

## CHAPTER IX

1862-1864

Who was this master good  
Of whom I make these rhymes ?  
His name is Jacob Homnium Esquire,  
And if I'd committed crimes,  
Good Lord ! I wouldn't 'ave that man  
Attack me in the *Times* !

THACKERAY'S *Miscellanies*.

But I have praised you when you have well deserved ten times as much as I have said you did.—*Antony and Cleopatra*.

ON the 15th May appeared this communication in *The Times*, from the redoubtable writer, Jacob Omnium :—

May 15th, 1862.

### THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

To the Editor of *The Times*.

SIR—I desire to call the attention of the Commissioners of the International Exhibition to an indecent and discourteous act which is being perpetrated within the walls of the Exhibition with their avowed sanction and, I am assured, to their profit.

A critic named Francis Turner Palgrave, who describes himself as a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and who clearly believes himself to be well fitted for the task he has undertaken, has been employed by the Commissioners to write for the use of the public *A Handbook to the Art Collections in the International Gallery*. Mr. Palgrave is evidently, in his own opinion, a thorough master of arts ; he writes as positively and dogmatically on oil-

painting and water-colour as he does on sculpture, architecture, and engraving. On all these topics he is "cock-sure." There is a novelty and vigour in the slang of art criticism in which he indulges which is very remarkable; he does nothing by halves; those whom he praises—and he praises some very obscure people—he praises to the skies; those whom he condemns—and he condemns a large number of very distinguished men—he damns beyond the possibility of any future redemption. I will give a few short specimens of his style.

The Commissioners of the Exhibition have obtained from Sir Edwin Landseer such of his works as they thought would do most credit to their gallery—the choice was theirs, not his; and thus does the critic hired by them to guide the ignorant public, illustrate their taste and discretion.

"In 'Bolton Abbey,' Landseer has wasted his great powers on the idle profusion of lifeless game and indolent sensuality. Nature is apt to revenge herself on the true man if he is unfaithful for a moment; Landseer is generally cold in colour, but in this picture the charming picturesque touch, which half redeems that deficiency, has also failed him."

It is, however, in dealing with Baron Marochetti, that Mr. Palgrave's good taste and courteous tones are most advantageously exhibited; of the Baron, who has, at considerable cost and trouble to himself, done his best to meet the wishes of the Commissioners, their "own critic" writes as follows:—

"It was the writer's first intention when he learnt that the model of the 'Twin Group' was to be exhibited in the Gardens, to have given to it that serious criticism which so imposing a mass seems to demand. Careful examination of much else by the same hand for many years could not indeed lead him to anticipate sterling merit here, for the study which began with a belief in the excellence of Marochetti's work has led gradually and surely to a conviction of its baseness."

This is pretty strong, but it is nothing to what follows. The Commissioner's "own critic" warms to his task as he proceeds. He inveighs against the "colossal clumsiness" of the sculptor's work, he points out his "ineffable scorn of ignorance of the rules of art"; he condemns the Turin monument as fit only to be classed with "the centre-pieces of a confectioner." He denounces the courteous and accomplished gentleman who made it as a mere "mountebank." It would be unfair to both operator and patient to attempt to condense what follows:—

"Addison somewhere justly praises the impregnability of nonsense. 'Nonsense,' he says, 'stands upon its own basis,

like a rock of adamant secured by its natural situation against all conquests and attacks. If it affirms anything you cannot get hold of it; or if it denies, you cannot confute it. In a word, there are greater depths and obscurities in an elaborate and well written piece of nonsense than in the most abstruse and profound tract of school divinity.' Thus it is with the 'Carlo Alberto.' Those who cannot at once see through the effect and specious audacity, and discover that there is nothing but an amateur's worthless sketch magnified into Memnonian proportions, will not be convinced even by a right arm which goes straight out from the trunk without a crease in the dress or a trace of muscular motion, swaying its ignorant arms like a branch in the wind, and with the left (which in its turn hangs at the shoulder like a dislocated doll's) covered with furrows, intended possibly for a coarse model of stratification; by a face constructed out of a lump of chin and a dab of moustache, by the padded shape which far more resembles a round of brawn with three cord marks round the middle of it, than the human body; by legs (please inspect the left) as round and rigid as water-pipes; and all this and much more of the same quality set bold upright like a child's toy rider astride on that too celebrated animal with the forequarters of one charger and the rear parts of another, which does duty already in Westminster, then descend (it is hardly the right word) to the remaining work, take the bas-reliefs crowded by figures drawn with all the accuracy and finish of the prints in the *Penny Novelist*—admire the grace of the Zouave on the North-West, the well known Sydenham Pantaloon on the diagonal corner, the modelling in the lower parts of his neighbour, where, so far from the least suggestion that they cover human limbs, the breeches are the very image of those which Jack hangs out upon the forecastle when he has washed and starched them in the Atlantic."

Such is the style, Sir, in which this Mr. Palgrave summarily disposes of Landseer, Marochetti, and many other artists who have not the good fortune to please him. On modern sculpture he is especially hard. He says that—"The very best modern antique bears its sentence in the simple fact that it is modern antique. The art which neither springs from real belief nor appeals to real belief—it matters little whose work it be—must be a learned mockery; I do not see how the word can be avoided—a nonsense sculpture. Or, look at it in another way. Can we imagine Phidias carving the gods of Egypt or Syria? Should Shakespeare have written 'Hamlet' in Latin?<sup>1</sup> Serious as the subject claims

<sup>1</sup> Ought he to have written it in Danish?

to be I confess it is very difficult to think of Nolleken's 'Venus,' Canova's 'Venus,' Gibson's 'Venus,' everybody's 'Venus' with due decorum. One fancies one healthy modern laugh would clear the air of these idle images; one agrees with the honest old woman in the play, who preferred a roast duck to all the birds of the heathen mythology."

