

Great Lives
of Writers & Artists

MONTH ELEVEN

SELECTED AUTHORS

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of Writers & Artists

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Libraries of Hope

Great Lives of Writers & Artists

Great Lives Series: Month Eleven

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Month 11

Giotto

A Shepherd Lad of Tuscany

1267 – 1337 A.D.

April had come, bringing flower and bird weather to the sweet Italian land of Tuscany, and even along the Apennine slopes, where the blossom carpet was not so heavy as in the sunny lowlands, buttercups and wild daffodils made golden rugs beneath the ilex-trees. They stretched away in shining patches to the vine-draped Fiesole hills, from which other rugs of gayer bloom and richer verdure sloped down to the silver Arno. Blue skies above, bird song and blossom breath sweetening the air, it was surely a time for merrymaking and joyous words. Yet two boys in charge of a flock on the hills above Vespignano looked at each other with excited faces, and the older one spoke so angrily to his companion that the lad winced as if struck.

"You have so little courage that even if you go, you won't amount to anything. So stay here, because you're not brave enough to try the world!"

The dark eyes of the younger were wide with hurt surprise.

"Do you mean that you think me a coward, Pasquali?" he asked, his sensitive lips quivering as if it required an effort to keep back the tears.

Pasquali shrugged his shoulders. He was fond of Giotto, and had not meant to grieve him, yet he felt provoked because he did not agree to his plan.

"Not exactly that," he replied more gently. "But can't you see that, as long as we stay here in Vespignano, we must go on herding sheep, while yonder in the city there is a chance

of becoming rich?"

And as he spoke he pointed down to where Florence lay in her valley beside the Arno, all white and gold against the blue of the Lucca mountains, like a bit of fairy-land.

"It is beautiful there, Giotto," he urged, "with marble palaces instead of peasant huts, and the people wear fine clothes, and are happy. Come along, and be something bigger than a shepherd."

For a minute, Giotto's face was afire with anticipation. He knew that Cimabue, the greatest of Italian painters, would come soon to decorate the castello, and that the count was sending men to the city next day to be his escort. For weeks, Pasquali had been urging him to run away and join the cavalcade beyond Fiesole, from which point they could travel along together, and, as members of the noble's train, gain admission to Florence, which would not be possible for two boys alone. Pasquali had a golden flow of words, and so dazzling was his picture of the luxurious life they might lead there, that Giotto was almost persuaded. But it was only for a minute. Then he shook his head, and answered: "No, Father needs me here. Besides, I have no money, and even if it does seem cowardly, I am afraid to go to the city without even a lira."

Pasquali laughed, not pleasantly but with a sneer, as if to mock the fears of his companion. He was two years older, and so large and strong that he looked like a man. Little he hesitated about leaving Vespignano, and was so confident of his ability to make his way anywhere that he pressed his timid friend with promises to look out for him.

"You can send money home to your father, and even if it is a little hard at first, anything will be better than this lonely life of herding."

But as Giotto looked at the white-fleeced sheep around him, and then at the village below, he thought differently. He saw his grandfather, too old to follow a herd now, laughing

with some of the children, as if all the world were glad, and his sister Teresa, dark-eyed and graceful, go singing into the hut where his grandmother sat spinning. Just beyond, white-haired Armando, bent and feeble too, hobbled along on his stick, beckoning and smiling to those who hailed him as he passed, while gay young Serafino, who had broken a leg a fortnight before while rescuing a lamb from a precipice, was taking the sun and trying to gain strength to go back to his flock. Shepherd folk all were they, and there were no merrier hearts in Tuscany. So if those could be happy who had never seen the city except as they looked down on its gleaming towers from the hills where they pastured their flocks, it didn't seem a bad life after all. The ilex-tufted slopes that Pasquali was so eager to leave were home to Giotto. He was born in a hut below, and, as far back as his memory went, could look out of its northern window on the Apennines. And there had always been the music of the Mugone stream, now yellow and muddy, now shimmering like a silver ribbon flung down from the peaks, as it hurried away to join the Arno. Pasquali was an orphan, and had lived in many places, one of which was as dear as another. But to the boy who had never been beyond the grazing lands, there was only one home spot, and that was in Vespignano. Why, then, should he leave it for a place where he would be friendless and might perhaps have to go hungry? And that question he put to Pasquali.

"Besides," he continued, "herding doesn't seem so dreadful. I love my sheep, and often when the hours seem long I make pictures in the sand. Then I forget that I am lonely."

Pasquali sneered. "Stay on and be a shepherd if you think the life so fine. But look out that the count never catches you drawing when you are out with the sheep, for he will tell your father, and then there will be trouble. But I mean to be a great man, and do something finer than follow a flock."

And he strode away before Giotto could tell him that once, when he was drawing, the count had come by, and,

instead of making trouble, had seemed much interested.

Pasquali kept his word and went away that night, and, in the days that followed, Giotto wondered much about him, hoping he would be successful in the city. Of course no word came back, for at that time letters had to go by courier, which cost so much that only the rich sent messages, while the poor had to be satisfied with wondering and hoping. He did not doubt that the lad would be able to make his way, for he was so big and strong that of course people would give him work, and Giotto even planned for the time when he might appeal to him.

"When I am older and can earn more," he mused, "I will go and ask Pasquali to help me find work; for, if I send a few lire home each week, it will not be hard for Father."

For little did he dream that a time would come when he would not need Pasquali's aid, and that Florence would be as proud of him as of her most illustrious prince.

Several days later, as he ate his lunch on the hillside, he heard the blare of trumpets announcing the arrival of Cimabue the painter, and saw the train go up to the castle gate. The splendidly groomed horses held their plumed heads high, while gold and silver mountings on saddle and bridle made them seem like fairy steeds. Banners and pennants floated, and brighter even than the scarlet coats of the attendants was the artist's crimson mantle; and, as the solitary lad watched the gorgeous cavalcade go into the courtyard and out of sight, he thought that to be a painter must be better than to be a prince. Then, taking up a piece of slate he had found that morning, he began making pictures of his sheep.

Everything else went out of his mind. He forgot that he was a peasant and lived in a poor hut, forgot everything in his love of sketching, and, as soon as one picture was finished, he rubbed it out and made another. Sometimes a lamb came up, caressing him with its velvet nose, or a soft-eyed ewe lay down at his feet. But he did not know it, nor did he hear hoofs

advancing from behind, or see two riders alight from their mounts. He was still lost in his drawing when a voice said, "This is the shepherd lad of whom I told you, the one who makes pictures in the sand."

Giotto jumped in alarm. He knew it was the count who spoke, and feared that he would be angry because he had not greeted him as the low-born should those of rank. But the nobleman was not displeased, for he thought of something finer than social distinction, and, taking the slate from the weather-browned hand, he gave it to his companion.

