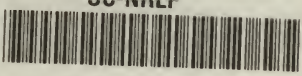
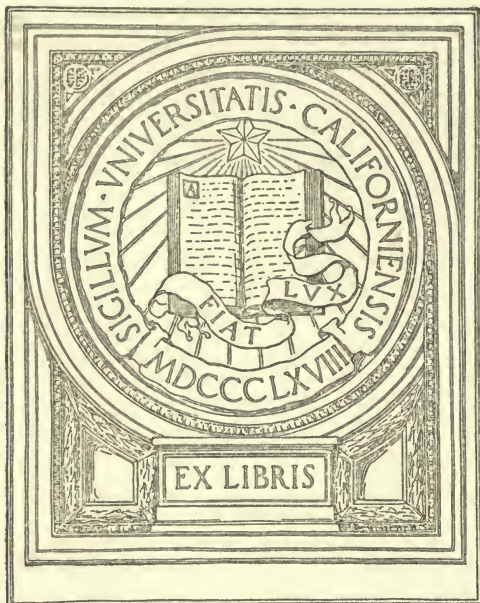


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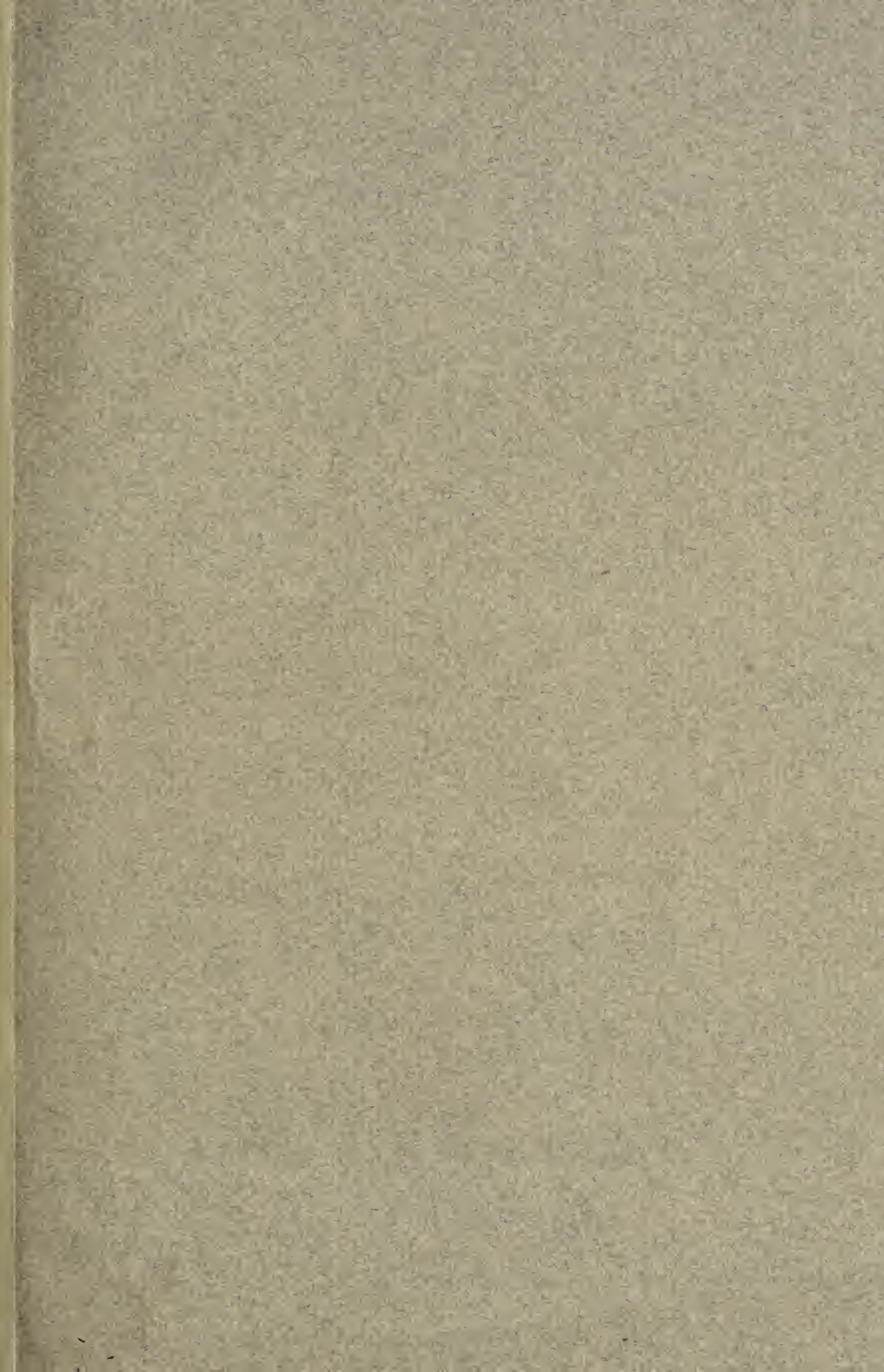


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Irvingiana.



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Washington Irving

Etched by Jas D Smilhe

After a Sketch from life by F O G Darley

at Sunnyside July 1848

a side long glance at Dame VanWinkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rifi VanWinkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edge tool that grows keener by constant use. For a long while he used to console himself when driven from home, by ~~from~~ frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers and other idle personsages of the village that ~~assembled~~ ^{held its sessions} on a bench ~~in~~ before ~~the inn~~, a small ⁱⁿⁿ public house, designated by a ^{rubicund} ~~roof~~ portrait of his majesty George the third. Here they used to sit in the shade, of a long lazy summers day, talk listlessly over village gossip or tell ~~of~~ endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any ~~ones~~ ^{ones} statesmans ~~heart~~ ^{heart} good money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper ~~had~~ fell into their hands



IRVINGIANA:

A MEMORIAL

OF

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Ever Augustus Duyckinck

—Tread lightly on his ashes, ye men of genius,—
for he was your kinsman:

Weed his grave clean, ye men of goodness,—for he
was your brother.

TRISTRAM SHANDY, CHAP. CLXXXVI.

NEW YORK:

CHARLES B. RICHARDSON.

1860.

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ERRATA.—p. xiii, in lines at bottom dele "And;" for "foeman," read "soldier;" for "heard," read "told."

IRVINGIANA:

A MEMORIAL OF WASHINGTON IRVING.

MEMORANDA OF THE LITERARY CAREER OF WASHINGTON IRVING.*

BY EVERT A. DUYOKINCK.

WASHINGTON IRVING was born April 3, 1783, in the city of New York. As there has been some little discussion as to the particular spot of his birth, it may not be amiss, writing for an historical magazine, to produce the following decisive testimony on the subject.

In a letter, the original of which is before us, to Mr. Henry Panton, dated Sunnyside, Feb. 15, 1850, Mr. Irving states precisely the place of his birth. "The house in which I was born was No. 131 William-street, about half-way between John and Fulton streets. Within a very few weeks after my birth the family moved into a house nearly opposite, which my father had recently purchased; it was No. 128, and has recently been pulled down and a large edifice built on its site. It had been occupied by a British commissary during the war; the *broad arrow* was on the street door, and the garden was full of choice fruit-trees, apricots, green-gages, nectarines, &c. It is the first home of which I have any recollection, and there I passed my infancy and boyhood."

Mr. Irving was the youngest son of a merchant of the city, William Irving, a native of Scotland, of an ancient knightly stock, who had married Sarah Sanders, an English lady, and been settled in his new country some twenty years.

A newspaper correspondent a few years since narrated an anecdote of this early period, of a pleasing character, which, unlike many things of the kind, has, we believe, the merit of truth in its favor. The story, as related, is given from the lips of Mr. Irving at a breakfast-table in Washington City. "Mr. Irving said that he remembered General Washington perfectly. There was some celebration, some public affair going on in New York, and the General was there to participate in the ceremony. 'My nurse,' said Mr. Irving, 'a good old Scotchwoman, was very

anxious for me to see him, and held me up in her arms as he rode past. This, however, did not satisfy her; so the next day, when walking with me in Broadway, she espied him in a shop, she seized my hand and darting in, exclaimed in her bland Scotch :—"Please, your Excellency, here's a bairn that's called after ye!" General Washington then turned his benevolent face full upon me, smiled, laid his hand upon my head, and gave me his blessing, which,' added Mr. Irving earnestly, 'I have reason to believe, has attended me through life. I was but five years old, yet I can feel that hand upon my head even now.'"*

The early direction of the mind of the boy upon whose infant head the hand of Washington had thus been laid, was much influenced by the tastes of his brothers who had occupied themselves with literature. Of these, William, who subsequently became united with him in the joint authorship of *Salmagundi*, was seventeen years his elder, while Peter, the editor of a later day, was also considerably his senior. With the guidance of these cultivated minds and sound family influences, the youth had the good fortune to fall in with a stock of the best old English authors of the Elizabethan as well as of the Augustan period, the study of which generously unfolded his happy natural disposition. Chaucer and Spenser were his early favorites; and a better training cannot be imagined for a youth of genius. His school education was the best the times afforded. Though something may be said of the defects of the city academies of those days in comparison with the present, we are forced to remember that however prodigally the opportunities of learning may be increased, the receptive faculties of a boy are limited. There may be more cramming in these times at the feast of the sciences; but we question whether the digestion is very materially improved. Few men, at any rate, have ever shown themselves better trained in the pursuit of literature than Washington Irving. The education which bore such early and mature fruit must have been of the right kind.

* A portion of this paper is made up from a previous sketch, published in "The Cyclopaedia of American Literature."

* This anecdote appeared in the *Buffalo Courier*, in the winter of 1853.

His first literary productions known to the public, bear date at the early age of nineteen. They were a series of essays on the theatrical performances and manners of the town, and kindred topics, with the signature, "Jonathan Old-style," and were written for a newspaper, the *Morning Chronicle*, just then commenced, in 1802, by his brother, Dr. Peter Irving. A surreptitious edition of these papers was published twenty years later, when the *Sketch-Book* had made the author famous; but they have not been included in his collected works. We have read them with pleasure. They present a quaint picture of the life of New York half a century ago, and are noticeable for the early formation of the writer's happy style.

A year or two after this time, in 1804, Mr. Irving, induced by some symptoms of ill-health, apparently of a pulmonary nature, visited the South of Europe. Embarking at New York for Bordeaux in May, he travelled, on his arrival in France, by Nice to Genoa, where he passed two months; thence to Messina, in Sicily, making a tour of that island, and crossing from Palermo to Naples. He continued his journey through Italy and Switzerland to France; resided several months in Paris, and finally reached England through Flanders and Holland, having accumulated, by the way, an abiding stock of impressions, which lingered in his mind, and furnished ever fresh material for his subsequent writings. It was while at Rome, on this journey, that he became acquainted with Washington Allston, and so far participated in his studies as to meditate for a time the profession of a painter, a pursuit for which he had naturally a taste, and in which he had been somewhat instructed. His own reminiscence of this period, in his happy tribute to the memory of Allston,* is a delightful picture, softly touched in an Italian atmosphere.

"We had delightful rambles together," he writes, "about Rome and its environs, one of which came near changing my whole course of life. We had been visiting a stately villa, with its gallery of paintings, its marble halls, its terraced gardens set out with statues and fountains, and were returning to Rome about sunset. The blandness of the air, the serenity of the sky, the transparent purity of the atmosphere, and that nameless charm which hangs about an Italian landscape, had derived additional effect from being enjoyed in company with Allston, and pointed out by him with the enthusiasm of an artist. As I listened to him, and gazed upon the landscape, I drew in my mind a contrast between our different pursuits and prospects. He was to

reside among these delightful scenes, surrounded by masterpieces of art, by classic and historic monuments, by men of congenial minds and tastes, engaged like him in the constant study of the sublime and beautiful. I was to return home to the dry study of the law, for which I had no relish, and, as I feared, but little talent.

"Suddenly the thought presented itself, 'Why might I not remain here, and turn painter?' I had taken lessons in drawing before leaving America, and had been thought to have some aptness, as I certainly had a strong inclination for it. I mentioned the idea to Allston, and he caught at it with eagerness. Nothing could be more feasible. We would take an apartment together. He would give me all the instruction and assistance in his power, and was sure I would succeed.

"For two or three days the idea took full possession of my mind; but I believe it owed its main force to the lovely evening ramble in which I first conceived it, and to the romantic friendship I had formed with Allston. Whenever it recurred to mind, it was always connected with beautiful Italian scenery, palaces, and statues, and fountains, and terraced gardens, and Allston as the companion of my studio. I promised myself a world of enjoyment in his society, and in the society of several artists with whom he had made me acquainted, and pictured forth a scheme of life, all tinted with the rainbow hues of youthful promise.

"My lot in life, however, was differently cast. Doubts and fears gradually clouded over my prospects; the rainbow tints faded away; I began to apprehend a sterile reality, so I gave up the transient but delightful prospect of remaining in Rome with Allston, and turning painter."

After an absence of two years, Mr. Irving returned to New York, in March, 1806. He resumed the study of the law, which he had abandoned for his journey, and was admitted at the close of the year attorney-at-law. He, however, never practised the profession.

Salmagundi; or, the Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq., and others—an undertaking much more to his taste—was at that time projected, and the publication was commenced in a series of small eighteenmo numbers, appearing about once a fortnight from the Shakspeare Gallery of Longworth. The first is dated January 24, 1807. It was continued for a year through twenty numbers. Paulding wrote a good portion of this work, William Irving the poetry, and Washington Irving the remainder. The humors of the day are hit off, in this genial collection of essays, in so agreeable a style, that the work is still read with interest—what was piquant gossip then being amusing

* Kindly contributed to "The Cyclopaedia of American Literature."

history now. It was the intention of Mr. Irving to have extended these papers by carrying out the invention, and marrying Will Wizard to the eldest Miss Cockloft—with, of course, a grand wedding at Cockloft Hall, the original of which mansion was a veritable edifice owned by Gouverneur Kemble, on the Passaic, a favorite resort of Geoffrey Crayon in his youthful days. Among other originals of these sketches we have heard it mentioned that some of the peculiarities of Dennie, the author, were hit off in the character of Launcelot Langstaff. The well-defined picture of "My Uncle John" is understood to have been from the pen of Paulding; his, too, was the original sketch of the paper entitled "Autumnal Reflections," though extended and wrought up by Mr. Irving.

Knickerbocker's History of New York was published in December, 1809. It was commenced by Washington Irving, in company with his brother, Peter Irving, with the notion of parodying a handbook, which had just appeared, entitled "A Picture of New York." In emulation of an historical account in that production, it was to burlesque the local records, and describe in an amusing way the habits and statistics of the town. Dr. Irving departing for Europe, left the work solely with his brother, who confined it to the historical part, which had grown in his hands into a long comic history. The humorous capabilities of the subject were turned to account in the happiest way, the fun being broad enough to steer clear of the realities; though a venerable clergyman, who was on the lookout for a history with that theme from a clerical brother, is said to have begun the work in good faith, and to have been only gradually warned to a consciousness of the joke. The highest honor ever paid to the authentic history of Knickerbocker was the quotation from it—in good Latin phrase—by Goeller, German annotator of Thucydides, in illustration of a passage of the Greek author: "Addo locum Washingtonis Irvingii *Hist. Novi Eboraci*," lib. vii., cap. 5.* To humor the pleantry, preliminary advertisements had been inserted before the publication in the *Evening Post*, calling for information of "a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of *Knickerbocker*," etc., who had left his lodgings at the Columbian Hotel in Mulberry street; then a statement that the old gentleman had left "a very curious kind of a written book in his room," followed by the announcement of the actual book, "in two volumes duodecimo, price three dollars," from the publishers, Inskip & Bradford—to pay the bill of his landlord.

* Classical Museum, Oct., 1849.

To the last revised edition of this work, in 1850, which contains some very pleasant additions, the author prefixed an "Apology," which, however, offered little satisfaction to the irate families who had considered their honor aggrieved by the publication of this extravagant burlesque—seeing that the incorrigible author insisted upon it that he had brought the old Dutch manners and times into notice, instancing the innumerable Knickerbocker hotels, steamboats, ice-carts, and other appropriations of the name; and had added not only to the general hilarity but to the harmony of the city, by the popular traditions which he had set in vogue "forming a convivial currency; linking our whole community together in good humor and good fellowship; the rallying points of home feeling; the seasoning of civic festivities; the staple of local tales and local pleasantries."* We should attach little importance to the subject had it not been made a matter of comment in the New York Historical Society, in an address before which body it was gravely held up to reprehension. The truth of the matter is that the historians should have occupied the ground earlier, if possible, and not have given the first advantage to the humorist. We do not find, however, that the burlesque has at all damaged the subject in the hands of Mr. Brodhead, who has at length brought to bear a system of original investigation and historical inquiry upon the worthy Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam; or deteriorated a whit the learned labors of O'Callaghan, who has illustrated the early Dutch annals with faithful diligence. The style of *Knickerbocker* is of great felicity. There is just enough flavor of English classical reading to give the riant, original material, the highest gusto. The descriptions of nature and manners are occasionally very happy in a serious way, and the satire is, much of it, of that universal character which will bear transplantation to wider scenes and interests. The laughter-compelling humor is irresistible, and we may readily believe the story of that arch wag himself, Judge Brackenridge, exploding over a copy of the work, which he had smuggled with him to the bench.

Has the reader ever noticed the beautiful, pathetic close of this humorous book? "Already," writes Diedrich Knickerbocker, "has withering age showered his sterile snows upon my brow; in a little while, and this genial warmth, which still lingers around my heart, and throbs—worthy reader—throbs kindly towards thyself, will be chilled forever. Haply this frail compound of dust, which while alive may have given

* The author's "Apology," preface to edition of *Knickerbocker*, 1843.

birth to naught but unprofitable weeds, may form a humble sod of the valley, whence may spring many a sweet wild flower, to adorn my beloved island of Manna-hatta!"

Some time after the publication of *Knickerbocker*, a copy was sent by the late Mr. Henry Brevoort, an intimate friend of the author, to Sir Walter Scott. It drew forth the following cordial reply, dated Abbotsford, April 23, 1813: "My dear Sir, I beg you to accept my best thanks for the uncommon degree of entertainment which I have received from the most excellently jocose history of New York. I am sensible that, as a stranger to American parties and politics, I must lose much of the concealed satire of the piece; but I must own that, looking at the simple and obvious meaning only, I have never read any thing so closely resembling the stile of Dean Swift as the annals of Diedrich Knickerbocker. I have been employed these few evenings in reading them aloud to Mrs. S. and two ladies who are our guests, and our sides have been absolutely sore with laughing. I think, too, there are passages which indicate that the author possesses powers of a different kind, and has some touches which remind me much of Sterne. I beg you will have the kindness to let me know when Mr. Irvine takes pen in hand again, for assuredly I shall expect a very great treat, which I may chance never to hear of but through your kindness. Believe me, dear sir, your obliged and humble servant, Walter Scott.*"

Praise like this was likely to create a flutter in a youthful breast. Irving had afterwards the satisfaction to learn how sincere it was, in personal intercourse with Scott. Lockhart, in the biography of Sir Walter, tells us that the latter had not forgotten the *Knickerbocker*, when, in the summer of 1817, Mr. Irving presented himself at the gate of Abbotsford with a letter of introduction from the poet Campbell. The welcome was prompt and earnest; and the proposed morning call was changed into that delighted residence so fondly revived in the "Visit to Abbotsford" in *The Crayon Miscellany*, and largely adopted by Lockhart in the Biography. We have heard Mr. Irving speak of this visit within the last year of his life with boyish delight. "This," said he, "was to be happy. I felt happiness then." So true and generous was his allegiance to the noble nature of Sir Walter, who was himself warmly drawn to his visitor. Scott thanked Campbell for sending him such a guest, "one of the best and pleasantest acquaintances I have made this many a day."† In the

later years of Irving at Sunnyside, there was much to remind the privileged visitor of the pilgrimages to Abbotsford, when the radiance of the author of *Waverley* shed delight on all around.

In 1810 Mr. Irving wrote a biographical sketch of the poet Campbell, which was prefixed to an edition of the poet's works published in Philadelphia, and subsequently was printed, "revised, corrected, and materially altered by the author," in the *Analectic Magazine*. The circumstance which led to this undertaking at that time, was Mr. Irving's acquaintance with Archibald Campbell, a brother of the author, residing in New York, and desirous of finding a purchaser for an American edition of *O'Connor's Child*, which he had just received from London. To facilitate this object, Mr. Irving wrote the preliminary sketch from facts furnished by the poet's brother. It afterwards led to a personal acquaintance between the two authors when Mr. Irving visited England. In 1850, after Campbell's death, when his *Life and Letters*, edited by Dr. Beattie, were about to be republished by the Harpers in New York, Mr. Irving was applied to for a few preliminary words of introduction. He wrote a letter, prefixed to the volumes, in which he speaks gracefully and nobly of his acquaintance with Campbell, many of the virtues of whose private life were first disclosed to the public in Dr. Beattie's publication.

One sentence strikes us as peculiarly characteristic of the feelings of Mr. Irving. It is in recognition of this revelation of the poet's better nature that he writes, in words of charity, as he looked back upon the asperities which beset Campbell's career:—"I shall feel satisfaction in putting on record my own recantation of the erroneous opinion I once entertained, and may have occasionally expressed, of the private character of an illustrious poet, whose moral worth is now shown to have been fully equal to his exalted genius."

Though Mr. Irving in this later essay speaks slightly of the earlier composition as written when he was "not in the vein," we have found it, on perusal, a most engaging piece of writing. A paragraph descriptive of the youthful Campbell might be taken for a portrait of himself. Indeed, it often happens that a writer, while drawing the character of another, is simply projecting his sympathies, and unconsciously portraying himself. "He is generally represented to us," says Mr. Irving, in this description of Campbell, "as being extremely studious, but at the same time social in his disposition, gentle and endearing in his manners, and extremely prepossessing in his appearance and address. With a delicate and even nervous sensibility, and

* This copy is made from a lithographed fac-simile of the original. One or two defects in spelling, it will be seen, are preserved.

† Lockhart's *Scott*, ch. xxxix.

a degree of self-diffidence that, at times, is almost painful, he shrinks from the glare of notoriety which his own works have shed around him, and seems ever deprecating criticism, rather than enjoying praise. Though his society is courted by the most polished and enlightened, among whom he is calculated to shine, yet his chief delight is in domestic life, in the practice of those gentle virtues and bland affections which he has so touchingly and eloquently illustrated in various passages of his poems."

In this memoir of Campbell we meet with a beautiful image illustrating the sentiment of obligation to British authorship, which must have been entertained, as, indeed, it still is, with great force by every ingenious mind, at the beginning of the century, when our literature was in its infancy. "When we turn our eyes to England, from whence this bounteous tide of literature pours in upon us, it is with such feelings as the Egyptian experiences, when he looks towards the sacred source of that stream which, rising in a far distant country, flows down upon his own barren soil, diffusing riches, beauty, and fertility."

We may here, too, recall a sentence as not unsuited to our own times at home, in which Mr. Irving, writing in 1815, after his pen had done good service to his countrymen in the war, records his sense of the peculiar sphere of authorship in its better moods. After describing "the exalted ministry of literature to keep together the family of human nature," he adds:—"The author may be remiss in the active exercise of this duty, but he will never have to reproach himself that he has attempted to poison, with political virulence, the pure fountains of elegant literature."

But we must hasten rapidly over the events of Mr. Irving's literary life, though tempted to linger at every turn, so fertile are they in topics of pleasure and instruction.

After the publication of the *Knickerbocker*, Mr. Irving, turning from the law with little regret, engaged with two of his brothers in mercantile business, as a silent partner. In a letter to a friend, dated May 15, 1811, he writes:—"Since you left us, I have been a mere animal; working among hardware and cutlery. We have been moving the store, and I (my pen creeps at the very thoughts of it) have had, in this time of hurry and confusion, to lend all the assistance in my power, and bend my indolent and restive habits to the plodding routine of traffic."

The second war with Great Britain then broke out, when he took part in the spirit of the day; edited the *Analectic Magazine*, published at Philadelphia by Moses Thomas, penning an eloquent series of biographies, accompanying portraits of

the American Naval Captains; and, in 1814, joined the military staff of Governor Tompkins as aid-de-camp and military secretary, with the title of colonel. When the war was ended the next year, he sailed for Liverpool in the month of May, made excursions into Wales, extended his tour to several of the finest counties of England, and to the Highlands of Scotland, and had the intention of visiting the continent. The commercial revulsions which followed the war overwhelmed the house with which he was connected, and he was thrown upon his resources as an author. He accepted his new method of life with cheerfulness; his spirits rose with the occasion, as he started on a literary career with not unproved powers, and an inward consciousness of his fitness for the pursuit.

Repairing to London, his excursions and his observations on rural life and manners furnished materials for some of the most attractive portions of his *Sketch-Book*. He was very much struck by the individuality of the English, particularly in such as were removed from business centres; and found much to study in personal peculiarities, while at a small watering-place in Wales. He met there with the veteran angler whom he has so pleasantly described in a paper of the *Sketch-Book*, which soon after made its appearance. The first number was sent from London in the beginning of March, 1819, to his friend, Mr. Brevoort, in America, with the characteristic remark that it had cost him "much coaxing of his mind to get it in training again."

The publication was commenced in New York in large octavo pamphlets—a style afterwards adopted by Dana in his *Idle Man*, and Longfellow in his *Outre Mer*. Shortly after the first volume had appeared in this form, it attracted the notice of the London editor, Jerdan, who received a copy brought over from America by a passenger, and republished some of the papers in his *Literary Gazette*.* A reprint of the whole was in prospect by some bookseller, when the author applied to Murray to undertake the work. The answer was civil, but the publisher declined it. Mr. Irving then addressed Sir Walter Scott (by whom he had previously been cordially received at Abbotsford, on his visit in 1817, of which he has given so agreeable an account in the paper in the *Crayon Miscellany*), to secure his assistance with the publisher Constable. Scott, in the most friendly manner, promised his aid; and, as an immediate assistance, offered Mr. Irving the editorial chair of a weekly periodical to be established at Edinburgh, with a salary of five hundred pounds; but the sensitive author, who knew his own mind, had too vivid a sense of the

* Autobiography of William Jerdan, ii. 288.

toils and responsibilities of such an office to accept it. He put the first volume of the *Sketch Book* to press at his own expense, with John Miller, February, 1820; it was getting along tolerably, when the bookseller failed in the first month. It was a humorous remark of Mr. Irving, that he always brought ill luck to his publishers; though, with the ardor of a good lover—a more amiable type of character than a good hater—he stuck by them to the end. Sir Walter Scott came to London at this emergency, reopened the matter with Murray, who issued the entire work, and thenceforward Mr. Irving had a publisher for his successive works, “conducting himself in all his dealings with that fair, open, and liberal spirit which had obtained for him the well-merited appellation of the Prince of Booksellers.”* Murray bought the copyright for two hundred pounds, which he subsequently increased to four hundred, with the success of the work.

In 1820, Mr. Irving took up his residence for a year in Paris, where he became acquainted with the poet Moore, enjoyed his intimacy, and visited the best English society in the metropolis. Moore's Diary at this period abounds with pleasant glimpses of Irving in these social scenes in Paris—at the dinner-parties of London, in company with his intimates, Kenney the dramatist and Newton the artist—and in the more general society of Holland House, and in other distinguished belles-lettres and social resorts at Longman's and elsewhere, down to “supper at the Burton Ale House.” Moore, as he himself tells us, sought and made the acquaintance of Irving at Meurice's *table-d'hôte* in Paris. It was in December, 1820, and his first impression is thus recorded—“a good-looking and intelligent mannered man.” They became friends at once, dined frequently together in company, and admired one another generously. Moore, as usual, is ready to chronicle the compliments, and somewhat eager to put upon record his valuable suggestions. He speaks of Irving's “amazing rapidity” in the composition of *Bracebridge Hall*, which was written while he was in the vein. At other times he could produce little. Moore tells us that some hundred and thirty pages of the new book were written in the course of ten days. Mr. Irving, however, never liked that spur to most authors, being “dogged by the press,” as he terms it in the preface to one of his most agreeable books, the *Life of Goldsmith*, which was mostly written and driven through the printer's hands within the short period of two months.

Moore, in several instances, claims his “thun-

der.” The account of the bookseller's dinner in the story of “Buckthorne and his Friends,” in the *Tales of a Traveller*, which owes every thing to Irving's handling, Moore says is “so exactly like what I told him of one of the Longmans (the carving partner, the partner to laugh at the popular author's jokes, the twelve-edition writers treated with claret, &c.), that I very much fear my friends in Paternoster Row will know themselves in the picture.” Moore tells us that he told Irving the story of “the woman with the black collar, and the head falling off,” which he had from Horace Smith, which, taking Irving's fancy, appeared in due time, as “The Adventure of the German Student,” in the *Tales of a Traveller*. Such reminiscences are the jealousies of friendship; they carry with them no taint of plagiarism.

Moore records a pointed rebuke which Cooper, the novelist, once gave Rogers, in his company, when the poet saying of the *Life of Columbus*, “in his dry, significant way,” that “It's rather long,” Cooper turned round on him, and said sharply, “That's a short criticism.”

In another passage, Moore, recording a visit of Irving to Sloperton, says:—“Took Irving after dinner to show him to the Starkeys, but he was sleepy, and did not open his mouth; the same at Elwyn's dinner.” He adds, what Geoffrey Crayon himself would have accepted as a panegyric,—“not strong as a lion, but delightful as a domestic animal.”

This somnolence of Irving in company was a joke of the wits, doubtless exaggerated, but probably with some foundation. Yet his sensitive organization left him a poor sleeper at night. D'Israeli, in his *Vivian Grey*, is the father of this story in his introduction of Geoffrey Crayon: “‘Poor Washington! poor Washington!’ said Vivian, writing; ‘I knew him well in London. He always slept at dinner. One day, as he was dining at Mr. Hallam's, they took him, when asleep, to Lady Jersey's rout; and to see the Sieur Geoffrey, when he opened his eyes in the illumined saloons, was really quite admirable, quite an Arabian tale!’”

We find these exaggerated tales of Irving's sleepiness in company long kept up as a tradition among dull diners-out. Miss Bremer, in 1849, in her *Homes of the New World*, is delighted with his vivacity at table; perhaps taking the exception as a personal compliment to herself, for she had heard the old story, without much surprise, she says, as dinner-parties generally go.

Bracebridge Hall, or the *Humorists*, the successor of *The Sketch Book*, is a series of pictures of English rural life, holiday customs, and refined village character of the Sir Roger de Coverly portraiture, centring about a fine old establishment

* Preface to the Revised Edition of the *Sketch-Book*.

in Yorkshire. The characters of Master Simon, Jack Tibbets, and General Harbottle do credit to the school of Goldsmith and Addison. The Stout Gentleman, the Village Choir, the delicate story of Annette Delarbre display the best powers of the author; while the episodes of the Dutch tales of Dolph Heyliger and the Storm Ship, among the happiest passages of his genius, relieve the monotony of the English description.

