wished to pass for a man of high rank, whose costume he mimicked; and that folly he would often venture upon without an income sufficient to pay one of his many tailors' bills.' He seemed bent upon exaggerating even the extravagances of fashion. There is a story of his having been seen with such enormously long spurs that he was obliged to walk down stairs backwards to save himself from falling headlong. He had a craving for notoriety. If the public would not notice his works, at least they should notice *him*. Somehow he would be singled out from the crowd. People should ask who he was, no matter whether censure or applause was to follow the inquiry. So he dressed with wild magnificence and swaggered along the streets and laughed loudly and talked with an audacious freedom that was often the cause of his expulsion from respectable company. A glass or two of wine seemed quite to turn his brain; he was alert then for any frivolity, and he was not always content with so restricted a libation, when the consequences were even more to be deplored.

He now offered himself as a candidate for Academic honours. He was not a likely man to succeed, yet he did all he could to conciliate the more influential Academicians, and certainly he had merits that entitled him fairly to look for the distinction. He painted a portrait of Northcote, said to be the best that had ever been taken of the veteran artist, and the number of portraits of him was very great. He also painted Stothard and Nollekens, and the well-known and admirable portrait of Fuseli. With this he took extraordinary pains, had numerous sittings, and was two whole days engaged upon the right hand only—a long time according to the art-opinion of his day, when it was the fashion to finish a portrait in a very dashing style of execution, after one sitting, and in a few hours' time. Mr. Leslie allowed Harlow's portrait of Fuseli to be the best. 'But,' he said, 'it would have required a Reynolds to do justice to the fine intelligence of his head. His keen eye of the most transparent blue I shall never forget.' But the Academy would not think favourably of Harlow. In later days Northcote sturdily declaimed: 'The Academy is not an institution for the suppression of Vice but for the encouragement of the Fine Arts. The dragging morality into everything in season and out of season, is only giving a handle to hypocrisy, and turning virtue into a byword for impertinence.' There was only one Academician who could be found to give a vote for Harlow. This was, of course, Fuseli. He was accused of it, and vindicated himself—'I voted for the talent, not for the man!' He was seeking to estimate the fitness of the claimant for art-honours, by means of perhaps the fairest criterion. The Academy tested on a different plan. It was hard to say that Harlow's moral character rendered him unfit to associate with the painters of his day; yet such was the effect of the decision of the Academy.

Of course he was cruelly mortified, deeply incensed; of course he swore in his wrath that he would wreak a terrible vengeance upon his enemies. But what could he do? He could privately abuse the academicians corporately and severally wherever he went; and publicly he would paint them down. He would demonstrate their imbecility and his own greatness by his works. He took to large historical paintings—'Bolingbroke's Entry into London' and 'The Quarrel between Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex.' Unfortunately the merits of these achievements were not sufficient to carry dismay into the hearts of his oppressors. And what was even worse, no purchaser came for these ambitious works. He was driven to portrait painting again. He was dexterous in delineating character, was rapid in execution, had a respectable appreciation of colour. His first exhibited portrait was one of his mother; she lived to see him, in a great measure, successful, and died when he was twenty-two years old. A deep affection seems to have subsisted between the mother and the son. He was greatly moved at her death, and always mentioned her name with tenderness. He had soon no lack of sitters. He was recognised as being, in a certain style of portraiture, second to Lawrence only. And he next achieved a considerable success in a higher order of art. His 'Arthur and Hubert' was highly applauded by the public. It was painted for Mr. Leader, at the price of one hundred guineas. The patron, however, was less pleased with the vigour and glow of colour of the work than were the critics, and was not sorry to exchange the picture for portraits of his children. This was sufficiently galling to the painter's pride, but he was not rich enough to resent such conduct. He could not afford to close all dealing with his patron, as he would greatly have preferred to do.

The next picture—and the one by which of all his works he is the most popularly known—was that combination of historical art and portraiture known as the 'Trial of Queen Katherine.' The work was commissioned by Mr. Welsh the professor of music. It was commenced during the progress of the artist's portrait of Fuseli, who, examining the first drawing of the picture, said:—'I do not disapprove of the general arrangement of your work, and I see you will give it a powerful effect of light and shade. But you have here a composition of more than twenty figures, or, I should rather say, parts of figures, because you have not shown one leg or foot, which makes it very defective. If you do not know how to draw feet and legs, I will show you.' And with a crayon he made drawings on the wainscot of the room.

However inclined Harlow may have been to neglect counsel, given in rather an imperious tone, he did not hesitate to profit by Fuseli's comments, and accordingly he re-arranged the grouping

in the foreground of his picture. On a subsequent visit Fuseli remarked the change: 'So far you have done well,' he said, 'but now you have not introduced a back-figure to throw the eye of the spectator into the picture.' And he then proceeded to point out by what means this might be managed. Accordingly, we learn, Harlow introduced the two boys who are taking up the cushion; the one with his back turned is altogether due to Fuseli, and is, no doubt, the best drawn figure in the whole picture.

Fuseli was afterwards desirous that the drawing of the arms of the principal object—Queen Katherine—should be amended, but this it seems was not accomplished. 'After having witnessed many ineffectual attempts of the painter to accomplish this, I remarked, "It is a pity that you never attended the antique academy."' It was only Fuseli who would have presumed to address such an observation to Harlow; while it was only from Fuseli that it would have been received with even the commonest patience.

The Kemble family are represented in this picture; and it is probable that the painter was more anxious for the correctness of their portraits, and an accurate representation of the scene, as it was enacted at Covent Garden Theatre, than for any of the higher characteristics of historical art. Mrs. Siddons is the *Katherine*; John Kemble is *Wolsey*; Charles Kemble, *Cromwell*; while Stephen Kemble, who was reputed to be fat enough to appear as *Falstaff*, 'without stuffing,' here represents the *King*. These are all admirable portraits of a strikingly handsome family, firmly and grandly painted, and full of expression. Perhaps the best of all is Mrs. Siddons', and the next Charles Kemble's. The whole picture is a highly commendable work of art, and enjoyed during many years an extraordinary popularity.

It was with John Kemble, however, that the artist had his greatest difficulty, and it was here that Sir Thomas Lawrence rendered assistance to Harlow. Kemble steadily refused to sit, and great was the distress of the painter. At last Sir Thomas advised his pupil to go to the front row of the pit of the theatre (there were no stalls in those days, it should be remembered), four or five times successively, and sketch the great actor's countenance, and thus make out such a likeness as he could introduce into the painting. This expedient was adopted, and not only was a very good likeness secured, but the artist was successful in obtaining the expression of the *Cardinal* at the exact point of his surprise and anger at the defiance of the *Queen*. Had Mr. Kemble sat for his portrait, Harlow would probably have experienced the difficulty Northcote complained of:—

'When Kemble sat to me for *Richard III.*, meeting the children, he lent me no assistance whatever in the expression I wished to give, but remained quite immoveable, as if he were sitting for an ordinary portrait. As Boaden said, this was his way. He never put himself to any exertion except in his professional character. If any one wanted to know his idea of a part, or of a particular passage, his reply always was, "You must come and see me do it."'

Harlow had much of that talent for painting eyes which was so lauded in the case of his master Lawrence. A critic has described the eyes in certain of Lawrence's portraits as 'starting from their spheres.' The opinion is rather more extravagant than complimentary, or true. There is a winning sparkle about them which may occasionally be carried to excess, but, as a rule, they are singularly life-like.

Sir Joshua had laid it down as a fixed principle that, to create the beautiful, the eyes ought always to be in mezzotint. To this rule Sir Thomas did not adhere very rigorously, and indeed, by a departure from it, frequently arrived at the effect he contemplated.

Ambitious at one time of exhibiting his learning, Harlow thought proper to express surprise at a scholar like Fuseli permitting the engravers to place translations under his classical subjects.

'Educated at Westminster school,' he said, rather affectedly, 'I should prefer to see the quotations given in the original language;' and he was rash enough to instance the print from the death of Œdipus, as a case in point. The unfortunate part of this was, that, on the plate in question, the passage was really engraved in Greek characters under the mezzotint. Fuseli heard of this criticism: 'I will soon bring his knowledge to the test,' he said.

On the next occasion of his sitting to Harlow he wrote with chalk in large letters, on the wainscot, a passage from Sophocles: 'Read that,' he said to Harlow. It soon became evident that Mr. Harlow was quite unable to do this. Fuseli thought the occasion a worthy one for administering a rebuke. 'That is the Greek quotation inscribed under the Œdipus, which you believed to be absent from the plate, and a word of which you are unable to read. You are a good portrait-painter; in some ways you stand unrivalled. Don't then pretend to be what you are not, and, probably, from your avocations, never can be,—a scholar.'