We are then warned against Brodie's, Durham's, Gibson's and Lawler's emptiness, against Thrupp's "toppling and proportionless Hamadryads"; while Munro, Bell, and Theed are pronounced to be so nearly beneath even Mr. Palgrave's criticism as to "be only exempted from silence by their positive and prominent failure." Against Munro Mr. Palgrave appears to entertain a special *guignon*; in alluding to that artist's "Auld Play" and his "Sound of the Shell" he says that:—

"Such vague writhing forms have not even a good doll's likeness to human children; they are rather mollusca than vertebrata, gaps, scratches, lumps, and swellings stand here, alas, for the masterpieces of Nature's modelling. The eyes are squinting cauters, the toes inarticulate knobs, while the very dresses of the poor children in reality so full of charm and prettiness, become clinging cerements of no nameable texture and thrown into no possible folds. We (the Commissioners?) should not have thought it worth while to scrutinise work of an ignoramus so grotesque and babyish as all we have seen by Munro with any detail, if it did not appeal in subject to popular interests, and if we had not some faint hope that arduous as are the steps from 'Child's Play' to marble in art, the author of these works may retrieve himself by recommencing his art before it is too late."

Pleasant for Mr. Munro is it not? How truly grateful he must feel to the Commissioners for having first borrowed his statues to adorn their Exhibition, and for having then considerably discovered in Mr. Palgrave a critic competent to appreciate them, and bestow on the sculptor such kind and practical advice!

If in selecting works of art for exhibition the Commissioners have made a bad choice, on them let the blame fall; it was in their power, nay, it was their duty, to exclude any works deserving the opprobrious terms which Mr. Palgrave so lavishly and indiscriminately scatters. But it appears to me to be intolerable that the very gentlemen, who have earnestly solicited these artists to exhibit their work in the International Exhibition, should permit such ignorant and brutal abuse to be written and published under their sanction, and to be sold under their name within their walls. Indeed I can only explain their conduct by the supposition that they have never read what their critic has written. I have

only to add that Mr. Palgrave's praise seems to me far less tolerable than his censure. He bestows it very lavishly on a certain gentleman named Arthur Hughes, of whom I blush to say I have never before heard, but who, in his opinion, is the first of our living painters, and thus does he bespatter Holman Hunt:—

"Hunt's pictures burn with a kind of inner fire which extinguishes almost all other men's work; the sun's heat seems within the 'Cairo'; the pure crystal day itself in the scene from Shakespeare; the hazy celestial silver of the moon mixed with the stealthy influences of starlight and dawning, and subtle flashings from gem and dewdrop have been harmonised in the 'Light of the World' by we know not what mysterious magic," and so on *ad nauseam*.

I feel certain that as soon as the attention of the Commissioners has been called to Mr. Palgrave's bumptious and shallow attempt to bully and mislead the taste of the public under the shelter of their wings, the sale of his precious "Handbook" will be prohibited within the Exhibition, and that that accomplished writer will be necessitated to take his chance of circulation *extra cathedra* with more courteous and competent critics, in which case I venture to prophesy that his chance will be a very bad one.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. O.

May 15th, 1862.

On the next day the following letter appeared in *The Times*:—

16th May 1862.

SIR—Mr. Francis Turner Palgrave, who tells us in the preface of his *Handbook to the Fine Art Collections of the International Exhibition*, that in abusing in such unmeasured terms some of the best artists in this country he is reluctantly fulfilling a grave judicial function entrusted to him by the Royal Commissioners, does not tell us who he is, or what claims he has to represent himself as the redeemer and regenerator of English art. I believe I am now in a position to throw a good deal of light on the subject.

Mr. Palgrave is a clerk in the Privy Council Office, and one of the Government Examiners connected with the Educational Department. He has tried his hand at novel writing and as a poet with moderate success; he now comes forward as an art critic whose dicta are to be accepted as final, supported as they are by the patronage of the Royal Commissioners, for no dog of that herd may bark within the Exhibition but Mr. Palgrave. He claims in his Preface a special aptitude for sculpture, an art to which he has given many years' close attention.

Now it must be observed that in his Handbook, although he uses the harshest and most insolent language to nearly all the best sculptors of the day, there is one on whom he lavishes pages of high-flown praise which would have made a Phidias blush; that sculptor is Mr. Woolner.

The object of this is evidently to fill Mr. Woolner's pockets at the expense of his fellow-labourers. If, as Mr. Palgrave points out (p. 105), Adams' "Wellington" and Burdett Noble's "Barrow" and "Lyons," Munro's "Armstrong," Theed's "Adam" and "Lawrence," are a disgrace to English art now, and an outrage on remote generations, there is a chance that people desirous of ordering busts may rush to Mr. Woolner if they have any faith in the judgment and integrity of Mr. Palgrave and of the Royal Commissioners, and that not only Mr. Palgrave, but also Mr. Woolner, may make a good thing out of the Exhibition.