The winter of 1822 was passed by Mr. Irving at Dresden. He returned to Paris in 1823, and in the December of the following year published his *Tales of a Traveller*, with the stories of the Nervous Gentleman, including that fine piece of animal spirits and picturesque description, the Bold Dragoon, the series of pictures of literary life in Buckthorne and his Friends—in which there is some of his most felicitous writing, blending humor, sentiment, and a kindly indulgence for the frailties of life,—the romantic Italian Stories, and, as in the preceding work, a sequel of New World legends of Dutchmen and their companions, built up by the writer's invention in the expansion of the fertile theme of Captain Kidd, the well-known piratical and money-concealing adventurer. For this work Moore tells us that Murray gave Mr. Irving fifteen hundred pounds, and "he might have had two thousand."* These books were still published in the old form in numbers in New York, simultaneously with their English appearance.

It was about this time that John Neal, in a series of lively and egotistical papers in *Blackwood*, on "American Writers," published rather a detailed account of Irving and his writings. In the course of it we meet with this personal description of Geoffrey Crayon. It is freely sketched, but has the rough likeness of a good caricature:—"He is, now, in his fortieth year; about five feet seven; agreeable countenance; black hair; manly complexion; fine hazel eyes, when lighted up, heavy in general; talks better than he writes, when worthily excited; but falls asleep—literally asleep in his chair—at a formal dinner-party, in high life; half the time in a revery; little impediment—a sort of uneasy, anxious, catching respiration of the voice, when talking zealously; writes a small, neat hand, like Montgomery, Allan Cunningham, or Shee (it is like that of each); indolent; nervous; irritable; easily depressed; easily disheartened; very amiable; no appearance of especial refinement; nothing remarkable, nothing uncommon about him;—precisely such a man, to say all in a word, as people would continually overlook, pass by without notice, or forget, after dining with him, unless, peradventure, his name were

mentioned; in which case—odds bobs!—they are all able to recall something remarkable in his way of sitting, eating, or looking—though, like Oliver Goldsmith himself, he had never opened his mouth, while they were near; or sat, in a high chair—as far into it as he could get—with his toes just reaching the floor."

Neal was the first, we believe, to point out the occasional high poetical qualities in Irving's style. He stickled for a passage in the "Life of Perry," in the *Analectic Magazine*, picturing the "apparition" of the sea-fight to the natives on Lake Erie: "The bosoms of peaceful lakes which, but a short time since, were scarcely navigated by man, except to be skimmed by the light canoe of the savage, have all at once been ploughed by hostile ships. The vast silence that had reigned for ages on those mighty waters, was broken by the thunder of artillery, and the affrighted savage stared with amazement from his covert, at the sudden *apparition of a sea-fight* amid the solitudes of the wilderness."*

Again, after some fine compliments to *The Sketch Book*, we are told "The touches of poetry are everywhere; but never where one would look for them. * * The '*dusty splendor*' of Westminster Abbey—the '*ship staggering*' over the precipices of the ocean—the shark '*darting, like a spectre, through the blue waters*,'—all these things are poetry. We could mention fifty more passages, epithets, words of power, which no mere *prose* writer would have dared, under any circumstances, to use. They are like the '*invincible locks*' of Milton—revealing the god, in spite of every disguise. * * * When we come upon the epithets of Geoffrey, we feel as if we had found accidentally, after we had given up all hope, some part or parcel which had always been missing (as everybody could see, though nobody knew where to look for it), of the very thoughts or words with which he has now coupled it forever. Let us give an illustration.

"Who has not felt, as he stood in the solemn, strange light of a great wilderness; of some old, awful ruin—a world of shafts and arches about him, like a druidical wood—illuminated by the sunset—a visible, bright atmosphere, coming through colored glass—who has not felt as if he would give his right hand for a few simple words—the fewer the better—to describe the appearance of the air about him? Would he call it *splendor*?—it isn't *splendor*: *dusty*?—it would be ridiculous. But what if he say, like Irving, *dusty splendor*?—will he not have said all that can be said? Who ever saw those two words associated before? who would ever wish to see them separated again?"

* Diary, June 17, 1824.

* *Analectic Magazine*, Dec., 1818.

The winter of 1825 was passed by Mr. Irving in the South of France;* and early in the following year he went to Madrid, at the suggestion of Alexander H. Everett, then minister to Spain, for the purpose of translating the important series of new documents relating to the voyage of Columbus, just collected by Navarrete. For a translation was substituted the *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, to which the *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* were afterwards added. The Columbus was published in 1828; and the English edition brought its author, with an expansion of his fame, a substantial return in three thousand guineas. It also gained him a high honor in the receipt of one of the fifty-guinea gold medals, provided by George IV. for eminence in historical writing, its companion being assigned to Hallam. A tour to the South of Spain in this and the following year provided the materials for *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada*, and *The Alhambra, or the New Sketch-Book*. The latter is dedicated, May, 1832, to Wilkie, the artist, who was a companion with the author in some of his excursions. Mr. Irving spent three months in the old Moorish palace. He some time after, in America, published his *Legends of the Conquest of Spain* (in 1835); which, with his *Mahomet and his Successors* (1849-50), complete a series of Spanish and Moorish subjects, marked by the same genial and poetic treatment; the fancy of the writer evidently luxuriating in the personal freedom of movement of his heroes, their humor of individual character, and the warm oriental coloring of the whole. If the author had any preferences for his writings, they were for these fascinating themes. He abandoned himself to the mystical charm of the East—that fertile pleasure-ground of the imagination, about which still hangs something of the childhood of the world; a land of idle ease and magical incantations, where new generations are constantly entertained with the unexhausted fable. “He loved!” (perhaps bet-

ter than the poet Collins) “fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of elysian gardens.”

The following anecdotes of the preparation of the *Columbus*, and of these Spanish studies, have been communicated to us by Mr. J. Carson Brevoort, the son of Mr. Irving's old friend, who had served him with Scott, and in the publication of the *Sketch Book*. Mr. Brevoort, the younger, subsequently accompanied him to Madrid as secretary in his Spanish mission:

“Lieut. A. Slidell McKenzie (author of a *Year in Spain and Spain Revisited*) was in Madrid about the time when the MS. of Mr. Irving's *Columbus* was nearly completed, and, confiding in his taste, Mr. Irving begged him to read it with a critic's eye. Mr. McKenzie, or rather Slidell, as he was then called, did so, and returned it, remarking that it was quite perfect in his judgment, with the exception of the style, which he thought of unequal excellence. Mr. Irving was impressed by the remark, and rewrote the whole narrative in order to make it uniform in style throughout. Mr. Irving afterwards thought that its style was not improved by the labor thus bestowed on it.

“While engaged on his *Columbus* he had such frequent occasion to examine into the period of history covering the war with Granada, that his interest in the chivalric deeds of the Spanish and Moorish knights often tempted him away from his work in hand, to peruse the narratives of those sturdy warriors' deeds. He at last threw *Columbus* aside for a few weeks, and took up the materials which had so interested him, preparing the heads of chapters and making notes of the sources from which he might glean additional facts. After the *Columbus* was finished, he took them up, and in a very short time completed his *Conquest of Granada*, which many consider a masterpiece of romantic narrative.

“Some other materials, relating to the period of Spanish history anterior to the conquest of Granada, were never published. He was always deeply interested in these matters, and had for a long while been making collections, with a view to writing a series of works, beginning with a History of the Caliphs, following this up by the Domination of the Moors in Spain, and ending with the Conquest of Granada. He also wished to write the history of Charles and Philip, and even had thought of the Conquest of Mexico. The materials collected for these last works he handed over to Mr. Prescott.”

At a convivial meeting in London of the *literati*, it was once suggested to Mr. Irving that he should undertake a translation of the minor

* An idle story of Irving in Italy appears at this time to have been circulated among the literary triflers in London. It found its way into *Blackwood's Magazine* for August, 1826, in the following paragraph:

“A propos of extraordinary juxtapositions. The last news from Italy is that Washington Irving is on the point of being married to the Empress Maria Louisa; the Cyclops, General Caracambaza, having been dismissed her presence, and the whole nobility of Parma having united in a petition that her majesty would leave them no longer without a Sovereign. Political reasons possibly prevented her from fixing on a European; and the American author having been highly introduced at her court, and really having the mild and graceful manners and exterior that naturally please women, the announcement of his good fortune was made to him by her chancellor, Count Clocgnara; and it is stated that the alliance may be expected to take place immediately. So much for America. With Mrs. Jerome Napoleon, the Marchioness Wellesley, and Archduke Irving of Parma and Luca, the Trans-Atlantics may hope to have some future share of European civilization.”

tales of the author of *Don Quixote*. If he had acted upon the hint, he would have added a few more volumes to the stock of English literature: for his style would, in a measure, have made them his own.*

In July, 1829, Mr. Irving left Spain for England, having been appointed Secretary of Legation to the American Embassy at London, when Mr. McLane was minister. He retired on the arrival of Mr. Van Buren. The University of Oxford conferred on him, in 1831, the degree LL.D.

Before leaving England on his return to America, he edited for a London publisher, in the beginning of 1832, an edition, the first in England, of the *Poems* of William Cullen Bryant. Though unacquainted with Mr. Bryant at the time, he was a warm admirer of his writings; and when a friend sent him a copy from home, with a desire that he might find a publisher in England, he cheerfully undertook the task. A publisher was found, who, however, made it a condition that Mr. Irving should "write something that might call public attention to it." In compliance with this demand for a gratuitous service, Mr. Irving prefixed the following dedicatory letter addressed to the poet Rogers:

"TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

"*My dear Sir*,—During an intimacy of some years' standing, I have uniformly remarked a liberal interest on your part in the rising character and fortunes of my country, and a kind disposition to promote the success of American talent, whether engaged in literature or the arts. I am induced, therefore, as a tribute of gratitude, as well as a general testimonial of respect and friendship, to lay before you the present volume, in which, for the first time, are collected together the fugitive productions of one of our living poets, whose writings are deservedly popular throughout the United States.

"Many of these poems have appeared at various times in periodical publications; and some of them, I am aware, have met your eye and received the stamp of your approbation. They could scarcely fail to do so, characterized as they are by a purity of moral, an elevation and refinement of thought, and a terseness and elegance of diction, congenial to the bent of your own genius and to your cultivated taste. They appear to me to belong to the best school of English poetry, and to be entitled to rank among the highest of their class.

"The British public has already expressed its delight at the graphic descriptions of American scenery and wild woodland characters contained

* Biographical Notice of Irving, in the *European Magazine*, March, 1825.

in the works of our national novelist, Cooper. The same keen eye and fresh feeling for nature, the same indigenous style of thinking and local peculiarity of imagery, which give such novelty and interest to the pages of that gifted writer, will be found to characterize this volume, condensed into a narrower compass and sublimated into poetry.

"The descriptive writings of Mr. Bryant are essentially American. They transport us into the depths of the solemn primeval forest—to the shores of the lonely lake—the banks of the wild nameless stream, or the brow of the rocky upland, rising like a promontory from amidst a wide ocean of foliage; while they shed around us the glories of a climate, fierce in its extremes, but splendid in all its vicissitudes. His close observation of the phenomena of nature, and the graphic felicity of his details, prevent his descriptions from ever becoming general and commonplace; while he has the gift of shedding over them a pensive grace, that blends them all into harmony, and of clothing them with moral associations that make them speak to the heart. Neither, I am convinced, will it be the least of his merits in your eyes, that his writings are imbued with the independent spirit and the buoyant aspirations incident to a youthful, a free, and a rising country.

"It is not my intention, however, to enter into any critical comments on these poems, but merely to introduce them, through your sanction, to the British public. They must then depend for success on their own merits; though I cannot help flattering myself that they will be received as pure gems, which, though produced in a foreign clime, are worthy of being carefully preserved in the common treasury of the language. I am, my dear sir, ever most faithfully yours,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

"*London, March, 1832.*"

It is needless to say that the *Poems* met at once with a most cordial reception. Several of them had been much admired in England already; but the entire collection established at once the claims of the American poet.

A few years after this the late Mr. Leggett, in his journal, *The Plaindealer*, made an incident connected with this publication the subject of an unmannerly attack. It seems that while the *Poems* were going through the press in London, the publisher strenuously objected to a line in the poem entitled "Marion's Men," as peculiarly offensive to English ears. It reads—

And the British foeman trembles
When Marion's name is heard.

Timid objections are often made by publishers, and where the integrity of authorship is con-

cerned, should be firmly denied. Mr. Irving, we think unnecessarily and forgetful of an important literary principle, and that he had no authority in the matter, yielded to the publisher, conceding to an objection urged with a show of kindness, what he probably would not have granted under other circumstances. The obnoxious word "British" was removed, and the line was made to read—

The foeman trembles in his camp.

Mr. Irving was roughly handled in consequence by Mr. Leggett, who took occasion also, at the same time, to charge him with "preparing, in a book of his own, one preface for his countrymen full of *amor patriæ* and professions of American feeling, and another for the London market in which all such professions are studiously omitted." Mr. Irving sent to *The Plaindealer* a prompt reply. The change in the poem was seen to have grown out of a motive of kindness; while the malign charge in the matter of the prefaces was easily put out of the way. The indignant rebuke shows that the gentle pen of Geoffrey Crayon, when roused by insult, could cope even with the well-practised and somewhat reckless energy of *The Plaindealer*. We present this portion of Mr. Irving's letter entire:

"Another part of your animadversions is of a much graver nature, for it implies a charge of hypocrisy and double dealing which I indignantly repel as incompatible with my nature. You intimate that 'in publishing a book of my own, I prepare one preface for my countrymen full of *amor patriæ* and professions of home feeling, and another for the London market in which such professions are studiously omitted.' Your inference is that these professions are hollow, and intended to gain favor with my countrymen, and that they are omitted in the London edition through fear of offending English readers. Were I indeed chargeable with such baseness, I should well merit the contempt you invoke upon my head. As I give you credit, sir, for probity, I was at a loss to think on what you could ground such an imputation, until it occurred to me that some circumstances attending the publication of my *Tour on the Prairies*, might have given rise to a misconception in your mind.

"It may seem strange to those intimately acquainted with my character, that I should think it necessary to defend myself from a charge of *duplicity*; but as many of your readers may know me as little as you appear to do, I must again be excused in a detail of facts.

"When my *Tour on the Prairies* was ready for the press, I sent a manuscript copy to England for publication, and at the same time, put a copy in the press at New York. As this was my

first appearance before the American public since my return, I was induced, while the work was printing, to modify the introduction so as to express my sense of the unexpected warmth with which I had been welcomed to my native place, and my general feelings on finding myself once more at home, and among my friends. These feelings, sir, were genuine, and were not expressed with half the warmth with which they were entertained. Circumstances alluded to in that introduction had made the reception I met with from my countrymen, doubly dear and touching to me, and had filled my heart with affectionate gratitude for their unlooked-for kindness. In fact, misconstructions of my conduct and misconceptions of my character, somewhat similar to those I am at present endeavoring to rebut, had appeared in the public press, and, as I erroneously supposed, had prejudiced the mind of my countrymen against me. The professions therefore to which you have alluded, were uttered, not to obviate such prejudices, or to win my way to the good will of my countrymen, but to express my feelings after their good will had been unequivocally manifested. While I thought they doubted me, I remained silent; when I found they believed in me, I spoke. I have never been in the habit of beguiling them by fulsome professions of patriotism, those cheap passports to public favor; and I think I might for once have been indulged in briefly touching a chord, on which others have harped to so much advantage.

"Now, sir, even granting I had 'studiously omitted' all those professions in the introduction intended for the London market, instead of giving utterance to them after that article had been sent off, where, I would ask, would have been the impropriety of the act? What had the British public to do with those home greetings and those assurances of gratitude and affection which related exclusively to my countrymen, and grew out of my actual position with regard to them? There was nothing in them at which the British reader could possibly take offence; the omitting of them, therefore, could not have argued 'timidity,' but would have been merely a matter of good taste; for they would have been as much out of place repeated to English readers, as would have been my greetings and salutations to my family circle, if repeated out of the window for the benefit of the passers-by in the street.

"I have no intention, sir, of imputing to you any malevolent feeling in the unlooked-for attack you have made upon me: I can see no motive you have for such hostility. I rather think you have acted from honest feelings, hastily excited by a misapprehension of facts; and that you have been a little too eager to give an instance

of that 'plainealing' which you have recently adopted as your war-cry. Plainealing, sir, is a great merit, when accompanied by magnanimity, and exercised with a just and generous spirit; but if pushed too far, and made the excuse for indulging every impulse of passion or prejudice, it may render a man, especially in your situation, a very offensive, if not a very mischievous member of the community. Such I sincerely hope and trust may not be your case; but this hint, given in a spirit of caution, not of accusation, may not be of disservice to you.

"In the present instance I have only to ask that you will give this article an insertion in your paper, being intended not so much for yourself, as for those of your readers who may have been prejudiced against me by your animadversions. Your editorial position of course gives you an opportunity of commenting upon it according to the current of your feelings; and, whatever may be your comments, it is not probable that they will draw any further reply from me. Recrimination is a miserable kind of redress in which I never indulge, and I have no relish for the warfare of the pen."

With all the gentleness of *Geoffrey Crayon*, Mr. Irving was a high-spirited man where honor, duty, or the proprieties were at stake.

We have anticipated, however, the course of our narrative; for this correspondence took place in 1837.

Mr. Irving arrived in America, at New York, on his return, May 21, 1832, after an absence of seventeen years. A public dinner was at once projected by his friends and the most eminent persons of the city.

- It took place at the City Hotel on the 30th May. Mr. Irving had his old friend and literary associate, Mr. Paulding, on one side, and Chancellor Kent on the other. Bishop Onderdonk said grace, and Dr. Wainwright returned thanks. Mr. Gallatin was present, with many foreign and native celebrities.* Mr. Verplanck was absent at the session of Congress. The President of the meeting, Chancellor Kent, welcomed the illustrious guest to his native land, in a speech of good taste and feeling. His appreciation of Irving's early American productions, and not less, of his later, was warm and enthusiastic. The *History of Diedrich Knickerbocker* has

never found a heartier eulogist. The venerable Chancellor compared it with Rabelais and Swift, and brought it off creditably; admiring its laughter, its pointed satire, its wit and humor, and, above all, its good-nature. Mr. Irving replied with a touching allusion to rumors and suggestions which had reached him abroad, to the effect that absence had impaired the kind feelings of his countrymen, and that they had considered him alienated in heart from his native land. He had, he said, been fully disabused of this impression, by the universal kindness which greeted him on his arrival. He then turned to the prosperity of the city. "Never, certainly," said he, "did a man return to his native place after so long an absence, under happier auspices. As to my native city, from the time I approached the coast I had indications of its growing greatness. We had scarce descried the land, when a thousand sails of all descriptions gleaming along the horizon, and all standing to or from one point, showed that we were in the neighborhood of a vast commercial emporium. As I sailed up our beautiful bay, with a heart swelling with old recollections and delightful associations, I was astonished to see its once wild features brightening with populous villages and noble piles, and a seeming city extending itself over heights I had left covered with green forests.* But how shall I describe my emotions when our city rose to sight, seated in the midst of its watery domain, stretching away to a vast extent; when I beheld a glorious sunshine lighting up the spires and domes, some familiar to memory, others new and unknown, and beaming upon a forest of masts of every nation, extending as far as the eye could reach? I have gazed with admiration upon many a fair city and stately harbor, but my admiration was cold and ineffectual, for I was a stranger, and had no property in the soil. Here, however, my heart throbbed with pride and joy as I admired. I had a birthright in the brilliant scene before me: 'This was my own, my native land!'

"It has been asked can I be content to live in this country? Whoever asks that question must have but an inadequate idea of its blessings and delights. What sacrifice of enjoyments have I to reconcile myself to? I come from gloomier climes to one of brilliant sunshine and inspiring purity. I come from countries lowering with doubt and danger, where the rich man trembles, and the poor man frowns—where all repine at the present, and dread the future. I come from these to a country where all is life and animation; where I hear on every side the sound of exultation; where every one speaks of the past

* We may add the names of others present at this dinner, who offered toasts: Philip Hone, William Turner, Charles King, Judge Irving, General Santander, LL-Gov. Livingston, Chancellor Walworth, General Scott, Commodore Chauncey, William A. Duer, M. M. Noah, Prosper M. Wetmore, James Lawson, Charles De Behr, Jesse Hoyt, Henry Wheaton, James Hoffman, Le Ray de Chaumont, Vice-Chancellor McCoun, Orden Hoffman, J. W. Francis, Mr. Gener. C. W. Safford, W. A. Mercelin, W. P. Hawes, Captain De Peyster, William Leggett, William H. Maxwell, J. Watson Webb, Professor Renwick, Samuel Swartwout, John Duer.

* The allusion probably was to Brooklyn.

with triumph, the present with delight, the future with glowing and confident anticipation. Is not this a community in which we may rejoice to live? Is not this a city by which one may be proud to be received as the son? Is this not a land in which one may be happy to fix his destiny and ambition—if possible, to found a name?

"I am asked, how long I mean to remain here? They know but little of my heart or my feelings who can ask me this question. I answer, as long as I live."

It was some time before the plaudits ceased sufficiently for him to utter his toast: "Our City—May God continue to prosper it."

A few months later, in the summer, Mr. Irving accompanied Mr. Ellsworth, one of the commissioners for removing the Indian tribes west of the Mississippi, in his journey, which he has described in his *Tour on the Prairies*, published in the *Crayon Miscellany* in 1835. His *Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey* formed another volume of the series. In 1836 he published his *Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains*, undertaken by the late Mr. John Jacob Astor, between the years 1810 and the war with England of 1812. He was attracted to the subject not less by an early fondness for the character of the trappers and voyageurs of the West, into whose company he had been thrown in his youth, in Canada, than by his subsequent acquaintance with the projector of the enterprise. He was assisted in the preparation of this work by his nephew, Mr. Pierre Munro Irving. Many years after this publication was issued a statement was made, under circumstances which seemed to challenge the attention of Mr. Irving, imputing the glorification of Mr. Astor as a motive for the work, with the accompanying stimulus of a large sum of money paid by the millionaire. Mr. Irving availed himself of the opportunity to give the history of the book. The letter is of sufficient interest, involving as it does several honorable personal traits of character, no less than a detail of literary history, to be presented entire. We give it as it appeared in the *Literary World* of Nov. 22, 1851.

"CORRECTION OF A MISSTATEMENT RESPECTING
"ASTORIA."

"To the Editors of the *Literary World*."

"GENTLEMEN—A quotation from Mr. Schoolcraft's work in your last number has drawn from me the following note to that gentleman, which I will thank you to insert in your next.

"Yours very truly,

"Nov. 10, 1851. WASHINGTON IRVING."

"To Henry R. Schoolcraft, Esq.

"SUNNYSIDE, Nov. 10, 1851.

"DEAR SIR—In your *Personal Memoirs*, recently published, you give a conversation with the late Albert Gallatin, Esq., in the course of which he made to you the following statement:

"Several years ago John Jacob Astor put into my hands the journal of his traders on the Columbia, desiring me to use it. I put it into the hands of Malte-Brun, at Paris, who employed the geographical facts in his work, but paid but little respect to Mr. Astor, whom he regarded merely as a merchant seeking his own profit, and not a discoverer. He had not even sent a man to observe the facts in the natural history. Astor did not like it. He was restive several years, and then gave Washington Irving \$5000 to take up the MSS. This is the History of *Astoria*."

"Now, sir, I beg to inform you that this is not the History of *Astoria*. Mr. Gallatin was misinformed as to the part he has assigned me in it. The work was undertaken by me through a real relish of the subject. In the course of visits in early life to Canada, I had seen much of the magnates of the Northwest Company, and of the hardy trappers and fur-traders in their employ, and had been excited by their stories of adventurous expeditions into the 'Indian country.' I was sure, therefore, that a narrative, treating of them and their doings, could not fail to be full of stirring interest, and to lay open regions and races of our country as yet but little known. I never asked nor received of Mr. Astor a farthing on account of the work. He paid my nephew, who was then absent practising law in Illinois, for coming on, examining, and collating manuscript journals, accounts, and other documents, and preparing what lawyers would call a brief, for me. Mr. Fitzgreene Halleck, who was with Mr. Astor at the time, determined what the compensation of my nephew ought to be. When the brief was finished, I paid my nephew an additional consideration on my own account, and out of my own purse. It was the compensation paid by Mr. Astor to my nephew which Mr. Gallatin may have heard of, and supposed it was paid to myself; but even in that case, the amount, as reported to him, was greatly exaggerated.

"Mr. Astor signified a wish to have the work brought out in a superior style, supposing that it was to be done at his expense. I replied that it must be produced in the style of my other works, and at my expense and risk; and that whatever profit I was to derive from it must be from its sale and my bargain with the publishers. This is the true History of *Astoria*, as far as I was concerned in it.

"During my long intimacy with Mr. Astor,

commencing when I was a young man, and ending only with his death, I never came under a pecuniary obligation to him of any kind. At a time of public pressure, when, having invested a part of my very moderate means in wild lands, I was straitened and obliged to seek accommodations from moneyed institutions, he repeatedly urged me to accept loans from him, but I always declined. He was too proverbially rich a man for me to permit the shadow of a pecuniary favor to rest on our intercourse.

"The only moneyed transaction between us was my purchase of a share in a town he was founding at Green Bay; for that I paid cash, though he wished the amount to stand on mortgage. The land fell in value; and some years afterwards, when I was in Spain, Mr. Astor, of his own free-will, took back the share from my agent, and repaid the original purchase-money. This, I repeat, was the only moneyed transaction that ever took place between us; and by this I lost four or five years' interest of my investment.

"My intimacy with Mr. A. was perfectly independent and disinterested. It was sought originally on his part, and grew up, on mine, out of the friendship he spontaneously manifested for me, and the confidence he seemed to repose in me. It was drawn closer when, in the prosecution of my literary task, I became acquainted, from his papers and his confidential conversations, with the scope and power of his mind, and the grandeur of his enterprises. His noble project of the ASTOR LIBRARY, conceived about the same time, and which I was solicitous he should carry into execution during his lifetime, was a still stronger link of intimacy between us.

"He was altogether one of the most remarkable men I have ever known: of penetrating sagacity, massive intellect, and possessing elements of greatness of which the busy world around him was little aware; who, like Malte-Brun, regarded him 'merely as a merchant seeking his own profit.'

"Very respectfully, your friend and servant,
"WASHINGTON IRVING."

Though made up from the most unpromising material of a commercial correspondence frequently carried on under great disadvantages, with gaps and deficiencies which had to be supplied from the scanty stock of published travels in the West, the skill of the writer overcame all difficulties. His own conception of the artistical requirements of the subject, happily fulfilled by his adroit pen, is expressed in the concluding paragraph of the Introduction:—"The work I here present to the public is necessarily of a rambling and somewhat disjointed nature, comprising various expeditions and adventures by

land and sea. The facts, however, will prove to be linked and banded together by one great scheme, devised and conducted by a master-spirit; one set of characters, also, continues throughout, appearing occasionally, though sometimes at long intervals, and the whole enterprise winds up by a regular catastrophe; so that the work, without any labored attempt at artificial construction, actually possesses much of that variety so much sought after in works of fiction, and considered so important to the interest of every history."

Another undertaking of a similar character was the *Adventures of Captain Bonneville, U.S.A., in the Rocky Mountains and the Far West*, prepared from the MSS. of that traveller, but made an original work by the observation and style of the writer.

Commencing with 1839, for the two following years, Mr. Irving contributed a series of papers monthly to the *Knickerbocker Magazine*. Among these tales and sketches are two narratives of some length, *The Early Experiences of Ralph Ringwood*, and *Mountjoy, or some Passages out of the Life of a Castle Builder*. A number of these papers, with some others from the English Annuals and other sources, were collected in 1855 in a volume, with the title of *Wolferst's Roost*.

In February, 1842, Mr. Irving was appointed Minister to Spain, an office which he occupied for the next four years. The nomination was entirely unsought for, and was a compliment paid him by Daniel Webster, who announced it to him in a dispatch bearing his honorary title. It was the first notice he received of it. On his return to America he took up his permanent residence at his cottage, "Sunnyside," near Tarrytown, on the banks of the Hudson, the very spot which he had described years before in the "Legend of Sleepy Hollow," as the castle of the Herr van Tassel, and of the neighborhood of which he had said:—"If ever I should wish for a retreat, whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remainder of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley." At this retreat, looking out upon the river which he loved so well, he continued to live, in the midst of a family circle composed of his brother and his nieces, hospitably entertaining his friends, occasionally visiting different portions of the country, and employing his pen in the composition of his *Life of Washington*, the last volume of which passed through the press the present year. The preparation of this great work, the publication of *Oliver Goldsmith, a Biography*, an enlargement of a life which he had prefixed to an edition in Paris of that author's works,

adapting the researches of Prior and Forster, and a revised edition of his own writings published by Putnam, of which several of the volumes have been issued in a more costly form, enriched by the vigorous and refined designs of Darley, were the literary employments of his closing years. His retirement at Sunnyside was all that his youthful fancy painted, and more than experience of the world could have promised. His age was not exempt from infirmities; but it was spared many of the sufferings common to mortality. And when he came to die, his soul passed to heaven the nearest way. His death, on the night of November 28, 1859, when he had just retired from his cheerful family circle, was instantaneous.

We now return to the concluding literary labor of the life we have thus traced to its close.

The preface to the first volume of the *Washington* bears date 1855. Two volumes were published in that year; a third in the following; a fourth in 1857; the fifth, and concluding portion, in 1859. It was the completion of a work to which, in his own words prefixed to the last volume, "the author had long looked forward as the crowning effort of his literary career." Continuing this retrospect, Mr. Irving relates that "the idea of writing a life of Washington entered at an early day into his mind. It was especially pressed upon his attention nearly thirty years ago, while he was in Europe, by a proposition of the late Mr. Archibald Constable, the eminent publisher of Edinburgh, and he resolved to undertake it as soon as he should return to the United States, and be within reach of the necessary documents." The purpose was never lost sight of, though the work was postponed. If there was any expiation due the delay, the author paid the penalty in the increasing difficulty of the theme. Thirty years ago less would have been demanded by the public in the performance of such a work. A thoroughly scientific school of historians had sprung up in the interval. The collection of facts by the historical societies and other agencies imposed new exactions in the weighing of evidence. Each addition to the vast Washington library brought additional care and responsibility. Researches of this nature may, indeed, be benefited by the judgment of age; but the labor would seem to require the strength and enthusiasm of youth.