Mr. Fuseli was inclined to be censorious, but possibly his severity was, in a great measure, deserved in the case of poor, vain, pretentious Harlow.

In June 1818, in his thirty-first year, Harlow set out for Italy, bent on study and self-improvement. An interesting and characteristic account of his life in Rome is contained in his letter dated the 23d November, addressed to Mr. Tomkisson, the pianoforte-maker of Dean Street, Soho, who was in several ways connected with artists, and interested in art.

'The major part of my labours are now at an end, having since my arrival made an entire copy of the Transfiguration; the next was a composition of my own, of fifteen figures which created no small sensation here. Canova requested to have the picture at his house for a few days, which was accordingly sent, and, on the 10th November, upwards of five hundred persons saw it; it was

then removed to the academy of St. Luke's, and publicly exhibited. They unanimously elected me an Academician, and I have received the diploma. There are many things which have made this election very honourable to me, of which you shall hear in England. You must understand that there are two degrees in our academy—one of merit, the other of honour; mine is of merit, being one of the body of the academy. The same night of my election the King of Naples received his honorary degree (being then in Rome on a visit to the Pope) in common with all the other sovereigns of Europe, and I am happy to find the Duke of Wellington is one also. West, Fuseli, Lawrence, Flaxman, and myself, are the *only* British artists belonging to St. Luke's as academicians. This institution is upwards of three hundred years standing. Raffaelle, the Caracci, Poussin, Guido, Titian, and every great master that we esteem, were members. I had the high gratification to see my name enrolled in the list of these illustrious characters. Now, my dear friend, as this fortunate affair has taken place, I should wish it added to the print of Katherine's Trial: you will perhaps have the kindness to call on Mr. Cribb, the publisher, in Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, and have it worded thus: *Member of the Academy of St. Luke's at Rome*.' (This, of course, was by way of reproach to the Royal Academy of Great Britain.) 'I mention this as it is a grand plate, and indeed ought to be added. I expect to be in England by Christmas-Day or near it. I shall have an immensity to talk over. I was much pleased with Naples; stayed ten days; went over to Portici; Herculaneum and Pompeii, and ascended Mount Vesuvius: this was a spectacle—the most awful and grand that I had ever witnessed—the fire bursting every two minutes, and the noise with it like thunder: red-hot ashes came tumbling down continually where I stood sketching, many of which I brought away, and different pieces of the old lava which I hope to show you. The eruption took place a week or two after I left. But Pompeii exhibits now the most extraordinary remains of antiquity in the world; a whole city laid open to view; the habitations are unroofed, but, in other respects, are quite perfect. The house of Sallust, the Roman historian, was particularly gratifying to me, unaltered in every respect, except the furniture (which I believe is now in Portici), the same as it was eighteen hundred and fifty years ago when inhabited by him. There are many shops; in one the amphoræ which held the wine are curious, and marks of the cups they used upon the slabs are distinctly seen: a milkshop with the sign of a goat is perfectly preserved with the vessels, and also several other shops in the same perfect state. Rome has been a scene of the utmost gaiety lately, during the stay of the King of Naples. I was at three splendid balls given at the different palaces. We were obliged to appear in court-dresses, and the cardinals added very much to the richness and grandeur of the party. The ladies looked peculiarly striking, but they did not wear hoops as in the English court. We had French and English dances, etc., and the fireworks surpassed all my expectations. Upon the whole, the entertainments were very novel and very delightful. I am to be presented to the Pope either on the 2d or 3d of next month. Cardinal Gonsalvi will let me know when the day is fixed, and I leave Rome directly after; perhaps the next day—a day that I most sincerely dread—for I have become so attached to the place and the people that I expect a great struggle with myself. I should be the most ungrateful of human beings if I did not acknowledge the endless favours they have bestowed on me. It is the place of all others for an artist, as he is sure to be highly appreciated if he has any talent; and I shall speak of the country to the end of my days with the most fervent admiration. The Transfiguration, I think, will make a stare in England!'

It was of this same copy of the Transfiguration that Canova had spoken so applaudingly: 'This, sir, seems rather the work of eighteen weeks than of eighteen days.'

He gave a picture of 'The Presentation of the Cardinal's Hat to Wolsey in Westminster Abbey' to the Academy of St. Luke's at Rome, and his own portrait to the Academy of Florence, in acknowledgment of having been elected a member. He embarked for England in January 1819. Lord Burghersh, the English ambassador at Florence, had paid him marked attentions. Lord Liverpool gave instructions that the painter's packages should be passed at the Custom House. He established himself in a house, No. 83 Dean Street, Soho. Everything seemed to promise to him a happy and prosperous future, when suddenly he sickened with the disease, known popularly as the mumps. He died on the 4th February 1819, and was buried under the altar of St. James's Church, Piccadilly. In the churchyard had been buried, a year or two previously, an artist of less merit,—James Gillray, the caricaturist.

It is not possible to lay great stress upon the early failings of Harlow; errors, after all, rather of manners than of morals. Had he lived, it is likely that a successful career would have almost effaced the recollection of these, while it would certainly have contradicted them as evidences of character. As Lawrence said of his dead pupil, generously yet truthfully, 'he was the most promising of all our painters.' There was the material for a great artist in Harlow. He died too young for his fame, and for his art. A proof engraving of one of his best works (a portrait of Northcote) was brought to Lawrence to touch upon:—

'Harlow had faults,' he said, 'but we must not remember the faults of one who so greatly improved himself in his art. It shall never be said that the finest work from so great a man went into the world without such assistance as I can give.'

TURNER AND RUSKIN.

The difficulty the vulgar have experienced in comprehending that kings and queens, and generally persons high in authority, are simply men and women after all—their ordinary appearance, dress, manners, and habits not greatly different from those of the rest of mankind—has been a frequent subject of remark and ridicule. Years back, at the American theatres, spectators in the pit were often gravely asking each other, whether the sovereign of England was really accustomed to appear in the London streets, wearing a similar wonderful costume to that in which Mr. Lucius Junius Booth was then strutting and ranting as Richard the Third; the fact of the Drury Lane copies of the dresses worn at the coronation of George IV. having been taken to the other side of the Atlantic, and *The Coronation* performed at most of the chief cities, supplying, perhaps, an apology for the reasoning which prompted the inquiry. But the popular notion, that a monarch habitually walks about carrying on his head a jewelled crown of enormous value and weight, finds a reflection in higher stages of culture and intelligence. An analogous delusion is traceable amongst people occupying very reputable rounds upon the social ladder. A state of confusion between a man and his office, or his works, is by no means confined to those whom it is the fashion to designate as 'the masses.' Are we not continually meeting ladies and gentlemen, of otherwise commendable intellectual endowments, bent upon bewildering themselves with the notion, that the sentimental novelist is necessarily a creature of sentiment—that the comic actor, out of his part and off his stage, is still laughable and amusing—that the writer of poetry, as a consequence, lives poetry, and the career of the painter is inevitably picturesque?

How mistaken is this kind of opinion we have hardly need to point out. How prosaic may be a poet's life our readers will probably not care to question. And if any doubt haloed the artist with an unreal interest and charm, the biography of the late Mr. Turner[23] will pretty well disperse anything of the kind. A statement of the plain facts of the matter clears away all mirage of fancy and romance, and,—as in cruelly restored pictures, the beautiful glazing well scoured off,—we come then to the mere raw paint, and coarse canvas, unattractiveness, even ugliness.

In truth, the sunshine pictures of Turner were evolved from a life as dingy and uncomely as could well be. It is difficult to conceive any correspondence, any *rapport* between workmanship so exquisite, and a workman in every way so unattractive, so little estimable. But just as from the small dusky insect in the hedges at night proceeds a phosphorescent flame of great power and beauty—just as from a miserable-looking, coarse, common flint are emitted sparks of superb brilliance,—so from the hands of this strange, sordid, shambling man came art-achievements almost without precedent in the history of painting.

Joseph Mallord William Turner was born on the 23d April (St. George's day) 1775, in a house (recently pulled down and reconstructed) opposite what used to be called the Cider Cellars in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. Through a narrow arched passage, closed by an iron gate, was formerly obtained, by a narrow door on the left-hand side, access to the small but respectable shop of William Turner, barber, the father of the painter. The trade could hardly have been an unprosperous one in those days of perukes and powder and pomatumed edifices of hair, and when, moreover, 'the Garden' was a not unfashionable locality. The new-born was baptized on the 14th May following, in the parish church of St. Paul's, where also, it may be said, his father had been married (by license) to Mary Marshall, also of the same parish, on the 29th August 1773. The registers recording these important events are still extant.