Under these circumstances, it is a matter of interest to know where Mr. Woolner resides. *The Royal Blue Book* affords that information. I find that it is at 29 Welbeck Street that the British Phidias is to be found, and I grieve to add that Mr. Palgrave, the regenerator of British art—the man with a mission, who believes in Woolner, and in Woolner alone, and who orders us all to do the same—actually keeps house with the said Woolner. So says the *Blue Book*.

Surely this is suspicious. Is it not just possible that the close attention which Mr. Palgrave professes to have given sculpture may merely mean that the Critic and Phidias have talked over the competitors of the latter a great deal at breakfast time, and that the glowing periods in which the Critic praises Phidias and abuses everybody else may merely represent the latter's high opinion of himself and contempt for everybody else?

Why do they (the Commissioners) keep a critic at all? What title has Mr. Palgrave to use the language he has "under their sanction" to much abler and better men than himself? And above all, why are we to have Mr. Woolner forcibly thrust down our throats because he and Mr. Palgrave find it convenient to lodge together in Marylebone?—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

J. O.

Then followed a letter signed by Calder Marshall, R.A., W. F. Woodington, and Edward Stephens, explaining efforts made by them to get the Handbook suppressed, and afterwards another from G. D. Leslie, protesting

against the unjust detraction of his father's claims as a painter, the remarks on which were directed at the character of his colour, which indeed, though very restrained, was ever fresh, sound, and daylighty. On the 17th appeared a letter from F. T. Palgrave, in which he proved that the extracts from his Catalogue given by J. O. were so selected that an undue idea was conveyed of their injustice to the painters and sculptors he blamed, and Woolner wrote to deny that he had in the slightest degree influenced Palgrave's opinions.

On Monday, the 19th, appeared a further letter from Palgrave, enclosing a correspondence between the Commissioners and himself, which terminated in the withdrawal of the *Fine Art Handbook* as an official publication. A later column also gave a further letter from "J. O.," headed "Damon and Pythias," in which he quoted long passages from the Catalogue to justify his charge of unjust laudation of Woolner, and his assumption that the latter had inspired Palgrave with his own prejudices on sculpture. What well illustrates the impression these letters made is the following humorous verse which appeared in public from the pen of a man of note :—

Confound his impudence ! I cannot say  
How little I've enjoyed myself to-day.  
I positively shudder when I look  
Within the pages of this crimson book,  
For all that once seemed lovely, graceful, chaste,  
Is shown to be in execrable taste.  
I once thought Gibson charming, and, indeed,  
Admired the "cold vacuity" of Theed !  
But one, I find, is lifeless, tame, and vile,  
The other in the "dull spasmodic" style.  
On reading further on, I learn with pain  
That Baron Marochetti tries in vain,  
"Like other men of similar pretensions,  
To puff and blow himself to Bull dimensions."  
I'm sure that Woolner, who's refined and modest,  
Although his fellow-lodger's of the oddest,  
Must blush at eulogy so coarse and stupid,  
And own there's something in the tinted Cupid.

Now the author of the letter in *The Times* was a very agreeable member of the Cosmopolitan Club, with whom I was on friendly terms, although we more than once sparred over the degree of right that Marochetti had to oust all English sculptors from any chance of getting public employment. A very formidable man to all was this Mr. Higgins; six feet eight and a half inches was the crown of his cranium from the ground he stood on; perfectly broad, and strong in proportion, withal remarkably handsome, and he had been a favourite pupil of the existing belt-holder. Thackeray had written the strong eulogium on him, quoted above, and he was in close relations with Society. "J. O." cared nothing at all for the other sculptors of native birth whom he mentioned, neither did most of the fashionable classes.

We had come to the pass now that Woolner, by reason of the commotion caused by the Handbook, was in danger of losing the prospect that he had at last secured, and I was determined that he should not suffer if any remonstrance from me could save him. It was impossible for me to expose Jacob Omnium's motive, veiled under the show of defending the whole profession; his desire was to turn the tide in favour of Marochetti for the commission of a statue of Macaulay to be put up at Cambridge, which was on the point of being decided by a Council largely composed of men in favour of the young Englishman.

I drafted my letter and went down to Welbeck Street. Palgrave and Woolner were just finishing breakfast, and I asked what hope might exist of a champion for their cause. They were dejected, and confessed that no one was likely to help them, which was more serious to the Cambridge chance, because Jacob Omnium's letters had been timed so as to appear only a day or two before the award of the Commission. I then produced my letter, while I avowed to Palgrave what I had said before, that it was only Woolner that I could consider in it, and it was agreed that it was possible it might save the situation.

Accordingly I sent it to *The Times*, and the editor with his usual courtesy at once inserted it:—

SIR—Surely your correspondent J. O. goes somewhat beyond the just limit when, in his letter which appeared yesterday, he makes insinuations against Mr. Woolner's talents and honourable dealings, in addition to the strictures which he has passed upon the Handbook of the Exhibition, in which Mr. Woolner's works are, as he says, so exceptionally praised. It may be said that I am an interested person in maintaining the authority of the Handbook. In answer I have to declare that throughout a period of twelve or thirteen years, during which the works that I have exhibited have often been roughly handled by omnipotent critics, I have never attempted to say a word in public to avert the effect of their wrath, and I have equally refrained from acknowledging favourable criticisms, either in public or private, although I have in both cases run the risk of being misunderstood by the readers as well as the writers of these judgments. I have not read the Handbook in question; my only knowledge of it is from "J. O.'s" quotations and other allusions, and I am not therefore in a good position to assent or to dissent from Mr. Palgrave's views.