"See, Cimabue!" he said. "This is how he passes his lonely hours."

Giotto caught the name and it thrilled him. Cimabue! The king of Italian painters! He would laugh at such poor sketching.

"Oh, sire, it is not worth looking at!" he exclaimed. "I did it just to keep from being lonely."

But Giovanni Cimabue did look at the slate, and, as he examined it, spoke some words to the count that the boy did not understand. Then he asked, "Would you like to be a painter?"

"A painter!" Giotto repeated. "Oh, yes, sire. But that is impossible, for Father is poor, and I must tend sheep."

"Opportunities come to those who deserve them," the great man replied, "and there is something for you beside a shepherd's life."

Then the two rode away, and, as they went, Giotto wondered what Cimabue meant. But he had not very long to wonder, for that same night they came to the peasant hut to ask that he might study painting. The decorations at the castle would require some weeks, and when the artist returned to Florence he would take the lad into his workshop. At first it seemed impossible that such a lovely thing could come to a herd boy, but when his father gave his word, and thanked both count and painter, he wondered what Pasquali

would think, Pasquali, who had taunted him with being too much of a coward to try his fortune in the city.

Giotto did not lead his sheep to the slopes next day, nor any day thereafter. But all through the golden summer, when around Fiesole were billows of many-colored bloom, and his own hills of Vespignano were painted with orange and russet, he worked with Cimabue at the castle. Every morning, when the sunrise tints still hung like flaming poppies along the peaks, he went from the hut in the village, and he came back again at night to dream of his brushes and colors. The count let one of his own shepherds tend the Bondone flock, so his studies brought no hardship to his people, and, as all the villagers loved him, so all were glad that he was to be a painter.

Meanwhile, in fair Florence, Pasquali was learning that the city is a monster waiting to devour those who approach her friendless and empty-handed. Day after day he tramped the streets from one shop to another, and up to doors of great houses where many servants were employed, looking for work, and always he was met with the question, "What can you do?"

"In Vespignano I was a shepherd," he would reply; "but the life was dull, so I came away."

"Better go back," those disposed to be kind would say. "The city is no place for country lads." While others drove him away with angry words.

For weeks he slept under the sky and ate the bread of charity. Then, sick and discouraged, he started back to Vespignano.

Giotto, on his way home from the castle one evening, saw the weary, foot-sore lad go toward the hut that had once been his home, and wondered if it could be Pasquali, who had been so eager to get away. Hunger had made hollows in his cheeks, and only the soft, dark eyes, and the hair curling about the brow in the old way made him sure it was his friend.

"Pasquali mio," he called, falling into the tender speech of

the old shepherd days; "why are you back? Didn't you like the city?"

"The city!" the boy repeated in horror. "It is a black hole of misery to those without money. It were better had I stayed here with the sheep, because now perhaps I cannot get any sheep to tend."

Giotto forgot that the boy had scorned him for not being brave enough to try the world. He thought only that his friend was troubled, and that he wanted to help him.

"I am sure you can," he comforted. "Come home with me to-night, and to-morrow I will ask the count to give you work."

So the two went together to the hut, where the shepherd fare seemed good indeed to the discouraged lad; and the next day, although he had all the help he really needed, the count pitied the runaway and took him back.

The frosts came, and the chestnut-trees on the slopes wore coats of bronze. The walls of the castello had been beautified until nothing was left to be done, and the painter prepared to leave Vespignano. Then Giotto went to the city, the same Florence in which Pasquali had urged him to seek his fortune in the spring. But he did not steal away like a thief in the night. He went instead as one who departs with honor. All the shepherds of the valley met to say good-by, and the count himself, and Cimabue, the painter, rode beside him. No knight faring forth to conquest ever rode with higher hopes in his breast, and few have gone to greater honors. Hard work awaited him in the studio of the master, for Cimabue was an exacting teacher, and knew that, no matter how gifted, one does not excel except by painstaking, persistent effort of both hand and brain. But he was an appreciative teacher as well, and nothing pleased him as much as some new evidence of genius in the boy in whom he had such great faith.

Once he went away from the workshop, leaving Giotto busy there. The boy kept to his painting for a while, then,

stopping to look at the half-finished work of his master, a mischievous idea possessed him. Seizing a brush, he painted a fly on the nose of the figure on the canvas, and so lifelike was his portrayal, that, when Cimabue returned, he tried to brush it away with his hand, before he discovered the trick his pupil had played on him. Yet he was not angry, for it was but another proof that the boy kept his eyes open and studied everything around him, without doing which no one can hope to be a painter.

Years passed, and Florence became a fairer and more glorious city because a peasant lad from the northern hills had taken up his abode there. He became an architect as well as a painter, and, whenever a new palace was to be builded or an old one needed beautifying, it was Giotto who was chosen for the work, because no one in Italy wrought such wonders as he. The lords of the land called him from one city to another. Naples, Pisa, Ravenna, Assisi, and even imperial Rome, clamored for a show of his genius; and, whenever he gave his time to a piece of work, it was as if a fairy hand had touched it.

But in Florence his heart seemed to rest, and there he put forth his noblest effort. Those who followed strove to make their work as fine as his, so the city of the Arno came to be a place of wonderful achievement.

The story of its loveliness has spread to every land, and to-day it is the treasure-house of Italy, possessing an untold wealth of art and some of the noblest buildings in the world, the most wonderful among them having been glorified by the hand of Giotto.

"Giotto's Campanile," men still call the matchless bell-tower that rises beside the Duomo. But of the thousands who go there to see it, only a few know that he who planned and partly built it was once a shepherd whom Cimabue found drawing on a piece of slate as he tended his flocks on the hills of Tuscany.

Giotto

It was more than six hundred years ago that a little peasant baby was born in the small village of Vespignano, not far from the beautiful city of Florence, in Italy. The baby's father, an honest, hard-working countryman, was called Bondone, and the name he gave to his little son was Giotto.

Life was rough and hard in that country home, but the peasant baby grew into a strong, hardy boy, learning early what cold and hunger meant. The hills which surrounded the village were grey and bare, save where the silver of the olive-trees shone in the sunlight, or the tender green of the shooting corn made the valley beautiful in early spring. In summer there was little shade from the blazing sun as it rode high in the blue sky, and the grass which grew among the grey rocks was often burnt and brown. But, nevertheless, it was here that the sheep of the village would be turned out to find what food they could, tended and watched by one of the village boys.