The barber's position was plebeian, though there are no indications of its having been one of poverty. He came originally from Devonshire. Inquiry as to the descent of the artist's mother is balked by the widely differing stories that present themselves. From one account we learn that she was a native of Islington; from another that she came of a good Nottinghamshire family living at Shelford Manor-house, while yet we learn in another direction that her brother was a butcher at Brentford. We are involved in doubt at last as to whether, after all, her name was not *Mallord* rather than Marshall, and hence the second Christian name of her son, which else there seems no way of accounting for. All this is obscure enough. Certainly, in the latter part of her life, the poor woman was insane and in confinement. Turner was uncommunicative upon most subjects; but in regard to his mother and her family he preserved a reticence of unusual severity.

Mr. Ruskin has amused himself with a fanciful contrast between the boyhood of Giorgione at Venice, and of Turner in Covent Garden. There is no reason to believe that any disadvantage accrued to Turner from his somewhat uncheerful birthplace. It is hardly the Venetians who are the most alive to the beauties of Venice. But Mr. Ruskin is fond of mounting a richly-caparisoned

charger of the imagination, and caracoling round a crotchety circus; and his feats in this respect are so elegantly and admirably fantastic, that we almost forbear to smile, out of deference to so perfect a non-perception of humour, when we find him tracing the painter back to *Covent Garden Market* in all his paintings. Mr. Ruskin detects in the corners of Turner's foregrounds 'always a succulent cluster or two of green-grocery!' The artist's *Hesperides* gleam with Covent Garden oranges; in his *Shipwrecks* chests of them are flung upon the waters; and in his *St. Gothard* a litter of stones reflects Covent Garden wreck after the market! What wonder Mr. Turner was tempted to exclaim now and then about his arch-critic—'He knows a great deal more about my pictures than I do. He puts things into my head, and points out meanings in them that I never intended.'

A silver salver, engraved with heraldic devices, seen at the house of Mr. Tomkisson, the famous piano-forte-maker, is said to have first inspired the boy Turner with a love for art. He commenced to imitate the drawing of a certain rampant lion that especially took his fancy. Very soon after this the father announced that his son William was going to be a painter. The reader will note that the early ambitions of the boy were at once humoured. There would seem to have been no attempt usual with poor parents anxious for the commercial success of a child, to thrust the boy into a trade or employment which, though distasteful, would have been profitable to him. Old Mr. Turner probably knew little enough of art, and could have had but a poor opinion, in a pecuniary sense, of the profession to which his son was desirous of attaching himself. But no obstacles were thrown in his path; he was soon placed with Mr. Thomas Malton, a perspective draughtsman, who kept a school in Longacre, and was the son of the author of a practical book on *Geometry and Perspective*. Certainly his poverty and low birth in no way hindered the painter; had he been born to rank and wealth, he could only have had his will: and he had it without these.

The little education he ever received was obtained at a school at Brentford; but he could never write or spell correctly. It is probable that his passion for art absorbed his every thought. Not that he succeeded with his perspective studies, however, for Mr. Malton brought the boy back to his father as a pupil quite beyond all hope. Yet the real talent of the young painter was already developing itself. Some of his drawings exhibited in the Maiden Lane shop found purchasers among his father's customers. An engraver employed him to colour prints. Two or three architects engaged him to fill in skies and backgrounds to their plans. Soon he had entered the office of Mr. Hardwick, the architect, who regularly employed him.

It is curious to learn that, later in life, Turner, pointing admiringly to a green mezzotinto of a Vandevelde—a large vessel bearing up against the waves—would exclaim, '*That* made me a painter!' Yet he stood before the work of one of those 'Van-somethings and Back-somethings,' who, Mr. Ruskin tells us, have 'more especially and malignantly libelled the sea.' 'I feel utterly hopeless in addressing the admirers of these men, because I do not know what it is in their works which is supposed to be like nature.' It seems that Turner was more catholic in his tastes than his panegyrist.

In 1789, following the advice of Mr. Hardwick, Turner became a student of the Royal Academy. In the same year Reynolds ceased to paint, owing to the failure of his sight. That Turner, who had been admitted to the President's studio to copy portraits, was present when the great painter laid aside his brush with the solemn words, 'I know all things on earth must come to an end, and now I am come to mine,' is one of those suppositions in which biographers are prone to indulge, but which few readers will be found to credit. In these days Turner's drawing was in advance of his colour: an order of things which was afterwards reversed.

In 1790 he first exhibited at Somerset House: the picture being 'Lambeth Palace.' From that time, down to 1850 inclusive, hardly a season being missed, Turner's name appears in the catalogues of the Academy. In all, two hundred and fifty-seven pictures by Turner were hung on the walls of the Academy exhibitions, while nearly twenty more were to be seen at the British Institution. He relinquished all idea of becoming a portrait-painter about the time of the death of Reynolds. His own portrait in the National Gallery was painted when he was seventeen. It is executed with skill, although without any charm of colour. It represents a young man of large heavy features, but of a not unattractive appearance altogether.

Upon a story of a love affair in the painter's early life, we are inclined to lay no great stress. There is no evidence that it affected his after-life, or that any excuse can be found in it for the faults of his character. Speaking of his own love of money, he would sometimes say apologetically, 'Dad never praised me for anything but saving a halfpenny.' A disappointment in love is more likely to make a man a profligate than a miser; if it affects him at all seriously, it will more likely produce a reckless waste than a sordid passion for money-making. The painter was prospering. He taught in schools, first charging five shillings a lesson, then raising his terms to ten shillings, next charging a guinea. What system of painting did he teach, this suspicious jealous man, who always worked with locked doors—who would never permit another even to see him draw—who seemed to hold (but it was a then prevalent belief with his profession) that art was producible by some occult process—was a mystery and a secret, like a conjurer's trick? He founded his style very much on that of his friend and contemporary Girtin, the water-colour painter. Both delighted in a golden yellowness of tone which it is probable Girtin had originated. Turner's regard and reverence for him and his works seem to have been very great. He always spoke kindly of him as 'poor Tom!' Of one of his drawings in the British Museum, Turner said, 'I never in my whole life could make a drawing like that; I would at any time have given one of my little fingers to have made such a one.' At another time he said, 'If Tom Girtin had lived, I should have starved!' Girtin died in 1802; in the same year Turner was made a Royal Academician; he

had been two years before admitted to the honours of Associateship. The influence of Girtin upon English art has hardly been sufficiently recognised. Mr. Ruskin has had too little to say on behalf of one to whom it is evident that Turner owed very much.

Turner's rapid advance in his profession may be traced in his frequent change of residence. In 1796 he had quitted his father's house in Hand Court, to occupy rooms at No. 26 Maiden Lane. In 1800 he was at No. 64 Harley Street. The following year he had moved to No. 75 Norton Street. In 1804 he was back again in Harley Street. In 1808 he was Professor of Perspective, of Harley Street, and of West End, Upper Mall, Hammersmith. He moved to Queen Anne Street in 1812, and that continued to be his address in the Academy catalogues up to the time of his death. But from the year 1814 to 1826 he was also the tenant of a house at Twickenham, which he first called 'Solus,' and afterwards 'Sandycombe' Lodge. He died in December 1851, at a small house near Cremorne Gardens, Chelsea. This he first tenanted probably about the year 1845.

A few continental visits, and tours in England, Scotland, and Wales, all undertaken apparently with professional objects,—incessant squabblings with his engravers, the most wearisome haggling with picture-dealers, genuine hard work, and the production of very perfect specimens of landscape art, and the outlines of Turner's life seem to be fairly sketched. His passion for his profession was intense, yet with it was the keenest love of its emoluments. His industry was beyond all praise, his energy indefatigable; he seemed to live perpetually before his easel, or with his sketch-book in his hands, and yet he had a broker's view as to the worth of everything he did; he appraised his every pencil-stroke, with the full determination of having his price for it. There is hardly a story of his ever giving away a drawing. A lady, in whose house he was residing, playfully asked him to make a sketch of her favourite spaniel. 'My dear madam,' said the painter, astounded and indignant, 'you don't know what you ask!' He once gave three sketches to aid an amateur artist, and most intimate friend and patron, who had brought his painting into an embarrassed condition; the sketches showed him the way out of his difficulty. Undoubtedly this action was very kind; but in the end the miser prevailed over the gentleman. Turner growlingly asked for his sketches back again!