Mr. Woolner and Mr. Palgrave, it is true, within the last two months have taken up their abode in the same house. Is there anything suspicious in this fact to any but "J. O."? The first had set himself to work at sculpture for years, with a result which has commanded the admiration of many of the best men of the day. The second is, as "J. O." says, a novel writer and poet, and moreover has given many years' close attention to sculpture. What is there in the positions of these two men to prevent them from occupying the same house, if their private circumstances make such an arrangement desirable? or to prevent a perfectly independent pursuit of their studies after they are established together? Any one would think, from "J. O.'s" letter, that no one had ever before complained of the general character of our public statues; that Trafalgar Square, the Royal Exchange, Cheapside, and the neighbourhood of the Palace of Westminster contained monuments which the nation regarded with just pride, as calculated to uphold our honour as an artistic nation against the world. Surely it required no imaginary breakfast-table conversations with Mr. Woolner to convince a sensible man that this is notoriously incorrect. *Punch* and your own columns have made indignation against such works almost proverbial. As a friend of Mr. Woolner, I may assert that his appreciation of the few really great things of our modern sculptors, which it would

be invidious to specify in part only, is as absolute as that of any artist of my acquaintance.

When "J. O." confines himself to the question of whether the *Art Handbook* should be sold under official patronage, he deals in a perfectly straightforward English manner, but the public will, I think, regard his attempt to use the interest which he has engaged for this question to the injury of a talented and honourable gentleman in a very different light.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,  
W. HOLMAN HUNT.

TOR VILLA, CAMDEN HILL,  
17th May.

The letter cost me not a little, as I knew it must do. J. O. naturally resented it, and I was now entirely cut off from Marochetti, whose talent I respected, although at times it bordered on the confines of theatrical bombast, as seen in the genteel vulgarity of his statue of Victory, and in the flaunting birds' wings in his Wellington tomb. There was grace in his statue of Princess Elizabeth, and force in that of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy. Sir Edwin Landseer, who lately had shown a disposition to become friendly, now avoided me. And all the painters and sculptors condemned by Palgrave evidently thought me of his opinion, while, in fact, I often disagreed with him.

On the same day as mine, appeared a joint letter in *The Times* from Watts and Millais, in condemnation of Palgrave's Catalogue. Woolner, two or three days after my letter, told me that the Cambridge Council had passed a resolution that, while the heated controversy (I alone being the defender) was going on, it was desirable to postpone their decision for a month; and this, he was told, would secure him the commission, and it did so.

I feel bound to say, in justice to my own judgment, that when Woolner's statue was completed, it was a disappointment to me. And although part of his few ideal groups continually proved the excellence of his modelling and marble carving, the spirit of his design did not, on the whole, satisfy the early expectations of his power, which his admirable statue of Sassoon certainly revived. My protest was perhaps the first to give a much-grudged

opening to English sculptors, and quickly resulted in the development of new men whose genius cannot be mistaken.

Though the original study for my picture of "The Finding in the Temple" had yet only some experimental parts painted on the canvas, it would have been a loss to leave it incomplete, and I devoted myself to finishing it. In some slight points the outlines differed from the larger picture, and, for greater joy in the work, I chose to make changes of hue in some parts of the composition.

Augustus Egg had become so far affected in health that he now wintered abroad; this year he went to Algiers, and we were all hoping that he would return, when we heard of his death.

When I took the news to Wilkie Collins he was quite broken down, and rocked himself to and fro, saying, "And so I shall never any more shake that dear hand and look into that beloved face! And, Holman," he added, "all we can resolve is to be closer together as more precious in having had his affection."

I was appealed to by an editor for some reminiscences of him for a journal, and to better qualify myself for a task which I felt beyond me, I wrote to Charles Dickens to help me with any testimony that he could supply. His response will be the best eulogium upon our common friend that could appear:—

GAD'S HILL PLACE,  
HIGHAM, NEAR ROCHESTER, KENT,  
*Sunday Night, 1st May 1863.*

MY DEAR MR. HUNT—I should have immediately complied with your request but for the sufficient reason that I really have nothing to tell which the public has any claim to know. The dear fellow was always one of the most popular of the party, always sweet-tempered, humorous, conscientious, thoroughly good, and thoroughly beloved. I always advised with him about the compositions of the figures and the like,<sup>1</sup> and his artistic

<sup>1</sup> This refers to arrangements made in theatrical tours by Dickens and his friends, including Egg, made in the provinces to secure a fund for the relief of decayed actors.

feeling and his patience were what you know them to have been. There is not a single grain of alloy, thank God, in my remembrance of our intimate personal association. But I look back upon his ways and words, in that half-gipsy life of our theatricals, as sanctified by his death and as not belonging to the public at all. In that aspect of his life, as in every other, he was a thoroughly staunch, true, reliable man. All else I regard as private companionship and confidences.—Believe me, ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES DICKENS.

At this period I visited Sir Thomas Fairbairn at Burton Park near Penshurst. Wingrove Cook was also a guest there; he had been the correspondent to *The Times* in China during the recent war, and had written letters of world-wide interest on that subject. The later contributions to the series had been unprecedentedly amusing and edifying, describing the behaviour of the atrocious Commissioner "Yeh" on his voyage as a prisoner to India. He reported that when left alone in the saloon, the great Chinaman was observed through a peephole to jump down from his seat of state, and exhibit a monkey-like curiosity, turning over cushions and prying into corners; but on the slightest sound of returning footsteps, he would race back to resume his seat of dignity with the imperturbable serenity of a Buddhist image. Wingrove Cook was a writer of the greatest facility, who would, without pause for a word or expression, describe graphically all that had passed before his eyes. He was a man of ready wit, and generally a good fellow.