So it happened that when Giotto was ten years old his father sent him to take care of the sheep upon the hillside. Country boys had then no schools to go to or lessons to learn, and Giotto spent long happy days, in sunshine and rain, as he followed the sheep from place to place, wherever they could find grass enough to feed on. But Giotto did something else besides watching his sheep. Indeed, he sometimes forgot all about them, and many a search he had to gather them all together again. For there was one thing he loved doing better than all beside, and that was to try to draw pictures of all the things he saw around him.

It was no easy matter for the little shepherd lad. He had

no pencils or paper, and he had never, perhaps, seen a picture in all his life. But all this mattered little to him. Out there, under the blue sky, his eyes made pictures for him out of the fleecy white clouds as they slowly changed from one form to another. He learned to know exactly the shape of every flower and how it grew; he noticed how the olive-trees laid their silver leaves against the blue background of the sky that peeped in between, and how his sheep looked as they stooped to eat, or lay down in the shadow of a rock.

Nothing escaped his keen, watchful eyes, and then with eager hands he would sharpen a piece of stone, choose out the smoothest rock, and try to draw on its flat surface all those wonderful shapes which had filled his eyes with their beauty. Olive-trees, flowers, birds and beasts were there, but especially his sheep, for they were his friends and companions who were always near him, and he could draw them in a different way each time they moved.

Now it fell out that one day a great master painter from Florence came riding through the valley and over the hills where Giotto was feeding his sheep. The name of the great master was Cimabue, and he was the most wonderful artist in the world, so men said. He had painted a picture which had made all Florence rejoice. The Florentines had never seen anything like it before, and yet it was but a strange-looking portrait of the Madonna and Child, scarcely like a real woman or a real baby at all. Still, it seemed to them a perfect wonder, and Cimabue was honoured as one of the city's greatest men.

The road was lonely as it wound along. There was nothing to be seen but waves of grey hills on every side, so the stranger rode on, scarcely lifting his eyes as he went. Then suddenly he came upon a flock of sheep nibbling the scanty sunburnt grass, and a little brown-faced shepherd-boy gave him a cheerful 'Good-day, master.'

There was something so bright and merry in the boy's smile that the great man stopped and began to talk to him.

Then his eye fell upon the smooth flat rock over which the boy had been bending, and he started with surprise.

'Who did that?' he asked quickly, and he pointed to the outline of a sheep scratched upon the stone.

'It is the picture of one of my sheep there,' answered the boy, hanging his head with a shame-faced look. 'I drew it with this,' and he held out towards the stranger the sharp stone he had been using.

'Who taught you to do this?' asked the master as he looked more carefully at the lines drawn on the rock.

The boy opened his eyes wide with astonishment.

'Nobody taught me, master,' he said. 'I only try to draw the things that my eyes see.'

'How would you like to come with me to Florence and learn to be a painter?' asked Cimabue, for he saw that the boy had a wonderful power in his little rough hands.

Giotto's cheeks flushed, and his eyes shone with joy.

'Indeed, master, I would come most willingly,' he cried, 'if only my father will allow it.'

So back they went together to the village, but not before Giotto had carefully put his sheep into the fold, for he was never one to leave his work half done.

Bondone was amazed to see his boy in company with such a grand stranger, but he was still more surprised when he heard of the stranger's offer. It seemed a golden chance, and he gladly gave his consent.

Why, of course, the boy should go to Florence if the gracious master would take him and teach him to become a painter. The home would be lonely without the boy who was so full of fun and as bright as a sunbeam. But such chances were not to be met with every day, and he was more than willing to let him go.

So the master set out, and the boy Giotto went with him to Florence to begin his training.

The studio where Cimabue worked was not at all like

those artists' rooms which we now call studios. It was much more like a workshop, and the boys who went there to learn how to draw and paint were taught first how to grind and prepare the colours and then to mix them. They were not allowed to touch a brush or pencil for a long time, but only to watch their master at work, and learn all that they could from what they saw him do.

So there the boy Giotto worked and watched, but when his turn came to use the brush, to the amazement of all, his pictures were quite unlike anything which had ever been painted before in the workshop. Instead of copying the stiff, unreal figures, he drew real people, real animals, and all the things which he had learned to know so well on the grey hillside, when he watched his father's sheep. Other artists had painted the Madonna and Infant Christ, but Giotto painted a mother and a baby.

And before long this worked such a wonderful change that it seemed indeed as if the art of making pictures had been born again. To us his work still looks stiff and strange, but in it was the beginning of all the beautiful pictures that belong to us now.

Giotto did not only paint pictures, he worked in marble as well. To-day, if you walk through Florence, the City of Flowers, you will still see its fairest flower of all, the tall white campanile or bell-tower, 'Giotto's tower' as it is called. There it stands in all its grace and loveliness like a tall white lily against the blue sky, pointing ever upward, in the grand old faith of the shepherd-boy. Day after day it calls to prayer and to good works, as it has done all these hundreds of years since Giotto designed and helped to build it.

Some people call his pictures stiff and ugly, for not every one has wise eyes to see their beauty, but the loveliness of this tower can easily be seen by all. There the white doves circle round and round, and rest in the sheltering niches of the delicately carved arches; there at the call of its bell the black-

robed Brothers of Pity hurry past to their works of mercy. There too the little children play, and sometimes stop to stare at the marble pictures, set in the first story of the tower, low enough to be seen from the street. Their special favourite is perhaps the picture of the shepherd sitting under his tent, with the sheep in front, and with the funniest little dog keeping watch at the side.

Giotto always had a great love for animals, and whenever it was possible he would squeeze one into a corner of his pictures. He was sixty years old when he designed this wonderful tower and cut some of the marble pictures with his own hand, but you can see that the memory of those old days when he ran barefoot about the hills and tended his sheep was with him still. Just such another little puppy must have often played with him in those long-ago days before he became a great painter and was still only a merry, brown-faced boy, making pictures with a sharp stone upon the smooth rocks.

Up and down the narrow streets of Florence now, the great painter would walk and watch the faces of the people as they passed. And his eyes would still make pictures of them and their busy life, just as they used to do with the olive-trees, the sheep, and the clouds.

In those days nobody cared to have pictures in their houses, and only the walls of the churches were painted. So the pictures, or frescoes, as they were called, were of course all about sacred subjects, either stories out of the Bible or of the lives of the saints. And as there were few books, and the poor people did not know how to read, these frescoed walls were the only story-books they had.

What a joy those pictures of Giotto's must have been, then, to those poor folk! They looked at the little Baby Jesus sitting on His mother's knee, wrapped in swaddling bands, just like one of their own little ones, and it made Him seem a very real baby. The wise men who talked together and pointed to the shining star overhead looked just like any of

the great nobles of Florence. And there at the back were the two horses looking on with wise interested eyes, just as any of their own horses might have done.