The writer, no doubt, found the undertaking a very different one from that which presented itself to his mind, on his first conception of the idea in the presence of Mr. Constable. There were sterner requisitions, as we have said, to be met; and there was also a spectre of his own raising to be encountered, the shadow of his fame. But, whatever the struggle, it was man-

fully borne by the author, who sacrificed well-earned ease and leisure, with no other stimulus than the sense of duty, and with which we may associate the impulse of genius, performing a great part, if not the whole, of his allotted work after he had attained the age of threescore and ten. There are few more cheering instances of literary activity in the whole history of authorship. We have frequently thought, as our eye rested on the narrative, that the author needed all the encouragement to be derived from the conscientiousness and sense of duty of his great subject. There stood above the page the awful shade of Washington, with warning finger pointing the way his historian should follow. The monition was not unheeded. The history is such a one as Washington himself, were he privileged or condemned to revisit the scene of his earthly cares and anxieties, the country which he loved, the people for whom he gravely toiled, would, we think, calmly approve of.

The qualities of Washington in the book are its simple, straightforward manner; its dignity and reserve, associated with care and candor, its paramount truthfulness. It is scarcely possible that a work of the kind could be written with greater absence of display or personal pretension on the part of the writer. The labor of rejection must have been great, where the material was overwhelming. The forbearance and self-denial, the avoidance of the sin of surfeit, can be fully estimated only by one who has made the prevalent characteristics and vices of the literature of the day a study. There are eloquent, profound, learned works in abundance; but a well-written book is a great rarity. We are not aware that Mr. Irving goes out of his way to make a point, indulge in an unnecessary digression, or yield, in a single instance, to the temptation to description, which last must, at times, have sorely beset his pen. He never stops in his steady movement to attitudinize, to strike a position, arouse the attention of his reader with "Here we are!" like the mountebank in the ring, or violate in any manner the sober pace of history. Great men come and depart noiselessly on the plain republican stage, trumpeted by no rhetorical blare of adjectives; their acts only betray their presence. There are no set attempts, no efforts for effect. A half reflection inwrought with the progress of the sentence, a single epithet does all—and the whole is any thing but a barren recital. It is the charm of the writings of Washington himself, where we are impressed by the truthfulness and pleased by a certain native gracefulness—a plain thing like the clown's mistress, but his own. Little, winning idiomatic touches frequently appear in the composition; but it has also the higher merit of

dramatic unity and steady progress. Washington is the central personage, never far distant, always inspiring and directing the scene: he appears firmly planted amidst the historical elements of his people and country.

Mr. Irving always received handsome sums for his copyrights. In 1850 it began to be doubted in England whether the copyright of a book by an American or alien could be held by a British publisher, and Irving's works were boldly taken from Murray, and issued in cheap editions by Bohn & Routledge. The legal question was carried into the Court of Chancery, and the plea was at least meditated by Mr. Murray, that Mr. Irving was not an alien, his father being a native of the Orkneys, and his mother of Falmouth. The absurdity of this pretence to citizenship—with which, of course, Mr. Irving had nothing to do—in behalf of an American who had held military rank in a war with Great Britain, was at once apparent. What stood in the way, it was asked, if he were a British subject, of taking him from Westminster Hall, as a rebel, to a court-martial, and ordering him to be shot!

A more pertinent plea was Mr. Murray's long previous undisputed enjoyment of the copyrights, and a statement of the sums he had paid for them. As given in the *London Athenæum* of Aug. 24, 1850, they were as follows:

Sketch Book	£467	10s.
Bracebridge Hall.....	1,050	0
Tales of a Traveller.....	1,575	0
Life of Columbus	3,150	0
Companions of Columbus.....	525	0
Conquest of Granada.....	2,100	0
Tour on the Prairies.....	400	0
Abbotsford and Newstead.....	400	0
Legends of Spain.....	100	0
footing up the respectable sum of ..	9,767	10

Mr. Bentley also published a statement of the sums paid by him to Irving, in conjunction with his partner, Colburn. They were, for the copyright of the *Alhambra*, £1,050; for *Astoria*, £500; for *Captain Bonneville's Adventures*, £900.

Nor were his copyrights of late less remunerative in America. In a recent statement it is said, that within the last ten years—the period of the revised edition of his works—there have been sold twenty-two thousand sets of fifteen volumes each, exclusive of the *Life of Washington*, and *The Sketch Book*; while of the latter thirty-five thousand copies have been distributed, and of the *Washington* forty-two thousand sets of five volumes each—a total of five hundred and seventy-five thousand volumes disposed of by Mr. George P. Putnam, the publisher of the works since 1849. These various editions, it is

said, have paid to the author seventy-five thousand dollars. They owe much to the good taste of the publisher, especially in the illustrated series.

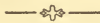
Mr. Allibone, who, in his "Critical Dictionary," has infused a loving spirit into his comprehensive bibliographical details of the writings of Irving, pays a just tribute to his publisher, Mr. Putnam,—“a gentleman who, by his extensive circulation of sound literature for many years both in Europe and America, has honestly earned the title of a benefactor to the public mind.” A letter from Mr. Irving to Mr. Putnam, expresses a still more intimate and cordial sentiment. “I take pleasure,” he writes, “in expressing the great satisfaction I have derived throughout all our intercourse, from your amiable, obliging, and honorable conduct. Indeed, I never had dealings with any man, whether in the way of business or friendship, more perfectly free from any alloy.”

Mr. Irving was throughout life fortunate in his friendships with artists, who were attracted by the man, no less than his picturesque books, for subjects for their pencil. His friend, the Academician Leslie, who had much in common with his genius, designed for Murray a series of ten plates to illustrate *The Sketch Book*, and *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, which were engraved by the best artists of the day. He also introduced a portrait of his friend in his *Roger de Coverly* picture. Allston, likewise, made illustrations for the *Knickerbocker*. Heath, the engraver, drew a humorous design of the march of the great Amsterdam army to the attack of Fort Casimir, from the original of which, preserved at Sunnyside, an engraving was published by Mr. Putnam. He also engraved a choice series of illustrations of the *Sketch Book*, from designs by Westall. George Cruikshank also made several capital pictures for an edition of *Knickerbocker*, published in the "Family Library," and also quite a number of very felicitous designs, chiefly from *Salmagundi*, and the *Knickerbocker*, which appeared in an elegant little volume, by Tegg, of London, entitled *The Beauties of Washington Irving*. Of the American designs, by Mr. Darley, much might be said, particularly of the two series of "Sleepy Hollow," and "Rip Van Winkle," issued by the American Art Union. They seize with a firm grasp, and an individuality of their own, the stronger and deeper elements of Mr. Irving's pathos and humor. They are full of grace and feeling, and are something more than interpreters of the author,—they are revelations of the artist's own mind.

Washington Irving was so lucky in his choice of subjects, and treated them so happily, that his name and fame are associated with some of the

most enduring objects of interest about the world. At Stratford-upon-Avon, the traveller, sitting down at the cheerful fireside of mine host of the "Red Lion," may, if he will, wield "the sceptre of Geoffrey Crayon;" when the traditional poker with which that pleasant tourist stirred the fire, bearing that identical inscription, is put into his hands, with a well-thumbed copy of the *Sketch-Book*, in which it is all written down, as voucher. The incident happened to myself, and we presume the custom will be perpetuated to a late posterity, with the memories of the "Red Lion Inn"—for inns in England have a long life. Next to the birthplace of Shakspeare, the fancy of the world nestles in the quaint galleries, pillared courts, and carved recesses of the Alhambra—the deserted home of a fallen race, dear to the imagination in a land of poetry. Washington Irving is firmly installed in the traditions of the place, and will doubtless, in time, become a myth, with King Chicó and the rest. A traveller who recently visited the Alhambra was immediately taken possession of, upon his arrival at Granada, by a youth of the town, who produced his plenipotentiary powers over English-speaking strangers in the following card:

GRANADA.



JOSÉ JIMENEZ,

(SON OF MATEO JIMENEZ,

GUIDE TO WASHINGTON IRVING,)

A NATIVE

OF THE ALHAMBRA,

RESPECTFULLY offers his services, to accompany Strangers, Travellers and visitors, to the Palace of the **Alhambra** and the environs of the above named Capital; for which his intimate acquaintance with the antiquities and beauties which distinguish **GRANADA**, eminently qualify him.

The Irving traditions were rife in his mind. He pointed out Geoffrey Crayon's apartments,

and narrated how he was accustomed to pass his evenings with Mateo, Tia Antonio, and Dolores, exciting their powers of story-telling, listening to their recitals, and reviving their flagging memory or invention by a good supper when the night wore on. It was pleasant to hear how good Geoffrey had given a marriage portion to that "little, plump, black-eyed Andalusian damsel Dolores."

Our traveller visited Mateo, of course, and found him a quiet, slow, soft-spoken, good-looking old man, such as his beneficent guest would be inclined to cotton to. He saw, in fact, Washington Irving firmly rooted in the pockets and affections of the tribe, a sort of family estate or heirloom handed down from father to son.

If these are slight, though agreeable incidents to travellers, home-keepers are not forgetful of these haunts of the imagination. They, too, remember what they owe to Irving; and they have other claims upon their sympathy in the biographies of Goldsmith, of Columbus, and Washington. It is something to be associated with these names, and leave behind all baser matter.

We might linger, too, upon the nationality of Irving's descriptions of American nature; of the fortunate turn his mind took to the great western regions of the American continent before they were invaded by the advancing pioneers of civilization: we might say much of the fancy and humor with which he has invested his native island and city: and no reader of his writings can forget his love of the noble river which flowed by his doorway, which had tempted his youthful imagination with its magic wonders—which had been fondly remembered by him in distant lands as he traced it in description—which was the solace of his age, and glowed, deeply dyed in the rays of the setting sun at his burial. "I thank God," he wrote in his later years, "that I was born on the banks of the Hudson. I fancy I can trace much of what is good and pleasant in my own heterogeneous compound to my early companionship with this glorious river. In the warmth of youthful enthusiasm, I used to clothe it with moral attributes, and, as it were, give it a soul. I delighted in its frank, bold, honest character; its noble sincerity, and perfect truth. Here was no specious, smiling surface, covering the shifting sandbar and perfidious rock, but a stream deep as it was broad, and bearing with honorable faith the bark that trusted to its waves. I gloried in its simple, quiet, majestic, epic flow, ever straight forward, or, if forced aside for once by opposing mountains, struggling bravely through them, and resuming its onward march. Behold, thought I, an emblem of a good man's course through life, ever simple, open, and direct; or if, over-

powered by adverse circumstances, he deviate into error, it is but momentary—he soon resumes his onward and honorable career, and continues it to the end of his pilgrimage.”

The finest description, perhaps, of the American climate ever written is from the pen of Irving. It occurs in an out-of-the-way sketch of the Catskills in the *Book of the Picturesque*, published a few years ago. “Here let me say a word in favor of those vicissitudes which are too often made the subject of exclusive repining. If they annoy us occasionally by changes from hot to cold, from wet to dry, they give us one of the most beautiful climates in the world. They give us the brilliant sunshine of the south of Europe with the fresh verdure of the north. They float our summer sky with clouds of gorgeous tints or fleecy whiteness, and send down cooling showers to refresh the panting earth and keep it green. Our seasons are all poetical; the phenomena of our heavens are full of sublimity and beauty. Winter with us has none of its proverbial gloom. It may have its howling winds, and thrilling frosts, and whirling snow-storms; but it has also its long intervals of cloudless sunshine, when the snow-clad earth gives redoubled brightness to the day; when at night the stars beam with intensest lustre, or the moon floods the whole landscape with her most limpid radiance—and then the joyous outbreak of our spring, bursting at once into leaf and blossom, redundant with vegetation, and vociferous with life!—and the splendors of our summer; its morning voluptuousness and evening glory; its airy palaces of sun-gilt clouds piled up in a deep azure sky; and its gusts of tempest of almost tropical grandeur, when the forked lightning and the bellowing thunder volley from the battlements of heaven and shake the sultry atmosphere—and the sublime melancholy of our autumn, magnificent in its decay, withering down the pomp and pride of a woodland country, yet reflecting back from its yellow forests the golden serenity of the sky—surely we may say that in our climate ‘the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handywork: day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night showeth knowledge.’”

In estimating the genius of Irving, we can hardly attach too high a value to the refined qualities and genial humor which have made his writings favorites wherever the English language is read. The charm is in the proportion, the keeping, the happy vein which inspires happiness in return. It is the felicity of but few authors, out of the vast stock of English literature, to delight equally young and old. The tales of Irving are the favorite authors of childhood, and their good humor and amenity can please where

most literature is weariness, in the sick-room of the convalescent. Every influence which breathes from these writings is good and generous. Their sentiment is always just and manly, without cant or affectation; their humor is always within the bounds of propriety. They have a fresh inspiration of American nature, which is not the less nature for the art with which it is adorned. The color of personality attaches us throughout to the author, whose humor of character is always to be felt. This happy art of presenting rude and confused objects in an orderly pleasurable aspect, everywhere to be met with in the pages of Irving, is one of the most beneficent in literature. The philosopher Hume said a turn for humor was worth to him ten thousand a year, and it is this gift which the writings of Irving impart. To this quality is allied an active fancy and poetic imagination, many of the choicest passages of Irving being interpenetrated by this vivifying power. On one or two occasions only, we believe,—in some stanzas to the Passaic River, some delicate lines descriptive of a painting by Gilbert Stuart Newton, and a theatrical address once pronounced by Cooper at the Park Theatre,—has he ever put pen to verse: but he is an essential poet in prose, in many exquisite passages of vivid description from Westminster Abbey and English rural scenery to the waste beauties of the great region beyond the Mississippi.

In composition, Mr. Irving's style flowed easily, though in common with most writers of original genius he had his favoring moods and seasons. Some of his best works were struck off at a heat. He took pleasure in writing when he could have his own way, and nurse a subject in his mind. The many hours passed at his desk in the absorbing pursuit of tracing his small, neat manuscript pages, were among his happiest. His principles of composition were few and simple. He recommended short and direct phrases in writing, with as few long words as possible, avoiding the use of conjunctions and expletives. On looking over his books we find that he is much less indebted to the Latin element of the language, for the flow of his composition, than we had supposed. He would, doubtless, have concurred with the advice of Sydney Smith to a young author, to improve his style by striking out every other word.

He attributed his ease in writing, we have heard it stated, to the early training which he received at his first school, where this branch of education was much insisted upon. He would write out the compositions of many of his school-fellows, and adapt his style to that of the one whose task he had undertaken. This is the remark of one who knew him well. But whatever

direction may thus have been given to his powers, we suspect that, as in the case of Oliver Goldsmith, a happy instinct was his chief guide, and that he found his way to his place in English literature, with but little aid from schoolmasters or preceptors. Good British authors were his professors; his college was the library where the learned doctors were the wits of Queen Anne, and such kindly instructors as Sterne, Johnson, and above all, Goldsmith; but his university was the world.

"He read much as a boy," remarks our narrator, "and always had entertaining books in his desk for a stealthy perusal, when the master's eye was turned. He was not a very deep classical scholar, not having received a collegiate education, but his deficiencies in this respect were amply compensated by his thorough ease in the use of plain, terse English, in which he was excelled by none. In reading, his memory of facts was not good, but he would grasp the spirit of a narrative, and conjure up a coloring of his own, which indelibly impressed it upon his mind, and was used as occasion required."*

We have said that the university of Irving was the world. He was never a very bookish man in the restricted sense; he was oftener to be found in good company than in the library, in the fields and streets than in the study; yet he was not a man of action in crowds. His life was a happy compromise between literature and society. A meditative disposition threw him upon himself; he was not cramped by pedantry, nor was his mind volatilized or lost in the dissipations or business of the world.

It was early remarked by one of the most subtle and powerful critics whom America has produced, Mr. Dana, the author of that more deeply-graven "Sketch Book," *The Idle Man*, that "Irving's wit and humor do not appear to come of reading witty and humorous books; but from the world acting upon a mind of that cast, and putting those powers in motion."†

We have now concluded our brief sketch of the literary career of Washington Irving. It would be an injustice to his memory, and a reproach to ourselves, not to say a word of those sterling moral qualities which were the secret springs nurturing, in the image of Jeremy Taylor, the "fair spreading tree" of his reputation in his books. He was intimately and essentially, in small things and in great, an honest, honorable man. His judgment was sound, and his course always straightforward; so that he attained success without craft or chicanery, which were entirely foreign to his nature. A modest simplicity

guided him in every thing. A beneficent deity had given him neither poverty nor riches, and had removed far from him vanity and lies. He had none of the frequent affectations of literature. He valued reputation, but he was never seen stumbling in the awkward pursuit of praise. It came to him through life, and in abundant measure in age, when it was most welcome, to cheer drooping spirits, and clothe with a warm mantle of charity and affection, the chill, declining years.

"Nothing amazed him," writes Mr. Brevoort to us, "so much as to be lionized, or made the centre of a group of listeners. To hear him talk, and to draw him out, it was necessary to have but few present. He preferred the society of such as had some refinement of taste; not humorous or witty, but with a disposition to take the pleasant side of any question; neither boisterous nor satirical. He never said any thing for effect, nor with a view to its being repeated or recorded. His remarks would drop from him as naturally as possible, and he never monopolized the conversation, but followed, instead of leading it,"

His chief guides were his tastes and affections, with which his principles of duty and religion, his love of independence, and his patriotism, were inwrought. Let his pastor, and the villagers and children of his neighborhood, as on the day of his funeral, that memorable first of December, when nature seemed to sympathize with his departure from earth, bear witness to his unaffected piety.

THE FUNERAL OF WASHINGTON IRVING.

BY W. FRANCIS WILLIAMS.

YESTERDAY* the funeral of Washington Irving took place at Tarrytown, where for twenty-one years the great author had resided, and to almost every inhabitant of which he was a personal friend. Indeed, the unanimity with which the people of that vicinity flocked to do honor to the memory of their late fellow-townsmen, was the spontaneous exhibition of their personal regard rather than an ovation to the genius and talent of a world-renowned author.

According to previous arrangement the stores at Tarrytown were closed yesterday, and many of them draped with black and white muslin. This gave a peculiar air of melancholy to the aspect of this quiet village, to which the slow tolling of the church-bells gave an additional mournfulness. The numerous visitors from New York, most of whom came by the eleven-o'clock train from the city, reaching Tarrytown at about

* MS. Notes by Mr. J. Carson Brevoort.

† North American Review for 1819. Article—"The Sketch Book."

* This sketch appeared in the N. Y. *Evening Post*, Dec. 2, 1850.

FUNERAL SERVICES.

noon, were thus at once reminded of the solemnity of the occasion and of the mournful character of their visit.

It would be difficult to estimate the number of persons that visited the village, to attend the funeral of Mr. Irving. We were, however, assured by an old inhabitant that on only one previous occasion had there been so large a concourse of people in Tarrytown. That occasion was the dedication of the monument erected to the memory of Paulding, Williams, and Van Wert, on the spot where those patriots captured Major André. Certainly on no previous occasion has the village contained such an array of men eminent in the various walks of literature and commerce.

The principal road at Tarrytown, after leaving the depot, and passing by a number of the principal stores and the hotels, winds up a short steep hill, and continues running eastwardly for about a quarter of a mile, until it meets the main road running from New York northward, parallel with the Hudson river. The upper part of the village has a more rustic appearance than the portion beneath the hill, as the houses are detached, and stand in large gardens surrounded by rich foliage, which even yet has not entirely disappeared.

At the crossing, where the road from the depot meets the main road, which, during its course through Tarrytown, is called "Broadway," an arch or canopy of black and white drapery decorated the street. To the south, about two miles from the junction, is Sunnyside, the celebrated residence of Mr. Irving, the Wolfert's Roost of the old Dutch times.

At this period of the year, Sunnyside generally presents a melancholy appearance, the trees being almost entirely denuded of foliage, the dry leaves lying upon the walks and lawns, and the wind playing around the yet verdant evergreens and among the bare branches with the soft, sad music peculiar to the autumn breeze. The house itself, with its quaint gables, its old-fashioned ornaments and rambling wings, readily assumes a tinge of melancholy. But yesterday it appeared unusually lonely; the windows were closed, and delicacy prevented others than those connected with the family or with the necessary funeral offices from intruding upon the house of woe, or trespassing upon the tastefully laid-out grounds.

At about one o'clock the funeral procession left Sunnyside, where a private religious service had been held by Rev. Dr. Creighton, the rector of Christ Church, Tarrytown, and an intimate personal friend of the deceased. The coffin was placed in a handsome hearse, the sides of which were glazed, so that the coffin was plainly visible. The carriages containing the friends of the

deceased followed. The turnpike road commands noble views of the Hudson river, with which the memory of Irving will be forever associated, while the "broad expanse of the Tappan Zee," dotted with sails, is spread out like a panorama before the traveller. The following is the

PROGRAMME OF THE PROCESSION.

- The Committee of Arrangements, consisting of
 Mr. Benson Ferris, Mr. William Chalmers,
 Mr. Seth Bldr, Hon. Holmes Odell,
 General Henry Storms.
- THE CLERGY:
- Rev. Wm. D. Creighton, D.D., Rev. J. S. Spencer,
 in carriages, wearing their gowns.
- PHYSICIANS:
- John C. Peters, M.D., H. Caruthers, M.D.,
 in carriages.
- PALL BEARERS:
- Professor James Renwick, Gouverneur Kemble,
 Mr. James A. Hamilton, Mr. Henry Sheldon,
 Dr. James G. Cogswell, Mr. N. B. Holmes,
 Gen. James Watson Webb, Mr. George D. Morgan,
 in carriages.
- THE HEARSE,
 drawn by two horses.
- MOURNERS,
 relatives of the deceased, as follows:
- Ebenezer Irving, aged 86, brother of deceased;
 Rev. Pierre P. Irving, Rev. Theodore Irving, Mr. Pierre M. Irving, Mr. Saunders Irving, Mr. Oscar Irving, Mr. Edgar Irving, nephews of deceased;
 Mr. Moses H. Grinnell, nephew by marriage;
 Mr. Irving Grinnell, Mr. Irving Van Wart, and other relatives
 in carriages.
- Private carriages of deceased.
 Trustees of the Astor Library.
 Representatives of the Common Council of New York,
 who joined the procession, on foot.
- Teachers and Pupils of the Private Schools, two and two.
 Citizens and strangers, numbering some five hundred, on foot,
 four abreast.
- Over one hundred and fifty carriages and other vehicles, with
 friends, which covered over a mile of space.
- As the procession approached the public school, the children were seen arrayed in a line upon the roadside. As the hearse passed, the boys and teachers uncovered their heads, in respect to the memory of one who for years had taken an active interest in their studies.
- The church, where the funeral ceremonies took place, is only a few rods from the school-house, and stands on the west side of the road. It is an unpretending structure of red brick, in the perpendicular Gothic or Tudor style of architecture, furnished with a square central tower, embowered in trees, draped with vines, and, like most country and village churches, provided with spacious sheds for the accommodation of the horses and vehicles of attendants from a distance. The basement of the church is occupied for the Sunday-school, and the interior of the church itself is finished with the utmost simplicity. Three Gothic windows on either side afford ingress for air and light. Over the entrance is a gallery for the organ and choir, while the chancel, lighted by a handsome stained window, is in a recess at the opposite or east end

of the building. On the north wall are a couple of diamond-shaped tablets to the memory of eminent members of the congregation long since deceased. For a number of years, Rev. William D. Creighton has officiated as rector of Christ Church. Dr. Creighton is a man of wealth, residing in one of the most beautiful country seats on the Hudson, and performs his parochial duties without receiving any salary. He was at one time, on the death of Dr. Wainwright, elected Provisional Bishop of this diocese, but declined the position, before his consecration, and thus made room for the election of the present Provisional Bishop. Rev. James Selden Spencer is the assistant-minister of Christ Church, Tarrytown.

At twelve o'clock the little church was crowded to repletion, and quite a panic was occasioned by a report that the gallery was threatening to fall. This report originated in the fact that one of the wooden pillars supporting the organ-loft was observed to move, while a crackling sound was heard. A number of people crowded out of the church in terror. It appears that the floor of the church had slightly sunk under the unusual weight, thus loosening the pillar. The gallery was, however, firmly supported by cross-beams, and there was no real danger. The panic was soon allayed.

At about half-past one, the clergy present entered the chancel, led by Bishop Potter, and including Rev. Dr. Vinton, of St. Paul's, New York; Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Grace Church; Rev. Mr. Meade; Rev. Mr. Farmington, of Trinity; Rev. Dr. Morgan, of St. Thomas; Rev. Dr. McViekar, Rev. Mr. Babbitt, and Rev. Mr. Moore. Among the clergymen in the body of the house was Rev. J. B. Wakeley, the distinguished Methodist clergyman of this city.

Rev. Dr. Creighton and Rev. Mr. Spenser, the officiating clergymen, met the body at the door of the church, and proceeded up the south aisle, reading the opening sentences of the Episcopal burial service:

"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Arrived at the chancel, the coffin was deposited before the chancel-rail, while the choir sang to a Gregorian chant, the appointed anthem, "Lord, let me know my end." Dr. Creighton then read the lesson from the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, and the choir sang the following

verses of the 20th hymn, to the choral known as "St. Ann's:—"

"Behold the innumerable host
Of angels clothed in light;
Behold the spirits of the just,
Whose faith is changed to sight.

Behold the best assembly there,
Whose names are writ in heaven;
Hear, too, the Judge of all declare
Their sins through Christ forgiven.

Angels, and living saints, and dead,
But one communion make—
All join in Christ, their vital Head,
And of His love partake."

This hymn is often sung at funerals, and was selected for the funeral of the late Bishop Wainwright.

Dr. Creighton then stated that those desiring to take a last look at the features of the deceased could do so by passing up the south aisle, crossing in front of the chancel, and leaving by the north aisle. This was a poor arrangement, as the head of the coffin fronting to the north, the face of the deceased was not visible to the beholders until they were directly before it; and as the time allowed to each was necessarily very short, few could take more than a passing glimpse. By approaching at the north aisle from the foot of the coffin, a much more satisfactory view could have been obtained.

Nearly a thousand persons who had been unable to gain entrance to the church availed themselves of this mournful privilege, and passed in quick, though solemn procession, by the remains of Washington Irving. Among the distinguished men who took part in this token of respect, or were present at the services, were Commodore Paulding, Hamilton Fish, John A. Dix, William B. Astor, Gulian C. Verplanck, George Bancroft, N. P. Willis, Donald G. Mitchell, Thomas Hicks, John Jay, Henry T. Tuckerman, G. P. Putnam, Evert A. Duyckinck, George L. Duyckinck, George Folsom, Frederick Saunders, President King of Columbia College, Judge Kent, Frederick S. Cozzens. Almost every inhabitant of Tarrytown was present to offer their last tribute of respect to their late friend and fellow-townsmen.

The features of Mr. Irving appeared very thin to those who had not seen him for some time. During the last year, however, Mr. Irving's failing health had visibly told upon his attenuated frame, and he looked very different from what he did five years ago. Then he might have been seen every Sunday in his pew at the little village church, always ready at the close of the services to greet the numerous friends that always met him by the church-door. He appeared well and hearty—as unlike the conventional idea of a literary man as could be, and more like a well-to-do

merchant or a respectable alderman. Mr. Irving dressed, of course, respectably, but never elegantly; and he often had a peculiar shambling gait, that would attract the attention even of those who did not know him. In entering the church he usually was waylaid by a few friends, spoke a few words with them, and then passed into his pew near the chancel, recognizing by a kindly smile, as he walked up the aisle, his various acquaintances. At other times he would visit the Sunday-school, for many years under the superintendence of his intimate personal friend and his pall-bearer, Mr. Nathaniel B. Holmes, of Spring Hill Cottage, Tarrytown. He always was very fond of and exceedingly popular among children, and therefore took a lively interest in the Sunday-school. He was for many years a warden of Christ Church, and on several occasions served as lay delegate to the Diocesan Convention. A firm, though not bigoted Episcopalian, Mr. Irving loved the services of his Church, and often expressed his devoted admiration of her liturgy. At the meeting held by the citizens of Tarrytown the night after Mr. Irving's death, Rev. Mr. Spencer spoke of Mr. Irving's love of the Church, his goodness of heart, and his susceptibility to emotional influences. He said that he had seen Mr. Irving's eyes well over with tears at the least circumstance that would touch his heart. He was passionately fond of music. On the occasion of his first interview with Mr. Irving, he was expressing his interest in that glorious hymn of the Church, the *Gloria in Excelsis*; and repeating the words, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will to men," he exclaimed, with his eyes moistened, "That is religion, Mr. Spencer; that is true religion for you."

Mr. Irving usually attended church accompanied by his nieces and other relatives. * * *

Mr. Irving's body was inclosed in a rosewood coffin, which was embossed with heavy silver screws, and furnished on the sides with chased silver handles. On the top was a silver plate bearing the inscription:

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Born April 3, 1783;

DIED NOVEMBER 28, 1859.

Wreaths of native and exotic flowers lay on the coffin-lid. The corpse was clothed in ordinary civilian costume.

The route to the grave lay along a road offering most beautiful glimpses of land and water scenery, but now rendered peculiarly interesting by the fact that it passes through scenes that the pen of Mr. Irving has rendered classic. The hearse and carriages, accompanied and preceded by a large number of pedestrians, started from

the church at about two o'clock, and passed up the main road, through and beyond the village. The piazzas of the houses were crowded with spectators, while the rocks on the wayside also served as standing-points for strangers and citizens. While the procession was on its way the bells of the various churches tolled responsively.

The procession passed through the village by the monument erected last year on the spot where Major André was captured, until a sudden turn and rapid descent in the road brought the spectator in full view of one of the most delicious bits of pastoral scenery in the vicinity of New York—the brook and cove of Sleepy Hollow, with its pond reflecting the trees upon its hilly borders, while on its opposite shore stood the celebrated Van Tassel mansion, the same to which Ichabod Crane was invited on the night of his celebrated adventure with the headless horseman. The old mill still stands, forming a prominent feature in the picture, and doing to this day good and active service. A few rods further and the bridge which Ichabod crossed in his furious flight, and which Irving in his tale has immortalized in the same way that Burns immortalized another bridge in his Tam O'Shanter, came in sight. It was elegantly decorated with evergreens, and black and white drapery and rosettes. Beyond this, on the opposite bank, stands the old Dutch Church, which, according to an inscription on its front, was built in 1699, by Frederick Phillips and Catharine Van Cortlandt his wife. The Tarrytown Cemetery, which bears also the title of the Mount Pleasant Cemetery, lies to the north of this Church, upon the slope of the hill. It is already thickly populated with tombstones, some of them dating as far back as the year 1667.

Near the summit of the slope, where a grove of oak and yew trees commences to crown the hill, is the burial-place of the Irving family. It is a large square lot, bounded by a low fence and a thickly grown evergreen hedge. Near the centre is a row of five graves, while a few feet distant is another row of five more graves, all marking the resting-places of the deceased members of the Irving family. Between these two rows, and connecting them into one continuous row, is the grave of Washington Irving, which, like the others, will be marked by a plain white marble slab. This latest grave is very near the centre of the Irving lot.

Only a few carriages, containing the relatives of the deceased, approached the grave, the others being left in the road by the old church, while the occupants walked to the place of interment. Dr. Creighton officiated, and, according to the solemn form of the Episcopal service, consigned

the "earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes." The scene at this moment, apart from the inseparable solemnity of such an occasion, was one of more than ordinary interest.