The details of his life are not agreeable, and not of much more interest than the outlines. Mr. Ruskin fixes the following as the main characteristics of Turner—*uprightness, generosity, tenderness of heart* (extreme), *sensuality, obstinacy* (extreme), *irritability, infidelity*.' By the light of all these 'Seven Lamps,' few people will have seen Turner besides Mr. Ruskin. Of the last four characteristics the painter will be generally found guilty; the first three remain as yet, at best, not proven. We are not tempted, just now, to account highly the uprightness of a man who could, and did, defraud the public by the sale of 'sham proofs' of the engravings of his pictures—of the generosity which made provision for his own memorial in stone in St. Paul's, yet left without bread his surviving 'housekeepers' and natural children—of the tenderness of heart which permitted that his father, moved from the shop, should play a servant's part in the gallery in Queen Anne Street, straining canvases, varnishing pictures, and showing in visitors, with a suspicion that he cooked the dinner even if he did not take the shillings at the door. 'Look'ee here,' said the poor old man, who, it is right to state, saw no humiliation in acting lackey to his prosperous son, 'I have found out a way at last of coming up cheap from Twickenham, to open my son's gallery. I found out the inn where the market-gardeners baited their horses; I made friends with one on 'em, and now, for a glass of gin a day, he brings me up in his cart on the top of the vegetables!' As a set-off to all this, we have now and then a spasmodic act of kindness: he rebukes Wilkie for talking about the fine effect of the snow falling while poor Lawrence's coffin was being lowered into the grave in the crypt of St. Paul's: he drives away the boys who injure his blackbirds: he sometimes gives half-a-crown when others would only offer a penny: and there is a story (very vague indeed) of his once lending £20,000 without security. But these are but the halfpennyworth of bread compared to the vast quantity of sack. The matter seems fairly summed up in the story of the man who said, 'Turner is not ungenerous; *he once paid the toll over Waterloo Bridge for me*!'

Mr. Ruskin charges Turner's faults upon his contemporaries and the public who failed to appreciate his genius. But is this for a moment sustainable? *Was* he unappreciated? His rise could hardly have been more rapid. He was a Royal Academician when he was twenty-seven. His merits were recognised almost immediately upon his becoming an exhibitor. Anthony Pasquin (Williams), who did not speak well of every one, loudly commends Turner's genius, and judgment, and originality, in 1797.[24] He was quite early a favourite with the public and the critics. His prices were always high. Mr. Ruskin has declared in his *Economy of Art*, that more than one hundred pounds should never be given for a water-colour drawing, nor more than five hundred for an oil-painting. But the sums Turner received were greatly in excess of these limits. For the 'Rise and Fall of Carthage' he was offered £5000. There is no evidence of his complaining of want of recognition by the public. He was dissatisfied, it is true, at the time of Shee's death, that he had not been made President; but this, as he well knew, was a matter that rested entirely with the Academy. 'What has the Academy done for me?' he would ask petulantly; 'they knighted Calcott, why don't they knight me?' This involved no charge against his critics. He was passed over for the same reason that Paley was neglected; because, as the courtly phrase went, he was not a 'producible man.' In fine, though he began with nothing, a barber's son in Hand Court, Maiden Lane, he died worth £140,000, and was buried in St. Paul's! This hardly looks like want of appreciation.

It has been the fashion to talk as though Mr. Ruskin had *discovered* Turner. Nothing can be further from the fact. Turner had been an exhibitor for more than fifty years when Mr. Ruskin

commenced to write about his pictures. He had reached the *Rock Limpet* stage of his career. He could then produce little beyond frantic whirls of colour, and there was a not unnatural tendency to smile at these achievements in the galleries, and the Hanging Committee were often puzzled to know whether they had or not hung the pictures upside down. All that Mr. Ruskin could do, and he did it superbly, was to bring people to think less of what Turner then was, and more of what he had been. It is all very well to denounce severely those who smiled at, or the critics who said they could not comprehend, the later Turners. It is presumable that pictures are sent to exhibitions to be applauded or condemned, as the world may judge. Mr. Thackeray may be rated for his confession, in a magazine article of the day, that he did not understand the *Rock Limpet*, though he added a kindly longing 'for the old day, before Mr. Turner had lighted on the "Fallacies," and could see like other people.'[25] But was Mr. Ruskin in any better plight? Was *he* any nearer the painter's meaning? Hear his own story:—

'He (Turner) tried hard one day, for a quarter of an hour, to make me guess what he was doing in the picture of "Napoleon" before it had been exhibited, giving me hint after hint in a rough way. But I could not guess, and he wouldn't tell me!' It is hard after this to censure so amiable a jester as the late Mr. a'Beckett, for burlesquing the strange picture called 'Hurrah for the whaler *Erebus*—another fish!' in the words proposed to be substituted—'Hallo, there—the oil and vinegar —another lobster salad!'[26]

'Cut off in great part,' says Mr. Ruskin, 'from all society, first by labour and last by sickness, hunted to his grave by the malignities of small critics and the jealousies of hopeless rivalry, he died in the house of a stranger.' As Mr. Leslie, his fellow-academician, remarks upon this passage truly enough, 'This was Turner's own fault. No death-bed could be more surrounded by attentive friends than his might have been, had he chosen to let his friends know where he lived.' But he seldom answered letters; his place of residence was a profound mystery to all; and he was living under an assumed name. To the Chelsea street-boys he was known as 'Puggy Booth,' and by his neighbours he was deemed to be an old admiral in reduced circumstances. His house in Queen Anne Street was closed, terribly out of repair—black with dirt. After much knocking at the door it was opened, if at all, by an old woman, her face half-concealed, owing to some cancerous disfigurement; she had kept the visitor waiting while she assumed a large apron—hung always behind the door on a peg, handy for the purpose,—which hid the grimy and tattered state of her dress. The drawing-room was tenanted by half-a-dozen Manx cats. In the other rooms, rats and mice made havoc with hoarded drawings and engravings. Many of the pictures in the gallery were warped and cracked, and mildewed by neglect and damp. At Sandycombe Lodge, a few of the academicians, including Mr. Mulready, had once been regaled with tea; and Mr. Pye, the engraver, had been treated to cheese and porter; but of the hospitalities of Queen Anne Street there are no records. Rogers, poet and satirist, expressed his wonder at a beautiful table adorning the painter's parlour. 'But how much more wonderful it would be,' he went on, 'to see any of his friends sitting round it!' And there is the story of the visitor who praised the wine of which he had had two glasses, a year intervening between them. 'It ought to be good,' said Turner; 'it's the *same bottle* you tasted before!' True or false, and their accuracy has been much questioned, that such stories could be repeated at all, says quite enough for the kind of life led by the painter at his gallery. And what claims upon society had the man who chose to conduct himself towards it after this manner?

Yet it is curious to note that Turner was in many ways fitted to be socially successful. He had very considerable humour, and highly appreciated the jests of others, even when they were directed against himself. He sat for a long time shaking with laughter, on a high seat at the Academy, one varnishing day, when Mulready had said 'that his cows were like the dough pigs, with currant eyes, in the bakers' shops.' He was gay and playful at times, and shone in careless conversation. Personally he was not less liked than as a painter he was respected by his fellow-academicians; and yet, from some mental warp, he closed his doors against the world, shunned his friends, preferred to live miserably and obscurely, hoarding his money, and treasuring his works. It is difficult to believe that he was not afflicted, late in life, with some morbid affection of mind that amounted almost to insanity, not alleviated by a manner of life that was far from regular, and habits that were anything but temperate. The more he avoided refined society, the more he found pleasure in dissipation of the lowest kind. 'Melancholy' Burton derived relief and amusement listening to the ribaldry of the bargemen. Turner found these and other solaces, it would seem, in his occasional mysterious absences from home, and indecorous sojournings at Wapping and elsewhere.