It seemed to make the story of Christmas a thing which had really happened, instead of a far-away tale which had little meaning for them. Heaven and the Madonna were not so far off after all. And it comforted them to think that the Madonna had been a real woman like themselves, and that the Jesu Bambino would stoop to bless them still, just as He leaned forward to bless the wise men in the picture.

How real too would seem the old story of the meeting of Anna and Joachim at the Golden Gate, when they could gaze upon the two homely figures under the narrow gateway. No visionary saints these, but just a simple husband and wife, meeting each other with joy after a sad separation, and yet with the touch of heavenly meaning shown by the angel who hovers above and places a hand upon each head.

It was not only in Florence that Giotto did his work. His fame spread far and wide, and he went from town to town eagerly welcomed by all. We can trace his footsteps as he went, by those wonderful old pictures which he spread with loving care over the bare walls of the churches, lifting, as it were, the curtain that hides Heaven from our view and bringing some of its joys to earth.

Then, at Assisi, he covered the walls and ceiling of the church with the wonderful frescoes of the life of St. Francis; and the little round commonplace Arena Chapel of Padua is made exquisite inside by his pictures of the life of our Lord.

In the days when Giotto lived the towns of Italy were continually quarrelling with one another, and there was always fighting going on somewhere. The cities were built with a wall all round them, and the gates were shut each night to keep out their enemies. But often the fighting was between different families inside the city, and the grim old palaces in the narrow streets were built tall and strong that they might be

the more easily defended.

In the midst of all this war and quarrelling Giotto lived his quiet, peaceful life, the friend of every one and the enemy of none. Rival towns sent for him to paint their churches with his heavenly pictures, and the people who hated Florence forgot that he was a Florentine. He was just Giotto, and he belonged to them all. His brush was the white flag of truce which made men forget their strife and angry passions, and turned their thoughts to holier things.

Even the great poet Dante did not scorn to be a friend of the peasant painter, and we still have the portrait which Giotto painted of him in an old fresco at Florence. Later on, when the great poet was a poor unhappy exile, Giotto met him again at Padua and helped to cheer some of those sad grey days, made so bitter by strife and injustice.

Now when Giotto was beginning to grow famous, it happened that the Pope was anxious to have the walls of the great Cathedral of St. Peter at Rome decorated. So he sent messengers all over Italy to find out who were the best painters, that he might invite them to come and do the work.

The messengers went from town to town and asked every artist for a specimen of his painting. This was gladly given, for it was counted a great honour to help to make St. Peter's beautiful.

By and by the messengers came to Giotto and told him their errand. The Pope, they said, wished to see one of his drawings to judge if he was fit for the great work. Giotto, who was always most courteous, 'took a sheet of paper and a pencil dipped in a red colour, then, resting his elbow on his side, with one turn of the hand, he drew a circle so perfect and exact that it was a marvel to behold.' 'Here is your drawing,' he said to the messenger, with a smile, handing him the drawing.

'Am I to have nothing more than this?' asked the man, staring at the red circle in astonishment and disgust.

'That is enough and to spare,' answered Giotto. 'Send it

with the rest.'

The messengers thought this must all be a joke.

'How foolish we shall look if we take only a round O to show his Holiness,' they said.

But they could get nothing else from Giotto, so they were obliged to be content and to send it with the other drawings, taking care to explain just how it was done.

The Pope and his advisers looked carefully over all the drawings, and, when they came to that round O, they knew that only a master-hand could have made such a perfect circle without the help of a compass. Without a moment's hesitation they decided that Giotto was the man they wanted, and they at once invited him to come to Rome to decorate the cathedral walls. So when the story was known the people became prouder than ever of their great painter, and the round O of Giotto has become a proverb to this day in Tuscany.

'Round as the O of Giotto, d' ye see;
Which means as well done as a thing can be.'

Later on, when Giotto was at Naples, he was painting in the palace chapel one very hot day, when the king came in to watch him at his work. It really was almost too hot to move, and yet Giotto painted away busily.

'Giotto,' said the king, 'if I were in thy place I would give up painting for a while and take my rest, now that it is so hot.'

'And, indeed, so I would most certainly do,' answered Giotto, 'if I were in your place, your Majesty.'

It was these quick answers and his merry smile that charmed every one, and made the painter a favourite with rich and poor alike.

There are a great many stories told of him, and they all show what a sunny-tempered, kindly man he was.

It is said that one day he was standing in one of the narrow streets of Florence talking very earnestly to a friend, when a

pig came running down the road in a great hurry. It did not stop to look where it was going, but ran right between the painter's legs and knocked him flat on his back, putting an end to his learned talk.

Giotto scrambled to his feet with a rueful smile, and shook his finger at the pig which was fast disappearing in the distance.

'Ah, well!' he said, 'I suppose thou hadst as much right to the road as I had. Besides, how many gold pieces I have earned by the help of thy bristles, and never have I given any of thy family even a drop of soup in payment.'

Another time he went riding with a very learned lawyer into the country to look after his property. For when Bondone died, he left all his fields and his farm to his painter son. Very soon a storm came on, and the rain poured down as if it never meant to stop.

'Let us seek shelter in this farmhouse and borrow a cloak,' suggested Giotto.

So they went in and borrowed two old cloaks from the farmer, and wrapped themselves up from head to foot. Then they mounted their horses and rode back together to Florence.

Presently the lawyer turned to look at Giotto, and immediately burst into a loud laugh. The rain was running from the painter's cap, he was splashed with mud, and the old cloak made him look like a very forlorn beggar.

'Dost think if any one met thee now, they would believe that thou art the best painter in the world?' laughed the lawyer.

Giotto's eyes twinkled as he looked at the funny figure riding beside him, for the lawyer was very small, and had a crooked back, and rolled up in the old cloak he looked like a bundle of rags.

'Yes!' he answered quickly, 'any one would certainly believe I was a great painter, if he could but first persuade

himself that thou dost know thy A B C.'

In all these stories we catch glimpses of the good-natured kindly painter, with his love of jokes, and his own ready answers, and all the time we must remember that he was filling the world with beauty, which it still treasures to-day, helping to sow the seeds of that great tree of Art which was to blossom so gloriously in later years.

And when he had finished his earthly work it was in his own cathedral, 'St. Mary of the Flowers,' that they laid him to rest, while the people mourned him as a good friend as well as a great painter. There he lies in the shadow of his lily tower, whose slender grace and delicate-tinted marbles keep his memory ever fresh in his beautiful city of Florence.

Fra Angelico

1395 – 1455 A.D.

Nearly a hundred years had passed by since Giotto lived and worked in Florence, and in the same hilly country where he used to tend his sheep another great painter was born.