One day out shooting we stopped to have lunch in an open glade, and talked of family pedigrees. Our host remarked that once he had the ambition to trace his family lineage; that he had got back two hundred years, to find that an ancestress had been burnt as a witch, and that he looked upon the discovery as a reason for stopping his investigations. His father, Sir William Fairbairn, was the great engineer, who had the credit of completing the Menai Bridge. When the son came to an end of the story of his ancestress condemned for diabolical dealings,

Wingrove Cook reflected, "Well, had your father lived two hundred years ago, I have no doubt whatever that he would have kept up the family character and been burnt as a wizard."

Still discoursing, we talked about the author of *Vanity Fair*. Cook said, "Thackeray is no genius! He was my schoolfellow, and I've known him all along for a rather able and plodding gentleman of letters, nothing more; amusing enough some of his lucubrations are, but he is overrated, he hammers out all with the greatest toil. Look here! when I came home last year after a long absence abroad, I invited a party of old chums to come and dine with me at Hampton Court. And I went to Thackeray, saying, 'Now, my dear fellow, you must come and dine with me and a lot of ancient cronies next Wednesday.'

"'Ah me!' returned William Makepeace, 'I wish 'twere not so, but the end of the month is coming, and so far I have not written a line of my new number, and I have put aside next Wednesday evening to go down to some quiet lodgings I have taken at Surbiton to make a big innings, so you see I am obliged to give up your attractive party. I'm truly chagrined.'

"'Do you mean to tell me that you consider the writing a few pages of your story a sufficient reason for breaking through our good fellowship?' I argued. 'Why, I could write twice the quantity of your whole number in four hours.'

"'Ah!' Thackeray replied, 'I know too well that I could not, and if I gave up Wednesday night, I should find that I was behind and all my sense of deliberate judgment would go. It would not do indeed.'

"It was no use arguing with him, and I had to give him up. Well, our party met. Every one asked why Thackeray was not there, and I told them. Nevertheless we had a jolly evening, and when we were breaking up, in reply to an inquiry where Surbiton was, I decided that we would drive home that way, and knock up W. M. Thackeray. We arrived at the dark village. There was



one house with a light on the first floor; it was easy to conclude that we were at the right one, and we all shouted out 'Thackeray.' The window was forthwith opened and our friend appeared; recognising us, he said quietly, 'Oh! wait a minute and I will come down and let you in.' He descended and opened the door. He was feverish, yet very calm, and terribly sober.

"We flocked in, and I preceded the party upstairs. There was the writing-pad with some sheets of notepaper on the table, and the upper sheet had about twelve lines of his neatest small writing, with a blank space at the bottom. I held it up before Thackeray. 'Tell me,' I said, 'is this all that you have written this blessed evening?'"

"'Alas!' he replied quite sadly, 'that is all.'

"And I rejoined, 'Then that is what you left all of us for? You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And in return, he admitted that I was quite right."

While my mind was still in the lodging at Surbiton, and following the inspired author of *Vanity Fair* after his boisterous companions had gone and he sat down to gather up the disturbed threads of his wonderful embroidery, Wingrove unsuspectingly said to us, "Now do you call that a genius?"

While I was at Burton Park, Trelawney, the friend of Byron and Shelley, arrived. He was a man of nearly eighty years of age at the time, in stature about five feet nine; his shoulders were of great width and his chest of Herculean girth, his neck was short and bull-like, and his head modelled as if in bronze, with features hammered into grim defiance. His eye was penetrating, and his mouth was shut like an iron chest above a Roman chin; it was no surprise to find his voice full and rough. And yet with all this there was a certain geniality in him which he concealed as though he were ashamed of it at first. When I was painting one morning in the park, I saw him approaching. When he was nigh I called out, "How do you do, Mr. Trelawney?" He walked on without

answering, and coming close threw himself down on the grass behind me. I repeated my salutation. His reply was, "I think that is about the most foolish thing one man can say to another." I hazarded, "Can I put it another way, and say, I hope you're quite well, Mr. Trelawney?" "Of course I am," he said. "I'm glad you've come out to see me, to give me the opportunity of a quiet chat with you," I continued, not noticing his tone. "Besides Byron and Shelley, you knew Keats, tell me what height Keats was, for the idea prevails that he was extremely short, and that does not correspond with the character of his head as seen in the cast. From what Keats idly says himself it is inferred he was only five feet." "No, he was of reasonable height, about our own," said Trelawney. "Tell me how the character of his face inspired you," I continued. "He couldn't be called good-looking," he replied, "because he was under-hung." "You use the word in an opposite sense to that in which it is sometimes applied to Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second of Spain, or to a bulldog?" I said. "Of course Keats was the very reverse," he grunted, "and the defect gave a fragile aspect to him as a man."

We talked of Byron, and Trelawney said he had put to the test Byron's power of swimming, in which he had boasted in his well-known lines. "Bathing from the beach one day," he said, "I pointed to a ship out at anchor and asked him to race me to it. We started, and in a few strokes I found that it was a mockery for me to exert myself. I waited for him to come up and made a fresh start, repeating this two or three times; at last I swam round the ship, and as I returned met him not yet arrived. 'Get away from me,' he said, 'I hate you,' and I saw he was really angered; to pacify him I said, 'Why, Byron, if I could write *Childe Harold* I should not mind having some one beat me in swimming.' But he was sore with me and remained so for some time."