It is with a sense of relief we turn from the contemplation of the imperfect man to consider the nearly perfect artist. The meanness, the squalor, the degradation of his *morale* and life are not discernible in his works. The affluence of beauty of some of these is indeed marvellous. But this fallen man had extraordinary gifts as a painter, and these he heightened and intensified by labour and industry the most ceaseless. It would be difficult to conceive any one endowed with a keener sensibility to colour, or with a more devotional love for its glories; it would be equally hard to estimate the enhancement of the worth of English art effected by the colour of Turner. It should be remembered that he appeared at a time when coldness of tone was almost a fashion in painting. The chilliness of the shadows of Lawrence and his followers was remarkable. Turner raised the chord of colour a whole octave, if it is permissible to say so, illustrating one art by the terms of another. Mr. Ruskin ascribes to him the discovery of the *scarlet shadow*. It was in truth less a new discovery than the re-awakening of an old one. The early masters were well aware of the value of warmth in this respect. Wilkie comments in his journal on the great picture of Correggio: 'And here I observe *hot shadows* prevail, *not cold*, as some of us would have it. This he

has to a fault, making parts of his figures look like red chalk drawings, but the sunny and dazzling effect of the whole may be attributed to this artifice.'[27] If we look for a prevalent tone in Turner's pictures—though a prevalent tone is always a vice in a painter, nature being without bias in the question of hue—we shall find it to be *yellow*, which he himself declared to be his favourite colour, and which occasioned those jokes about the 'mustard-pot' as a source of inspiration, to which art-students were at one time addicted. But, indeed, Turner's sense of all colour was very limitless. A Mrs. Austin once said to him, 'I find, Mr. Turner, that, in copying one of your works, touches of blue, red, and yellow appear all through the work.' He answered: 'Well, don't you see that yourself in nature, because, if you don't, Heaven help you!' Mr. Ruskin writes: 'Other painters had rendered the golden tones and blue tones of the sky; Titian especially the latter in perfection. But none had dared to paint—none seem to have seen—the scarlet and purple.' In representing the glare of sunlight, Turner surpassed even Claude. Cuyp hardly attempted this feat, his suns generally gleaming through a mist; though Turner standing before a splendid example of Cuyp, exclaimed: 'I would give a thousand pounds to have painted that' In atmospheric perspective he was perfect; but in linear faulty and ill grounded, although he had held the appointment of Professor of Perspective at the Academy for some years. The drawbacks to his pictures consist in their frequent sacrifice of truth to effect. From this cause he constantly failed to satisfy critics who were well acquainted with the scenes and subjects he attempted to represent. A tar said of his *Battle of Trafalgar* at Greenwich: 'What a Trafalgar! it's a d——d deal more like a brick-field!' while Sir Thomas Hardy used to call it a 'street scene,' as the ships had more the effect of houses than men-of-war. Of the wreck of the *Minotaur*, Admiral Bowles complained 'that no ship or boat could live in such a sea.'

To Turner's credit must be placed many acts of consideration for, and kindness towards, his brother artists. He has been known to displace one of his own pictures to make room for the work of a promising beginner. His love for art is the real redeeming point in his history. He was devoted to the Academy, which had recognised his genius at an early date, and was wholly conservative in his opinion upon all academic questions. Yet his zeal did not blind him. Haydon, whose life had been a gallant though almost fruitless struggle against the despotic exclusiveness of the Academy, drew back, we are told, in the midst of his exultation at a brief victory gained over his opponents, and said calmly: 'But Turner behaved well, and did me justice.'

Turner's biographer, with a scrupulousness that looks a little like timidity, has abstained steadily from all demur to the *dicta* of Mr. Ruskin. Mr. Thornbury's volumes represent rather elaborations than contradictions of the Ruskin opinions, just as what are known as 'variations' in music are rather amplifications of, than departures from, the original theme. But we are by no means sure that Mr. Thornbury has strengthened the case in the painter's favour. We believe that, at the bar, the junior counsel has been sometimes found to injure the effect of his chief's advocacy, by entering into and disclosing matters of detail which had been purposely left untouched by him. Something of the same sort has happened in the present instance. Mr. Ruskin bade us worship his hero, classically screened in a cloud. Mr. Thornbury unveils the idol, and the too apparent deformity disclosed renders adoration no longer possible. Mr. Ruskin's five volumes of *Modern Painters* will therefore probably still be considered to comprise the true 'Turneriad.' A more imposing monument to Turner's memory than is afforded by this book, with all its defects, can hardly be. For something like a quarter of a century Mr. Ruskin employed himself in examining and lauding the achievements of Turner. He did not complete his self-imposed task until the great painter had been dead some ten years.

It is really curious to go back to the beginning of this remarkable work.

In 1843 appeared the first volume of '*Modern Painters: their Superiority in the Art of Landscape Painting to all the Ancient Masters*. By a Graduate of Oxford.' A further volume was issued three years afterwards, to accompany an extended and amended edition of the first. A ten years' pause, and third and fourth portions were given to the world. Then came 1860, and the final volume. Not, as the author avowed, that his subject was concluded, for 'he had been led by it into fields of infinite inquiry, where it was only possible to break off with such imperfect results as may at any given moment have been attained.' He stopped because he must stop at some time or other. The future art-writings of Mr. Ruskin will no longer bear the collective title of *Modern Painters*. Perhaps that is all that the 'finis' at the end of the fifth volume really amounts to.

In his fifth volume, Mr. Ruskin has narrated the history of the birth and growth of his book. He has ascribed to himself from his earliest years, 'the gift of taking pleasure in landscape.' This, he says, 'I assuredly possess in a greater degree than most men, it having been the ruling passion of my life, and the reason for the choice of its field of labour.' Certain articles in a review condemnatory of the pictures of Turner offended keenly so ardent an admirer of the king of landscape painters. Mr. Ruskin addressed a letter to the editor of the review, 'reprobating the matter and style of those critiques, and pointing out their dangerous tendency;' for 'he knew it to be demonstrable that Turner was right and true, and that his critics were wrong, false, and base.' The letter grew to be a book; the defence expanded into an attack. What began as a few comments upon a particular branch of painting ended in being the most elaborate English dissertation upon art, in its widest and weightiest significance. The title originally selected for the book was *Turner and the Ancients*; and it was not then proposed to refer in it to any other modern painter than Turner. But the design enlarged,—'The title was changed, and notes on other living painters inserted in the first volume, in deference to the advice of friends; probably wise, for unless the change had been made, the book might never have been read at all.' So writes the author in his last pages; and returning to his first love, it is hard to say whether from

fickleness or from constancy he adds, 'So far as I am concerned, I regretted the change then, and regret it still.'

To this book, then, commenced almost without a plan, time subsequently gave form and pattern. At a certain period of his labour Mr. Ruskin paused to map out the future of his work, to define the limits of his undertaking. But in examining the concluding volume it will be seen that the waywardness of the beginning characterizes also the end. Time has taken away its gift; the scheme has fallen through; the book ends; but the design it had gathered to itself as it advanced, which had budded out from it unexpectedly as it were, remains in a large measure uncompleted. Over the boundaries he had himself imposed, his eloquent diffuseness long since surged: the book doubled its promised length; and now the author stays his hand, turns from his toil, and leaves unfinished and shapeless the long-expected 'section on the sea,' holding out but vague promise of his ever being able to accomplish, even in a separate work, his intentions in regard to that portion of his project.

It is almost of necessity that there should be deviation from the original planned economy of a work occupying more than a score of years; but Mr. Ruskin is more than ordinarily susceptible to vicissitude. It is part of his idiosyncrasy to start impulsively with an ill-digested project, and to run off the lines of his argument upon the slightest provocation and at the earliest opportunity. So that in his case time and his own temper have combined to exaggerate the vibration of his book. His manner of progression is very much what Mr. Assheton Smith's huntsman used to denominate 'zedding.' He cannot proceed straightforwardly. He must wander from the direct track; as a consequence, he is betrayed into all sorts of *culs de sac*, wrong turnings, and roundabout roads; and in the end, although much ground is gone over, very little advance is made. He is as the bee which does not make its final burglarious headlong plunge into the calyx until after a protracted course of circuitous buzzing and much prefatory waste of time: and this with all the insect's credit for industry. So over-perverse a traveller, so ultra-dilatory a bee as the author of *Modern Painters, must* shorten his journey, *must* leave much honey unfilched. He is as the army which commences in orderly retreat and ends in rabble-like riot and demoralization, gaining a place of safety at last, with the sacrifice of much baggage and treasure. So, as has been said, Mr. Ruskin flings away altogether a large division of his idea. In one place he writes,—

'I find it convenient in this volume, and I wish I had thought of the expedient before, whenever I get into a difficulty to leave the reader to work it out;' and in another we are stopped by such a half-indolent half-arrogant, 'No Thoroughfare' as this. He has been discoursing on the leaf,—then follows an inquiry into the conditions of the stem. Then he tells us:—

'I intended to have given a figure to show the results of the pressure of the weight of all the leafage on a great lateral bough in modifying its curves, the strength of timber being greatest where the leverage of the mass tells most. *But I find nobody ever reads things which it takes any trouble to understand, so that it is no use to write them.*'

In a higher tone he had once announced the aim and principle of his book, claiming for it a difference from most books, and 'a chance of being in some respects better for the difference, in that it had not been written either for fame, or for money, or for conscience' sake, but of necessity.' 'I saw an injustice done and tried to remedy it. I heard a falsehood taught and was compelled to deny it. Nothing else was possible to me.' In that good time there was no question as to whether people would or would not take the trouble to understand. They were taught what the teacher deemed to be true, and the risk was on their own heads if they neglected the teaching. It was of use to write then, intelligibly or unintelligibly, truly and wholly; but this was before Mr. Ruskin had strayed very much from his road, or broken off, breathless and worn out, from a journey, doubled by aberrations, rendered wearisome by the most wilful wandering, and stopped at last,—not perfected.