Many other artists had come and gone, and had added their golden links of beauty to the chain of Art which bound these years together. Some day you will learn to know all their names and what they did. But now we will only single out, here and there, a few of those names which are perhaps greater than the rest. Just as on a clear night, when we look up into the starlit sky, it would bewilder us to try and remember all the stars, so we learn first to know those that are most easily recognized—the Plough, or the Great Bear, as they shine with a clear steady light against the background of a thousand lesser stars.

The name by which this second great painter is known is Fra Angelico, but that was only the name he earned in later years. His baby name was Guido, and his home was in a village close to where Giotto was born.

He was not a poor boy, and did not need to work in the fields or tend the sheep on the hillside. Indeed, he might have soon become rich and famous, for his wonderful talent for painting would have quickly brought him honours and wealth if he had gone out into the world. But instead of this, when he was a young man of twenty he made up his mind to enter the convent at Fiesole, and to become a monk of the Order of Saint Dominic.

Every brother, or frate, as he is called, who leaves the

world and enters the life of the convent is given a new name, and his old name is never used again. So young Guido was called Fra Giovanni, or Brother John. But it is not by that name that he is known best, but that of Fra Angelico, or the angelic brother—a name which was given him afterwards because of his pure and beautiful life, and the heavenly pictures which he painted.

With all his great gifts in his hands, with all the years of youth and pleasure stretching out green and fair before him, he said good-bye to earthly joys, and chose rather to serve his Master Christ in the way he thought was right.

The monks of St. Dominic were the great preachers of those days—men who tried to make the world better by telling people what they ought to do, and teaching them how to live honest and good lives. But there are other ways of teaching people besides preaching, and the young monk who spent his time bending over the illuminated prayer-book, seeing with his dreamy eyes visions of saints and white-robed angels, was preparing to be a greater teacher than them all. The words of the preacher monks have passed away, and the world pays little heed to them now, but the teaching of Fra Angelico, the silent lessons of his wonderful pictures, are as fresh and clear to-day as they were in those far-off years.

Great trouble was in store for the monks of the little convent at Fiesole, which Fra Angelico and his brother Benedetto had entered. Fierce struggles were going on in Italy between different religious parties, and at one time the little band of preaching monks were obliged to leave their peaceful home at Fiesole to seek shelter in other towns. But, as it turned out, this was good fortune for the young painter-monk, for in those hill towns of Umbria where the brothers sought refuge there were pictures to be studied which delighted his eyes with their beauty, and taught him many a lesson which he could never have learned on the quiet slopes of Fiesole.

The hill towns of Italy are very much the same to-day as

they were in those days. Long winding roads lead upwards from the plain below to the city gates, and there on the summit of the hill the little town is built. The tall white houses cluster close together, and the overhanging eaves seem almost to meet across the narrow paved streets, and always there is the great square, with the church the centre of all.

It would be almost a day's journey to follow the white road that leads down from Perugia across the plain to the little hill town of Assisi, and many a spring morning saw the painter-monk setting out on the convent donkey before sunrise and returning when the sun had set. He would thread his way up between the olive-trees until he reached the city gates, and pass into the little town without hindrance. For the followers of St. Francis in their brown robes would be glad to welcome a stranger monk, though his black robe showed that he belonged to a different order. Any one who came to see the glory of their city, the church where their saint lay, which Giotto had covered with his wonderful pictures, was never refused admittance.

How often then must Fra Angelico have knelt in the dim light of that lower church of Assisi, learning his lesson on his knees, as was ever his habit. Then home again he would wend his way, his eyes filled with visions of those beautiful pictures, and his hand longing for the pencil and brush, that he might add new beauty to his own work from what he had learned.

Several years passed by, and at last the brothers were allowed to return to their convent home of San Dominico at Fiesole, and there they lived peaceably for a long time. We cannot tell exactly what pictures our painter-monk painted during those peaceful years, but we know he must have been looking out with wise, seeing eyes, drinking in all the beauty that was spread around him.

At his feet lay Florence, with its towers and palaces, the Arno running through it like a silver thread, and beyond, the purple of the Tuscan hills. All around on the sheltered hillside

were green vines and fruit-trees, olives and cypresses, fields flaming in spring with scarlet anemones or golden with great yellow tulips, and hedges of rose-bushes covered with clusters of pink blossoms. No wonder, then, such beauty sunk into his heart, and we see in his pictures the pure fresh colour of the spring flowers, with no shadow of dark or evil things.

Soon the fame of the painter began to be whispered outside the convent walls, and reached the ears of Cosimo da Medici, one of the powerful rulers of Florence. He offered the monks a new home, and, when they were settled in the convent of San Marco in Florence, he invited Fra Angelico to fresco the walls.

One by one the heavenly pictures were painted upon the walls of the cells and cloister of the new home. How the brothers must have crowded round to see each new fresco as it was finished, and how anxious they would be to see which picture was to be near their own particular bed. In all the frescoes, whether he painted the gentle Virgin bending before the angel messenger, or tried to show the glory of the ascended Lord, the artist-monk would always introduce one or more of the convent's special saints, which made the brothers feel that the pictures were their very own. Fra Angelico had a kind word and smile for all the brothers. He was never impatient, and no one ever saw him angry, for he was as humble and gentle as the saints whose pictures he loved to paint.

It is told of him, too, that he never took a brush or pencil in his hand without a prayer that his work might be to the glory of God. Often when he painted the sufferings of our Lord, the tears would be seen running down his cheeks and almost blinding his eyes.

There is an old legend which tells of a certain monk who, when he was busily illuminating a page of his missal, was called away to do some service for the poor. He went unwillingly, the legend says, for he longed to put the last touches to

the holy picture he was painting; but when he returned, lo! he found his work finished by angel hands.

Often when we look at some of Fra Angelico's pictures we are reminded of this legend, and feel that he too might have been helped by those same angel hands. Did they indeed touch his eyes that he might catch glimpses of a Heaven where saints were swinging their golden censers, and white-robed angels danced in the flowery meadows of Paradise? We cannot tell; but this we know, that no other painter has ever shown us such a glory of heavenly things.

Best of all, the angel-painter loved to paint pictures of the life of our Lord; you will see the tender care with which he has drawn the head of the Infant Jesus with His little golden halo, the Madonna in her robe of purest blue, holding the Baby close in her arms, St. Joseph the guardian walking at the side, and all around the flowers and trees which he loved so well in the quiet home of Fiesole.

He did not care for fame or power, this dreamy painter of angels, and when the Pope invited him to Rome to paint the walls of a chapel there, he thought no more of the glory and honour than if he was but called upon to paint another cell at San Marco.

But when the Pope had seen what this quiet monk could do, he called the artist to him.

'A man who can paint such pictures,' he said, 'must be a good man, and one who will do well whatever he undertakes. Will you, then, do other work for me, and become my Archbishop at Florence?' But the painter was startled and dismayed.