The day was mild and balmy as at spring-time, while the sun, yet high above the horizon, was veiled rather than dimmed by a film of cloud, which softened the rays that would otherwise have fallen with painful brilliancy upon the eyes of the reverently uncovered crowd that was present. The relatives and personal friends of the deceased were within the inclosure of the burial lot, while outside, and upon the various hillocks commanding a view of the scene, were many of the townspeople and strangers. Dr. Creighton, Bishop Potter, and the Rev. Pierre P. Irving stood at the head of the grave, and by them was the venerable brother of Washington Irving, Mr. Ebenezer Irving, now eighty-six years old, supported by his two daughters, the nieces whose care and affection so greatly enlivened the later years of Washington Irving's life. Other relations and friends made up the group. The scene spread out before this sad assembly, though all unheeded by them, was one of singular beauty. Down the green hill-slope, thickly dotted with grave-stones, groups of late comers were coming slowly towards the place of interment. At the foot of the slope was the old revolutionary church, its front draped in black, while the road before it was crowded with carriages. Beyond this the smooth sheet of water that supplies the ancient Van Tassel mill-dam was plainly discernible, while still farther were the village of Tarrytown and the Hudson river, with the Palisades forming a distant background. The delicate blue haze that pervaded the atmosphere mingled with the rich tints of an afternoon sun, which, as it descended, resolved itself, an hour or two later, into one of those gorgeous autumn sunsets that add such a peculiar glory to American scenery. And it was in such a place as this, on such a day, and under such circumstances that Washington Irving, the genial author, and the loved and cherished friend and citizen, was laid quietly down to take his last sleep, among the scenes he has himself so faithfully described, by the side of his mother, and in the very spot he had but a week ago designated as the place of his final repose.

Washington Irving, as the last of the great literary men of the earlier part of this century, and probably from his personal acquaintance with the great Scottish novelist, recalls to mind the genius and career of Walter Scott. In their last days, too, there was a singular similarity. Like Scott, Irving had his home among the scenes that he particularly loved, and which he had invested with the magic of his genius, and

like Scott, he was buried amid those scenes. It is difficult to tell whether the burial-place of Scott or of Irving is the more attractive. Beneath a high majestic arch of Dryburgh Abbey, one of the few remains of that noble Gothic edifice that has escaped the ravages of time—so near the banks of an historic Scottish stream, that the ripple of her waters can be heard from his grave—within sight of the almost enchanted land,

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes down to the plain,"

surrounded by decaying monuments of the mediæval grandeur, of which he has so nobly sung, they built the sarcophagus of Walter Scott. On the shores of his loved Hudson, in sight of the noble Palisades, before whose grand magnificence the mediæval monuments are but as toys, and under only the arch of oak and yew branches, twenty-seven years later his friend Washington Irving was laid to rest. They are now both but mere historic names. Yet Abbotsford and Sunnyside will remain to attract the traveller's attention, and Dryburgh Abbey will not be oftener visited than the quiet churchyard that looks upon Sleepy Hollow and the Tappan Zee.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEW YORK BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND COUNCILMEN.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

The Board of Aldermen held a special meeting at 3 P. M., Nov. 30.

The President, Alderman McSpedon, stated that the meeting had been called, in accordance with the suggestion of the Mayor, for the purpose of making a suitable expression of the sentiments of sorrow to which the death of Washington Irving gave rise.

The following message from the Mayor was read:

THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE.

"MAYOR'S OFFICE, New York, Nov. 30, 1859.

"To the Honorable the Common Council:

"GENTLEMEN:—It becomes my painful duty to announce to you the death of an eminent man and illustrious author. Washington Irving is no more. He died at his late residence, at Sunnyside, Westchester county, on the evening of the 29th inst., and already the wires of the electric telegraph have sped the news of this sad event to nearly every part of our country, by which it will, no doubt, be considered as a national calamity.

"While we bow with resignation to the dispensation of our Heavenly Father, who has taken from our country and the world of literature one

RESOLUTIONS

of its greatest benefactors and gifted sons, we are cheered by the thought that his works will be a rich and unfailing treasure of instruction and delight for generations to come. The genial products of his pure and graceful pen will forever continue to afford a solace to the sick and weary, and supply a fund of innocent gratification to all classes, as long as literary taste and culture find a place on earth; while his biographies of Columbus and Washington will fire the youthful mind to emulate those examples of heroic duty and heroic patriotism.

"For over fifty years this pioneer of American literature has ably sustained in the field of letters the national credit and honor; and I am confident that his native City will not be indifferent in adding their tribute to his fame. I would accordingly recommend that the Common Council pass such resolutions as may be appropriate to this sad occasion, expressing the sorrow of our citizens at his loss, as well as their admiration of him as a man, a writer, and an historian, and their sympathy with his bereaved family and friends. I would also recommend that you direct the alarm-bells, and request the church-bells to be tolled to-morrow, during the time fixed for his funeral, and that flags on the public buildings be displayed at half-mast throughout the entire day.

"DANIEL F. TIEMANN, Mayor."

Ald. Adams moved that the message be transmitted to the Board of Councilmen. Carried.

Alderman Peck said the death of Washington Irving had cast a gloom over the whole community. He was a Knickerbocker—a man of rare talents, whose place could not easily be supplied. No one could pass an adequate eulogy upon him. His name was known and honored throughout the world. When he had heard that Washington Irving was no more, he had been deeply impressed with the littleness of worldly affairs. When a great man died, the world mourned his loss. Who could have departed whose loss would have been more sincerely felt? He presented the following resolutions:

"*Whereas*, His Honor the Mayor has officially communicated to the Board the melancholy intelligence of the decease of one of New York's most illustrious sons, the Hon. Washington Irving, the sad event occurring at his late residence at Sunnyside, on the banks of the Hudson, in the adjoining county, on Monday evening last, at the advanced age of 76 years; and

"*Whereas*, In the decease of our illustrious and honored citizen, it is meet that the authorities of this, the City of his birth, should in a becoming manner evince their sense of the loss sustained by the whole country in being deprived of the companionship of one who has by his exemplary life

and his teachings, through the medium of his numerous literary publications, tended in a marked degree to elevate the mind, enlighten the understanding, and influence the will of all those of our citizens who entertain feelings of love and veneration for the cherished laws and institutions of our beloved country, more especially in the great and inestimable legacy bequeathed to us in his *Life of Washington*; and

"*Whereas*, In the many and important national trusts committed to his charge as Secretary of Legation at the Court of St. James, and as Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Madrid, the energy and fidelity with which he devoted his rare talents and ability to the best interests of his country, entitle him to the lasting gratitude of those for whom he labored; and the Common Council, as the representatives of the greatest commercial and most important City in the Union, feel called upon to pay their feeble tribute of respect to his memory as a public man; and

"*Whereas*, Possessing as he did in an eminent degree all those attributes which constitute the scholar, the patriot, and the statesman, his loss will be the more sorely felt, as his death creates a void in the number of our public men which cannot be filled in our day and generation—the shining galaxy of noble names, of whom he was a bright particular star, having of late years been gradually fading from our national horizon, never, we fear, to be replaced or renewed by stars of equal brilliancy; therefore, be it

"*Resolved*, That this Common Council deeply sympathize with the family and relatives of our deceased friend in their affliction; and in consideration of our respect for his memory, do recommend that his Honor the Mayor direct the bells in the several fire-alarm bell-towers to be tolled between the hours of one and two o'clock, on Thursday, Dec. 1, 1859, at which time the funeral will take place from his late residence; that the sextons of the several churches or places of Divine worship be requested to toll the bells of their several churches at the above-mentioned time; that the masters of vessels in the harbor, the proprietors of hotels and other public buildings, be requested to display their flags at half-mast during the day, and that the flags on the City Hall and other public buildings and institutions of the City, be also displayed at half-mast during the day. And be it further

"*Resolved*, That the Clerk of the Common Council be directed to cause a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions to be suitably engrossed and transmitted to the family of the deceased."

The resolutions were adopted unanimously, and transmitted to the Board of Councilmen.

The Board then adjourned.

ATHENÆUM RESOLUTIONS.

The Board of Councilmen also held a special meeting, at which similar resolutions were passed, and remarks made by Messrs. Ottarson, Lent, and others. Mr. Ottarson recalled Mr. Irving's speech complimentary to the city at the dinner given to him in 1832.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE ATHENÆUM.—THE REV. DR. OSGOOD'S REMARKS.

At the annual meeting of the Athenæum Club of this city, held November 30, at their rooms, No. 108 Fifth Avenue, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That the members of the Athenæum of New York, share in the profound sorrow which is everywhere felt at the death of Washington Irving.

Resolved, That while contemplating this event, which deprives the world of letters of its most illustrious ornament, we dwell with especial pride and affection on the memory of one who, by a long life of constant devotion to American literature, has justly earned the name of its most honored patriarch and representative.

Resolved, That the immortal legacy which he has left in his works entitles him to the enduring gratitude of the American people, and the Athenæum hereby offers its co-operation in embodying the sentiment of public appreciation in the form of some appropriate memorial.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions, signed by the president and secretary of the association, be forwarded to the family of the deceased, and that they be published in the morning and evening papers of the city.

GEORGE FOLSOM, President.

FRANK MOORE, Secretary.

The Rev. Dr. Osgood, in responding to these resolutions, remarked that he had come late to the club, wholly unaware that any such resolutions were to be offered, and he was not prepared to speak as the dignity of the occasion demanded. He thought, however, that any man might venture upon a few words of tribute to Washington Irving, and that simple and honest gratitude ought to be motive and inspiration enough. He would therefore not shrink from acceding to the request of his friends.

It is best to speak of the dead unaffectedly, just as we feel, or else not to speak of them at all; and the reason why epitaphs are said to tell such lies, is not because the authors of them

mean deliberately to lie, but because they allow themselves to take an unnatural position, and fall into an exaggerated, if not false, temper and style. Surely, now we may trust ourselves to speak sincerely of Irving, and say at the outset that, mournful as it is, we think that we shall never see his face nor touch his hand again. Yet, on the whole, there is far more to cheer and exalt than to sadden and depress us, in his death. His life has been a continued triumph, and any man who knows what this world is, and how full of trials and disappointments, must look upon this veteran of letters as favored alike in the honors of his life of seventy-six years and in the tranquillity of his death. Death takes him from our sight only to give new power to his works, and sets its solemn seal upon his genius, not to shut up its gold in sepulchral vaults or musty parchments, but to stamp it with the immortal crown, and give it universal currency among men, with the coinage that bears the superscription of God.

Washington Irving's death releases him from a round of labor most faithfully pursued, and his last work on Washington at once completes his literary life, and makes his baptismal name alike a name and a title,—his birth name and his honorary title. In fact, in his case, the day of his death answers fitly to his birth, and the honors that he won by his service till his decease, harmonized with the genius which was in-born. It is not always that a man's genius and character are alike honorable. If a man's birth should be celebrated as the date of his genius, and his death as the date of his completed character, we may here, to-night, put both dates together, and call Washington Irving blessed, alike in the gift of native genius and the graces of gentle humanity and unswerving fidelity.

Dr. Osgood said that he would not presume to survey Irving's various books, or try to analyze his intellectual gifts. He would merely speak of his genial temper,—the charming good-nature that led him to the practical optimism that makes the best of every thing, and enabled him to bequeath, not only to his heirs at law, but to the whole world of readers, a "Sunnyside," in which they may bask in the light of God, among the fruits and flowers of free and fair humanity, on the banks of a river whose flow and whose music all time is swelling.

With a word upon Irving's services to American nationality, and the power of literature in giving unity to a people, far more enduring than comes from the schemes of political wire-pullers and panic-makers, Dr. Osgood commended the resolutions, and took his seat.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

At the monthly meeting of the Society, held Dec. 6, 1859, after the usual transactions, the President, the Hon. Luther Bradish, made the following remarks :

"Since our last meeting, death has again invaded the circle of our Society, and removed from among us one of our earliest, most distinguished, and most cherished members. After a long, brilliant, and well-closed life, WASHINGTON IRVING has gone to his final rest! Few among the current events of time have touched more profoundly the heart of the public, or moved more deeply its finer sensibilities. It was natural that this should be so. For Washington Irving was not only admired for the brilliancy of his genius and its productions, but he was beloved for his genial spirit, the amenity of his character, and the beauty of his life. In his departure from among us he has left behind him, to remind us of the magnitude of our loss, not only the rich heritage of his literary works, but the benign influence and encouraging example of his own well-spent and successful life. In the universal grief at such a loss, the members of this Society deeply sympathize; but in the intimate relations of the deceased with this Society as a loved and honored associate, we have an additional and peculiar motive for grief.

"It is therefore fitting and proper that the Society should, in a manner becoming the occasion and worthy of itself, signalize its high appreciation of the deceased, and its own peculiar and profound grief at his loss. To this end, I trust that suitable measures may be proposed and adopted on this occasion, and which I now invite."

President King, of Columbia College, rose and said, that the duty had been assigned to him of laying before the Society some resolutions expressive of the Society's appreciation of the loss it had sustained in the death of Washington Irving. They would require no preface, and he would therefore read them.

Resolved, That the New York Historical Society has received with deep and solemn interest the intelligence of the death of our distinguished associate, Washington Irving, whose glowing pen has illustrated the annals, as the beauty of his life has advanced the character, of our country and our race.

Resolved, That, while mourning, as all must mourn, the loss of such a man, we acknowledge the Goodness that vouchsafed to him length of days to complete his last great work; and then, turning from further labors, to pass serenely,

and without suffering, from mortal life to immortality.

Resolved, That this Society will celebrate the next anniversary of the birth of Washington Irving by a Public Address on his Life, Character, and Genius; that William Cullen Bryant be respectfully requested to prepare and deliver the address; and that the executive committee make the proper arrangements for the occasion.

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing resolutions, duly authenticated, be transmitted by the President of the Society to the family of the deceased.

ADDRESS OF CHARLES KING.

The duty has been assigned to me, Mr. President, of offering for the consideration of the New York Historical Society certain resolutions expressive of our feelings at the death of Washington Irving, one of our earliest, oldest, and most distinguished members. There is no preface needed for the performance of such a duty, and I ask therefore at once to read the resolutions.

It is only a few short months ago that we met here to express our regrets at the decease of another illustrious member of our Society, too early snatched from us—our great historian Prescott. It was an added pang to our grief then, that in the meridian of his powers, with his work yet unaccomplished, and while we might reasonably look for continued years of honorable labors, Prescott was suddenly struck down. Now our sorrow—not less deep and sincere—is yet soothed by the reflection that Irving was graciously permitted to fulfil his work: that his beautiful life was prolonged into genial old age, with heart and affections still fresh, with judgment matured, and with faculties to complete the crowning glory of his literary labor—the biography of Washington. We cannot see so bright a life go out without mourning; yet we are consoled as by the dying sunset of a glorious day. That whole life, with the exception of the period passed in Europe, was spent in this city and vicinity. Mr. Irving was eminently a New Yorker, and fond of being so regarded; yet he was universal and catholic in his sympathies: and well was that largeness of sympathy repaid to him,—for where are not his friends and admirers?

To those of us who knew him in early youth—we are few and far between now, who did thus know him—his personal character is so identified with his literary character, that we might well distrust our judgment of his works from attachment to his person: but that the united voice of Europe and America confirms the most favorable judgment. He has written

much, and on varied and widely differing subjects, but in all, well. In his great biographies, careful in investigation, truthful in statement, impartial in deciding, and always aiming to be right, he wins the confidence of his readers by his honesty, quite as much as their admiration by his pure, polished, transparent style. In his various essays and fancy sketches, we find the same genial temper, quaint imaginings, delicate humor, and stainless purity, which characterized the man. Never, indeed, was author so completely *daguerreotyped* in the sunlight of his own genius as Washington Irving. He stands revealed in all the lineaments of his moral nature by the brightness of his own flashing pen. And as those who knew him best cannot, in all their intercourse, recall a word or act of his that could offend the most sensitive delicacy, so no cheek ever felt a blush of distress at any line or sentiment he ever wrote.

Of such a life, Mr. President, and such literary labors, it seems meet and fitting altogether that his associates in this Society, should make honorable record, as well in affectionate testimony of their own high regard, as for the edification of those who shall come after us to profit by such an example.

And it is most fortunate—shall I err in saying Providential?—that the close of such a life should be beautiful and serene as its course, that he should pass from life to death without a struggle, a murmur or a sigh; and that his obsequies should constitute the most remarkable incident known in the record of any private man. Truly the heavens that smiled propitious on his life, smiled, too, propitious on his grave. On one of the loveliest days of our loveliest season, which our Longfellow tells us is called by the pious Acadian peasants, "*the Summer of all Saints*," our friend was borne to his rest, followed by thousands from city and country, the long procession wending its way amid rustic displays of admiration, and regret—all business suspended, all hearts intent upon the one common sorrow, and among scenes which his pen has immortalized. Slowly, slowly and sadly they went, as the great sun sank to its rest, "looking with eyes of love, through the golden" vapors around him, upon that grave which was just about to close upon all that was mortal of our friend.

It is a "Washington Irving day," was an exclamation from many lips—a day in its beauty, calmness, and loveliness, akin to his life and labors; and turning from that hill-side where he was laid to his rest, to gaze upon the enchanting panorama around, and to mark the demeanor of the thronging multitudes as they separated on their respective paths, it was impossible not

to feel, with all the joy of grief, that our dead had been fittingly and worthily honored.

Mr. President, I add no more, and simply move the adoption of the resolutions.

The Rev. Dr. Bethune, upon being called upon by Mr. Bradish, said that he arose at the instance of an authority which he would never willingly disobey, to second the resolutions. He wished it to be understood that he did not deem himself a fit person to assume such a charge, as he had never been brought into close personal intimacy with Mr. Irving. He had indeed resided in his rural neighborhood; but he had not called upon him, out of respect for his retirement and pursuits. Dr. Bethune spoke of Mr. Irving's choice of a residence; in the valley, not amid the mountains; by the fields and meadows of the broad Tappaan sea, rather than the Highlands; in a congenial region, suited to his temperament. Aside from the intrinsic beauties of Irving's writings, he considered their great excellence to be their moral worth. After enlarging somewhat upon this topic, he concluded as follows: "Look upon the *Life of Washington Irving* was, if he chose to be, as strong as he was gentle. Let us honor his memory by following his example. If we cannot imitate the beauty of his power,—for it is not given to every one to be great, to instruct all, as master—let us, each in his sphere, show in his life that he has not read in vain the lessons of that beautiful teacher, who, though dead, yet speaketh."

ADDRESS OF MR. GEORGE BANCROFT.

Memory cherishes the lovely qualities and beautiful career of our friend who has just ceased to be mortal: but words are wanting to portray his genius and his virtues. No American since Washington has taken with him to the grave the undivided affection of the American people like Irving. And it is right that it should be so. He came into the world just as a treaty with England gave our Republic a recognized existence among the nations; and he was lulled in his cradle by the pleasant songs of returning peace. The first great solemnity that he gazed upon in his childhood was the inauguration of our Constitution; so that the early life of him who was called to take the foremost part in creating an American literature, was bathed in the purest dews of our country's morning. As he grew up, his genial humor was nursed by the traditions and inspirations of his own native State; he opened his heart to all the pleasant influences that surrounded him; he made himself one with Nature as she reveals herself in her glory along the Hudson; and when he was scarce

six and twenty years old he had written what the world will not suffer to be forgotten.

Thus far his literary activity had been the outgoing of the joyousness of youth; his mind was to be ripened, his character to be matured, his rightful career to be made plain by the trials of affliction. He had loved and been beloved; and he watched, to use his own words, "beauty and innocence languish into the tomb." The being was departed whom he had loved as he never again was to love in this world, who had loved him as he was never again to be loved; and the gladsome humor that marked his entrance into life had become, not subdued, but tinged by a sweet-souled melancholy, and a large and more earnest sympathy with his kind. Now, when he stood midway in the path of human life, of a sudden his outward fortune was swept away and disappeared, and he was left in possession of nothing but his own mind. Blessed adversity! that opened to him the treasures which lay heaped up within his soul. Sorrow and misfortune only brought out in its brightness the purity of his nature, and were but as clouds that reflect the sunshine in a thousand hues.

In a foreign land, alone, impoverished, bereaved, he was so good and true, we might also say angels ministered to him. He looked with serene wisdom upon the angry waves that threatened him, and they passed under him without harm.

The career of letters now claimed him for its service. He had not been deeply read in books; but his mind was richly stored with images of beauty and primal truths, and he knew nature by heart. The English language, which better than any other can express the sincerity of affection, the delicacy of sentiment, the freshness of rural scenes, spread out its boundless wealth as his own; and at that period of what he himself calls "his troubled life," he conquered for himself fame and good will wherever that language is spoken.

It was at this period of his life that, during a summer at Paris, I formed with him that relation of friendly intimacy which grew in strength to the last. Time has in a measure effaced the relative difference of our years, but then he was almost twice as old as I. As we roamed together over the fields round Paris, many an earnest, and noble, and encouraging word fell from him for my behalf; and sometimes he would speak to me of his own occupations. How he proceeded with descriptions, I cannot say; but I found that where he gave expression to feeling, he would write continuously, pouring out as it were at one gush all he intended to give forth. One evening, after we had been many hours together, he took me to his room and read to me what he had written at one sitting, without pause, without one in-

spiration, and almost without interlineation or erasure.

I remember it to this day: it was his *St. Mark's Eve*, from the words "I am now alone in my chamber;" to the end. He that studies such passages closely will find confessions of Irving's own inward experience and affections.

As an historian, Irving stands in the front rank. His life of Columbus has all kinds of merit—research, critical judgment, interest in the narrative, picturesque description and golden style; exquisite in the melody of its cadences and its choice of words. His *Life of Washington*, which is still dear to the American people, is a marvel. No one has so painted the Father of his Country to the life; modestly disclaiming great extent of original research, he has yet added much that was not known before. But what distinguishes him is the grace and facility of his movement. He writes American history, as it were, by the aid of special endowments; he takes with him a candor that never fails; a clear, impartial judgment, and an unrivalled keenness of insight into character. He may err in minor details, but never in the general effect. No one has drawn so true, and touching, and vivid a picture of Washington in his retirement, as Irving, who published it while suffering from prostration of the nerves, a depression of spirits, and that attack of asthma which harassed him to the last.

Nor let it be forgotten that Irving is a native of our own New York. Like Chaucer, and Milton, and Pope, and Gray, his birthplace was in the heart of a city. Among the Greeks, when a victor returned from the Olympian games, the citizens of his own home esteemed his prizes their own, went out to welcome his return, and would even break down the walls to receive him in greater triumph. Our Irving has wrestled in the game of life and came off the conqueror; he has gone to his long home; on the mildest of winter days we have surrounded him with flowers and laid him among his kindred, and his spirit in its flight has been borne upward on the affections of countless multitudes. Now, what shall we do here to mark for him our veneration and love? He gave to this city of merchants fame throughout the world of letters. Will not, then, the merchants of New York raise to his memory a statue of purest marble? It would be the payment of a debt to his fame, a just tribute to his virtues, a lesson to the rising generations. Fathers might then take their sons to gaze on his lineaments, and say, "There is the man who during more than fifty years employed his pen as none other could have done, and in all that time never wrote one word that was tainted by skepticism, nor one line that was not as chaste and pure as the violets of Spring."

CHARACTERISTICS OF WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE ADDRESS OF DR. JOHN W. FRANCIS.

In my attendance on this meeting of the Historical Society, it was my purpose to remain a listener, rather than be a speaker. The deep interest which the notices of the life of the illustrious deceased have awakened everywhere, and the grateful tributes now paid to the memory of the great author and his virtuous career, by the several gentlemen who have gratified this large assembly by their addresses this evening, have rendered the announcement of his death, if possible, still more impressive and instructive, and to this institution a memorable event indeed. I most cordially agree with every sentiment that has been expressed with regard to the spotless integrity of his life, the purity and excellence of his writings, and the mighty influence they have had, and are destined to maintain in after time, in the republic of letters. The gentlemen who have so amply given us their opinion on the richness of his intellect, the exquisite finish and chasteness of his style, the fertility of his imagination, his humor, his wit, his delicate satire, and e'en the very habits of the man, have rendered additional remarks of that import superfluous on this occasion; and yet I cannot but believe, in part, that many of their inferences, however faithfully deduced, have been drawn more from a study of his printed works than from a close personal knowledge of the man himself. I am aware that individually he was widely known, and that his character was well understood; and I am ready to acknowledge the obligations we are under for the benefit of that wisdom given us at this meeting which their personal knowledge of him in later years has enabled them to impart.

But there is a period in the life of the great author in which I think I have some advantages, or information at least, over the orators of to-night; and that fact, and that alone, impels me to the statement of a few circumstances associated with Washington Irving during a portion of his school-boy days. In casting my eyes around this assembly I see few older than myself, and none, I believe, acquainted with him at the period to which I allude in the same relationship with myself. I was a boy at the same school with young Irving, now some sixty-two years ago, in 1797. The institution was a male seminary, situated on John-street, next to the primary Methodist Meeting-house, and in the vicinity of the renowned John-street Theatre. There was some six years' difference in our ages, and Irving occupied a place in the school among the older youth at the head, where the prominent master had his desk and exercised his ferule. The

younger the scholar, the nearer the entrance or door seemed to be the disposition of the seat for him. In that day of dreary teaching in our academies, young Irving was associated with boys of about the same age with himself, and their studies blended in classes in the ordinary way so common in school-arrangements. About four years since, at an interview with Mr. Irving, the conversation turned to former times, and I asked him if he had a fair recollection of his school-associates of those days. He replied he believed they had all departed. I stated that I had in memory two survivors: one engaged in the lottery of political life, the other cultivating cabbages on his ample farm, with all the industry of an old Knickerbocker, though he was represented to be worth nigh half a million of dollars. Mr. Irving manifested a desire to make a visit to this legitimate descendant of the olden times, and we made an arrangement with that intent; but circumstances intervened, and the chances of life prevented it.

I remember well the elementary books scattered about the seminary, so characteristic of a common English school at that period: the *Columbian Orator* of Bingham, and Hamilton Moore's *Monitor*; the *Schoolmaster's Assistant* of Dilworth, and the *Arithmetic* of Pike, with here and there a copy of Dytch's English Dictionary. In those days, ballads, on printed slips, or folded in 8vo half-sheets, were widely sold in the streets, and many found their way into the school-house. *Watty and Meg* was of the number, supposed generally to be an offspring of Burns, but afterwards known as an early production of the celebrated Alexander Wilson, the great author of *American Ornithology*; many of Dibdin's famous songs, and Mrs. Rowson's *America*, *Commerce*, and *Freedom*, were also in the hands of many scholars. It may have been that the patriotism of the times in Adams' administration against the French, led to the distribution or toleration of this sort of literature among the boys, the better to diffuse the patriotic sentiment of the day. Young Irving, I think, was more of a general reader than an exact student, so far as prescribed duties enjoined. I take it that even at that juvenile period he had already adopted his own peculiar method of obtaining knowledge. He ruminated within himself, while his often seeming listlessness was seizing upon ludicrous perplexities which fell under his own notice. That quick foresightedness, that apt seizure of a novelty, a principle, or a fact, that prompt comprehension when too much labor was not demanded, rendered it comparatively an easy matter for him to master his Rule of Three; and as to grammar, we may infer, from the ever-dominant beauty and gracefulness of

his diction in all his writings, that he was etymological from the beginning. The leading teacher of the institution was ever insisting on the importance of rhetoric, and struggled hard to make every boy a Cicero. He assigned pieces for memory, to be rehearsed at the public exhibitions of his scholars, and such was his ethnological science and his acquaintance with the doctrine of temperaments, that he committed to Irving the heroic lines—

“My voice is still for war,” &c.—

while I, nearly seven years younger, was given for rhetorical display—

“Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,” &c

There was a curious conflict existing in the school between the principal and his assistant-instructor: the former a legitimate burgher of the city, the latter a New England pedagogue. So far as I can remember, something depended on the choice of the boy's parents in the selection of his studies; but if not expressed otherwise, the principal stuck earnestly to Dilworth, while the assistant, for his section of instruction, held to Noah Webster. The same system or rule was adopted with the school in unfolding the intricacies of arithmetic: Dilworth was all in all with the principal, while Nicholas Pike, with his amended federal currency, was imparted by the assistant. To render this sketch of the institution where young Irving received the earlier principles of his school-education less imperfect, it may be stated that the slender duodecimo volume of Morse's geography was in use. This book was a novelty in school-apparatus, being the first of its kind which professed an account of the different States of the Union, and it enlisted the attention of the schoolmasters. The glowing description of New England by the reverend author, its fertile soil and products, often invoked a smile from the old Knickerbocker instructors. The picture which the patriotic author had drawn of Wethersfield, its fair damsels and its exuberant onions, invoked merriment among the juvenile learners, and secured for a while for the book the sobriquet, *the onion edition*. There was, besides, a special teacher of elocution, in partial association with the academy, by the name of Milne. He was the compiler of a book entitled the *Well-bred Scholar*; a man of taste, a dramatic writer, if not a performer. He possessed a magisterial air, a robust and athletic fulness; lived plethoric, and died, I believe, apoplectic. He was an Englishman by birth, and perhaps the first among us, in the progress of instruction, who attempted expounding the art of speaking. Where or how young Irving acquired a knowledge of the classics I am unable to say. We had but three or four schools

of any pretensions among us in that department of education at that time, and Irving, so far as I can learn, was not a scholar of Edward Riggs, a renowned teacher of the Latin, and the author of a popular grammar of that tongue—the first, indeed, of American manufacture in New York, as that of the famous old Cheever was of that of Boston. Irving, however, was preparing to enter Columbia College, but health prevented his further progress.

Some few years after we find Irving a student at law with that eminent advocate, the late Josiah Ogden Hoffman. What proficiency he made in that abstract study must be left to conjecture; but in due season he opened a law-office in Pearl-street, near Coenties Slip. His health was still precarious, and he was threatened with pulmonary mischiefs. He was slender and delicate in appearance, but never weary in measures to improve his condition. For wholesome exercise he carried into practical operation a suggestion to be engaged in some mechanical operation daily, and for a specified time to saw wood, in an apartment below his office; and it is more than probable that this service proved of greater benefit to his physical powers than might have been derived at that time from nostrums and a sea-voyage.