In extenuation of the delay in the completion of the work, the author pleads his many employments during five years:—his book on the *Elements of Drawing*; his addresses at Manchester, and his examination, 'with more attention than they deserved,' of some of the theories of political economy referred to in those addresses; the Manchester Exhibition, 'chiefly in its magnificent Reynolds' constellation;' a visit to Scotland, to look at Dunblane and Jedburgh, and other favourite sites of Turner's; and the arrangement of the Turner drawings, the property of the nation, for the trustees of the National Gallery. To this last task Mr. Ruskin set himself with characteristic enthusiasm. In the lower room of the National Gallery, when he began his work, there were 'upwards of nineteen thousand pieces of paper drawn upon by Turner in one way or other,'—many on both sides, some with four, five, or six subjects on each side,—'some in chalk, which the touch of the finger would sweep away, others in ink rotted into holes, others eaten away by damp and mildew, and falling into dust at the edges, in cases and bags of fragile decay, others worm-eaten, some mouse-eaten, many torn halfway through, numbers doubled (quadrupled I should say) into four, being Turner's favourite mode of packing for travelling; nearly all rudely flattened out from the bundles in which Turner had finally rolled them up and squeezed them into his drawers in Queen Anne Street' In the edges of these flattened bundles lay the 'dust of thirty years' accumulation, black, dense, and sooty.' With two assistants, Mr. Ruskin was at work, all the autumn and winter of 1857, 'every day all day long, and often far into the night.' Then, by way of resting himself, Mr. Ruskin proceeded to hunt down Turner subjects along the course of the Rhine on the north of Switzerland. He crossed Lombardy afterwards, and found, unexpectedly, some good Paul Veroneses at Turin. He had been troubled by many questions respecting the 'real motives of Venetian work,' which he had planned to work out in the Louvre; but 'seeing that Turin was a good place wherein to keep out of people's way,' he settled there

instead. 'With much consternation, but more delight,' he discovered that he 'had never got to the roots of the moral power of the Venetians;' that for this a stern course of study was required of him. The book was given up for the year.

'The winter was spent mainly in trying to get at the mind of Titian.' The issue necessitated his going in the spring to Berlin, 'to see,' as he tells us, 'Titian's portrait of Lavinia there, and to Dresden to see the Tribute Money, the elder Lavinia, and girl in white with the flag-fan. Another portrait at Dresden, of a lady in a dress of rose and gold, by me unheard of before, and one of an admiral at Munich, had like to have kept me in Germany all the summer.' How expositive is all this of the unstable fashion of Mr. Ruskin's temper and writings!

It is not to be marvelled at that the term 'Ruskinism' should be evolved from a system of opinions so impassioned and earnest, so thorough and deep-rooted, and, at the time at which they were first broached, so singular and courageous, as those of the author of *Modern Painters*. When Mr. Ruskin took up his pen, the 'old masters' were the religion, and the creed, and the idols, of the connoisseurs. It was of landscape he was particularly writing, but his fiery condemnation in one sentence of such names as 'Claude, Gaspar Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Cuyp, Berghem, Both, Ruysdael, Hobbima, Teniers (in his landscapes), Paul Potter, Canaletti, and the various Van-Somethings and Back-Somethings, more especially and malignantly those who had libelled the sea,' carried dismay into the hearts of collectors, and he was denounced as guilty of an art sacrilege scarcely more marvellous for its impiety than its daring. His opinions, however, have passed through a burning fiery furnace of criticism, and have survived the ordeal. Earnestness is half success; and the truth that was the substratum of that earnestness has accomplished the rest. 'Ruskinism,' in its least invective and censorious form, has a host of followers and disciples. Take as its text the noble view of it contained in the following words descriptive of the book:—'It declares the perfectness and eternal beauty of the works of God, and tests all works of man by concurrence with or subjection to that.'

Time, that has given and changed the plan, has also been at work with certain of the judgments of the book. (It is with the fifth volume we are especially dealing,—for this may fairly be regarded as the 'summing up' of the divers opinions scattered through the earlier portions of the work.) The author of a book long in hand becomes himself the president of a court of appeal, in which his own earlier sentences are to be reversed or confirmed. It is one of the results of the heat and passion of first opinions that they seem to be harshly and cruelly framed when the time comes to tone down and qualify them; and the question arises, was it indispensable to be so savage,—was it absolutely necessary that what seemed to be the sword of justice should be wielded so angrily and without the slightest tempering of mercy? Still is there worth in the author's apology, 'that the oscillations of temper and progressions of discovery ought not to diminish the reader's confidence in the book;' 'that unless important changes are occurring in his opinions continually all his life long, not one of those opinions can be on any questionable subject true; all true opinions are living, and show their life by being capable of nourishment, therefore of change. But their change is that of a tree, not of a cloud.'

So, then, come repentance and recantation. Mr. Ruskin's 'boy veneration for Rubens's physical art power,' and the 'strong expression of admiration for him, which to his great regret occur in the first volume,' are now solemnly withdrawn. Rubens is now only a 'healthy, worthy, kind-hearted, courtly-phrased animal.' But the fault lies as much at the door of the time, as at that of the man. The Reformation had come and gone. The reformers had cast out the errors, and rent in twain the fallacies of the Roman Catholic Church. Then came a standing still; a paralysis of religion. The Evangelicals despised the arts; effete and insincere Roman Catholicism had lost its hold on men. The painters sunk into rationalism; they became men of the world, 'with no belief in spiritual existence, no interests or affections beyond the grave.' They painted religious subjects, of course; these were duly supplied as per order, especially martyrdom; they liked the vigorous cruelty of them, and painted atrocities with gusto, deeming they were illustrating religion; and they painted 'virgins in blue,' and 'St. Johns in red,' as many as were wanted,—but all utterly cold, and soul-less, and irreverential. 'Happily,' remarks Mr. Ruskin, 'there is just this difference between the men of this modern period and the Florentines or Venetians, that whereas the latter never exert themselves fully except on a sacred subject, the Flemish and Dutch masters are always languid unless they are profane. Leonardo is only to be seen in the 'Cena'; Titian only in the 'Assumption'; but Rubens only in the 'Battle of the Amazons'; and Vandyck only at court; and he adds, his indignation mounting as he proceeds, 'absolutely now at last we find ourselves without sight of God in all the world!'

In another place Mr. Ruskin's old enemy, Salvator, receives more lenient treatment than of yore. True, he still regards him as a lost spirit, rendering Michelet's, 'Ce damné Salvator' tenderly as 'that condemned Salvator.' But Mr. Ruskin now perceives in him the 'last traces of spiritual life in the art of Europe, the last man to whom the thought of a spiritual existence presented itself as a conceivable reality. All succeeding men, however powerful,—Rembrandt, Rubens, Vandyck, Reynolds,—would have mocked at the idea of a spirit. They were men of the world, they are never in earnest, and they are never appalled. But Salvator was capable of pensiveness, of faith, and of fear.' 'He would have acknowledged religion had he seen any that was true, anything rather than that baseness which he did see.' 'If there is no other religion than this of popes and cardinals, let us to the robber's ambush and the dragon's den.' 'A little early sympathy, a word of true guidance, perhaps had saved him. What says he of himself? "Despiser of wealth and of death." Two grand scorns; but, oh! condemned Salvator, the question is not for man what he can scorn, but what he can love!' Again further on,—'In Salvator you have an awakened conscience and

some spiritual power contending with evil, but conquered by it and brought into captivity to it.' Generally there is in this last volume a disposition to judge of the painter's art merits, especially in relation to his faculty of imitation, with more kindness and respect than in the earlier volumes.