'I cannot teach or preach or govern men,' he said, 'I can but use my gift of painting for the glory of God. Let me rather be as I am, for it is safer to obey than to rule.'

But though he would not take this honour himself, he told the Pope of a friend of his, a humble brother, Fra Antonino, at the convent of San Marco, who was well fitted to do the

work. So the Pope took the painter's advice, and the choice was so wise and good, that to this day the Florentine people talk lovingly of their good bishop Antonino.

It was while he was at work in Rome that Fra Angelico died, so his body does not rest in his own beloved Florence. But if his body lies in Rome, his gentle spirit still seems to hover around the old convent of San Marco, and there we learn to know and love him best. Little wonder that in after ages they looked upon him almost as a saint, and gave him the title of 'Beato,' or the blessed angel painter.

Sandro Botticelli

1445 – 1510 A.D.

We must now go back to the days when Fra Filippo Lippi painted his pictures and so brought fame to the Carmine Convent.

There was at that time in Florence a good citizen called Mariano Filipepi, an honest, well-to-do man, who had several sons. These sons were all taught carefully and well trained to do each the work he chose. But the fourth son, Alessandro, or Sandro as he was called, was a great trial to his father. He would settle to no trade or calling. Restless and uncertain, he turned from one thing to another. At one time he would work with all his might, and then again become as idle and fitful as the summer breeze. He could learn well and quickly when he chose, but then there were so few things that he did choose to learn. Music he loved, and he knew every song of the birds, and anything connected with flowers was a special joy to him. No one knew better than he how the different kinds of roses grew, and how the lilies hung upon their stalks.

'And what, I should like to know, is going to be the use of all this,' the good father would say impatiently, 'as long as thou takest no pains to read and write and do thy sums? What am I to do with such a boy, I wonder?'

Then in despair the poor man decided to send Sandro to a neighbour's workshop, to see if perhaps his hands would work better than his head.

The name of this neighbour was Botticelli, and he was a goldsmith, and a very excellent master of his art. He agreed to receive Sandro as his pupil, so it happened that the boy was

called by his master's name, and was known ever after as Sandro Botticelli.

Sandro worked for some time with his master, and quickly learned to draw designs for the goldsmith's work.

In those days painters and goldsmiths worked a great deal together, and Sandro often saw designs for pictures and listened to the talk of the artists who came to his master's shop. Gradually, as he looked and listened, his mind was made up. He would become a painter. All his restless longings and day dreams turned to this. All the music that floated in the air as he listened to the birds' song, the gentle dancing motion of the wind among the trees, all the colours of the flowers, and the graceful twinings of the rose-stems—all these he would catch and weave into his pictures. Yes, he would learn to paint music and motion, and then he would be happy.

'So now thou wilt become a painter,' said his father, with a hopeless sigh.

Truly this boy was more trouble than all the rest put together. Here he had just settled down to learn how to become a good goldsmith, and now he wished to try his hand at something else. Well, it was no use saying 'no.' The boy could never be made to do anything but what he wished. There was the Carmelite monk Fra Filippo Lippi, of whom all men were talking. It was said he was the greatest painter in Florence. The boy should have the best teaching it was possible to give him, and perhaps this time he would stick to his work.

So Sandro was sent as a pupil to Fra Filippo, and he soon became a great favourite with the happy, sunny-tempered master. The quick eye of the painter soon saw that this was no ordinary pupil. There was something about Sandro's drawing that was different to anything that Filippo had ever seen before. His figures seemed to move, and one almost heard the wind rustling in their flowing drapery. Instead of walking, they seemed to be dancing lightly along with a swaying motion as if to the rhythm of music. The very rose-leaves the boy loved

to paint, seemed to flutter down to the sound of a fairy song. Filippo was proud of his pupil.

'The world will one day hear more of my Sandro Botticelli,' he said; and, young though the boy was, he often took him to different places to help him in his work.

So it happened that, in that wonderful spring of Filippo's life, Sandro too was at Prato, and worked there with Fra Diamante. And in after years when the master's little daughter was born, she was named Alessandra, after the favourite pupil, to whom was also left the training of little Filippino.

Now, indeed, Sandro's good old father had no further cause to complain. The boy had found the work he was most fitted for, and his name soon became famous in Florence.

It was the reign of gaiety and pleasure in the city of Florence at that time. Lorenzo the Magnificent, the son of Cosimo de Medici, was ruler now, and his court was the centre of all that was most splendid and beautiful. Rich dresses, dainty food, music, gay revels, everything that could give pleasure, whether good or bad, was there.

Lorenzo, like his father, was always glad to discover a new painter, and Botticelli soon became a great favourite at court.

But pictures of saints and angels were somewhat out of fashion at that time, for people did not care to be reminded of anything but earthly pleasures. So Botticelli chose his subjects to please the court, and for a while ceased to paint his sad-eyed Madonnas.

What mattered to him what his subject was? Let him but paint his dancing figures, tripping along in their light flowing garments, keeping time to the music of his thoughts, and the subject might be one of the old Greek tales or any other story that served his purpose.

All the gay court dresses, the rich quaint robes of the fair ladies, helped to train the young painter's fancy for flowing draperies and wonderful veils of filmy transparent gauze.

There was one fair lady especially whom Sandro loved to

paint—the beautiful Simonetta, as she is still called.

First he painted her as Venus, who was born of the sea foam. In his picture she floats to the shore standing in a shell, her golden hair wrapped round her. The winds behind blow her onward and scatter pink and red roses through the air. On the shore stands Spring, who holds out a mantle, flowers nestling in its folds, ready to enwrap the goddess when the winds shall have wafted her to land.

Then again we see her in his wonderful picture of 'Spring,' and in another called 'Mars and Venus.' She was too great a lady to stoop to the humble painter, and he perhaps only looked up to her as a star shining in heaven, far out of the reach of his love. But he never ceased to worship her from afar. He never married or cared for any other fair face, just as the great poet Dante, whom Botticelli admired so much, dreamed only of his one love, Beatrice.

But Sandro did not go sadly through life sighing for what could never be his. He was kindly and good-natured, full of jokes, and ready to make merry with his pupils in the workshop.

It once happened that one of these pupils, Biagio by name, had made a copy of one of Sandro's pictures, a beautiful Madonna surrounded by eight angels. This he was very anxious to sell, and the master kindly promised to help him, and in the end arranged the matter with a citizen of Florence, who offered to buy it for six gold pieces.

'Well, Biagio,' said Sandro, when his pupil came into the studio next morning, 'I have sold thy picture. Let us now hang it up in a good light that the man who wishes to buy it may see it at its best. Then will he pay thee the money.'