We need scarcely apprehend falling into error when we affirm that his law-office proved neither burdensome to his mental nor physical faculties. The legal profession, then, as now, abounded in numbers and in great talent. Moreover, the contemplative qualities of Irving were directed in other channels. He needed diversion; he demanded variety; and his views of life were comprehensive. It is a remark well founded, that realities are but dimly to be traced in the twilight of the imagination, and the first impulses of genius are often to be illustrated by the subsequent career of the individual. Young Irving at school was a quiet boy. I can narrate no wild freaks or sports, originating from his conduct. It is true, that except from the general good order of his section of the room, and his devotion to reading, I had little chance to do more than occasionally look at him as at other scholars, witness his movements in the streets, and observe his rather taciturn and sequestered way. He seemed to have a habit of loneliness or abstraction; but he was early a reader, and I might say an observer from the beginning to the end of his life. These qualities, it is not to be supposed, were so prominent as to induce special notice among his school-associates at that period of his life; yet as his teacher seemed to bestow particular attention on his pupil, and often spoke of it in after time, his maturer wisdom may have found in his scholar

a temperament of peculiar indications, and thus tolerated the impulse of a youth who gave promise of character. Among the incidents of young Irving's life, we know him to have been remarkable for his pedestrian excursions; at times alone, sometimes accompanied with his intimate friends, Paulding, Brevoort, Verplanck, and Blauvelt, an unfledged poet of New Jersey. His rambles at Weehawken and Powles' Hook; his tours to the Passaic; his grouse excursions at Hempstead; his walks through the Stuyvesant lane of cherry-trees (which, it may be remarked, passed directly through the very grounds on which this edifice where we are now convened stands), all betrayed that love of nature which he has so luxuriantly unfolded in his captivating writings.

These rambles were profitable to health and wholesome to intellect; they furnished materials for contemplation and enlarged intellectual capacity; but Irving at this juncture in early manhood sought out other resources of mental gratification. He was bookish, and he read; he individualized the author whom he studied, and he extended the circle of his personal associations. He must have formed an acquaintance with a portion of that mass of men who flourished at that dawn of literary effort in this city. His profession, that of law, had secured to him some knowledge of Hamilton and Burr, of Harrison and Colden, of Williams and Jay, of Jones and Livingston; but with a generous freedom he could seek out Brown, the novelist, Linn, the poet, Allsop, Clifton, and Low. This you will say is a brief list; but genuine writers at that day were not a common article. In my searches after novelties I have walked a day to cast a glance at an author; and a reward of a thousand dollars could not bring forth for inspection a penny-a-liner. For my own part I distinctly recollect the first time I caught a glimpse of Noah Webster, when I felt a triumph as if I had made a discovery in philosophy. But there were other sources of instruction abundantly accessible to all, and Irving would draw wisdom from them: the acting drama of those times yielded gratification to the most refined in taste: the remnant of the old American company of performers was stirring in their vocation and the great renown which waited upon their achievements was recognized as substantially earned. That Irving's imagination was at an early period enamored of scenic exhibitions, and that he took great delight in theatrical displays, as holding the "mirror up to nature," is the concurrent testimony of all acquainted with him during his minority. That his mind was fructified by a close study of the older dramatists I think a safe inference. He studied the Spanish language the better to comprehend the Spanish

drama. That fountain of knowledge yields a living spring to all who desire to delineate human character; and who has excelled Irving in that branch of intricate illustration? The animating movements, the picturesque displays made fiction almost a reality, and illumined a mind so susceptible of impression. The drama, with sensibilities like his, roused to newness of reflection, dissipated *ennui*, and invoked the inner powers of a lonely student to increased literary effort. He must have availed himself of these advantages, now still further multiplying by the efforts of Dunlap and Smith to add novelty to the stage, if not by gorgeous scenery, yet by the bringing forward the popular productions of Kotzebue and Schiller, the acknowledged masters of the drama at that time in Germany. A personal knowledge of some facts, and the humorous and critical disquisitions on the stage, which Irving published shortly after, over the name of Jonathan Oldstyle, demonstrate his intimacy with this species of literature. His *Salmagundi* adds to our proofs of this fact.

I forbear to enter into a consideration of the literary labors of Mr. Irving, voluminous as they are, and precious as the world acknowledges them. His *Knickerbocker's History* excited an interest in the metropolis never before roused up by any literary occurrence; scarcely, perhaps, by any public event. The reading community, upon its first appearance, were seized with amazement at the wondrous antiquarian research of the author, his lifelike pictures of the olden times, and his boundless humor and refined wit; and many melted in sympathy at the fate of old Diedrick himself, the deserted inhabitant of the Mulberry-street tenement. I confess myself to have been one of the thousands who sought out his obscure lodgings in vain. The brilliant career of Mr. Irving may be dated from the publication of this assumed history, and the wheel of fortune now turned in his behalf. The book was received by Campbell, the poet: through the hands of Henry Brevoort, Walter Scott possessed a copy, and almost raved with delight in its perusal. The omnipotent wit and satirist, George Canning, had nigh fractured his ribs by laughter over its pages. The reading public sought after it, and what the select averred, the masses confirmed. Mr. Irving now became the lion of London, and of the literary world. It is, however, not of his writings that I would wish to speak, at present, but rather confine myself to a few reminiscences of his individuality. The ample page of criticism has already recorded his vast literary merits, and inscribed his name on the tablet of immortality. He is national, he is universal.

Did not the lateness of the evening forbid, I would dwell upon that remarkable faculty which

Irving possessed of rejoicing in the luxuries and beauties of nature; his love of animals, and his kindly feelings for their comfort; his delight in surveying the garden and the farm-yard; his zeal to behold the anomalies of the vegetable world; his gratification in comprehending the labors of the naturalist; and I would attempt to point out how the defects of the schools of his boyhood were overcome by reading, and a close observation of men and things. He had the power of drawing knowledge from minute as well as great occurrences, from the ludicrous as well as the severe. He has more than once dwelt with me upon the odd characters he had encountered in the streets of our city, in those early days, and none seems to have made a stronger impression on him than the once famous Wilhelm Hoffmeister, popularly known as Billy the Fiddler. I do not know whether this musical genius and singularly-constructed man finds a place in any of Irving's writings.

You all, gentlemen, have dwelt upon the genial humor of Irving; his kindly nature was ever apparent. An instance in illustration I will give. Upon his return from his first European tour, after an absence of two years, he had scarcely entered into his parent's domicile in William-street, when his first inquiry was concerning the condition and prospects of an unfortunate maimed boy, of the neighborhood, who possessed singular qualities of mental organization. Mr. Irving had a marvellous tendency to the curious. Had he walked through a lunatic asylum he would seem to have been qualified to write a treatise on insanity; had he been bred to physic,—could his sensibilities have endured such servitude,—he might have become famous for his descriptive powers in diagnostic pathology. Language like this may sound extravagant; but the devoted reader of his pages will be strengthened in such an opinion, by comparing the propriety and clearness of his diction in all he utters touching the subject in hand, whether belonging to the schools of arts or of letters, whether in technical science or in the philosophy of nature. Mr. Irving was the best judge of his own faculties and attainments, and what he assumed he accomplished. His competitor is yet to be discovered.

His courteous and benignant intercourse with others, whether in the humbler or the higher walks of life, was of so captivating a character as never to create a rebellious feeling, but ever awaken emotions of friendship. Unobtrusive, with his vast merits, nay almost timid, he won esteem from all beholders. He possessed a quick discernment in the analysis of character. I will give an example. Jarvis, the painter, had just finished the head of a venerable member of the

bar, and courteously requested, Lavater-like, Mr. Irving's opinion of the character. "You have faithfully delineated the Genius of Dulness," replied Irving. The answer was a biography of the individual. There was a trait of singular and peculiar excellence in Mr. Irving,—of all mortals he was the freest of envy; and merit of every order he was ready to recognize. A literary man, *par excellence*, he could admire the arts, and look upon mechanical skill and the artisan with the feelings, if not the acquisition, of the most accomplished in scientific pursuits; he knew that intellect presided in mechanics as well as in the Homeric song. He endured without annoyance the renown which waited upon the career of Fenimore Cooper; nay, he has written of the genius of his great rival in terms of strongest laudation, in admiration of his noble conceptions and his graphic powers. In like manner has he treated our Bryant. He rarely volunteered his opinion, but he never turned his back on what he had once expressed. Were I to concentrate my views on the more immediate sources of that knowledge, in his several writings, which he displayed with such copious profusion both in active life and in letters, I would affirm that a cautious reading of good authors, an almost unquenchable thirst for dramatic literature in early manhood, and a wide observation, secured by much travel, of the scenery of the bustling world, and of nature herself, had fertilized that peculiar and susceptible mind, and given to his happy mental organization its most potent charms.

The deduction is safe, if formed even from the study of his writings alone, that he was fond of incidents and adventures; they enriched his gallery for illustration. Like Hawthorne, he admired a snow-storm; he loved music; he loved little children, that faithful index of the human soul, and often participated in their innocent sports. He abjured excess, and was, at all times, moderate in indulgence at the table. He detested tobacco in every form, with all the abhorrence of Doctor Franklin or Daniel Webster.

His toilet was neat; his dress free from peculiarities: the extremes of fashion never reached him. His portrait, with the ample furred coat, executed by Jarvis, and painted after the appearance of the Knickerbocker history, is the most characteristic of him at that period of his life, and gives the most striking idea of his mental aspect, as he was daily seen in public, accompanied with his friend Renwick, or with the superb Decatur, or old Ironsides.

About two months before his death, Mr. Irving made his final visit to this city from his residence at Sunnyside. He had an official trust to fulfil as President of the Board of Trustees

of the Astor Library: he manifested no special indications of alarming physical suffering. Yet it was observed he had less of muscular strength, and that his frame was much attenuated. With his intimate friend, the learned librarian, Dr. Cogswell, having surveyed with gratification the improvements of the enlarged edifice and the accessions of books recently made to that great institution, he remarked with some earnestness, "What, Doctor, might have been my destiny could I have commanded these treasures in my youth!"

Foreign criticism has exerted her refined powers in unfolding the merits and the beauties inherent in the writings of our illustrious friend and associate; the schools of Addison and of Johnson have each awarded to him the laurel. At home a dissentient voice has not been expressed, and the republic at large has testified to the purity of his principles and the worth of his labors by a sale almost unparalleled in the annals of bibliopoly. Allibone, with the impartiality of a literary historian, has given us a charming view of this gratifying truth. But I shall make but one brief citation on the subject of our national author's qualities; it is from a classical pen, that has repeatedly dwelt upon the delectable harmony of the life and literature of Irving. I have taken it from Tuckerman; could I have written half so well I would have preferred my own language:

"The outline of his works," says Mr. T., "should be filled by the reader's imagination with the accessories and coloring incident to so varied, honorable, and congenial a life. In all his wanderings, his eye was busied with the scenes of nature, and cognizant of their every feature; his memory brooded over the tradition of the past, and his heart caught and reflected every phase of humanity. With the feelings of a poet and the habitudes of an artist, he then wandered over the rural districts of merry England, the melancholy hills of romantic Spain, and the exuberant wilderness of his native land, gathering up their most picturesque aspects and their most affecting legends, and transferring them, with the pure and varied colors of his genial expression, into permanent memorials."

Posterity, to whom he may most safely be confided, will neither forget the man nor his writings: these unfold the treasures of a commanding genius, with the excellencies of an unparalleled diction, while of the author himself we may emphatically affirm that his literary products are a faithful transcript of his peculiar mind. He enjoys a glorious triumph: we need not plead in extenuation of a line that he has penned. Let us console ourselves at his loss that he was a native and "to the manor born," that his life was immaculate and without reproach, and that in death he triumphed over its

terrors. Let it be our pride that the patriarch of American literature is indissolubly connected, in his mighty fame, with the Father of his Country.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

A SPECIAL meeting of this Society was held at the residence of its Vice-President, the Hon. David Sears, Boston, Dec. 15, 1859. After a formal announcement of the death of Mr. Irving, by the President, the following resolutions were offered by Mr. Henry W. Longfellow:

MR. LONGFELLOW'S ADDRESS.

Every reader has his first book. I mean to say, one book among all others, which in early youth first fascinates his imagination, and at once excites and satisfies the desires of his mind. To me this first book was the *Sketch Book* of Washington Irving. I was a school-boy when it was published, and read each succeeding number with ever-increasing wonder and delight; spell-bound by its pleasant humor, its melancholy tenderness, its atmosphere of reverie, nay, even by its gray-brown covers, the shaded letters of the titles, and the fair, clear type, which seemed an outward symbol of the style.

How many delightful books the same author has given us, written before and since—volumes of history and fiction, most of which illustrate his native land, and some of which illumine it, and make the Hudson, I will not say as classic, but as romantic as the Rhine! Yet still the charm of the *Sketch Book* remains unbroken; the old fascination still lingers about it; and whenever I open its pages, I open also that mysterious door which leads back into the haunted chambers of youth.

Many years afterwards, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Irving in Spain, and found the author, whom I had loved, repeated in the man. The same playful humor; the same touches of sentiment; the same poetic atmosphere; and, what I admired still more, the entire absence of all literary jealousy, of all that mean avarice of fame, which counts what is given to another as so much taken from one's self—

"And rustling hears in every breeze,
The laurels of Miltades."

At this time Mr. Irving was at Madrid, engaged upon his *Life of Columbus*; and if the work itself did not bear ample testimony to his zealous and conscientious labor, I could do so from personal observation. He seemed to be always at work. "Sit down," he would say; "I will talk with you in a moment, but I must first finish this sentence."

One summer morning, passing his house at

the early hour of six, I saw his study window already wide open. On my mentioning it to him afterwards, he said: "Yes, I am always at my work as early as six." Since then I have often remembered that sunny morning and that open window, so suggestive of his sunny temperament and his open heart, and equally so of his patient and persistent toil; and have recalled those striking words of Dante:

"Seggendo in piuma,
In fama non si vien, ne sotto coltre:
Senza la qual chi sua vita Cousuma,
Cotal vestigio in terra di se lascia,
Qual fumo in aere, od in acqua la schiuma."

"Seated upon down,
Or in his bed, man cometh not to fame,
Withouten which, whoso his life consumes,
Such vestige of himself on earth shall leave,
As smoke in air, and in the water foam."

Remembering these things, I esteem it a great though a melancholy privilege, to lay upon his hearse the passing tribute of these resolutions:

Resolved, That while we deeply deplore the death of our friend and associate, Washington Irving, we rejoice in the completeness of his life and labors, which, closing together, have left behind them so sweet a fame, and a memory so precious.

Resolved, That we feel a just pride in his renown as an author, not forgetting that, to his other claims upon our gratitude, he adds also that of having been the first to win for our country an honorable name and position in the History of Letters.

Resolved, That we hold in affectionate remembrance the noble example of his long literary career, extending through half a century of unremitted labors, graced with all the amenities of authorship, and marred by none of its discords and contentions.

Resolved, That as members of this Historical Society, we regard with especial honor and admiration, his Lives of Columbus, the Discoverer, and of Washington, the Father of our Country.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to his family, with the expression of our deepest and sincere sympathy.

MR. EVERETT'S ADDRESS.

The Hon. Edward Everett, in seconding the resolutions, said:

I cordially concur in the resolutions which Mr. Longfellow has submitted to the Society. They do no more than justice to the merits and character of Mr. Irving, as a man and as a writer; and it is to me, sir, a very pleasing circumstance, that a tribute like this to the Nestor of the prose writers of America—so just and so happily expressed—should be paid by the most distinguished of our American poets.

If the year 1769 is distinguished, above every

other year of the last century, for the number of eminent men to which it gave birth; that of 1859 is thus far signalized in this country for the number of bright names which it has taken from us; and surely that of Washington Irving may be accounted with the brightest on the list.

It is eminently proper that we should take a respectful notice of his decease. He has stood for many years on the roll of our honorary members, and he has enriched the literature of the country with two first-class historical works, which although from their subjects they possess a peculiar attraction for the people of the United States, are yet, in general interest, second to no contemporary work in that department of literature. I allude, of course, to the *History of the Life and Voyages of Columbus*, and the *Life of Washington*.

Although Mr. Irving's devotion to literature as a profession—and a profession pursued with almost unequalled success—was caused by untoward events, which in ordinary cases would have proved the ruin of life, a rare good fortune attended his literary career. Without having received a collegiate education, and destined first to the legal profession, which he abandoned as uncongenial, he had in very early life given promise of attaining a brilliant reputation as a writer. Some essays from his pen attracted notice before he reached his majority. A few years later, the numbers of the *Salmagundi*, to which he was a principal contributor, enjoyed a success throughout the United States far beyond any former similar work, and not surpassed, if equalled, by any thing which has since appeared.

This was followed by *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, which at once placed Mr. Irving at the head of American humorists. In the class of compositions to which it belongs, I know of nothing happier than this work, in our language. It has probably been read as widely, and with as keen a relish, as any thing from Mr. Irving's pen. It would seem cynical to subject a work of this kind to an austere commentary—at least while we are paying a tribute to its lamented author. But I may be permitted to observe, that, while this kind of humorous writing fits well with the joyous temperament of youth, in the first flush of successful authorship, and is managed by Mr. Irving with great delicacy and skill, it is still, in my opinion, better adapted for a *jeu d'esprit* in a magazine, than for a work of considerable compass. To travesty an entire history seems to me a mistaken effort of ingenuity, and not well applied to the countrymen of William of Orange, Grotius, the De Witts, and Van Tromp.

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After Mr. Irving had been led to take up his residence abroad and to adopt literature as a pro-

profession and a livelihood—a resource to which he was driven by the failure of the commercial house of his relatives, of which he was nominally a partner—he produced in rapid succession a series of works which stood the test of English criticism, and attained a popularity not surpassed—hardly equalled—by that of any of his European contemporaries. This fact, besides being attested by the critical journals of the day, may be safely inferred from the munificent prices paid by the great London bookseller, the elder Murray, for the copyright of several of his productions. He wrote, among other subjects, of English manners, sports, and traditions—national traits of character—certainly the most difficult topics for a foreigner to treat, and he wrote at a time when Scott was almost annually sending forth one of his marvellous novels; when the poetical reputation of Moore, Byron, Campbell, and Rogers was at the zenith; and the public appetite was consequently fed almost to satiety by these familiar domestic favorites. But notwithstanding these disadvantages and obstacles to success, he rose at once to a popularity of the most brilliant and enviable kind; and this too in a branch of literature which had not been cultivated with distinguished success in England since the time of Goldsmith, and with the exception of Goldsmith, not since the days of Addison and Steele.

Mr. Irving's manner is often compared with Addison's, though, closely examined, there is no great resemblance between them, except that they both write in a simple, unaffected style, remote from the tiresome stateliness of Johnson and Gibbon. It was one of the witty, but rather ill-natured sayings of Mr. Samuel Rogers, whose epigrams have sometimes done as much injustice to his own kind and generous nature as they did to the victims of his pleasantry, that Washington Irving was Addison and water; a judgment which, if seriously dealt with, is altogether aside from the merits of the two writers, who have very little in common. Addison had received a finished classical education at the Charter House and at Oxford, was eminently a man of books, and had a decided taste for literary criticism. Mr. Irving, for a man of letters, was not a great reader, and if he possessed the critical faculty, never exercised it. Addison quoted the Latin poets freely, and wrote correct Latin verses himself. Mr. Irving made no pretensions to a familiar acquaintance with the classics, and probably never made an hexameter in his life. Addison wrote some smooth English poetry, which Mr. Irving, I believe, never attempted; but, with the exception of two or three exquisite hymns (which will last as long as the English language does), one brilliant simile of six lines in the *Campaign*, and one or two sententious, but not very brilliant passages from Cato, not a line of Addison's poetry

has been quoted for a hundred years. But Mr. Irving's vein of humor is not inferior in playful raciness to Addison's; his nicety of characterization is quite equal; his judgment upon all moral relations as sound and true; his human sympathies more comprehensive, tenderer, and chaster; and his poetical faculty, though never developed in verse, vastly above Addison's. One chord in the human heart, the pathetic, for whose sweet music Addison had no ear, Irving touched with the hand of a master. He learned that skill in the school of early disappointment.

In this respect the writer was in both cases reflected in the man. Addison, after a protracted suit, made an "ambitious match" with a termagant peeress; Irving, who would as soon have married Hecate as a woman like the Countess of Warwick, buried a blighted hope, never to be rekindled, in the grave of a youthful sorrow.

As miscellaneous essayists, in which capacity only they can be compared, Irving exceeds Addison in versatility and range, quite as much as Addison exceeds Irving in the far less important quality of classical tincture; while as a great national historian, our countryman reaped laurels in a field which Addison never entered.

* * * * *

It would be altogether a work of supererogation to engage in any general commentary on the merits of Mr. Irving's two great historical works, and the occasion is not appropriate for a critical analysis of them. They have taken a recognized place in the historical literature of the age, and stand, by all confession, in the front rank of those works of history of which this century and especially this country has been so honorably prolific. Reserving a distinguished place apart for the venerable name of Marshall, Mr. Irving leads the long line of American historians—first in time and not second in beauty of style, conscientious accuracy, and skilful arrangement of materials. As his two works treat respectively of themes, which for purely American interest stand at the head of all single subjects of historical research, so there is no one of our writers to whom the united voice of the country would with such cheerful unanimity have intrusted their composition.

From the time that he entered for life upon a literary career, Mr. Irving gave himself almost exclusively to its pursuit. He filled the office of *Chargé d'Affaires* for a short time in London, prior to his return to the United States, and that of Minister to Spain from 1842 to 1846. His diplomatic dispatches in that capacity are among the richest of the treasures which lie buried in the public archives at Washington.

A more beautiful life than Mr. Irving's can

hardly be imagined. Not unchecked with adversity, his early trials, under the soothing influence of time, without subduing the natural cheerfulness of his disposition, threw over it a mellow tenderness, which breathes in his habitual trains of thought, and is reflected in the amenity of his style. His misfortunes in business, kindly overruled by a gracious Providence, laid the foundation of literary success, reputation, and prosperity. At two different periods of his career he engaged in public life; entering it with ambition; performing its duties with diligence and punctuality; and leaving it without regret. He was appointed Chargé d'Affaires to London under General Jackson's administration, and Minister to Spain under Mr. Taylor's, the only instances, perhaps, in this century, in which a distinguished executive appointment has been made without a thought as to the political opinions of the person appointed. Mr. Irving's appointment to Spain was made on the recommendation of Mr. Webster, who told me that he regarded it as one of the most honorable memorials of his administration of the department of State. It was no doubt a pleasing circumstance to Mr. Irving, to return in his advancing years, crowned with public honors, to the country where, in earlier life, he had pursued his historical studies with so much success; but public life had no attraction for him. The respect and affection of the community followed him to his retirement; he lived in prosperity without an ill-wisher; finished the work which was given him to do, amidst the blessings of his countrymen, and died amidst loving kindred in honor and peace.*

Speeches were also made by Professor Felton, Doctor O. W. Holmes, Colonel Aspinwall, and others, after which the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

LETTER FROM GEORGE SUMNER.

The following letter from Mr. George Sumner was read by Mr. Longfellow:

BOSTON, December 15, 1859.

MY DEAR LONGFELLOW: An imperative engagement calls me in half an hour from the city, and will deprive me of the melancholy satisfaction of joining, this evening, in the tribute of the Historical Society to the memory of Washington Irving.

Others will speak of his literary fame—of his style—as graceful and delicate as that of Charles Nodier—and of the chords of ever-sensitive feel-

* The omitted portion of Mr. Everett's Address is a recapitulation of Mr. Irving's writings, already given in the previous "Memoranda."

ing he has touched—which cause the *Sketch Book* to be more widely read, in its original tongue, than any book in our language except the *Vicar of Wakefield*. I would fain, if present, speak of his genial and constant friendship—of his faith in man—and of his readiness to find good in every thing.

There is also one part of his life—the least familiar, perhaps, to the public—on which it seems fitting that something should be said—I mean his diplomatic career as Minister to Spain. He was there at a moment of great political excitement—when the party which had most strongly toiled for liberty, being in power, "veiled temporarily," to use the borrowed language of one of its minister's proclamations, "veiled temporarily the statue of the law," and having done this, fell.

In the turmoil that ensued, delicate questions arose, which Mr. Irving treated with promptness and success.

On one occasion, citizens of the United States, resident as merchants in Spain, had been compelled to serve in the National Guard. Mr. Irving's protest against this was met by the declaration that the property of these Americans being protected by the National Guard, it was their duty to join its ranks. In the correspondence that ensued, as in all his relations with the Spanish government, Mr. Irving showed the suavity so congenial to his nature, and so presumptive of latent force. He carried all his points, and gave a lesson of conduct to other diplomatists.

In his career as a Minister, as in his social life, there was a constant recognition of the rights of others—and, as the natural result of this, a constant respect on the part of others for his own rights.

Mr. Irving was, in the largest sense of the word, a national man—keenly alive to the honor and good name of the Republic—and his honest nature revolted at any forgetfulness of it on the part of those whom the people have selected as their representatives. He was too hopeful to give way to despair, but he was moved, even to tears, by the spectacle which our country presented, not many years ago, of a succession of expeditions fitted out to invade the territory of a friendly power; and he had read history too well not to see in these forays examples which would return to plague their inventors.

His civic life was as honorable, and as true to the principles of the founders of the Republic, as was his public career as Minister—but this will doubtless be fully treated by his biographer. It is enough for the present to say that, to those who had the privilege of his intimacy, his character seemed, in every respect, complete. We

drop a tear upon the grave of the author—the friend—the public servant—the citizen.

Ever faithfully yours,
GEORGE SUMNER.

SUNNYSIDE. *

December 1, 1859.

BY HENRY THEODORE TUCKERMAN.

THE dear, quaint cottage, as we pass,
No clambering rose or locusts hide;
And dead leaves fleck the matted grass,—
And shadow rests on Sunnyside:

Not by the flying cloud-rack east,
Nor by the summer foliage bred,
The life-long shadow which the Past
Lets fall where cherish'd joys have fled:

For he whose fancy wove a spell
As lasting as the scene is fair,
And made the mountain, stream, and dell
His own dream-life forever share;

He who with England's household grace,
And with the brave romance of Spain,
Tradition's lore and Nature's face,
Imbued his visionary brain;

Mused in Granada's old arcade
As gush'd the Moorish fount at noon,
With the last minstrel thoughtful stray'd
To ruin'd shrines beneath the moon;

And breathed the tenderness and wit
Thus garner'd, in expression pure,
As now his thoughts with humor flit,
And now to pathos wisely lure;

Who traced with sympathetic hand,
Our peerless chieftain's high career;
His life, that gladden'd all the land,
And blest a home—is ended here.

What pensive charms of nature brood
O'er the familiar scene to-day,
As if, with smile and tear she wooed
Our hearts a mutual rite to pay!

The river that he loved so well,
Like a full heart, is awed to calm,
The winter air that wafts his knell
Is fragrant with autumnal balm.

A veil of mist hangs soft and low
Above the Catskill's wooded range,
While sunbeams on the slope below
Their shroud to robes of glory change.

How to the mourner's patient sight
Glide the tall sails along the shore,
Like a procession clad in white
Down a vast temple's crystal floor.

So light the haze, its floating shades,
Like tears through which we dimly see,

With incense crown the Palisades,
With purple wreath the Tappan Zee.
And ne'er did more serene repose
Of cloud and sunshine, brook and brae,
Round Sleepy Hollow fondly close,
Than on its lover's burial day.

WASHINGTON IRVING.*

THUS it will be seen that the life of Washington Irving had been mostly passed in literary labors. These acquired him a fame no less solid and extensive on the other side of the Atlantic than here, and his works, which are numerous and take in a considerable diversity of subjects, form a part of the acknowledged classics of the English language. He wrote with such a charm and grace of expression, that the mere fascination of his style would often prove powerful enough to keep the reader intent upon his pages when the subject itself might not happen to interest him. His humor was of a peculiar quality, always delicate in character, and yet enriched with a certain quaint poetic coloring, which added greatly to its effect. His graver writings have no less beauty, and several of them prove that, as is often the case with men who possess a large share of humor, he was no less a master in the pathetic, and knew how to touch the heart. His *Life of Oliver Goldsmith* always seemed to us one of the most delightful works of biography ever written—we doubt whether Goldsmith himself, even if he had been so fortunate in his subject, could have executed his task so well.

It was the happiness of Mr. Irving that he retained his fine powers in all their vigor to the last. The closing years of his life were occupied in writing the *Life of Washington*, a subject worthy to be committed to the hands of one who could relate events so charmingly, and portray character with such admirable skill. Having executed that task in a manner to satisfy those whose expectations were the highest, he regarded his literary labors as finished, and looked forward calmly to the end of life. He survived the issue of his last volume but a few months. His rising on the world of letters was in what might almost be called the morning of our literature, and after completing his course, his setting takes place in the midst of a crowd of luminaries, among whom his orb shines with no less brightness than at its meridian.

Mr. Irving was one of the most amiable and gentle of men; a man of exceeding modesty, never willing to set forth his own pretensions,

* These lines appeared in the New York *Evening Post*, with the following editorial introduction:

"The beauty of the day on which Mr. Irving's funeral took place, and the charming aspect of the surrounding country, in the glorious sunshine which then closed our long Indian Summer, have prompted the ensuing lines, which we have from the pen of a friend of the departed author, himself eminent in the world of letters."

* From an obituary editorial notice in the *Evening Post*. Nov. 29, 1859.

and leaving to the public the care of his literary reputation. He had no taste for controversy of any sort. His manners were mild, and his conversation in the society of those with whom he was intimate, was most genial and playful.

THE LATE WASHINGTON IRVING.*

THE daily newspapers of New York have furnished such full and interesting accounts of the death and burial of this greatly beloved man, as to leave little scope for remark by us. Nevertheless, as the name is in some degree identified with the interests of Staten Island, from the residence among us of two of the family, in public positions, we have endeavored to comply with the solicitations of some friends, and have gathered a few additional facts in relation to the departed.

Washington Irving was the descendant of a good family in the north of Scotland. The parent stock is known as "the knightly family of Drum," and is still settled at the old castle, or "Tower of Drum," as it is there called, occupying the same estate granted by Robert Bruce, in 1306, to Sir William de Irwyn, the direct ancestor of the present proprietor. It is situated on the banks of the Dee, about ten miles from Aberdeen, and being a curiosity as "the oldest inhabited house in Scotland," has been visited by not a few American travellers.

A second son of this family, after the manner of Scottish houses, left the paternal roof, and, under the patronage of the crown, settled in the Orkneys. There he acquired large possessions and influence; his descendants, for a long while, were seated at Gairstay and Quhome, the names of their estates and dwellings. There they encountered the various vicissitudes of the world, enjoying prosperity for a time, and afterwards adverse fortunes; and there, as their celebrated American descendant once remarked, "we will not say they *flourished*, but *dwindled* and dwindled and dwindled, until the last of them, nearly a hundred years since, sought a new home in this new world of ours."

The local laws of the island—i. e., the ancient "Udal" laws, which required in title deeds the statement of relationship of parties mentioned therein—the possession of old parchment deeds, and the official records of the county, have preserved with singular clearness and accuracy the line of our American author's descent.