This tendency to greater calmness and generosity of view in the case of Salvator (not to recite evidences of similar nature in other cases) is a sign of healthful mental progression. Opinions taken up in the first instance, possibly as much from impulse as conviction, grown from floating speculations into recognised realities, require to be defended less strenuously than in the early doubtful phase of their being, and still less need for their support virulent onslaughts upon antagonistic views. It is no longer necessary to degrade *some* painters utterly for the proper exaltation of some *others*; or it may be better to say, to deify *one* by the damnification of the whole balance of the fraternity. There have been victims enough on the shrine of Turner, and his manes are now appeased and his wrongs avenged. What need of further holocausts? So Mr. Ruskin loosens his grip and half sheaths his knife, and becomes more merciful and pitiful, though yet unable to do full justice to those who oppose him: for it is one of his marked peculiarities that he is unable to shift his point of view. He judges always by his own modern *ex post facto* standard; he cannot see with Salvator's eyes, or with the eyes of his contemporaries, and determine how fully he met the requirements of his age and time, how honestly he won the applause of the men about him. Mr. Ruskin asks two questions only—'Are these works accurate renderings of nature, as I by education and study now know nature to be?' and next, 'Are these high art in its purest, and most ideal, and most godly form?' By such Procrustean measurements he adjusts his decisions, and so misses the swarthy romance, the dramatic coarse fire of Salvator, and fails to appreciate the vigorous, affluent, gorgeous majesty of Rubens, before whose luxurious pageant canvas it always seems that, of right, pompous coronation music should be played, and multitudes huzza and banners wave. Perhaps some such feelings as these Mr. Ruskin himself at one time experienced, until, shocked by what he deemed the excessive mundaneness, the intense unspirituality of the great Fleming,—he revolted to the thoughtful, attenuated poetry of Angelico and the early Italian painters, to be in time again driven by the too intense asceticism and archaic debility of this school, to the robust excellence and the more real and material, though pure and refined, beauty of the Venetians. With them he has now found his golden mean.

To turn more particularly to the contents of Mr. Ruskin's concluding volume, and their invariable bearing upon Turner.

The first half is divided into considerations of 'Leaf' and 'Cloud Beauty,' respectively: 'The leaf between earth and man, as the cloud is between man and heaven.' Many fanciful headings are given to the chapters on these subjects. In the 'Earth Veil' Mr. Ruskin discourses in very delicate poetry, of trees and flowers, which form on the surface of the earth a veil of vegetation; 'of strange intermediate being; which breathes, but has no voice; moves, but cannot leave its appointed place; passes through life without consciousness; to death without bitterness; wears the beauty of youth without its passion, and declines to the weakness of age without its regret' Passing on, then, to the 'orders of the leaf,' he arranges plants in two classes,—the TENTED PLANTS, which live on the ground, as lilies, or crawl on the rocks, as lichen and mosses, leading ever an arab life, and so passing away and perishing; and the BUILDING PLANTS, which soar above the earth in the 'architectural edifices we call trees.' And the builders are again curiously subdivided. There are the 'builders with the shield,' with their leaves, shield-shaped, raised above, and sheltering their buds as they rise. Gentle, and pleasant, and conciliatory builders are these, living in pleasant places, and providing food and shelter for man. And there are also the 'builders with the sword,' with sharp-pointed leaves stuck fearlessly out sword fashion, the bud growing amid the points, dwelling in savage places, and of little aid to man, none in the way of food. (They are called 'pines,' we may explain, vernacularly.) Mr. Ruskin then goes on to the 'Bud,' and is at some pains to explain its gradual development and the scheme of its growth. 'Leaves' he explains to be 'broadly divisible into mainsails and studding-sails.' Many diagrams are given explanatory of the leaf system, its form and manner and charm, and the 'laws of deflection, of succession, of resilience,' all fanciful theories arising from the subject, are in turn laid down. In our progress to 'tree-structure,' we come to 'leaf aspects.' Then perhaps the object of this elaborate teaching transpires, and Mr. Ruskin speaks of the 'Pre-Raphaelites who, some years back, began to lead our wondering artists back into the eternal paths of all great art, and showed that whatever men drew at all ought to be drawn accurately and knowingly, not blunderingly nor by guess (leaves of trees among other things),' proceeding to the following curious dictum,—'If you can paint one leaf you can paint the world.' The Pre-Raphaelite laws 'lay stern on the strength of Apelles and Zeuxis, put Titian to thoughtful trouble, are unrelaxed yet, and unrelaxable for ever. Paint a leaf indeed!—the above-named Titian has done it. Corregio, moreover, and Giorgione and Leonardo, very nearly, trying hard. Holbein three or four times, in precious pieces, highest wrought. Raphael, it may be, in one or two crowns of Muse or Sibyl. If any one else in later times, we have to consider.' There is no endeavour to show how or why accurate drawing of the leaf leads to general accuracy in drawing; no analogy is attempted, for instance, between the human and vegetable anatomies. Perhaps this is as well; only it will strike even the most casual and unprofessional reader that a student may be able by practice to become a very apt draughtsman of the leaf skeleton, and yet be a feeble renderer of the human. Mr. Ruskin argues, unsoundly enough, from effects; the great Italian designers of the figure all drew leaves thoroughly well. Among the Dutch painters the leaf painting degenerates in proportion to the diminishing power in the figure; therefore, who can draw the leaf can draw the figure. Next comes sharp criticism of the Dutch leaf-treatment generally, and elaborate demonstration, by the aid of many plates, of the infinite superiority of Turner, closing with what sounds a strange admission after such teachings and such arguments:—'Remember always that Turner's greatness

and rightness in all these points successively depend on no scientific knowledge. *He was entirely ignorant of all the laws we have been developing.* He had merely accustomed himself to see impartially, intensely, and fearlessly.'

The fact is that Mr. Ruskin is disposed to lay far too heavy a stress on the mere mechanical accuracy of the draughtsman, to think too much of his hand, too little of his head. He has been surrounded by a number of supple admirers and unquestioning students, who, placing their whole time and labour at his disposal, have rather pampered, by such ultra-allegiance, his inclination to be dogmatic on these points. 'Study this for half an hour,' he says of one illustration; 'Look here for a good five minutes,' of another; 'or, better still, get pen and paper and draw it yourself: take care you make it as nearly as you can quite right,' and so on. There is something almost ludicrous, only Mr. Ruskin has little perception of the humorous, about the strained care, the exaggeration of painstakings, bestowed on some of the drawings. Instance plate 58, drawn by one of his pupils at the Working Man's College (a joiner by trade), 'an unprejudiced person,' states Mr. Ruskin, always *posing* himself as addressing a suspicious and jealous audience, who would rise against him and turn him off the judgment seat, by fair means or foul, if they dared, or could. The student was set to work in the spring, the subject being a lilac branch of its real size as it grew, *before it budded*. It will tell how long this rather simple lesson occupied the student, that 'before he could get it quite right, *the buds came out and interrupted him*.' Yet Mr. Ruskin makes strong objection to the word 'niggling.' 'I should be glad if it were entirely banished from service and record. The only essential question about drawing is whether it be right or wrong; that it be small or large, swift or slow, is a matter of convenience only.' He reserves to himself, however, the right to apply the 'ugly word' to Hobbima. 'A single dusty roll of Turner's brush is more truly expressive of the infinitude of foliage than the *niggling* of Hobbima could have rendered his canvas if he had worked on it till doomsday.' 'No man before (Turner) painted a distant tree rightly, or a full-leaved branch rightly.'

Chapters on the 'branch,' the 'stem,' the 'leaf monuments,' the 'leaf shadows,' and 'leaves motionless,' conclude the first division of the book. They are all in elaboration of his 'leaf-beauty' theory, and are rich in exquisite fancy and admirable writing, but it cannot be that they should be detailed or examined here. As a specimen of feeling and poetry, here are a few lines from many on the lichen:—'As in one sense the humblest, in another they are the most honoured, of the earth's children: unfading as motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is intrusted the weaving of the dark eternal tapestries of the hills; to them slow, iris-eyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the winds of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip gold, far above among the mountains, the silver lichen-spots rest star-like on the stone, and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years.'

In treating of the second portion of the first half of the book, 'Cloud Beauty,' briefness is now indispensable. And first of 'Cloud Balancings.'