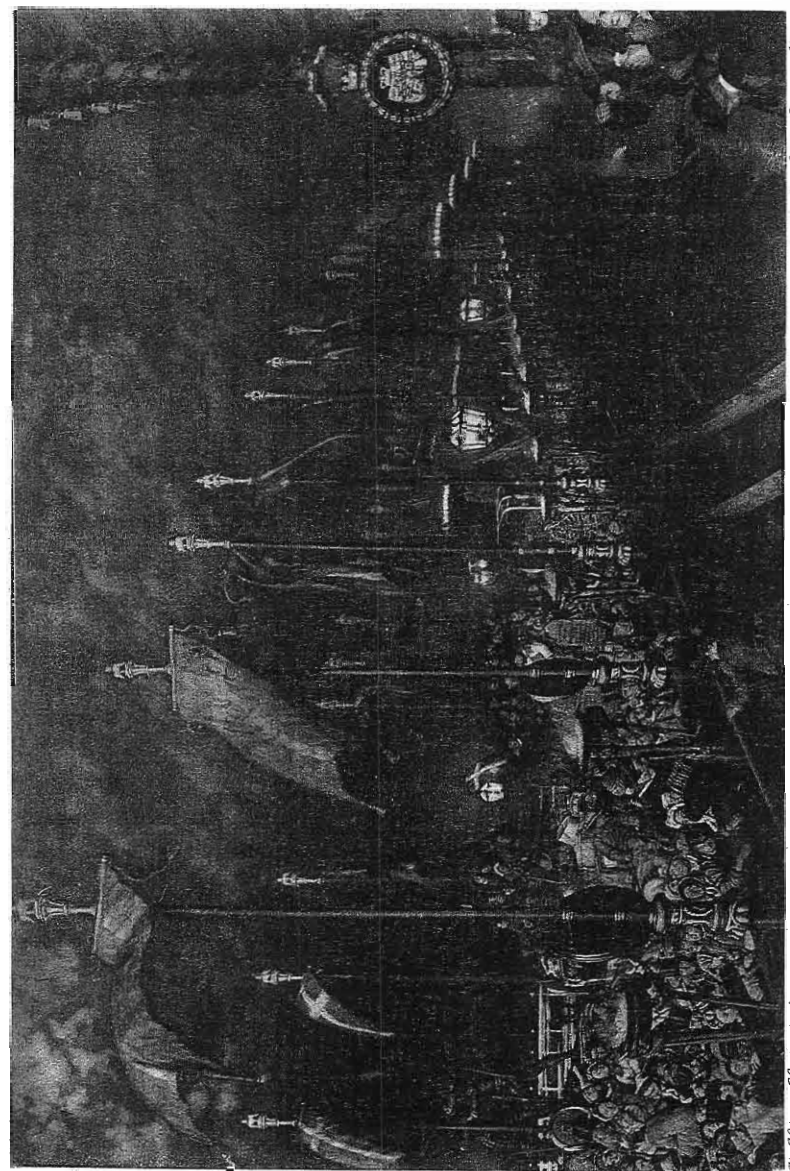
With the massive chest, shoulders, and arms before me the story could well be understood.



A few days later at dinner Trelawney's place at table was empty, and a servant was sent up to his room, who reported that he was not there and could not be found. This arousing curiosity, the master asked the butler if he knew anything about the guest. "Yes, Sir Thomas," he said, "I saw him going with his valise in his hand on his way to the station in the afternoon, and I think, Sir Thomas, he has left." Being pressed for further news of Trelawney, he said with the gravity becoming a trained servant, "He was sitting in the afternoon in the lake up to his neck in water reading a book, and he remained there till dusk, Sir Thomas." Thus ended the visit of this survivor of a past generation.

A man occasionally appeared among our circle at this time who proved soon afterwards to be one of the great figures of our time. Before *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* had made George Meredith receive his first welcome from the world, we recognised the author as both brilliant in his wit and also singularly handsome in his person. Of nut-brown hair and blue eyes, the perfect type of a well-bred Englishman, he stood about five feet eight, and was of about my own age. He had a boy of some five or six years old, and when he lost his first wife, the daughter of Peacock, who had been in youth a friend of Shelley, he devoted himself unremittingly to the child and to his training and education. When I was told Meredith was about to take up his residence with Rossetti in Cheyne Walk, I recognised regretfully that this combination would be an obstacle to the increase of my intimacy with the novelist at the time, but it transpired afterwards that he relinquished his project ere it was put into execution, and he has told me since that he never slept at Queen's House.

On the night of the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales, I went to the City to see the decorations of the streets through which the Royal party had passed. The display made many edifices, by daylight dingy with city smoke, fairylike and gorgeous. Temple Bar was enlivened



After Blake's Engraving &c.

London Bridge.

W. H. Sturt, pin.

W. H. Sturt, pin. March 10th 1862

by hangings of gold and silver tissue, and London Bridge was hung with masts, crimson banners surmounting the Danish insignia of the Elephant; tripod braziers and groups of statuary made up the show of welcome to the Princess on a spot full of memories of Danish exploits of ancient times, and the whole was illuminated by an effulgence of light. Being fascinated by the picturesque scene, I made sketches of it in my note-book, and the next day, feeling how inadequate lines alone were to give the effect, I recorded them with colour on a canvas. When I had completed this, the Hogarthian humour that I had seen tempted me to introduce the crowd; but to do this at all adequately grew to be an undertaking. I was led on, and felt that the months during which I could see that family matters would still detain me in England would not be ill spent in perpetuating this scene of contemporary history, but the work proved to be much greater than I had anticipated.