William Irving, the father of Washington, came to this country in 1763, having previously married an English lady by the name of Sanders,

in Cornwall, England. He was a member of the established Church of Scotland, and he became afterwards an officer of the Presbyterian "Brick Meeting," on the Park, New York. He was a constant and devout student of the Scriptures, regular in the habit of family worship, and greatly respected for uprightness. His wife was a "Church of England" woman, the granddaughter of a clergyman of that Church; and to this influence may be ascribed the fact that all of her children, with one exception, became attached to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. She was a woman of vigorous intellect, open and generous disposition, and of truly devout habit and affections.

Washington Irving was born on the third, not on the thirteenth of April, as some of the papers have stated, in the year 1783. When a child, he was not remarkable for brightness, and his surviving brother has often told an anecdote of his returning from school one day, when about eight years of age, with this remark to his mother, "The madame says I am a dunce; isn't it a pity!" A very delicate constitution, and prolonged ill-health, such as sent him abroad soon after he came of age, prevented his availing himself of the advantages of education which were placed before him, and he abandoned the intention of following his brother, the late judge, to the old halls of Columbia College. He was, however, by no means an idler, or indifferent to the cultivation of his mind. His elder brothers, William and Peter, were men of much literary taste and cultivation, and under their guidance his reading was directed and his own taste formed.

For a short period he read law with the late Judge Josiah Ogden Hoffman, but ill health, as we have intimated, broke up this study. And here we may now mention, that through this connection grew up that intimacy between our beloved author and a daughter of the late Judge Hoffman, which was early terminated by the death of the lady; an incident which, from our knowledge of Mr. Irving's disposition, we doubt not had its influence upon him all through his life. We cannot but think that we find a leaf from his own experience in a passage of his charming paper on "Newstead Abbey," where he says: "An early, innocent, and unfortunate passion, however fruitful of pain it may be to the man, is a lasting advantage to the poet. It is a well of sweet and bitter fancies; of refined and gentle sentiments; of elevated and ennobling thoughts, shut up in the deep recesses of the heart, keeping it green amidst the withering blights of the world, and by its casual gushings and overflowings, recalling at times all the freshness, and innocence, and enthusiasm of youthful days." It happened, not long ago, that during a visit to Sunnyside,

* From the *Richmond County Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1853.

while Mr. Irving was absent, our informant was quartered in Mr. I.'s own apartment, and very deeply it touched him to notice, that upon the table which stood by the bedside, always within reach, there was lying an old and well-worn copy of the Bible, with the name in a lady's delicate hand on the title page, "M——— II———." More than half a century had passed away, and still the old bachelor of seventy-five drew his daily comfort from this cherished memento of the love of his youth.

MR. IRVING'S RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.*

Passages from a Sermon at Tarrytown, Dec. 4, 1859.

BY THE REV. DR. CREIGHTON.

IN referring to the heavy loss which we have sustained, and which will be deplored by every one wherever the English language is spoken, I do not propose to dwell on his literary reputation. World wide as it is, his fame does not need any eulogy from me. Every one must know how greatly he has advanced the literature of the country, and how deep is the debt which we owe him in that behalf. I would rather dwell on his religious and moral character; and, in regard to the first, I thank God that I am permitted to indulge this one feeling—that he was sound in the faith of Christ crucified. I have often been asked, if our deceased friend was a believer in the cardinal doctrines of our holy Christian faith, and I have declared then, as I now declare, that he was. This opinion was founded, not alone on his ordinary language in conversation; not only in his uninterrupted observance of the days and ceremonies connected with the Christian institution—and I have never heard a syllable otherwise from him—but upon a voluntary declaration, for which there was no occasion, except "that out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh."

One Sabbath morning he approached me, and asked, why we could not have the "Gloria in Excelsis" sung every Sunday. I replied that I had no objection, and that there was nothing whatever to prevent it, and at the same time inquired of him—"Do you like it?" "Like it!—like it!" said he; "above all things. Why, it contains the sum and substance of our faith, and I never hear it without feeling better, and without my heart being lifted up." Now, whoever will take the trouble to look at this sublime confession of faith will see that it is nothing but an adoration of Christ Jesus our Saviour, as God—as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the

sins of the world," as the Lord Christ, and of the Holy Ghost as equal to him in glory and in power. Therefore, when we consider the unobtrusiveness of the character of the deceased, we can only say that when he thus spake, the view which he expressed was one of the forms of sound words once delivered to the saints. Nor was he only sound in the faith. He was also exemplary in practice. He was not only a hearer, but a doer of the Word.

You all know, how regular and punctual was his attendance in this church—so regular, indeed, that when not seen, it was at once understood that he was either absent from home, or detained by indisposition. Nor was he satisfied in giving his bodily presence merely. This was not all that he desired. But the part which he bore in the responses showed that he came not only in compliance with custom, but to fulfil a sacred duty in offering up his humble prayers at the footstool of mercy. And were we permitted to look at the inward disposition of the heart, as we are at the outward manifestation of piety, we would have seen the hinges of the heart bent down whenever the lips uttered the voice of prayer. The deceased was for many years a communicant of the Church, receiving on every stated occasion, with contrite spirit, the emblems of the Saviour's body and blood. In his intercourse with his fellow-men he was always the same kind and generous heart, and he always put the most charitable construction on their words and conduct. Charity with him was not a duty, but an instinct. Every discourse from the pulpit, or from any other place, which set forth these things as the bond of peace, was certain to meet the approval of the deceased. Every measure for the amelioration of the condition of the poor and afflicted was sure to meet his approbation. The relief of the poor and needy—the improvement of schools, of chapels and churches—were always of the deepest interest and especially interesting to him. His advice and his experience were always readily given whenever required, and his contributions from his purse were always of the most liberal kind. Of the extent of his private charities no man shall know until the day when the Saviour shall declare, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of these little ones, ye did it unto me." He who now addresses you has been more than twice the recipient of double the sum asked for, when the occasion was one that recommended itself. In fact, he was one of the few on whom positive dependence could be placed for a favorable answer, whenever the application was of a meritorious character.

* * * * *

He alluded, in appropriate terms, to the deep

* Reported in the *New York Herald*.

and affectionate interest of the deceased in the young, and continued:

* * * * *

In mourning, then, for Washington Irving—a name revered and loved wherever and whenever heard—we sorrow not as those without hope; for we believe that as Jesus died and rose again, so also those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him. We sorrow not with the sorrow of the world, immoderately and in a repining spirit, because we can say with the disciples, when they could not prevail on Paul to remain, “The Lord’s will be done.” But we sorrow because we shall see his face no more. No more at his own fireside, at which were clustered cheerfulness, wit, humor, charity, kindness, righteousness, and all holy affections! No more in the social circle gathered at other homes, where every hand was extended to greet him, and every heart sprang up to give him the warmest welcome! No more in this holy place, where his attendance was as uniform as his demeanor was earnestly devout! No more in the ministrations of the rite of baptism, which he always attended with feelings of lively interest and delight! No more at our annual confirmations, his eyes ever gleaming with the force of Christian sympathy! No more at the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, his manner expressive of Christian humility and heartfelt gratitude to God for the privilege accorded him thus to commemorate the Saviour’s love! And if the Lord had vouchsafed him another week of health and strength, he would have been with us to-day to share in the solemn eating and drinking symbolically of the body and blood of Christ. But he has passed, we humbly, though firmly trust, from the communion of the Church militant on earth to the supper of the Lamb—to the Church triumphant in heaven. We shall see his face here no more, but his image is indelibly impressed upon our hearts, and his lovely character shall be cherished so long as life shall last, and honored so long as men have grace to cherish moral worth and the virtuous and honorable character of a holy example.

PASSAGE FROM A DISCOURSE

Delivered in the Second Reformed Dutch Church, at Tarrytown, Dec. 11, 1859,

BY THE REV. JOHN A. TODD.*

I KNOW not what may be done or spoken elsewhere in regard to the departure out of this life of that illustrious, and honored, and beloved citi-

* Reported in the *New York Daily Times*.

zen, whom we, in this community, were so proud to call our friend and neighbor; but whatever it may be, I cannot bring myself to believe that you, my hearers, are willing that he should pass away from among us, never more to return, and that his dust should be laid down to mingle with that of parents and dearest kindred, by the shadow of that old Dutch church, which is the mother of us all, without some recognition of his individuality—some words of tender feeling, of heart-felt sorrow—some expressions of love and reverence for his memory—some offering of praise and thanksgiving to God for the excellent gifts, both of head and heart, with which He was pleased to endow him—and some attempt to gather up, and to bring home, for our nobler and more spiritual uses, the solemn lessons of the dispensation which took him from us. His is a name to be revered and cherished. Its glory shines upon our country’s annals. And now that he has gone from us, and from the land he loved so well, he has bequeathed to us, in his unblemished life, in his recorded words, and in his illustrious name, an inheritance worthy to be highly prized, to be sacredly guarded. A country’s glory is the collected glory of the great men whom God has given her—their high achievements, their noble spirits, their memorable names. And it is right that they should have their monuments not merely in the mute and icy marble that marks the spot where their ashes rest, but in the warm, the living, throbbing hearts of all her sons.

— “Think not such names
Are common sounds; they have a music in them,
An odorous recollection; they are a part
Of the old glories past; their country knows
And loves the lofty echo, which gives back
The memory of the buried great,
And calls to valor and to victory,
To goodness and to freedom.”

Washington Irving, the patriarch of American literature,—the accomplished scholar,—the admirable historian,—the elegant writer,—the wonderful magician, who evoked from the realms of thought the spirit of romance and beauty, and breathed it upon every hill and valley, upon every shady retreat, and every wandering brook that hastens on to join this noble river that pours its majestic volume into the sea; ay, and upon the very air that fans the summer verdure, or whistles through the branches of the wintry wood around us;—the pure patriot,—the diplomatist, watchful for his country’s honor, and yet skilful in the arts of preserving peace,—the kind and beloved neighbor,—the faithful friend, and, what is better than all, because it constituted him the “highest style of man,” the modest and benevolent Christian, the sincere believer and disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Washington Irving is dead! Dead, did I say? No! He has

just begun to live. His spirit has gone up to the enjoyment of a higher sphere, and its power upon the kindred spirit of his race has been consecrated by the solemn mystery of its departure. God has given to him the precious boon of a twofold life—the life eternal of the glorified in heaven, and the life of an undying memory in the hearts of men. And can we say of such a one, that he is dead? True, he has gone from us, and on earth we shall see his face no more.

“But strew his ashes to the wind,
Whose sword or voice has served mankind—
And is he dead whose glorious mind
Lifts thine on high?
To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die.”

We have lost his welcome presence, and it is for that we mourn. But his grave is with us, and here it will remain for generations to come, the shrine of unnumbered pilgrim feet. From the lofty eminence upon which he stood, conspicuous to the eyes of the world, from his position of intellectual greatness and spotless dignity, he has passed away. The sepulchre has claimed all of him that was mortal for its own. His eye is quenched; his arm is palsied; the tongue that was ever eloquent with the words of kindness is hushed to the ears of living men forever; the pen that distilled upon the written page the subtle creations of his brain, the ideal forms all fresh and fair from the realms of intellectual beauty, in which his spirit loved to linger, lies where he left it, dead and silent, like the clay from which the living soul has departed. And on this Sabbath morning while we are gathered in the house of God, his honored remains are sleeping by the side of her whom he called by the holy name of “Mother,” who loved him while living, and whose memory he loved when dying, in the grave which he had appointed for his last repose. There—there may they sleep in peace until these heavens be no more, and in the last day be raised again to the glorious resurrection of the just.

PASSAGE FROM A DISCOURSE,*

New York, Dec. 4, 1859,

BY THE REV. DR. E. H. CHAPIN.

I LOOKED out the other day, and saw the flags floating half-mast in honor of one who has just departed from us. He has had comparatively little to do with commerce, or with national affairs. There was nothing in his career to awaken political sympathies, or stir the pulse of popular agitation. And yet there were these tokens of general respect floating in an atmos-

* From the author's manuscript.

phere as calm and beautiful as his own spirit. And now do we ask, what is the reason why an entire people has thus paid its tribute to the memory of one who lived so quietly, so serenely? I reply, that here, too, popular sympathy is vindicated in its instincts. In the first place, it is a great thing to live such a calm life as he did, the beautiful and the good blossoming in his manhood, and ripening in his age. And in the next place, it is a great thing to elevate the intellectual life of a people, to lift it above political discords, and mercenary callings, and give it a higher and purer air. He who does this, honors his country, and deserves to be honored by it. But this has been not merely an expression of general sentiment, but of individual gratitude and regard. For how many of us, now in middle life, find that some of our richest and tenderest intellectual memories have been wrought by him who has just ceased from his labors? Who of us can forget the fortitude of “the wife,” the pathos of “the widow's son,” and the associations of genial humanity and domestic beauty which he has linked with our common world of trial and of change? Yes, he deserves our sympathy, he deserves our honor, who thus elevates the literature of a people; who has never written a line that he might have wished to blot, and has left a “sunny side” for many a heart and many a life.

POSTHUMOUS INFLUENCE.*

From a Sermon preached in St. Thomas' Church, Dec. 11, 1850.

BY THE REV. DR. WILLIAM F. MORGAN.

THERE is still another and most impressive thought suggested by this Scriptural assertion, that the Dead speak. I refer to the after-life and effect of gifts and endowments—to that surviving power, by which men not only outwit death, but hold the living world as a whispering gallery for the conceptions of their brain and the sentiments of their heart.

As I have said, every man who dies will retain an audience upon earth. The carved obelisk and monumental shaft may speak in louder tones to larger circles; but the unmarked resting-place of the beggar shall pour forth an oratory for some ear, and wield an influence over some heart, as effectual as kingly dust enshrined.

No one is so wretchedly forlorn—no one so miserably debased, but that some soul is linked on to his by fellowship in life, by memories in death. Nevertheless, beyond all the narrower limits of immediate or local impression—beyond social or domestic influence—there are posthumous voices which spread and reverberate, till they

* From the author's manuscript.

fill the "compass of the round world." There is no spot, however distant from his grave, where the morbid and misdirected energies of genins may not carry on a work of moral devastation, the extent of which shall mock every estimate or record except that of the Book of God's remembrance. There is no clime or tribe which may not be visited by the pestilential forms of licentiousness, of atheism, of monstrous, though guileful immorality, even while the men who gave sculptured shape and fascination to those forms are dead and incorporate with the sluggish clod.

The art of printing lends omnipotence to the great departed. It invests their thoughts, their creeds, their principles, their imaginations, with a vitality which endures and pulsates upon every shore. It enables the good to achieve a desirable and most benignant immortality upon earth; it enables the bad to damn themselves to everlasting infamy—to speak, from generation to generation, in the dialect of devils. It may bear a Jeremy Taylor down to posterity, or, it may bear a Thomas Paine; the one in all the fragrance and beauty of his saintly spirit, and the other in all the hideousness of his blasphemous and God-defying character.

Living or dying, a great man, if also good, halows his country, and elevates all who live in his time: yea, and all who shall live in the times to come. It was the consciousness of this which stirred us all so deeply when we lately heard that *he* was dead, whose name and influence are imperishable. While he lived, we felt a natural pride and possession in all that belonged to him; his person, his health, his habits, his home. We knew that his sun was descending in the west, and we watched its decline. We knew that it must sink, and be no more seen, and we looked for the hour. And, when all was over—when life was gone, and the seal was set, and the day of burial had come, the cloud of sorrow had a silver lining. Never was there a more honest funeral. I stood near and saw the almost interminable procession pass by the open coffin-lid. The expression on every face was chastened pride, not grief. Each sidelong glance at the placid visage whispered "Well done; all now is safe; what he was, he shall be, amongst the posterities forever." Washington Irving reached the last goal, in faith and in deportment, a model of simplicity and sweet Christian benignity. Greatly gifted, a master in his realm, he had pre-eminently the grace of goodness; and the aroma of this grace freshly ascends from all his works. He pursued a steady course for scores of years without one concession to the spirit of a doubting age—without one uttered or written word in support of any wrong; and what was said of another eminent man, might with greater force be

said of him: "He thought the noblest occupation of a man was to make other men happy; and to this end he lived, without one side-look, one yielding thought, one motive in his heart, which he might not have laid open to the view of God or man."* We knew before his death, and we know it now, that his writings contain not a solitary line that could leave the faintest stain upon the purity of youth, or the innocence of woman. And I make especial note of this, because, to some extent, he occupied a field of intellectual effort, which is liable, and in our day subject, to the most awful perversion and abuse—the field of the imagination.

It is undeniably true, that most who subsidize their gifts or acquisitions to corrupt mankind, address themselves at once to this faculty, and approach their easy and innumerable victims, "to the beat of Dorian measures," or with

"The soft, lascivious pleatings of the lute."

They tread and creep upon velvet carpets. They begin with a licentious or misleading hint, and end with a loud and reverberating, Amen. They steal towards the soul and climb over its inclosures, and beguile it, as the serpent beguiled Eve, with flattering words. They come when it is most tender and impressible. They put on the imperial robe of the poetry that charms, or the legendary romance that fascinates even to the morning watch: they soar, that they may sink, and drag down in their descent millions who might have reached the gate of heaven. I need not tell you that these painters of unreal life—these rovers through a false, and deceitful world, have no higher purpose than to weave into all they delineate or describe, the debasement of their own hearts—the skepticism of their own intellects,—the utter desolation of their own hopes and prospects. Gifted, but guilty minds,

"Whose poison'd song
Would blend the bounds of right and wrong
And hold with sweet, but cursed art
Their incantations o'er the heart
Till every pulse of pure desire
Throbs with the glow of passion's fire."

The modern press is forevermore in birth with such productions; they swarm the earth and sweep around us and our families like the plague of serpents or of locusts. If pernicious views of life are formed, if the passions are inflamed, if the thoughts and proclivities of the better nature, are alienated from all that is pure and lovely and of good report—it is because the appeal of our literature is so continually made, not to reason, not to conscience, but to the imagination; made with a charmed pen dipped in a licentious heart or a stimulated brain. And yet, the men

* The Rev. Sydney Smith on the death of Mr. Grattan.—*Edinburgh Review*.

who make these appeals, ask to be indulged—ask that the fertility of their genius or their wit, should compensate for the barrenness of their morals—ask that the light which leads astray, should be counted light from Heaven.

But no such indulgence did he crave, who, being dead, now speaketh from his peaceful, woodland grave. As I have said, his aim was to make mankind happier and better, and only to write what was fitting and ennobling to be read. It lay within his power to invest the land of dreams with shape and substance, to create scenes of unearthly beauty, to collect and blend the charms of nature, to group the varying characters of a people or an era, to tell the pathetic story of human sorrow or remorse, or to sketch the fading lineaments of old times or traditions; but his pen was always the obedient servant of sound principles and pure religion, always made the soul pant for something higher, and never left a mark which an angel might wish to blot. And when, at length, in his ripe old age, he sought to lay the cap-stone upon the pyramid of his labor and his fame, he took the highest and purest character our earth affords—not merely to magnify or embellish it, but to hold it forth before the whole world in its grand proportions and almost faultless beauty, anxious—*anxious*, that the latest impression of his pen should be the most exalted, and the most enduring.

Such was the lesson of his life—such *will be* its lesson “to the last syllable of recorded time.”

GOLDSMITH AND IRVING.*

BY GEORGE WASHINGTON GREENE.

We have always fancied that there was a strong resemblance between Goldsmith and Irving. They both look at human nature from the same generous point of view, with the same kindly sympathies and the same tolerant philosophy. They have the same quick perception of the ludicrous, and the same tender simplicity in the pathetic. There is the same quiet vein of humor in both, and the same cheerful spirit of hopefulness. You are at a loss to conceive how either of them can ever have had an enemy; and as for jealousy and malice, and all that brood of evil passions which beset the path of fame so thickly, you feel that there can be no resting-place for them in bosoms like theirs. Yet each preserves his individuality as distinctly as if there were no points of resemblance between them. Irving's style is as much his own as though Goldsmith had never written, and his

pictures have that freshness about them which nothing but life-studies can give. He has written no poem, no *Traveller*, no *Deserted Village*, no exquisite ballad like *The Hermit*, no touching little stanzas of unapproachable pathos, like *Woman*. But how much real poetry and how much real pathos has he not written! We do not believe that there was ever such a description of the song of a bird, as his description of the soaring of a lark in *Buckthorn*; and the poor old widow in the *Sketch Book*, who, the first Sunday after her son's burial, comes to church with a few bits of black silk and ribbon about her, the only external emblem of mourning which her poverty allowed her to make, is a picture that we can never look at through his simple and graphic periods without sobbing like a child. Poet he is, and that too of the best and noblest kind, for he stores our memories with lovely images and our hearts with human affections. If you would learn to be kinder and truer, if you would learn to bear life's burden manfully, and make for yourself sunshine where half your fellow-men see nothing but shadows and gloom, read and meditate Goldsmith and Irving. And if you too are an author, at the first gentle acclivity or far upward on the heights of fame, learn to turn backward to your teacher with the same generous and fervent gratitude with which Irving at the close of his preface addresses himself to Goldsmith in the noble language of Dante:

Tu se' lo mio maestro, e 'l mio autore;
Tu se' solo colui da cui io tolsi
Lo bello stile che m' ha fatto onore.

Thou art my master, and my teacher thou;
It was from thee, and thee alone, I took
That noble style for which men honor me.

IRVING DESCRIBED IN VERSE.

[From the *Fable for the Critics*.]

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

WHAT! IRVING? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain;
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were there
Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair.
Nay, don't be embarrass'd, nor look so beseeching,—
I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
And, having just laugh'd at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's stock and goodwill,
Mix well, and, while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman; simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain;

* From a volume entitled *Biographical Studies*.

Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
 From the warm, lazy sun loitering down through green
 leaves,
 And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
 A name either English or Yankee—just IRVING.

VISITS TO SUNNYSIDE.

BY N. P. WILLIS.*

Sunnyside in the Summer of 1857.

OUR conversation, for the half hour that we sat in that little library, turned first upon the habits of literary labor. Mr. Irving, in reply to my inquiry (whether, like Rip Van Winkle, he had "arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity"), said, "no"—that he had sometimes worked even fourteen hours a day, but that he usually sits in his study, occupied, from breakfast till dinner (both of us agreeing, that, in literary vegetation the "do" is on in the morning); and that he should be sorry to have much more leisure. He thought, indeed, that he should "die in harness." He never had a headache—that is, his workshop never gave him any trouble—but among the changes which time has wrought, one, he says, is very decided; the desire for travel is dead within him. The days are past when he could sleep or eat anywhere with equal pleasure; and he goes to town as seldom as possible.

Motley's *Dutch Republic* lay open on the table, and Irving said he had been employing a little vacation from his own labors in the reading of it. It had interested him exceedingly. "How surprising" (he exclaimed, quite energetically), "that so young a man should jump at once, full-grown, to fame, with a big book, so well-studied and complete!" This turned the conversation upon the experiences of authorship, and he said that he was always afraid to open the first copy that reached him, of a new book of his own. He sat and trembled, and remembered all the weak points where he had been embarrassed and perplexed, and where he felt he might have done better—hating to think of the book, indeed, until the reviewers had praised it. Indifference to praise or censure, he thought, was not reasonable or natural. At least, it was impossible to *him*. He remembered how he had suffered from the opinion of a Philadelphia critic, who, in reviewing the *Sketch Book*, at its first appearance, said that "Rip Van Winkle" was a silly attempt at humor, quite unworthy of the author's genius.

My mention of Rogers, the poet, and some other friends of Mr. Irving's who had asked me about

him in England, opened a vein of his London recollections. He was never more astonished, he said, than at the success of the *Sketch Book*. His writing of those stories was so unlike an inspiration—so entirely without any feeling of confidence which could be prophetic of their popularity. Walking with his brother, one dull foggy Sunday, over Westminster Bridge, he got to telling the old Dutch stories which he had heard at Tarrytown, in his youth—when the thought suddenly struck him:—"I have it! I'll go home and make memoranda of these for a book!" And, leaving his brother to go to church, he went back to his lodgings and jotted down all the data; and, the next day—the dullest and darkest of London fogs—he sat in his little room and wrote out "Sleepy Hollow" by the light of a candle.

I alluded to the story I had heard told at Lady Blessington's—of Irving going to sleep at a dinner-party, and their taking him up softly and carrying him into another house, where he waked up amid a large evening-party—but he shook his head incredulously. It was Disraeli's story, he said, and was told of a party at Lady Jersey's, to which he certainly went, after a dinner-party—but not with the dramatic nap at the table, nor the waking up in her Ladyship's drawing-room, as described. In fact, he remembered the party as such a "jam," that he did not get, that evening, beyond the first landing of the staircase.

A Drive through Sleepy Hollow.

We wound out from the smooth-gravelled and circling avenues of "Wolfert's-dell," and took to the rougher turnpike leading to Tarrytown—following it, however, only for a mile or so, and then turning abruptly off to the right, at what seemed a neglected by-road to the hills. Of the irregular semicircle of Sleepy Hollow, this is the Sunnyside end—the other opening towards Tarrytown, which lies three miles farther up the river.

Our road, presently, grew very much like what in England is called "a green lane," the undisturbed grass growing to the very edge of the single wheel-track; and this lovely carpeting, which I observed all through Sleepy Hollow, is, you know, an unusual feature for our country—the "Spring-work" on the highways, ordinarily (under the direction of the "pathmaster"), consisting mainly in ploughing up the roadsides and matting up the ruts with the *ass-ass*-inated green-sward. For the example of this charming difference I am ready to bless the bewitchment of the "high German doctor," or even to thank the ghost of the "old Indian chief who held his powwows there before the country was discovered."

With what attention I could take off from Mr.

* Published in *The Home Journal*.

Irving's conversation and his busy pointings-out of the localities and beauties of the valley, I was, of course, on the look-out for the "Sleepy-Hollow Boys," along the road; but oddly enough I did not see a living soul in the entire distance! For the "Headless Horseman," it was, doubtless, too early in the afternoon. We had, neither of us, any expectation of being honored with an introduction to him. But I *did* hope for a look at a "Hans Van Ripper" or a "Katrina Van Tassel"—certainly, at the very least, for a specimen or two of the young Mynheers, "in their square-skirted coats with stupendous brass buttons," and their "hair queued up in an eel-skin." Mr. Irving pointed out an old tumble-down farmhouse, still occupied, he said, by the Dutch family who traditionally "keep the keys to Sleepy Hollow," but there was not a soul to be seen hanging over the gate, or stirring around porch or cow-yard. There were several other and newer houses, though still of the same model—(or, to quote exactly Mr. Irving's words, in reply to my remark upon it, "always built crouching low, and always overlooking a little fat meadow")—but they were equally without sign of living inhabitant. Yet read again what Mr. Irving says of the vegetating eternity of the inhabitants, in his own account of Sleepy Hollow, and see how reasonable were my disappointed expectations in this particular.

One thing impressed me very strongly—the evidence there was, in Mr. Irving's manner, from our first entrance into Sleepy Hollow, that the charm of the locality was to him no fiction. There was even a boyish eagerness in his delight at looking around him, and naming, as we drove along, the localities and their associations. He did not seem to remember that he had written about it, but enjoyed it all as a scene of childhood then for the first time revisited. I shall never forget the sudden earnestness with which he leaned forward, as we passed close under a side-hill heavily wooded, and exclaimed, "There are the trees where I shot my first squirrels when a boy!" And, till the turn of the road put that hillside out of sight, he kept his eyes fixed, with absorbed earnestness upon it, evidently forgetful of all around him but the past rambles and boy-dreams which the scene had vividly recalled. You will understand, dear Morris, how this little point was wonderfully charming to me—being such a literal verification, as it were, of one of the passages of his description of the spot, and one of those, too, of which the music lingers longest in the ear! "I recollect" (he says) "that when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noon-time, when all Nature is peculiarly quiet,

and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around, and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley." And, to drive through "this little valley" with the man who had so written of it, and have him point out "the tall walnut-trees" with such an outburst of boyish recollection—why, it was like entering with Thomson, under the very portcullis of the "Castle of Indolence!"

I should mention, by the way, that we pulled up, for a moment, opposite the monument of Major André, a marble shaft standing at the side of the road and designating the spot (mentioned in "Sleepy Hollow") where that unfortunate man was captured. I could not read the whole inscription in the single minute that our impatient horses stood before it, but the concluding sentence, in larger letters, stood out boldly—"History tells the rest"—and it was thrilling to read that reference to a more enduring record than marble, and turn one's eyes upon the hand by which the imperishable words had been just written!

A Later Visit in 1859.

During the ten minutes before Mr. Irving came in (for he was out upon his morning drive when we arrived), his nieces very kindly gratified our interest in the "workshop of genius" by taking us into the library—the little curtain-windowed sanctuary where his mind had found both its labor and its repose, though, by the open newspapers scattered carelessly over the large writing-table in the centre, and the inviting readiness of the well-cushioned lounge in the recess, it now serves more the purpose of the repose more needed. It was a labyrinth of books; as it was a labyrinth of tender associations, in which, as the eye roved over its consecrated nooks and corners, the fancy, in all reverence, rambled lovingly! The tear at the heart kissed the threshold as we left it.

I was looking admiringly, once more, at Jarvis's record of him at the *Sketch Book* period of his life (the portrait with the fur collar, which all who have seen it will so well remember), when Mr. Irving came in from his drive. We had heard so much, recently, of his illness, that I was surprised to see with how lively and firm a step he entered—removing the slouched hat (a comfortable departure from the old-school covering, which I had never expected to see on so proper a head!) with as easy elegance as ever,

sitting down with his gray shawl left carelessly over his shoulders, and entering upon kind inquiries and exchange of courtesies with no hindrance of debility that I could see. He is thinner somewhat, in both form and features—owing to the asthma which interferes somewhat with his repose when lying down—but the genial expression of his countenance is unchanged, and his eye as kindly and bright. As to sprightliness of attention and reply, I could see little difference from the Washington Irving of other days. The reports of his illness must have been exaggerated, I thought.

Conversation falling upon exercise, Mr. Irving remarked that he daily took his drive in the carriage—less from any desire to go abroad than from finding, since he had given up habits of labor, that time hung heavy on his hands. If he walks out, it is only in the grounds. We spoke of horseback-riding, and he gave us a most amusing account of his two last experiences in that way—a favorite horse called “Gentleman Dick” having thrown him over his head into a laurel bush, which kindly broke his fall; and another very handsome nag, given him by his brother, having proved to be opinionative as to choice of road—particularly at a certain bridge, which it was very necessary to pass, in every ride, but which the horse could not by any reasonable persuasion be got over. With the sending of this horse-dogmatist to town, to be sold to meaner service for his obstinacy, had ended the experiments in the saddle.