Why is the soft, level, floating, white mist so heavy? Why so light 'the colossal pyramids, huge and grim, with outlines as of rocks, and strength to bear the beating of the high sun full on their fiery flanks?' What are clouds? Water in some fine form or other. But water is heavier than air,—cannot float on it. May, then, clouds be formed of minute hollow globules of water swimming in the air, balloon-like? These and a hundred other questions; and what is the use of asking them? 'I enjoy them,' says our author; 'perhaps the reader may—I think he ought, and not love less the clouds of morning or the summer rain because they come to him with hard questions, with only a syllable or two of answer illuminated here and there on the heavenly scroll.' And Mr. Ruskin takes credit to himself for not being 'dogmatic' on the subject of clouds.

Then of 'Cloud Flocks,'—upper clouds, detached, bird-like, with flame-like curves, tender, various, pointing, inquiring. And why do they assume these forms? Not driven by eddies of wind, they move along, unhurried, compressed in a phalanx, fifty thousand separate groups in half of a morning sky, all obedient to one rule of harmonious progress. And so of 'Cloud Perspective,' cleverly set forth and illustrated, but appealing perhaps too exclusively to the art-student for transfer here, and of 'Cloud Colours.' Is it well to watch them like Turner? or to neglect them with Claude, Salvator, Ruysdael, Wouvermans, never to look nor portray? Then of the 'Cloud Chariot,' or cumulus,—not to be drawn, not to be explained; even Turner attempted not that. Mountain-like, electric, brilliant beyond power of colour, endless in variety of form, transitory as a dream; and estimates of weight and movement, and of a chariot cloud which soared 20,000 feet from behind Berne Cathedral! Next of the 'Angel of the Sea,' the author's epithet for rain. 'Is English wet weather one of the things which we would desire to see art give perpetuity to?' Assuredly, answers Mr. Ruskin; and under five heads he ranges the climates into which the globe is divided with respect to their fitness for art. See the result:—

Wood lands	Shrewd intellect	No art.
Sand lands	High intellect	Religious art.
Vine lands	Highest intellect	Perfect art.
Field lands	High intellect	Material art.
Moss lands	Shrewd intellect	No art.

The table is worthy of study.

The second half of the volume treats of 'Ideas of Relation.' It deals with Art in its relation to God and man, and with its work in the help of human beings and the service of their Creator, and inquires into 'the various powers, conditions, and aims of mind involved in the conception or creation of pictures, in the choice of subject, and the mode and order of its history; the choice of forms, and the modes of their arrangement.' Very forcible and significant are the reflections upon invention, the 'greatest and rarest of all the qualities of art;' and on 'Composition.' If one part be taken away, all the rest are helpless and valueless; yet true composition is inexplicable—to be felt, not reasoned upon. 'A poet or creator is, therefore, a person who puts things together; not as a watchmaker, steel; or a shoemaker, leather: but who puts life into them.'

In the chapter entitled the 'Task of the Least,' the author argues, adroitly enough, 'that the *minutest* portion of a great composition is helpful to the whole,' and examples from Turner's compositions furnish good evidence in this respect. Under the titles of the 'Lance of Pallas,' and the 'Wings of the Lion,' the Greek and Venetian art inspirations are descanted upon. These are chapters of great interest to the student. Mr. Ruskin finds the Venetian mind perfect in its belief, its width, and its judgment. Yet it passed away. Not desiring the religion, but the delight only of its art, in proportion to the greatness of the power of the Venetians was the shame of their fall. Chapters follow on representative painters—Durer and Salvator, Claude and Poussin, with comments on the 'faithless' and 'degraded' system of classical landscape—Rubens and Cuyp. The next discourse is on 'Vulgarity.' A striking exemplification of it Mr. Ruskin finds in the expression of the butcher's dog in Landseer's 'Low Life,' and Cruikshank's Noah Claypole in the plates to *Oliver Twist*. He counts 'among the reckless losses of the right service of intellectual power with which the century must be charged, the employing to no higher purpose than the illustration of *Jack Sheppard* and the "Irish Rebellion," the great, grave (using the words deliberately and with large meaning), and singular genius of Cruikshank,' though the works selected are hardly fair specimens of the artist's general illustrative labours, and the 'Irish Rebellion' is surely worthy of art record and rendering. The most fatal form of vulgarity is described as dulness of heart and dulness of bodily sense, general stupidity being its material manifestation. 'One of the forms of death,' suggests Mr. Ruskin's 'keen-minded friend,' Mr. Brett, the painter—a vague enough definition—but it pleases Mr. Ruskin, though he amends it, and settles at last on the term 'earthful selfishness,' as embracing all the most fatal and essential forms of mental vulgarity. Hastening to an end, it can only now be simply stated that chapters on Wouvermans and Angelico succeed. Then the 'two boyhoods,' an interesting and highly-wrought comparison of the early lives of Turner and Giorgione, and of the different circumstances under which their art-minds severally dawned and developed. The remainder of the book is almost wholly devoted in glowing strains, like the pompous glory of the crowning movement of a Beethoven symphony, to loving yet deferential homage to Turner. His works and life are traced out and lingered over, not with biographical exactness, but with some effort to make them explicable of the character of the great painter. 'Much of his mind and heart I do not know—perhaps never shall know; but this much I do, and if there is anything in the previous course of this work to warrant trust in me of any kind, let me be trusted when I tell you that Turner had a heart as intensely kind and as nobly true as ever God gave to one of his creatures.' And in a tone replete with the most solemn and impassioned poetry and feeling, the author brings his great work to an end. Emphatically a great work—a noble jewel in the crown of art literature, resplendent enough to have its flaws dwelt upon and some imperfections and shortcoming in its setting pointed out, and yet to lose little in estimation after the utmost has been said and done in these respects.

NOTES:

[23] In 1861 was published *The Life of J.M.W. Turner, R.A.*, founded on letters and papers furnished by his friends and Fellow Academicians; by Walter Thornbury. In a more recent work, *Haunted London* (1865), Mr. Thornbury has himself passed judgment upon his *Life of Turner*, pronouncing it to be 'a careless book, but still containing much curious, authentic, and original anecdote.'

[24] It may be noted, however, that in 'The Georgian Era' (1834) occurs the following passage:—'Some have gone the length of saying that in marine views Turner has wrested the palm from all competitors; but with this, few, surely, will agree who have seen the sea pieces of Powell, an artist who, though but recently deceased, has had no biographer to commemorate his poverty or his genius.' The works of Powell, however admirable, are not likely now to be preferred to Turner's. 'The Georgian Era' is not a work of much repute.

[25] 'What can I say of the Napoleon of Mr. Turner? called (with frightful satire) "The Exile and the *Rock Limpet*." He stands in the midst of a scarlet tornado looking at least forty feet high. "Ah!" says the mysterious poet from whom Mr. Turner loves to quote—

> "Ah! thy tent-formed shell is like
> The soldier's nightly bivouac, alone
> Amidst a sea of blood.....
> .....*but you can join your comrades!*"

'These remarkable lines entirely explain the meaning of the picture; another piece is described by lines from the same poem, in a metre more regular—

> "The midnight torch gleamed o'er the steamer's side,

And *merit's corse* was yielded to the tide."

(This was the burial of Wilkie at sea: now in the National Gallery.)

'When the pictures are re-hung, as sometimes I believe is the case, it might, perhaps, be as well to turn these upside down and see how they would look *then*. The Campo Santo of Venice, when examined closely, is scarcely less mysterious; at a little distance, however, it is a most brilliant, airy, and beautiful picture. O for the old days before Mr. Turner had lighted on "The Fallacies" and could see like other people!'—*An Exhibition Gossip*, by Michael Angelo Titmarsh, *Ainsworth's Magazine*,1843.

[26] *The Almanack of the Month*, 1846—in which see also a comical drawing, by Mr. Richard Doyle, of 'Turner painting one of his pictures,' and the accompanying letterpress:—'Considerable discussion has arisen as to the mode in which Turner goes to work to paint his pictures. Some think he mixes a few colours on his canvas instead of on his palette, and sends the result to be exhibited. Another ingenious theory is that he puts a canvas in a sort of pillory, and pelts it with eggs and other missiles, when appending to the mess some outrageous title, he has it hung in a good position at the Academy. Our own idea is, that he chooses four or five good places in which he hangs up some regularly framed squares of blank canvas; a day or so before the opening of the Exhibition, we believe he goes down to the Academy with a quantity of colours and a nine pound brush, with which he dabs away for a few minutes, and his work is finished,' etc. etc.

[27] In a letter to Phillips he adds, 'No one knew the value of this treatment better than Turner.'

EDINBURGH: T. CONSTABLE, PRINTER TO THE QUEEN, AND TO THE UNIVERSITY.

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