When the picture was finished I had it exhibited in a gallery in Hanover Street, together with a few others, including "The Afterglow" and the painting of "The Last Day in the Old Home" by my pupil Martineau. I left the carrying out of all arrangement of lighting, etc., to a manager, and did not see them until the morning of the private view, when His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, with the Princess of Wales, had promised to do us the honour of visiting our pictures. My arrival was only a couple of hours before the Royal visit, and there was such a scene of confusion, of carpenters' tools, of sweeping materials, bare boards, steps and the like, that I was alarmed at the possibility that some of these might not be out of sight before the Royalties' arrival.

In extraordinary manner however all disappeared as by magic just as we heard the Royal approach announced.

Promptly His Royal Highness scanned Robert Martineau's picture with interested attention, then turned to the picture of "The Afterglow," pointing out to the

Princess the correctness of type, atmosphere, and costume of the Egyptian picture. The Prince then asked me for the picture of "London Bridge." "Where is the Princess; where am I?" he inquired in looking on the motley scene. I explained that the picture dealt only with "London Bridge by Night on the Occasion of the Marriage," crowded by the mob viewing the illuminations. Looking at it from point to point, our Royal guest asked many questions about it, but suddenly singling out Mr. Combe's figure, which I had introduced into the crowd, with face no larger than a sixpence, the Prince exclaimed, "I know that man! Wait a minute," he added, "I have seen him in the hunting-field with Lord Macclesfield's hounds. He rides a clever pony about fourteen hands high, and his beard blows over his shoulders. He is the head of a house at Oxford, not a college"—as he went on following the trace in his mind—"but I'll tell you—yes—I remember now—it's the Printing Press, and he rides in a red jacket. Am I not right?"

"Your Royal Highness is indeed surprisingly so," I answered; "for although I have not been with that pack when you, sir, were in the field, Mr. Combe has often told me that he has seen Your Royal Highness with Lord Macclesfield."

"Remind me of his name," said the Prince.

Before I had well said it he took me up with, "Yes, I remember, Combe of course."

This is an example of the extraordinary faculty possessed by the Royal Family of remembering faces and names, and it would be a want in my record of remarkable individuals of my time if I were not to note this experience of mine of our present King's phenomenal and gracious recognition of individuals.

In 1864, when Garibaldi came to England, there was such a press of admirers about him, that I could not out of my much taxed time make arrangements for seeing the great man in any manner that would enable me to satisfy my artistic interest on the outward aspect which his inner

divinity of soul had stamped upon his personality. Despairing of the opportunity of a satisfactory meeting with the hero, I was unexpectedly gratified at receiving an invitation from the Duchess of Argyll to meet him at breakfast. The party consisted of some twenty people, and the man who had made the greatest romance of modern days walked in modestly with a friend or two, who stepped aside while he advanced to be received by his host and hostess, with her mother, the gentle and still beautiful Duchess of Sutherland.

Garibaldi from his photographs had appeared to me to be a man of about five feet ten in height, and indeed when he stood alone he might still be thought to be of that stature, so well was he proportioned; but alongside of other men, the stalwart bag-pipers to wit, he proved to be not more than about five feet five.

What a difference there is between man and man! One is employing his full powers to dig a grave, and another no bigger is making a kingdom, and withal does so with the honesty of the simplest child; another will connect seas together and change the course of navigation. While one man quarrels in a drunken brawl, the other will use his strength to overthrow tyrants and consolidate a nation. It was the glory of Garibaldi that while he had achieved the latter task he had used no deceit. Machiavelianism was to him enough to condemn a cause as a miserable one; his yea was yea, and his nay nay, but was he then blunt and rugged? No. Certainly the gods had made in him a vessel of high nobility out of the clay of earth: not a line was there in his face or figure that was not wholly heroic. The forehead and nose seen in profile were of the same inclination, the bridge of the nose following the brow in leonine continuity, the eyes were profoundly caverned, the cheeks and the jaw amply expressed the power of judicious will, their anatomy showing itself vigorously below the surface, both alike declaring the strength of self-control and control of others.

He talked in French, and taking the Duchess of Argyll on his arm with a perfection of courtesy, the red-shirted hero conducted her to table. On his left was the Duchess of Sutherland. After some talk about Italy, his earlier campaign in South America was discussed, and the ladies in the course of conversation inquired whether the people of Uruguay were of fair complexion. "Yes," he said, "they are generally fair as Europeans." Then reflecting that his remark as distinguishing the people from negroes and half-caste might require qualification, he gesticulated with either hand to the ladies on right and left in turn, and said, inclining his head ceremoniously, "*Quand je dis blonde, il ne faut pas croire que ces personnes dont je parle possèdent la peau blanche de vous, Madame la Duchesse d'Argyll, ou de vous, Madame la Duchesse de Sutherland.*"

I did not have personal talk with him, nor attempt a portrait, but many artists who induced him to sit to them had their work suddenly cut short. It had been planned that he should make a circuit of the important provincial cities of Great Britain, but on a day or two after my seeing him, at some public gathering he very simply expressed his indebtedness to the English fleet lying in the Bay of Naples for having refused to stir from their anchorage, which course had sheltered the force of volunteers as they were approaching the land forts, enabling him to bring his men close to shore without being exposed to fire. The course the British admiral took was really dictated by previous policy, Garibaldi was justified in taking advantage of it, but our Ministers could neither accept nor refuse his gratitude, and they feared further complications might be caused by future speeches; the wish was therefore expressed that he should not complete his visit at that time. Garibaldi accordingly left our island very abruptly.