Attributable, perhaps, to a rallying of his animal spirits with cessation from work—I could not but wonder at the effortless play of “Diedrick Knickerbocker” humor, which ran through all his conversation—Washington Irving, in his best days, I am very sure, was never more socially “agreeable” than with us, for that brief visit. One little circumstance was mentioned in the course of this pleasant gossip. There was some passing discussion of the wearing of beards—his friend Mr. Kennedy have made that alteration in his physiognomy since they had met—and Mr. Irving closed a playful comment or two upon the habit, by saying that he could scarce afford the luxury himself, involving, as it would do, the loss of the most effectual quietus of his nerves. To get up and shave, when tired of lying awake, sure of going to sleep immediately after, had long been a habit of his. There was an amusing exchange of sorrows, also, between him and Mr. Kennedy, as to persecution by autograph hunters; though the Ex-Secretary gave rather the strongest instance—mentioning an unknown man who had written to him, when at the head of the Navy Department, requesting, as one of his constituents, to be furnished with autographs of all the Presi-

dents, of himself and the rest of the Cabinet, and of any other distinguished men with whom he might be in correspondence!

But there was a *table* calling for us, which was less agreeable than the one we were at—the “time-table” of the railroad below—and our host’s carriage was at the door. Mr. Kennedy was bound to the city, where Mr. Irving, as he gave us his farewell upon the porch, said he thought he might find him, in a day or two, and Wise and I, by the up-train, were bound back to Idlewild. We were at home by seven, and over our venison supper (the “Alleghany haunch” still bountiful), we exchanged our remembrances of the day, and our felicitations at having been privileged, thus delightfully, to see, in his home and in health, the still sovereign Story-King of the Hudson. May God bless him, and may the clouds about his loved and honored head grow still brighter with the nearer setting of his sun.

A Memoranda or two made after attending Mr. Irving’s Funeral.

There were a few drops of rain in the Highlands as we left home to attend the funeral of Mr. Irving. The air was breathlessly still, and the temperature soft and warm; but the clouds in the west looked heavy, as if, by noon, it might gather to a thunder-storm. The neighbors to whom I spoke upon the way, anticipated it. But, as the train made its way down the river, the air brightened, and it was all clear, save a thin veil of mist which draped the valley of the Hudson with the silvery veil common to a day of Indian summer. As I walked along the uplands of Tarrytown, an hour before the funeral, listening to the tolling of the bells and looking off upon the sunny landscape below, it seemed to me as if Nature was conscious of the day’s event—present with hushed tread and countenance of sympathy and tenderness, but, *not to mourn!* There was a glorious putting away of the morning clouds, and an opening upward of the far-reaching path of sunshine into mid-heaven, in harmony with what all felt, save perhaps the hearts from whose daily life, thought, and fond care the beloved invalid had been just torn—a noon, it seemed to me, that was tempered as if by the hands of ministering angels—a lifting of the gloom of death for one whose departure should be cheerful beyond man’s ordinary lot. To a pure life, nobly and beautifully completed, it was Death’s inevitable coming; but, ordered at the most timely hour, and announced with the gentleness of a welcome.

The ferryman, as I crossed the river (forty miles above Sunnyside, and out of reach, of course, of the neighborhood’s rumor of the day), had giv-
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en me a touching proof of the singular universality of the departed one's hold upon the popular heart. It was, of course, a man of the laboring class, hard-working, and, in his ordinary intercourse with those around him, little likely to hear a book mentioned—but *he had read and loved Irving*. "You are going down to the funeral, I suppose, sir?" he inquired, as I stepped on board. "Yes," I replied, "and we have a great loss in the death of such a man." "A loss, indeed! and, as soon as I heard of it, I put the flag at half-mast, and we shall keep it there to-day," he said, as he turned thoughtfully away. How beautiful for Irving (I could not but think) to have died, not only with all the world's highest honors about his head, but to be mourned, also, at the deeper and more sacred level of the world's common heart.

It is probable, that, among the many descriptions of the funeral ceremony, there will be a mention—(possibly a portrait in one of the illustrated papers)—of a tall and ragged old man, with very marked physiognomy, who fell into the procession of the wealthy and gifted, approaching the chancel to take a last look at the cold features in the coffin. My attention was called to him as he unconsciously crowded his ragged shoulder against our country's wealthiest man (Mr. Astor), with whose heart his own humbler heart had, for that moment, a tear in common, I am sure. In unconscious forgetfulness of all around, he tottered down the north aisle—his rough features full of emotion at what he had just gazed upon, and appearing, in his whole figure and aspect, so like what has been portrayed to us in Irving's sketches of other days! He might easily have been a relic of the early settlers of the hills near by—a type, by fair inheritance, of the characters who were the studies of "Diedrick Knickerbocker"—but it seemed a striking apparition of the Past, so strangely conjured into the midst of that crowd of To-Day's gifted and distinguished!

There is little to add to the many touching descriptions of the funeral, or to the interesting particulars of the last days of Mr. Irving. They have been well and lovingly written upon, by many and able pens. As I stood in the church, before the service, I heard, incidentally, from one of the neighbors who was often at Sunnyside, that Mr. Irving had been for some time aware of the uncertain tenure of his life—with the disease at his heart which has now ended it so suddenly. He fully anticipated an instantaneous stopping of the fluttering pulse, and was, therefore, careful never to be left alone—but he talked cheerfully of dying. My companion home, after the funeral (Mr. Grinnel), was one of our party when the beloved author accompanied us on a visit to "Sleepy

Hollow," two years ago—a privileged day which I described in the Home Journal, at the time—and he recalled to my mind the peculiar unhesitatingness with which Mr. Irving pointed out to us, as we drove past it in the carriage, the old church which was his family burying-ground. "*It is soon to be my resting-place,*" he said, expressing it in the tone of an habitual thought, and returning immediately to the lively conversation suggested by the historic scenery we were passing through. And, to this place, he was borne and laid to rest, yesterday—"blessed of the Lord," we may well believe, in having been "found ready."

HALF AN HOUR AT SUNNYSIDE.*

A VISIT TO WASHINGTON IRVING.

BY THEODORE TILTON.

I HAD half an hour one day last week at Sunnyside—the residence of Washington Irving. Such a half hour ought to have been one of the pleasantest in one's life; and so it was! The pleasure began before reaching the door-step, or taking the old man's hand—in the thousand associations of the place—for a visit to Sunnyside is equal to a pilgrimage to Abbotsford.

The quaint, grotesque old dwelling, with its old-fashioned gables, stood as solemn and sleepy among the trees as if it had been built to personate old Rip Van Winkle at his nap. The grounds were covered with brown and yellow leaves, with here and there a red-squirrel running and rustling among them, as if pretending to be the true red-breast that laid the leaves over the babes in the wood.

The morning had been rainy, and the afternoon showed only a few momentary openings of clear sky; so that I saw Sunnyside without the sun. But under the heavy clouds there was something awe-inspiring in the sombre view of those grand hills with their many-colored forests, and of Hendrik Hudson's ancient river still flowing at the feet of the ancient Palisades.

The mansion of Sunnyside has been standing for twenty-three years; but when first its sharp-angled roof wedged its way up among the branches of the old woods, the region was far more a solitude than now; for at that time our busy author had secluded himself from almost everybody but one near neighbor; while he has since unwittingly gathered around him a little community of New York merchants, whose ele-

* From the *Independent*, Nov. 24, 1859.

gant country-seats, opening into each other by mutual intertwining roads, form what looks like one vast and free estate, called on the time-tables of the railroad by the honorary name of Irvington. But even within the growing circle of his many neighbors, the genial old Knickerbocker still lives in true retirement, entertaining his guests within echo distance of Sleepy Hollow—without thought, and almost without knowledge,

“—how the great world
Is praising him far off.”

He withdrew a year ago from all literary labor, and is now spending the close of his life in well-earned and long-needed repose.

Mr. Irving is not so old-looking as one would expect who knew his age. I fancied him as in the winter of life; I found him only in its Indian summer. He came down stairs, and walked through the hall into the back-parlor, with a firm and lively step that might well have made one doubt whether he had truly attained his seventy-seventh year. He was suffering from asthma, and was muffled against the damp air with a Scotch shawl, wrapped like a great loose scarf around his neck; but as he took his seat in the old arm-chair, and, despite his hoarseness and troubled chest, began an unexpectedly vivacious conversation, he made me almost forget that I was the guest of an old man long past his “threescore years and ten.”

But what should one talk about who had only half an hour with Washington Irving? I ventured the question,

“Now that you have laid aside your pen, which of your books do you look back upon with most pleasure?”

He immediately replied, “I scarcely look with full satisfaction upon any; for they do not seem what they might have been. I often wish that I could have twenty years more, to take them down from the shelf, one by one, and write them over.”

He spoke of his daily habits of writing, before he had made the resolution to write no more. His usual hours for literary work were from morning till noon. But, although he had generally found his mind most vigorous in the early part of the day, he had always been subject to moods and caprices, and could never tell, when he took up the pen, how many hours would pass before he would lay it down.

“But,” said he, “these capricious periods, of the heat and glow of composition, have been the happiest hours of my life. I have never found, in any thing outside of the four walls of my study, any enjoyment equal to sitting at my writing-desk with a clean page, a new theme, and a mind awake.

His literary employments, he remarked, had always been more like entertainments than tasks.

“Some writers,” said he, “appear to have been independent of moods. Sir Walter Scott, for instance, had great power of writing, and could work almost at any time; so could Crabbe—but with this difference: Scott always, and Crabbe seldom, wrote well. “I remember,” said he, “taking breakfast one morning with Rogers, Moore, and Crabbe. The conversation turned on Lord Byron’s poetic moods: Crabbe said that, however it might be with Lord Byron, as for himself he could write as well one time as at another. But,” said Irving, with a twinkle of humor at recalling the incident, “Crabbe has written a great deal that nobody can read.”

He mentioned that while living in Paris he went a long period without being able to write. “I sat down repeatedly,” said he, “with pen and ink, but could invent nothing worth putting on the paper. At length, I told my friend, Tom Moore, who dropped in one morning, that now, after long waiting, I had the mood, and would hold it, and work it out as long as it would last, until I had wrung my brain dry. So I began to write shortly after breakfast, and continued, without noticing how the time was passing, until Moore came in again at four in the afternoon—when I had completely covered the table with freshly-written sheets. I kept the mood almost without interruption for six weeks.”

I asked which of his books was the result of this frenzy; he replied, “*Bracebridge Hall*.”

“None of your works,” I remarked, “are more charming than the *Biography of Goldsmith*.”

“Yet that was written,” said he, “even more rapidly than the other.” He then added:

“When I have been engaged on a continuous work, I have often been obliged to rise in the middle of the night, light my lamp, and write an hour or two, to relieve my mind; and now that I write no more, I am sometimes compelled to get up in the same way to read.”

Sometimes, also, as the last Idlewild letters mention, he gets up to shave.

“When I was in Spain,” he remarked, “searching the old chronicles, and engaged on the *Life of Columbus*, I often wrote fourteen or fifteen hours out of the twenty-four.”

He said that whenever he had forced his mind unwillingly to work, the product was worthless, and he invariably threw it away and began again; “for,” as he observed, “an essay or chapter that has been only hammered out is seldom good for any thing. An author’s right time to work is when his mind is aglow; when his imagination is kindled; these are his precious moments: let him wait until they come, but

when they have come let him make the most of them."

I referred to his last and greatest work, the *Life of Washington*, and asked if he felt, on finishing it, any such sensation as Gibbon is said to have experienced over the last sheet of the *Decline and Fall*. He replied that the whole work had engrossed his mind to such a degree that, before he was aware, he had written himself into feebleness of health; that he feared in the midst of his labor that it would break him down before he could end it; that when at last the final pages were written, he gave the manuscript to his nephew to be conducted through the press, and threw himself back upon his red cushioned lounge with an indescribable feeling of relief. He added, that the great fatigue of mind throughout the whole task had resulted from the care and pains required in the construction and arrangement of materials, and not in the mere literary composition of the successive chapters.

But what magnificent volumes! What a work for an old man to have achieved! What a fitting close to the labors of a long and busy life! They unite on one page, and will perpetuate in one memory, not only a great name, but its great namesake: the Father of the American Republic, and the Father of the American Republic of Letters.

On the parlor wall hung the engraving of Faed's picture of "Scott and his Contemporaries." I alluded to it as presenting a group of his former friends.

"Yes," said he, "I knew every man of them but three: and now they are all gone."

"Are the portraits good?" I inquired.

"Scott's head," he replied, "is well drawn, though the expression lacks something of Scott's force; Campbell's is tolerable; Lockhart's is the worst. Lockhart," said he, "was a man of very delicate organization, but he had a more manly look than in the picture."

"You should write one more book," I hinted.

"What is that?"

"Your reminiscences of those literary friends."

"Ah," he exclaimed, "it is too late now! I shall never take the pen again; I have so entirely given up writing, that even my best friends' letters lie unanswered. I must have rest. No more books now!"

He referred to the visit, a week before, from Mr. Willis, whose letter he had just been reading in the *Home Journal*.

"I am most glad," said he, "that Mr. Willis remembered my nieces; they are my housekeepers and nurses; they take such good care of me that really I am the most fortunate old bachelor in the world! Yes," he repeated with

a merry emphasis, "the most fortunate old bachelor in all the world!"

It was delightful to witness the animation of his manner, and the heartiness of his gratitude, as he continued to relate how they supplied all his wants—gave him his medicines at the right time, without troubling him to look at the clock for himself—called him down to breakfast—cloaked and shawled him for his morning ride—brought him his hat for his fine-weather walks—and in every possible way humored him in every possible whim.

"I call them sometimes my nieces," he said, "but oftener my daughters!"

As I rose to go, he brought from a corner of the room a photograph of a little girl, exhibiting it with great enthusiasm. It was a gift from a little child who had come to see him every day during his sickness. The picture was accompanied with a note, printed in large letters, with a lead pencil, by the little correspondent, who said she was too young to write! He spoke with great vivacity of his childish visitor. "Children," said the old man, "are great pets: I am very fond of the little creatures."

The author's study—into which I looked for a few moments before leaving—is a small room, almost entirely filled by the great writing-table and the lounge behind it. The walls are laden with books and pictures, which evidently are rearranged every day by some delicate hand; for none of the books were tumbled into a corner, and no papers were lying loose upon the table. The pen, too, was laid precisely parallel to the edge of the inkstand—a nicety which only a womanly housekeeper would persevere to maintain! Besides, there was not a speck of dust upon carpet or cushion!

I stood reverently in the little room—as if it were a sacred place! Its associations filled my mind with as much delight as if I had been breathing fragrance from hidden flowers. On leaving, I carried the picture of it vividly in my mind, and still carry it;—the quiet, secluded, poetic haunt in which a great author wrote his greatest works!

As I came away, the old gentleman bundled his shawl about him, and stood a few moments on the steps. A momentary burst of sunshine fell on him through the breaking clouds. In that full light he looked still less like an old man than in the dark parlor by the shaded window. His form was slightly bent, but the quiet humor of the early portraits was still lingering in his face. He was the same genial, generous, merry-eyed man at seventy-seven as Jarvis had painted him nearly fifty years before. I wish always to remember him as I saw him at that last moment!

A DAY AT SUNNYSIDE.*

BY OSMOND TIFFANY.

I MET Mr. Irving only once, but then it was by his own fireside, with no other visitor to share my enjoyment. It was in the summer of 1853, when I had left Baltimore for the hot season, and was passing my time at White Plains, eight miles from Sunnyside. The Hon. John P. Kennedy, an intimate friend of Irving's, had given me a letter to him, and on a lovely August day I drove over to his house. * * * * *

Mr. Irving was suffering a little that day with headache, and feeling unwilling to detain him, after a pleasant call of half an hour, I rose to depart. He, however, would not permit me to do so, saying that I had come from a distance, and must stay to dinner. He then added that he wished a little rest, but that if I could amuse myself with a book, or strolling about the grounds, he would leave me to myself for an hour or so. Nothing more delightful than to tread the lawn at Sunnyside. It overhung the river, the railroad passing directly under the bank from which I looked across the Tappan sea. It was the day of the inauguration of the Crystal Palace, and all the world in heat and dust had gone to look at President Pierce, while I was alone with Washington Irving. Miles away, across the water, lay Tappan, where André bravely met his melancholy doom. Above and below stretched an enchanting prospect, ever enlivened by the white-winged craft scudding before or beating in the wind. Nature and art were charmingly blended in the grounds, fine deciduous trees and evergreens contrasted foliage, while winding paths led into shady dells and arbors, or to rustic bridges which spanned a brooklet running riverward. The whole sweet scene was in unison with the genial spirit of its possessor.

On returning to the house near four o'clock, Mr. Irving met me again in the parlor. This was a large and handsomely furnished room, decorated with paintings and engravings, several of them scenes from the author's own writings, which had been given to him, while the book-table displayed choice presentation copies of works from literary friends. I was attracted by a collection of Wilkie's engraved works, and particularly struck by one of its subjects; a young monk on his knees confessing to an old one. Mr. Irving said that he himself was with Wilkie, when he made the sketch of this picture. They were travelling together in Spain, and one day, in passing through the aisles of one of its old cathedrals, they peeped into a confessional

and beheld a venerable bearded ecclesiastic, listening to the fervent confession of sin from a young devotee. Wilkie instantly stopped and sketched this striking scene, elaborating it on his return to England.

Dinner being now announced, we were joined by a brother of Mr. Irving, who with his three daughters reside at Sunnyside. In introducing me to his nieces, he playfully spoke of them as his adopted daughters, for want of any of his own. He had now entirely recovered from his headache, and was in the most lively and agreeable mood. I had heard that in general society he was often silent, and I knew that on public occasions he could not possibly speak, but now nothing could be more delightful than the flow of his conversation. I found that the best way to draw him out, was to let him talk on at will, now and then making some slight suggestion which would open a new subject. In this manner he touched upon his travels in Spain, and recalled the palmy days of the Alhambra, and it was like reading one of his fine romances, to hear him speak of bygone scenes in Granada, Madrid, and Seville. He had many anecdotes of the celebrated actors and singers of his time, for he was fond of music, and thoroughly appreciated high dramatic art. I mentioned the "Little Red Horse Inn," which he has made immortal by his sketch of Stratford-on-Avon, and told him, that as soon as I visited it, the landlord on finding I was an American brought in a copy of his works, and said he was proud always to meet the author's countrymen. Mr. Irving added, that on his first return to Stratford, after the publication of the *Sketch Book*, he was in company with Mr. Van Buren, and that they were greatly amused by the landlady rushing in, holding up the poker with which he stirred the fire, and saying, "Sir, you see I've got your sceptre safe."

Nothing could be more modest than the way in which Mr. Irving spoke of himself or of his works, never naming them, unless they were alluded to. Indeed his whole manner was in striking contrast to the flippancy of some shallow literary men, and to the "smile superior," the self-complacency, and consummate impudence of some of the "curled darlings" of the lecture-room, who annually visit the rural districts to instruct us about "society," and tell how New York snobocracy ties its cravats and flirts its fans in Madison Square. Here was a man who for half a century had moved in the very highest circles of wealth, style, and intellect, caressed on every hand, yet whom panegyric and flattery could not spoil, and who had preserved unspotted his true nobility of nature. A modest hero of letters, a perfect gentleman in

* From the *Springfield Republican*.

AN IRVING ANECDOTE.

soul as in manner, one felt in his presence the influence of—

“A mind that all the muses deck'd
With gifts of grace, which might express
All comprehensive tenderness
All subtilizing intellect.

“Heart affluence in disensate talk
From household fountains never dry,
The critic clearness of an eye
Which saw through all the muses' walk.”

ANECDOTE OF WASHINGTON IRVING.*

WE dined at General Webb's, at his charming “Pokahoe,” in honor of Dr. Wainwright, lately chosen to be Provisional Bishop of New York.

The company consisted of Bishop Doane, Dr. Wainwright, Dr. Creighton, Dr. Vinton, and Mr. Southard, of the clergy; with Mr. Charles King and Mr. Washington Irving. These guests, enlivened by the happy occasion of their gathering, enjoyed the day prodigiously. Mr. Irving was silent for a long time; yet he seemed interested in the conversation, till, gradually, his eye lighted, and his face beamed, and he ventured to drop a word, here and there, sometimes spontaneously in repartee, but chiefly in monosyllabic response.

The company evidently respected his accustomed taciturnity with strangers, especially as our host had hinted to us that Mr. Irving reluctantly allowed himself to be drawn from his seclusion to participate in a “Clerical dinner-party.” Dinner-parties he abhorred; and clerical dinner-parties he conceived to be the most dull, precise, and formal of social ceremonies.

To Mr. Charles King we were indebted for bringing Mr. Irving out and keeping him awake, and cheating him of his accustomed nap. He addressed Mr. Irving as Major, recounting the scenes of his young manhood when he was aide-camp to Gov. Tompkins in the “last war.” Mr. Irving enjoyed the reminiscence to such a degree that his reserve was entirely dissipated, and he volunteered an anecdote of his military service on Fort Greene, and of the mishap of the Governor in being upset from his horse into the ditch of the Fort, which he told with inimitable humor, and with a relish characteristic of Diedrick Knickerbocker.

The ice was fairly broken. The connection of Mr. Irving and the soldier was itself a ludicrous juxtaposition, and he himself made the most fun of it.

Our host first playfully, and then seriously, endeavored to persuade him to apply for his “land-warrant,” to which his services entitled him, by

act of Congress. We severally promised to do the writing, if he would sign the application. And we urged the worth of the land-warrant as a memento which would be so valuable one of these days, as to be sought for at a price which would feed the poor, or provide a chancel window, or even (said one) to build a new church for Tarrytown.

Mr. Irving was greatly amused by the persuasions of the company, parrying the arguments, one after another, with sly skill and evident delight.

He hit the clergy with a gentle sarcasm at their disinterestedness, and intimated that their zeal for a new church or a chancel window was having “a single eye for the public good.” And he bantered Mr. King and our host upon the affectation of military *esprit de corps*. When the time came for parting, Mr. Irving invited us to call upon him at “Sunnyside,” and whispered to our host, “When you have another clerical dinner-party, count me in.”

The next day we called on Mr. Irving at Sunnyside. It was the day of Mr. Webster's funeral at Marshfield. It was one of the glorious days of October, when the mists of Tappaan Zee flung a veil over the charms of the Rockland Hills, obscuring the landscape of the Highlands in that half-light which Doughty knew so well how to paint. The sun was warm and genial and the air balmy, insomuch that we adjourned from the parlor to the porch. The conversation turned upon Mr. Webster,—his life, his labors, his successes, his disappointments, his death, and the loss to his mourning country. Thence, it changed to Mr. Webster's compeers and the era of the Republic when they lived, and to a comparison with the preceding epochs, and thence to prognostications and politics in general.

Just then, my eye was attracted to an apple-tree loaded with a precious freight of bright red apples, to which I quietly walked, unperceived, as I supposed. I picked an apple from the ground: it was very good. I tried another: it was somewhat decayed. I then threw some of them at the sound bright red apples on the tree.

While thus busied, I heard a tenor voice crying out: “An old man once saw a rube boy stealing apples, and he ordered him to come down.”

Looking round, I saw Mr. Irving coming towards me, to whom I replied: “But the young saucebox told him decidedly that he would not.”

Mr. Irving rejoined: “Then the old man pelted him with grass.”

I replied, “At which the saucebox laughed: whereupon the old man began to pelt him, saying, ‘I will see what virtue there is in stones.’”

“Ah! you've read it, you've read it,” exclaim-

* From the *Courier and Enquirer*, Dec. 14, 1859.

ed Mr. Irving, clapping his hands in great glee, and fairly running, in a dog-trot, to my side.

"I hope my guests will excuse me," he said; "but I could not refrain from coming to you."

"Yet they were conversing on very grave and interesting topics," said I; "and I wonder you could break away so easily to detect a young saucebox stealing your apples."

"Well I must tell you how it happened," he replied. "To be sure the topics are grave and patriotic, and all that, yet when I saw you eating my apples from this grand old tree, and trying to knock some down with the rotten apples spread about here, it brought to my mind a circumstance which happened to me, on this very spot, some fifteen years ago. I had lately come from Spain, and was building yonder nondescript cottage, half Moorish and half English—an *olla podrida* sort of thing—about which I was excessively interested, considering my work as patriotic and as grave a matter as the conversation down there.

"I was watching the workmen, directing this one and that one, lest the idea of my fancy might not be realized, when, in turning, my eye caught this apple-tree, loaded with its fruit (just as your eye did). It was a day like this, one of our October days—our Highland October days—such as one lights upon nowhere else in the world. And this apple-tree bore that year as it does not bear every year, yet just like this. Well, I left my workmen and my talk (just as you did), and ate one of these windfalls (just as you did), and liked it (just as you did), and then I tried to knock some down (just as you did). Now, while I was enjoying these fine apples (it was for the first time). "Just as I am now," I interposed. "Yes, yes," he continued. "A little urchin—such as infest houses in building—a ragged little urchin, out at the knees and out at the elbows—came up to me and said, *sotto voce*, 'Mister, do you love apples?' 'Ay, that I do,' said I. 'Well, come with me, and I'll show you where are some better than them are.' 'Ah,' said I, 'where are they?' 'Just over the hill, there,' said he. 'Well, show me,' said I. 'Come along,' said the little thief, 'but don't let the old man see us.' *So I went with him and stole my own apples.*

"Thus, you see how it happened that I could not stay with the politicians." And, as he said this, his whole frame shook with fun; and his face threw off the wrinkles of seventy years. Geoffrey Crayon stood before me.

WASHINGTON IRVING.*

BY GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

THE news of Irving's death did not surprise those who knew how gradually but surely he had been failing for several months; and yet the death of any one we love, however long expected, is sudden at last—and he was the one man whom the whole country loved. Men of greater genius, of more persuasive and brilliant power, more peculiarly identified than he with characteristic American development, there are and have been, but no character since Washington so symmetrical, and no career more rounded and complete.

With Irving, the man and the author were one. The same twinkling humor, untouched by personal venom; the same sweetness, geniality, and grace; the same transparency and childlike simplicity, which endeared the writer to his readers, endeared the man to his friends. Gifted with a happy temperament, with that cheerful balance of thought and feeling which begets the sympathy which prevents bitter animosity, he lived through the sharpest struggles of our politics, not without interest, but without bitterness, and with the tenderest respect of every party.

His tastes, and talents, and habits were all those of the literary man. In earlier life, Secretary to the Legation in London, and afterwards Minister to Spain, he used the opportunities of his position not for personal advancement, nor for any political object whatever, but for pure literary advantage. And it was given to him, first of our authors, to invest the American landscape with the charm of imagination and tradition. Curiously enough, he did not evoke this spell from the grave chronicles of religious zeal in New England, whose gloomy romance Hawthorne has wielded with power so weird, nor from the gay cavalier society of Virginia, but from the element of our national settlement which seemed the least promising of all—the Dutch.

So great is the power and so exquisite the skill with which this was done, that his genius has colored history. We all see the Dutch as Irving painted them. When we speak of our doughty Governor Stuyvesant, whom we all know, we mean not the Governor of the histories, but of Diedrick Knickerbocker. And so the entire Hudson river, from Communipaw, upon the Jersey shore of the Bay, along the Highlands and beyond the Catskill, owes its characteristic romance to the touch of the same imagination.

* A copyright article, reprinted, by the courtesy of the publishers, from *Harper's Weekly*, Dec. 17, 1859.

That this power should have been no less in the treatment of Spanish legend, shows its genuine quality as high, poetic imagination. That the same man should have written the Knickerbocker History, Rip Van Winkle, and Ichabod Crane, and then the Chronicles of the Alhambra, and the Legends of Granada, shows only that if his power were versatile, it was versatile not because it was talent, but genius.

And to this various excellence in seizing the essential romance of the Dutch and Spanish genius, we must add that he was not less fortunate in the English. The *Sketch Book* and *Bracebridge Hall* are the most exquisite pictures of characteristic English life in literature. What they delineate is constantly hinted in English works, but nowhere else is it so affectionately and fully elaborated. It is the poetic side of that burly dogmatist, John Bull, which is the secret charm of these books. They are full of a breezy heartiness, an unsophisticated honesty, a cordial reverence for traditions in themselves interesting, the flower and beauty of conservatism. There are hints and implications of it all through the *Spectator* and *Tattler*, and the early essayists; in Goldsmith, too; but nowhere among English authors until long after Irving's works, and then in the Christmas chapters of *Pickwick*, and generally in the Holiday tales of Dickens.

Is it too fanciful to find this susceptibility of genius to national individuality in Irving's histories? to suppose that it is evident in the method and atmosphere of the Columbus, as contrasted with that of the Washington?

It is fair to lay the more stress upon this, because Irving's genius suffers in public estimation as Washington's does, from its very symmetry. Disproportion gives an impression of strength, but an Egyptian temple was no more enduring than a Grecian, although the Egyptian architecture looks as if rooted in the earth, and the Grecian as if ready to float off into the blue sky. So in any direction, the ardent, passionate temperament seems to be more pronounced than the balanced and serene.

How Irving had grown into the public heart and life! It was like the love of England for Walter Scott. The word Knickerbocker, or his own name, had scarcely less vogue than the word Waverley. It greets us everywhere, and is not the fashion of a day, but the habit of love and reverence. And so, foretasting that immortality of affection in which his memory is and will be cherished, his many and various tasks fulfilled, his last great work done, ripe with years and honor, and entirely unspoiled by the world which he loved, and which loved him, the good old man died as quietly as he had lived, ceased without pain or struggle from the world

in which he had never caused the one nor suffered from the other.

And when his death was known, there was no class of men who more sincerely deplored him than those of his own vocation. The older authors felt that a friend, not a rival—the younger that a father, had gone. There is not a young literary aspirant in the country who, if he ever personally met Irving, did not hear from him the kindest words of sympathy, regard, and encouragement. There is none of the older rank who, knowing him, did not love him. He belonged to no clique, no party in his own profession more than in any other of the great interests of life; and that not by any wilful independence, or neutrality armed against all comers, but by the natural catholicity of his nature.

On the day of his burial, unable to reach Tarrytown in time for the funeral, I came down the shore of the river he loved. As we darted and wound along, the Catskills were draped in sober gray mist, not hiding them, but wreathing, and folding, and lingering, as if the hills were hung with sympathetic, but not unrelieved gloom. Yet far away towards the south, the bank on which his home lay, was Sunnyside still, for the sky was cloudless and soft with serene sunshine. I could not but remember his last words to me more than a year ago, when his book was finished and his health was failing, "I am getting ready to go; I am shutting up my doors and windows." And I could not but feel that they were all open now, and bright with the light of eternal morning.

WASHINGTON IRVING.*

BY FREDERICK S. COZZENS.

"WASHINGTON IRVING is dead!"

The word passed in whispers through the train, as it rolled noisily along the banks of his beloved river—beside the very trees that fringed Sunnyside.

And within that hallowed ground, Earth's Greatest Favorite lay silent.

Who can mourn for him? Not one! We may mourn for ourselves,—for what we have lost in him; it was fitting that his life should have such a close; that his gentle spirit was not taxed with pain, nor did dissolution advance with lingering pace. But when the labor of his life was accomplished, and he rested, Death, gently as a child, drew aside his curtains of repose, saluted

* Reprinted, by the courteous permission of Mr. Bonner, from *The New York Ledger*, Dec. 17, 1859.

him with a kiss, and said, Awake, for it is morning!