Biagio was overjoyed.

'Oh, master,' he cried, 'how well thou hast done.'

Then with hands which trembled with excitement the pupil arranged the picture in the best light, and went to fetch the purchaser.

Now meanwhile Botticelli and his other pupils had made eight caps of scarlet pasteboard such as the citizens of Florence then wore, and these they fastened with wax on to the heads of the eight angels in the picture.

Presently Biagio came back panting with joyful excitement, and brought with him the citizen, who knew already of the joke. The poor boy looked at his picture and then rubbed his eyes. What had happened? Where were his angels? The picture must be bewitched, for instead of his angels he saw only eight citizens in scarlet caps. He looked wildly around, and then at the face of the man who had promised to buy the picture. Of course he would refuse to take such a thing.

But, to his surprise, the citizen looked well pleased, and even praised the work.

'It is well worth the money,' he said; 'and if thou wilt return with me to my house, I will pay thee the six gold pieces.'

Biagio scarcely knew what to do. He was so puzzled and bewildered he felt as if this must be a bad dream.

As soon as he could, he rushed back to the studio to look again at that picture, and then he found that the red-capped citizens had disappeared, and his eight angels were there instead. This of course was not surprising, as Sandro and his pupils had quickly removed the wax and taken off the scarlet caps.

'Master, master,' cried the astonished pupil, 'tell me if I am dreaming, or if I have lost my wits? When I came in just now, these angels were Florentine citizens with red caps on their heads, and now they are angels once more. What may this mean?'

'I think, Biagio, that this money must have turned thy brain round,' said Botticelli gravely. 'If the angels had looked as thou sayest, dost thou think the citizen would have bought the picture?'

'That is true,' said Biagio, shaking his head solemnly; 'and yet I swear I never saw anything more clearly.'

And the poor boy, for many a long day, was afraid to trust his own eyes, since they had so basely deceived him.

But the next thing that happened at the studio did not seem like a joke to the master, for a weaver of cloth came to live close by, and his looms made such a noise and such a shaking that Sandro was deafened, and the house shook so greatly that it was impossible to paint.

But though Botticelli went to the weaver and explained all this most courteously, the man answered roughly, 'Can I not do what I like with my own house?' So Sandro was angry, and went away and immediately ordered a great square of stone to be brought, so big that it filled a waggon. This he had placed on the top of his wall nearest to the weaver's house, in such a way that the least shake would bring it crashing down into the enemy's workshop.

When the weaver saw this he was terrified, and came round at once to the studio.

'Take down that great stone at once,' he shouted. 'Do you not see that it would crush me and my workshop if it fell?'

'Not at all,' said Botticelli. 'Why should I take it down? Can I not do as I like with my own house?'

And this taught the weaver a lesson, so that he made less noise and shaking, and Sandro had the best of the joke after all.

There were no idle days of dreaming now for Sandro. As soon as one picture was finished another was wanted. Money flowed in, and his purse was always full of gold, though he emptied it almost as fast as it was filled. His work for the Pope at Rome alone was so well paid that the money should have lasted him for many a long day, but in his usual careless way he spent it all before he returned to Florence.

Perhaps it was the gay life at Lorenzo's splendid court that had taught him to spend money so carelessly, and to have no thought but to eat, drink, and be merry. But very soon a change began to steal over his life.

There was one man in Florence who looked with sad condemning eyes on all the pleasure-loving crowd that thronged the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent. In the peaceful convent of San Marco, whose walls the angel-painter had covered with pictures 'like windows into heaven,' the stern monk Savonarola was grieving over the sin and vanity that went on around him. He loved Florence with all his heart, and he could not bear the thought that she was forgetting, in the whirl of pleasure, all that was good and pure and worth the winning.

Then, like a battle-cry, his voice sounded through the city, and roused the people from their foolish dreams of ease and pleasure. Every one flocked to the great cathedral to hear Savonarola preach, and Sandro Botticelli left for a while his studio and his painting and became a follower of the great preacher. Never again did he paint those pictures of earthly subjects which had so delighted Lorenzo. When he once more returned to his work, it was to paint his sad-eyed Madonnas; and the music which still floated through his visions was now like the song of angels.

The boys of Florence especially had grown wild and rough during the reign of pleasure, and they were the terror of the city during carnival time. They would carry long poles, or 'stili,' and bar the streets across, demanding money before they would let the people pass. This money they spent on drinking and feasting, and at night they set up great trees in the squares or wider streets and lighted huge bonfires around them. Then would begin a terrible fight with stones, and many of the boys were hurt, and some even killed.

No one had been able to put a stop to this until Savonarola made up his mind that it should cease. Then, as if by magic, all was changed.

Instead of the rough game of 'stili,' there were altars put up at the corners of the streets, and the boys begged money of the passers-by, not for their feasts, but for the poor.

'You shall not miss your bonfire,' said Savonarola; 'but instead of a tree you shall burn up vain and useless things, and so purify the city.'

So the children went round and collected all the 'vanities,' as they were called—wigs and masks and carnival dresses, foolish songs, bad books, and evil pictures; all were heaped high and then lighted to make one great bonfire.

Some people think that perhaps Sandro threw into the Bonfire of Vanities some of his own beautiful pictures, but that we cannot tell.

Then came the sad time when the people, who at one time would have made Savonarola their king, turned against him, in the same fickle way that crowds will ever turn. And then the great preacher, who had spent his life trying to help and teach them, and to do them good, was burned in the great square of that city which he had loved so dearly.

After this it was long before Botticelli cared to paint again. He was old and weary now, poor and sad, sick of that world which had treated with such cruelty the master whom he loved.

One last picture he painted to show the triumph of good over evil. Not with the sword or the might of great power is the triumph won, says Sandro to us by this picture, but by the little hand of the Christ Child, conquering by love and drawing all men to Him. This Adoration of the Magi is in our own National Gallery in London, and is the only painting which Botticelli ever signed.

'I, Alessandro, painted this picture during the troubles of Italy … when the devil was let loose for the space of three and a half years. Afterwards shall he be chained, and we shall see him trodden down as in this picture.'

It is evident that Botticelli meant by this those sad years of struggle against evil which ended in the martyrdom of the great preacher, and he has placed Savonarola among the crowd of worshippers drawn to His feet by the Infant Christ.

It is sad to think of those last days when Sandro was too old and too weary to paint. He who had loved to make his figures move with dancing feet, was now obliged to walk with crutches. The roses and lilies of spring were faded now, and instead of the music of his youth he heard only the sound of harsh, ungrateful voices, in the flowerless days of poverty and old age.

There is always something sad too about his pictures, but through the sadness, if we listen, we may hear the angel-song, and understand it better if we have in our minds the prayer which Botticelli left for us.