About this time Baron Leys' pictures appeared in London. He had based his system upon revivalism, but being a Netherlander he eschewed the classicalism of the

Renaissance, not only as it showed itself in Italian art, but as it was reflected in Albert Dürer and other high German artists. He had rather taken the Basle School as seen in Holbein and other portraitists for a model. In his out-of-door scenes he avoided sunlight effects, and gave the more prevalent grey light of an aqueous climate; he often painted groups with scarcely traceable cast shadows, with almost childish naïveté as to the posings of his figures, portraying these with full yet careful handling. A few of his performances in which women's figures appeared were at times distinctly possessed of grace of form and of pose. Alma-Tadema had been his pupil, and early acquired his master's power, which he applied from the beginning to Roman subjects of the Imperial time with an archæological insight and exactness never attained before.

Dr. Sewell in earlier years, when founding Radley, had consulted me about an art master for the school, one who could awaken and also satisfy interest by his lectures, and teach drawing. I had introduced to him my fellow-student, John L. Tupper, who was invited down to learn the duties and the prospects of the intended post.

He was welcomed cordially and his qualifications were recognised, but as no funds were available for the professor, the appointment had to be indefinitely postponed. In 1864, having met Dr. Temple at a country house, he inquired if I knew of any artist qualified to fill the post of drawing-master at Rugby. I named Tupper, explaining that he would not be content to fulfil the ordinary routine of pencil drawing, but would strive to accomplish something much more thorough by his teaching. Immediately he entered into office he made a demand for funds to purchase a small collection of casts from the Pheidian marbles, and for the purchase of a skeleton and anatomical figure, with a hall in which to place them; nothing but the latter could be afforded, but my friend would not be defeated, and bought the objects for serious study himself. It was a pro-

test against the ordinary practice of drawing broken-down cottages and dilapidated five-barred gates and pumps, and I know that in some cases it did good service in the serious training of youths in the knowledge of fundamental principles of form. But unhappily he did not live long. The school authorities bought the collection from his widow, and these examples remain, leaving the hope that even yet they may do some good service for Art, and influence the young who in the future may be a power in the realm to direct public taste in the choice of true architects, sculptors, and painters.

After the Royal Commission of 1863 had published its report on the Royal Academy, the leaders of that institution took some steps to pacify the malcontents by making overtures to those who seemed most important and promising. G. F. Watts was one of those who had been badly used by them for many years, and before the Royal Commission<sup>1</sup> he coincided with all others who avowed the opinion that the Academy needed radical re-modelling to make the constitution of the Body, framed a hundred years before, more conformable to the needs of the greatly expanded profession. It had been privately maintained that the only means of effecting reform was to refuse in a body to accept Academy honours until radical changes had been conceded, making the control largely extra-mural, and that such influence should also be exercised over the work of the hanging Committee.

On my return from Florence in 1867 some of my friends, knowing that I was going abroad, approached me to give a promise not to accept any overtures by letter, unless all were satisfied with the Academy pledges.

<sup>1</sup> "The only mode I could suggest" (for improvement) "would be the introduction of some element from without. . . . I do not see its influence on our architecture—our street architecture, our fashions, or our taste in general, in any way whatever. The only national school which has grown up at all, has grown up outside the Academy, and indeed in opposition to it—that is the water-colour school; and the only definite reform movement (which the Pre-Raphaelite school may be called) was certainly not stimulated by the Royal Academy, and even met with opposition from it" (*Extracts, Report of Royal Commission, 1863*).

In Italy three months later I received news that many of these had accepted the overtures of the Academy to become members, and that they were now satisfied that all matters would be reformed exactly as they should be. Brown, Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and a few others were still deaf to the voice of the charmer. On my return to England in 1871, Millais said he was able to promise that if I would become a candidate for the Academy, I should be forthwith elected. He again referred to the advantages of membership in participation of the sale of works of art to the Chantrey Fund soon falling into the hands of the Body, but I would not change my course.

In the report of my evidence before the Commission it may be seen that I gave, as an instance of injustice on the part of the hanging Committee, the unfavourable manner in which Leighton's pictures had been placed in the previous Exhibition.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Without referring at all to the case of a person with the same views of art as myself, I may mention Mr. Leighton, a man who paints in a totally different way from myself, and to whom I certainly think injustice is done in the Academy. It seems to me that frequently his pictures have been put in places where they have not attracted the attention which their merits would have attracted for them if they had been fairly treated. . . . Two years ago, if not last year, his pictures were certainly put in places which prevented the public who had not come to look for them from seeing them; I think that that was unjust, and in talking to some Academicians about it, I found that they had what was really a conscientious prejudice against his work; and I think that if Mr. Leighton goes on exhibiting for three or four years they will find that, although he paints in a different way from them, he is a man of the utmost importance, and they will be glad to have him as a member; but it would be no advantage to him then to be made a member, he would already have established himself in the minds of the public. I have noticed many examples of the same kind. I only mention Mr. Leighton lest it should seem I was making a vague remark" (*Extracts, Report of Royal Commission, 1863*).