I count it one of the greatest privileges to have known Mr. Irving personally. Not from that idle vanity which too often leads the humbler writer to claim acquaintance with the most renowned in the field of letters; nor from any desire to repeat his private conversations in the public ear; nor yet to gather serviceable hints that might be useful hereafter; nor yet to task his courtesy with that delicate appeal to his criticism which, under the disguise of advice, covets the latent compliment; but simply because his genial and benevolent nature was such that it inspired the tenderest and the truest emotions. It is not easy to express what I mean, but those who knew him best will understand me.

If to convey the peculiar grace that his presence inspired, be beyond the power of description, yet its influence upon others is less difficult to represent. In his household, affection seemed to pervade the very atmosphere. The kindest, the tenderest language, to each and to all; the joyous welcome that awaited a distant relative visiting Sunnyside; the quiet, but constant care manifested for stranger guests; the happy, tranquil face of an elder brother; the cheerful, "pleased alacrity," of the servants; all seemed the very reflex of such a man:—so good, so true, so modest, so eminent.

"It seems," said a lady after a visit to Washington Irving's family, "as though I had been in heaven for a little while."

I do not misdoubt much that a letter from Washington Irving is the treasured possession of almost every decent writer, known or unknown, in America. I have seen many such; not addressed always to the author personally, but written sidewise, recommending him to editors of magazines, or to publishers; and sometimes, a right out and out note of brief encouragement;—bidding the youthful aspirant God speed! and saying such words, as a true man could say, in such a matter. And let any, whether "despondency weigh down their fluttering pinions," or heartless adulation terrify them, take up their Irving letter! Up or down, it will bring them to the true level; if as rightfully read, as rightfully written.

We cannot think him dead, whose words, whose tones, and accents yet linger in the ears of the living.

But when these recollections fade and wither; when, link by link, the associates of his lifetime separate from life, yet will his enduring memory survive. What he will be, requires neither the voice of prophet or commentator to tell; what he was, is this—Not one man of all human kind so beloved as he.

It is a very common belief that what is easily read, was as easily written. But the profoundest research of the student fails to explain simplicity of style. It is not difficult to employ technical phrases, or to press into the service the unusual diction current with transcendentalists; but that language by which heart speaks to heart, the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin, lies beyond the cunning of the most acute analyst. This is the art that will survive the test of translation. Need I repeat, what has been so often said—"the name of Irving is an honored household word in Spain, rivalled only by that of her own Cervantes."

How many proofs of such recognition might be recalled! "When I travelled through Spain," said a dear friend, "the best passport I had was that I was a countryman of Washington Irving. When I went to Granada, old Mateo, 'Son of the Alhambra,' ceased dancing the bolero with his newly-married fourth wife, that he might talk with me of his honored patron." And with equal affection did the master of Wolfert's Roost draw forth that yellow silk scarf, knitted by the fingers of his faithful servitor, and relate with grateful, kindling modesty, that his old friend in Granada had not forgotten him. "He thinks," said Irving, "that gastric complaints are dangerous in this climate; and so he warns me not to expose myself to the air without this protector!" Whereupon he wound the yellow scarf around his waist, not without a cogent twinkle of humor in his eye, but with a loving remembrance behind all that.

So, too, we may recall that reminiscence of Lord Byron, stumping through the hall of his Italian palace, to meet his American guests, and with the first salutation saying, "I have just read *Bracebridge Hall*; has your countryman, Washington Irving, written any thing since? for whatever he writes I have a great desire to read." And in travelling through England, lately, when my slouched hat betrayed that I was an American citizen, twice in a day's journey was that beloved name the subject of conversation. It was from the inquiry of strangers that I felt I was his countryman. I do not know whether or not I felt prouder because Irving was an American, or whether or not I did not feel prouder myself, as an American, because of him.

The ingenuous modesty which, in so eminent a degree, was his peculiar attribute, added a charm to every action of his life. The honors which public men so earnestly covet, he appeared to avoid; fulfilling the duties of his profession, and shrinking from the applause so faithfully and so honestly earned. It was not unusual for him to coincide with the most adverse and

injurious criticisms. In one of his pleasantest Sunnyside letters he speaks of "that self-criticism which is apt to beset me and cuff me down at the end of a work, when the excitement of composition is over." Thus, with a kind word of encouragement for every one, he was "forgetful only of himself." When his faithful physician and friend, Dr. Peters, told him, fifteen months since, that he had a subtle disease that might be fatal at any moment—an enlargement of the heart—his only reply was, "Do not tell it to the family."

If, while speaking reverently of Irving, I allude to that gentle play of humor which illuminated his conversation, I do so with a full sense of the impropriety of introducing so subtle an element in obituary. But when we speak of Irving, when we recall him, as he lived, and moved, and spoke, surely this must not be forgotten. Other men—famous, wise, but not so great as he, had learned the trick of dignity, and knew its value; but a kind word, a felicitous expression, that seemed to couple a smile and a tear, that smoothed the asperities of life, and awakened all its gentlest amenities, from Washington Irving was like a sunbeam! It broke forth amid the clouds, and its mellow effulgence lightened the path of the listener for that, and for many a day.

And when the volume of his life was closed, so did grace and peace follow his footsteps. Bidding farewell to those for whom he had lived, he retired to rest!

And the simple record of the end of a life so renowned, is sweet as the record of the life itself. Placing one hand upon his heart, and the other upon the book-table that had been so long his midnight companion, he sank down upon his knees, and with the arms of affection supporting his honored head, saw the first dawn of a celestial morning.

Not in the cheerless winter, but in the Indian summer of his renown.

Is it well, is it well with thee, beloved master? Not with mourning and funeral symbols; not with the pomp of public obsequies; not with the heartless array of alien magnificence; but decked with flowers, wreathed with laurel garlands, followed by those who knew him best and loved him most, the hearse bore the beloved remains of Washington Irving towards that valley which, to the end of time, will remain consecrated by his genius.

Chestnut Cottage, Dec. 2, 1859.

TABLE TALK.

From a sketch, "A Day with Washington Irving."*

BY JAMES GRANT WILSON.

As we sat at his board in the dining-room, from which is seen the majestic Hudson with its myriad of sailing-vessels and steamers, and heard him dilate upon the bygone days and the giants that were in the earth then—of his friends, Scott and Byron, of Moore and Lockhart, of Professor Wilson and the Etrick Shepherd, and as the old man pledged the health of his kinsfolk and guest, it seemed as if a realm of romance were suddenly opened before us. He told us of his first meeting with Sir Walter Scott, so graphically described in his charming essay on Abbotsford; and his last, in London, when the great Scotchman was on his way to the Continent with the vain hope of restoring his health, broken down by his gigantic efforts to leave an untarnished name, and a fantastic mansion and the broad acres that surrounded it, to a long line of Scotts of Abbotsford, with various anecdotes of those above mentioned, and other notables of bygone days.

Mr. Irving related with great glee an anecdote of James Hogg, the "Etrick Shepherd," who in one of his early visits to Edinburgh, was invited by Sir Walter Scott to dine with him at his mansion in Castle-street. Quite a number of the literati had been asked to meet the rustic poet at dinner. When Hogg entered the drawing-room, Lady Scott, being in delicate health, was reclining on a sofa. After being presented, he took possession of another sofa opposite to her and stretched himself thereupon at full length, for as he afterwards said, "I thought I could do no wrong to copy the lady of the house." The dress of the "Etrick Shepherd" at that time was precisely that in which any ordinary herdsman attends cattle to the market, and as his hands, moreover, bore most legible marks of a recent sheepshearing, the lady of the house did not observe with perfect equanimity the novel usage to which her chintz was exposed. Hogg, however, remarked nothing of all this—dined heartily and drank freely, and by jest, anecdote, and song, afforded great merriment to all the company. As the wine operated, his familiarity increased and strengthened; from "Mr. Scott" he advanced to "Shirra" (Sheriff), and thence to "Scott," "Walter," and "Wattie," until at length he fairly convulsed the whole party by addressing Mrs. Scott as "Charlotte."

In reply to our inquiry as to his opinion of

* *The Church Record*, Chicago, Illinois, Dec. 15, 1859.

the poets of the present day, he said, "I ignore them all. I read no poetry written since Byron's, Moore's, and Scott's."

ANECDOTES. *

BY FREDERICK SAUNDERS.

REFERRING to the inimitable story of Rip Van Winkle, which was written, with other productions, while the author resided at Kinderhook, opposite Catskill, it is not a little remarkable that it should have proved so accurate and consistent in its local details; for when it was written, he had not visited the mountains. Some time after its publication, Mr. Irving was on a visit there for the first time, and, as is usual, the guide pointed out to him the scene of the redoubtable and drowsy Dutchman. He also led him to the turn in the road at the entrance to a deep ravine, to "Rip Van Winkle's House," over the entrance to which is an enormous sign representing "Rip" as he awoke from his long "nap" in the Catskills. He listened to the rehearsal of his own legend with exemplary patience, pleased to find his *imaginary* description of its locality so singularly verified by fact. He quietly retired without revealing himself as the author. As an evidence of the deep hold these legends have taken upon the popular mind, it may be mentioned that this cicerone found such good capital to be made out of his recital of the story, that, with the view of imparting something of oracular force to his narration, he professed himself a lineal descendant of the veritable Rip Van Winkle.

* * * * *

Mr. Irving has never been a collector in the usual acceptation of the term; his library does not contain many rare or curious specimens of bibliography; it consists chiefly of standard historical works of reference, together with the best of the usual publications of the day. As may be supposed, his taste in books is fastidious and select. We noticed a long series of the works of Scott, his favorite contemporary writer; and he had the last production of Dickens lying open upon his table. He has a choice assortment of foreign authors—Mr. Irving being an excellent French, German, and Spanish scholar. We also saw some elegant English presentation volumes, together with some fine editions of the classics.

* * * * *

The ivy which is seen trailing over his study, was

* From a paper entitled "Washington Irving—his Home and his Works."

originally brought from Melrose Abbey, by Mrs. Fenwick, a friend of Irving's, and celebrated in song by Burns. This lady planted it at Sunnyside, and it now spreads over a large portion of the picturesque old house. It is very luxuriant and massive, as seen from the exterior of the building, and one of the objects of especial pride and value from its associations. In course of conversation, Mr. Irving spoke appreciatingly of the "multitude of clever authors of the present day," instancing some of the most prominent names; but, he added, with strong emphasis, "Dickens is immeasurably above his contemporaries, and *David Copperfield* is his master-production." Many times during our chat, we listened to the delicious carolling of the birds which haunt these sylvan shades, and fill the air with their melody. Mr. Irving said he could not account for it, but the birds seemed fond of the place, for they constantly made the air vocal with their delicate music. They also, or some other little fairies, seemed to have charmed away from the spot the summer-haunting mosquito, for we learned to our surprise they never made their appearance there. Two favorite dogs gambolled about the lawn, or stretched themselves at the feet of their master, who evidently took pleasure in their sportive and sprightly movements.

ICHABOD CRANE.

A LETTER FROM WASHINGTON IRVING.

This pleasant letter of reminiscences appeared in the *Kinderhook Sentinel*, with the following introduction:

"We have been favored with the perusal of a letter recently written by Washington Irving to his old friend Jesse Merwin, of this town—the veritable 'Ichabod Crane,' whose name has been immortalized in 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.' Having been kindly permitted to transfer this communication to our columns, we cheerfully do so, unwilling that our readers should be deprived of the gratification which we have derived from its perusal. We trust that we shall not incur the displeasure of the distinguished writer, in bringing him before the public, nor be considered as trespassing upon the precincts of unreserved, private epistolary intercourse. As for the 'Old Admiral of the Lake,' of piscatory memory, the redoubtable 'John Moore,' we have no fears to entertain for the mention made of him, he having long since 'shuffled off this mortal coil,' and his sceptre having passed into other hands."

COCKLOFT HALL.

SUNNYSIDE, Feb. 13, 1851.

You must excuse me, my good friend Merwin, for suffering your letter to remain so long unanswered. You can have no idea how many letters I have to answer, besides fagging with my pen at my own literary tasks, so that it is impossible for me to avoid being behindhand in my correspondence. Your letter was indeed most welcome—calling up as it did the recollection of pleasant days passed together, in times long since, at Judge Van Ness's, in Kinderhook. Your mention of the death of good old Dominie Van Ness, recalls the apostolic zeal with which he took our little sinful community in hand, when he put up for a day or two at the Judge's, and the wholesale castigation he gave us all one Sunday, beginning with the two country belles, who came fluttering into the school-house during the sermon, decked out in their city finery, and ending with the Judge himself, in the stronghold of his own mansion.

How soundly he gave it to us! how he peeled off every rag of self-righteousness with which we tried to cover ourselves, and laid the rod on the bare backs of our consciences! The good, plain-spoken, honest old man! How I honored him for his simple, straightforward earnestness; his homely sincerity! He certainly handled us without mittens; but I trust we are all certainly the better for it. How different he was from the brisk, dapper, self-sufficient little apostle who cantered up to the Judge's door a day or two after; who was so full of himself that he had no thought to bestow on our religious delinquencies; who did nothing but boast of his public trials of skill in argument with rival preachers of other denominations, and how he had driven them off the field and crowed over them. You must remember the bustling, self-confident little man, with a tin trumpet in the handle of his riding-whip, with which, I presume, he blew the trumpet in Zion!

Do you remember our fishing expedition, in company with Congressman Van Allen, to the little lake a few miles from Kinderhook; and John Moore, the vagabond admiral of the lake, who sat crouched in a heap, in the middle of his canoe, in the centre of the lake, with fishing-rods stretched out in every direction, like the long legs of a spider? And do you remember our piratical prank, when we made up for our bad luck in fishing by plundering his canoe of its fish when we found it adrift? And do you remember how John Moore came splashing along the marsh on the opposite border of the lake, roaring at us, and how we finished our frolic by driving off and leaving the Congressman to John Moore's mercy, tickling ourselves with the idea of his being at least scalped?

Ah, well-a-day, friend Merwin, these were the

days of our youth and folly. I trust we have grown wiser and better since then; we certainly have grown older. I don't think we could rob John Moore's fishing canoe now. By the way, that same John Moore, and the anecdotes you told of him, gave me the idea of a vagabond character, Dirk Schuyler, in my *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, which I was then writing.

You tell me the old school-house is torn down, and a new one built in its place. I am sorry for it. I should have liked to see the old school-house once more, where, after my morning's literary task was over, I used to come and wait for you occasionally until school was dismissed, and you used to promise to keep back the punishment of some little tough, broad-bottomed Dutch boy until I should come, for my amusement—but never kept your promise. I don't think I should look with a friendly eye on the new school-house, however nice it might be.

Since I saw you in New York, I have had severe attacks of bilious intermittent fever, which shook me terribly; but they cleared out my system, and I have ever since been in my usual excellent health, able to mount my horse and gallop about the country almost as briskly as when I was a youngster. Wishing you the enjoyment of the same inestimable blessing, and begging you to remember me to your daughter who penned your letter, and to your son whom out of old kindness and companionship you have named after me, I remain ever, my old friend, yours truly and cordially,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Jesse Merwin, Esq.

"COCKLOFT HALL."

A REMINISCENCE.*

AN old resident of Newark, who signs himself K. W., gives to the Newark *Advertiser* some particulars about the "Cockloft Hall," mentioned in Irving's *Salmagundi*. The original building referred to under that title, it appears, is situated on the Passaic river, between Belleville and Newark. It was known half a century ago as the "Gouverneur Place," from which family it descended to Mr. Gouverneur Kemble (who was present at Mr. Irving's funeral), but for many years it was rented out to a respectable couple who acted as host and hostess to Irving, Paulding, and three or four others constituting their coterie. The house has been recently improved, but without materially altering its form and internal arrangements. The Cockloft summer-house and the fish-pond mentioned by Irving

* From the *Evening Post*, Dec. 12, 1859.

still exist, though almost in ruins. K. W. thus describes the appearance of the summer-house as he visited it in August last:

"It was a small building, standing not far from the river's brink, and near an artificial basin or pond, into which, as the tide was full, the Passaic was pouring some of its surplus waters through a narrow sluice. It was octagonal in shape, about eighteen feet in diameter, containing only one apartment, with a door facing the river on the east, and having windows opening towards each of the other three cardinal points. It was built of stone, and had been originally weather-boarded, although most of the boards had fallen off. It had evidently been constructed with great care, being fully plastered within and papered, having an ornamental cornice and chair-board, an arched doorway, and cut stone steps,—all indicating a fastidiousness of finish not ordinarily found elsewhere than in dwellings; but it was far gone towards utter ruin, the window-sashes being all out, the door gone, and the mutilated wood-work showing it to be a resort only of the idle and the vicious."

The "Gouverneur Place," or Coekloft Hall, is at present occupied by Mr. Winslow L. Whiting. Mr. Irving, in a letter to the New Jersey Historical Society, some time since, referring to the time he spent at this place, remarked:—"With Newark are associated in my mind many pleasant recollections of early days and of social meetings at an old mansion on the banks of the Passaic."

IRVING PORTRAITS.*

Mr. Irving's Letter to the New York Mercantile Library Association.

Of the thousands who have read with delight the productions of Washington Irving's pen, comparatively few have any correct idea of his personal appearance. Of none of our public men have so few portraits been taken, at least of late years. The correspondence which follows gives the reason for this deficiency:

Irving requested to Sit for his Bust.

CLINTON HALL, November 2, 1854.

My Dear Sir: I have been appointed, by my colleagues in the Board of Direction of the Mercantile Library Association, to express to you their earnest desire to possess some appropriate and enduring memorial of the author of *The*

* From the *Evening Post*, Nov. 30, 1859.

Sketch Book and the Father of American Literature.

The presence in this country of Mr. Randolph Rogers, formerly a merchants' clerk in New York, but of late years a student of art in Italy and now a sculptor of some note, has suggested to a few friends of the institution the idea of embracing the opportunity to secure, if possible, for the merchants' clerks of this city, the marble bust of Washington Irving,—the diplomatist, the scholar, and the author. The Mercantile Library Association, now firmly established as a permanent centre of moral and intellectual influence over the young men of this metropolis (having a membership of nearly six thousand), would seem to be the fitting depository of such a work of art; and the clerks of New York, who have always paid their willing homage to the genius of our first great writer, may with reason present their request to be allowed thus to honor him, who, in the dark day of our national literature, became our Washington, and answered triumphantly for himself and for his country the taunt—"Who reads an American book?"

Commending the subject to your favorable consideration, and hoping that you may not feel compelled to withhold your consent, I am, my dear sir, very respectfully your obedient servant,

FRANK W. BALLARD.

Mr. Irving's Reply.

SUNNYSIDE, November 14, 1854.

TO FRANK W. BALLARD, Esq.—My Dear Sir: I cannot but feel deeply and gratefully sensible of the honor done me by the Mercantile Library Association in soliciting a marble bust of me to be placed in their new establishment. I am well aware of the talents of Mr. Randolph Rogers as a sculptor, and should most willingly stand to him for a bust, but I have some time since come to a fixed determination to stand or sit for no more likenesses, either in painting or sculpture, and have declined repeated and urgent solicitations on the subject. The last one I declined was from Mr. William B. Astor, who wished it for the Astor Library. I offered him, however, the use of a model of a bust executed some years since by Mr. Ball Hughes, and which at the time was considered by my friends an excellent likeness. Of this Mr. Astor had a copy made (by, I think, Mr. Brown, of Brooklyn), which is now in the Astor Library. Should the Mercantile Library Association be disposed to have a similar copy made, the model by Mr. Ball Hughes, which is in the possession of one of my relatives, is at their disposition.

In concluding, I would observe that, viewing the nature and circumstances of your institution

and its identification with the dearest interest and sympathies of my native city, I do not know any one from which an application of the kind you make would be more intensely gratifying.

Accept, my dear sir, my thanks for the kind expressions of your letter, and believe me, very respectfully, your obliged and humble servant,

WASHINGTON IRVING.

MR. IRVING'S OBJECTION TO PUBLIC DINNERS.*

THE last time we had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Irving was at the Publishers' Festival in New York, in the autumn of 1855. All who were present on that occasion will remember how fresh was his appearance, and how genial his manner, and with what a hearty welcome he greeted the friends, old and young, who thronged around him. Among the former was our townsman, Mr. Moses Thomas, and in reference to the interview between these gentlemen, the *American Publishers' Circular* afterwards said :

"One of the interesting incidents at the recent festival was the meeting of Washington Irving with his old friend, Moses Thomas, the veteran and much respected ex-publisher of Philadelphia. Mr. Irving, in his younger days, had been intimate with Mr. Thomas, and cherished for him the highest regard ; but it so happened that they had not met for more than a quarter of a century."

A month or two later Mr. Irving addressed the following letter to Mr. Thomas, which we are tempted to reprint, as at once showing his disinclination to public display, and his cordial recognition of the claims of private friendship.

"SUNNYSIDE, December 14, 1855.

"My Dear Thomas : I thank you heartily for your kind and hospitable invitation to your house, which I should be glad to accept did I propose attending the Godey complimentary dinner ; but the annoyance I suffer at dinners of this kind, in having to attempt speeches, or bear compliments in silence, has made me abjure them altogether. The publishers' festival, at which I had the great pleasure of meeting you, was an exception to my rule, but only made on condition that I would not be molested by extra civilities.

"I regret that on that occasion we were separated from each other, and could not sit together and talk of old times ; however, I trust we shall have a future opportunity of so doing. I wish, when you visit New York, you would take a run

up to Sunnyside ; the cars set you down within ten minutes' walk of my house, where my 'women-kind' will receive you (*figuratively speaking*) with open arms ; and my dogs will not dare to bark at you. Yours, ever very truly,

"WASHINGTON IRVING.

"Moses Thomas, Esq."

ANECDOTE OF WASHINGTON IRVING.*

A FRIEND of ours, who occupies a lordly mansion in Twenty-ninth-street, near Fifth Avenue, was whilom a contractor for building that section of the Croton Aqueduct which passed through Tarrytown. Soon after he had erected a rude building for the reception of the tools and of the workmen, and to afford himself a temporary shelter while engaged in his responsible duties, an old gentleman, plainly dressed and of exceeding unpretending manners, presented himself one day and commenced a conversation with our friend. A great many questions were asked, naturally suggested by the then new enterprise of supplying New York city with water, and after a visit of an hour or so, the old gentleman quietly departed. A few days afterwards, accompanied by two ladies, he again visited the headquarters of our friend, and entered into a more detailed conversation, seemingly intent upon finding out all that was to be learned about the proposed aqueduct. These visits finally became a regular affair, and were continued twice a week, for a period of some six months. The conversations were always confined to local subjects, and not a remark escaped from the lips of the visitor which was calculated to inspire curiosity, or suggest that he was other than some plain good-natured person, with plenty of time on his hands, who desired to while away an hour or two in commonplace chit-chat. In course of time our friend finished his labors at Tarrytown, but occasionally met his old friend on the little steamers that serve to connect our suburbs with the heart of the city. One day, while travelling along the Hudson, and busily engaged in conversation with the old gentleman, the steamer suddenly commenced pealing its bell, and made such a racket that our friend left his place, and hunting up the captain, asked him "what all that noise was about?"

"Why," replied that functionary, "we are opposite Sunnyside, and having Washington Irving on board, by this alarm his servant will be able to meet him at his landing with a carriage."

* From the *Philadelphia North American*, Nov. 30, 1859.

* From the *Spirit of the Times*, Dec. 3, 1859.

Our friend, in great enthusiasm, exclaimed, "Washington Irving! *he* on board; why, point him out to me; there is no man living whom I would more like to see."

At this demonstration, the captain looked quite surprised, and remarked, "Why, sir, you just left Washington Irving's company, and from the number of times I have seen you in familiar conversation with him on this boat, I supposed you were one of his most intimate friends."

The astonishment of our friend may be faintly imagined when he discovered that for more than a half year, twice a week he had had a long conversation with Washington Irving, a person with whom, more than any man living, he desired a personal introduction.

With a glance of disgust he the landscape survey'd,
With its fragrant wild flowers, its wide-waving shade;
Where Passaic meanders through margins of green,
So transparent its waters, its surface serene.

He riv'd the green hills, the wild woods he laid low;
He taugth the pure stream in rough channels to flow;
He rent the rude rock, the steep precipice gave,
And hurl'd down the chasm the thundering wave.

Countless moons have since roll'd in the long lapse of
time—
Cultivation has soften'd those features sublime—
The axe of the white man has lighten'd the shade,
And dispell'd the deep gloom of the thicketed glade.

But the stranger still gazes, with wondering eye,
On the rocks rudely torn, and groves mounted on high;
Still loves on the cliff's dizzy borders to roam,
Where the torrent leaps headlong embosom'd in foam.

TWO POEMS BY WASHINGTON IRVING.*

THE following is the little poem alluded to in the "Memoranda," descriptive of a painting by Gilbert Stuart Newton:

An old philosopher is reading, in this picture, from a folio, to a young beauty who is asleep on a chair on the other side of the table. It is a fine summer's day, and the warm atmosphere is let in through the open casement. Irving wrote the lines at his friend Newton's request.

THE DULL LECTURE.

Frostie age, frostie age,
Vain all thy learning;
Drowsie page, drowsie page,
Evermore turning.

Young head no lore will heed,
Young heart's a reckless rover,
Young beauty, while you read,
Sleeping dreams of absent lover.

THE FALLS OF THE PASSAIC.

In a wild, tranquil vale, fringed with forests of green,
Where nature had fashion'd a soft, sylvan scene,
The retreat of the ringdove, the haunt of the deer,
Passaic in silence roll'd gentle and clear.

No grandeur of prospect astonish'd the sight;
No abruptness sublime mingled awe with delight;
Here the wild flow'ret blossom'd, the elm proudly
waved,
And pure was the current the green bank that laved.

But the spirit that ruled o'er the thick tangled wood,
And deep in its gloom fix'd its murky abode—
Who loved the wild scene that the whirlwinds deform,
And gloried in thunder, and lightning, and storm—

All flush'd from the tumult of battle he came,
Where the red-men encounter'd the children of flame,
While the noise of the war-whoop still rang in his ears,
And the fresh-bleeding scalp as a trophy he bears:

* From *The New York Book of Poetry*, edited by Charles Fenno Hoffman.

AMERICAN LITERARY COMMISSIONS IN LONDON IN 1822.

A Letter from Mr. Irving to Mr. John E. Hall, Editor of the "*Port-Folio*," now first printed.

LONDON, June 30, 1822.

MY DEAR SIR:—I have received your letter of April 29th. The precious letter to which you allude came to hand when I was in France, and I replied to it at some length, but it appears my reply never reached you. The situation in which I was at the time, so far from London, put it out of my power to render you the services you required. The proof-sheets of the *Life of Anacreon* which you say you forwarded, never were received.

I have talked with Carpenter about your proposed work. He says the translation by Moore could not be published in the work without an infringement of his copyright, which of course he could not permit. He says, however, that if the *Life* were well executed, so as to be entertaining and attractive, he should have no objection to treat with you about it; but that at the present day, it is necessary that a work of this kind should be executed in a very masterly manner, as the age is extremely erudite and critical in such matters.

I think if you have the MSS. or printed sheets, you had better transmit them to Mr. Miller and let him act as your agent with Carpenter, or any other bookseller that may be disposed to undertake the thing. Of course, if Carpenter is not the man, you will have to substitute other translations instead of Moore's, which would be a disadvantage to the work.

As to well-written articles concerning America, there are various magazines that would be glad to receive contributions of the kind; as a lively interest exists on the subject of America

and American literature. Your best way is to send your MSS. to Miller, and get him to dispose of them to the best advantage, allowing him a percentage, both to repay him for his trouble, and to make it worth his while to take pains. He is fully to be depended upon. The terms with the most popular magazines is from ten to fifteen or twenty guineas a sheet, according to the merit of the article and the reputation of the author's writings before they make any offer.

I have handed the *Conversations on the Bible* to a young clergyman, a literary character, to read them and report on them; I will then see if I can do any thing with the printers about them. There is such an inundation of work for the press, however, that you have no idea of the difficulty of getting any thing looked at by a publisher unless the author has an established name.

The Spy is extremely well spoken of by the best circles, and has a very fair circulation; not a bit better than it deserves, for it does the author great credit. The selections of the American poets is, I believe, by one of the Roscoe family; the poets selected from are Paulding, the author of *Yamoyden*, the author of *Fanny*, Pierpont, Bryant, and over ten others whose names do not at present occur to me.

I shall leave London in the course of next week, for Aix la Chapelle, where I propose remaining some time to take the water, having been out of health for nearly a year past. Any thing you wish done at London, however, you will be sure of having well done by Mr. Miller. In sending proof-sheets, &c., do not send through the Post-office or Letter-bags, for the postage would then amount to *pounds sterling*, and the letters, &c., remain unclaimed. Send large *packets* by private hand.

I wish, when you see Mr. Ewing,* you would remember me to him, as an old friend who would not willingly be forgotten by him. Tell him Anacreon Moore holds him in honored remembrance. I am, my dear sir,

Very sincerely, your friend,
WASHINGTON IRVING.

JOHN E. HALL, Esq.,
Editor of the *Port-Folio*, Philadelphia.

* Samuel Ewing, Esq., of Philadelphia.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF IRVING.

A MEMOIR of Mr. Irving may in due time be expected. His entire manuscripts and correspondence were left in the hands of Pierre M. Irving, who is admirably adapted to the task. Such a memoir will afford early sketches of New York society, and the first attempts of American literature; it will bring out the details of Mr. Irving's life when abroad, and his social intercourse with the master-minds of Europe. And it may explain the magic of that power which subdued the ferocious criticism of London and Edinburgh. At the time of Mr. Irving's first publication in England, the reviewer's den was as surrounded with the bones of American authors, as Doubting Castle was with those of the pilgrims; but old Ebony became tamed by the Western Orpheus, and relaxing his teeth, explained himself by a figure from Comus: "The genius of Mr. Irving has smoothed the raven down of *censure* till it smiled." Such a volume the public will look for with eagerness and read with delight.

We have alluded to the high character of Mr. Irving's brothers, and need only add that it was shared by three sisters, all deceased. One of these married Henry Van Wart, an American merchant residing in Birmingham, England; another was married to the late Daniel Paris, attorney at law, and the third accepted the hand of Gen. Dodge, late of Johnstown, and now rests by his side in the old cemetery of that village.

A year ago Mr. Irving made his will. It was written during some leisure weeks passed in the city of New York. As he proceeded to this final duty, it would seem that his youth and boyhood came before him. The place where he sat, pen in hand, was then a desolate common, two miles distant from his father's rural mansion in William-street. He remembered early acts of kindness and generosity, and his gushing heart pours out its utterances of affection. None but he could have written such an instrument, and none can read it without emotion. It was penned in some sacred hour of retrospect and farewell, and its details should be sacred from the public gaze. Its main provisions refer to the establishment of Sunnyside as a permanent abode for the name and house of Irving.

* *Albany Evening Journal*, Dec. 9, 1859.

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