'Oh, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who alone rulest always in eternity, and who correctest all our wanderings, giver of melody to the choir of angels, listen Thou a little to our bitter grief, and come and rule us, oh Thou highest King, with Thy love which is so sweet.'

Pietro Perugino

1446 – 1523 A.D.

It was early morning, and the rays of the rising sun had scarcely yet caught the roofs of the city of Perugia, when along the winding road which led across the plain a man and a boy walked with steady, purpose-like steps towards the town which crowned the hill in front.

The man was poorly dressed in the common rough clothes of an Umbrian peasant. Hard work and poverty had bent his shoulders and drawn stern lines upon his face, but there was a dignity about him which marked him as something above the common working man.

The little boy who trotted barefoot along by the side of his father had a sweet, serious little face, but he looked tired and hungry, and scarcely fit for such a long rough walk. They had started from their home at Castello delle Pieve very early that morning, and the piece of black bread which had served them for breakfast had been but small. Away in front stretched that long, white, never-ending road; and the little dusty feet that pattered so bravely along had to take hurried runs now and again to keep up with the long strides of the man, while the wistful eyes, which were fixed on that distant town, seemed to wonder if they would really ever reach their journey's end.

'Art tired already, Pietro?' asked the father at length, hearing a panting little sigh at his side. 'Why, we are not yet half-way there! Thou must step bravely out and be a man, for to-day thou shalt begin to work for thy living, and no longer live the life of an idle child.'

The boy squared his shoulders, and his eyes shone.

'It is not I who am tired, my father,' he said. 'It is only that my legs cannot take such good long steps as thine; and walk as we will the road ever seems to unwind itself further and further in front, like the magic white thread which has no end.'

The father laughed, and patted the child's head kindly.

'The end will come ere long,' he said. 'See where the mist lies at the foot of the hill; there we will begin to climb among the olive-trees and leave the dusty road. I know a quicker way by which we may reach the city. We will climb over the great stones that mark the track of the stream, and before the sun grows too hot we will have reached the city gates.'

It was a great relief to the little hot, tired feet to feel the cool grass beneath them, and to leave the dusty road. The boy almost forgot his tiredness as he scrambled from stone to stone, and filled his hands with the violets which grew thickly on the banks, scenting the morning air with their sweetness. And when at last they came out once more upon the great white road before the city gates, there was so much to gaze upon and wonder at, that there was no room for thoughts of weariness or hunger.

There stood the herds of great white oxen, patiently waiting to pass in. Pietro wondered if their huge wide horns would not reach from side to side of the narrow street within the gates. There the shepherd-boys played sweet airs upon their pipes as they walked before their flocks, and led the silly frightened sheep out of the way of passing carts. Women with bright-coloured handkerchiefs tied over their heads crowded round, carrying baskets of fruit and vegetables from the country round. Carts full of scarlet and yellow pumpkins were driven noisily along. Whips cracked, people shouted and talked as much with their hands as with their lips, and all were eager to pass through the great Etruscan gateway, which stood grim and tall against the blue of the summer sky. Much good service had that gateway seen, and it was as strong as when it

had been first built hundreds of years before, and was still able to shut out an army of enemies, if Perugia had need to defend herself.

Pietro and his father quickly threaded their way through the crowd, and passed through the gateway into the steep narrow street beyond. It was cool and quiet here. The sun was shut out by the tall houses, and the shadows lay so deep that one might have thought it was the hour of twilight, but for the peep of bright blue sky which showed between the overhanging eaves above. Presently they reached the great square market-place, where all again was sunshine and bustle, with people shouting and selling their wares, which they spread out on the ground up to the very steps of the cathedral and all along in front of the Palazzo Publico. Here the man stopped, and asked one of the passers-by if he could direct him to the shop of Niccolò the painter.

'Yonder he dwells,' answered the citizen, and pointed to a humble shop at the corner of the market-place. 'Hast thou brought the child to be a model?'

Pietro held his head up proudly, and answered quickly for himself.

'I am no longer a child,' he said; 'and I have come to work and not to sit idle.'

The man laughed and went his way, while father and son hurried on towards the little shop and entered the door.

The old painter was busy, and they had to wait a while until he could leave his work and come to see what they might want.

'This is the boy of whom I spoke,' said the father as he pushed Pietro forward by his shoulder. 'He is not well grown, but he is strong, and has learnt to endure hardness. I promise thee that he will serve thee well if thou wilt take him as thy servant.'

The painter smiled down at the little eager face which was waiting so anxiously for his answer.

'What canst thou do?' he asked the boy.

'Everything,' answered Pietro promptly. I can sweep out thy shop and cook thy dinner. I will learn to grind thy colours and wash thy brushes, and do a man's work.'

'In faith,' laughed the painter, 'if thou canst do everything, being yet so young, thou wilt soon be the greatest man in Perugia, and bring great fame to this fair city. Then will we call thee no longer Pietro Vanucci, but thou shalt take the city's name, and we will call thee Perugino.'

The master spoke in jest, but as time went on and he watched the boy at work, he marvelled at the quickness with which the child learned to perform his new duties, and began to think the jest might one day turn to earnest.

From early morning until sundown Pietro was never idle, and when the rough work was done he would stand and watch the master as he painted, and listen breathless to the tales which Niccolò loved to tell.

'There is nothing so great in all the world as the art of painting,' the master would say. 'It is the ladder that leads up to heaven, the window which lets light into the soul. A painter need never be lonely or poor. He can create the faces he loves, while all the riches of light and colour and beauty are always his. If thou hast it in thee to be a painter, my little Perugino, I can wish thee no greater fortune.'

Then when the day's work was done and the short spell of twilight drew near, the boy would leave the shop and run swiftly down the narrow street until he came to the grim old city gates. Once outside, under the wide blue sky in the free open air of the country, he drew a long, long breath of pleasure, and quickly found a hidden corner in the cleft of the hoary trunk of an olive-tree, where no passer-by could see him. There he sat, his chin resting on his hands, gazing and gazing out over the plain below, drinking in the beauty with his hungry eyes.

How he loved that great open space of sweet fresh air, in

the calm pure light of the evening hour. That white light, which seemed to belong more to heaven than to earth, shone on everything around. Away in the distance the purple hills faded into the sunset sky. At his feet the plain stretched away, away until it met the mountains, here and there lifting itself in some little hill crowned by a lonely town whose roofs just caught the rays of the setting sun. The evening mist lay like a gossamer veil upon the low-lying lands, and between the little towns the long straight road could be seen, winding like a white ribbon through the grey and silver, and marked here and there by a dark cypress-tree or a tall poplar. And always there would be a glint of blue, where a stream or river caught the reflection of the sky and held it lovingly there, like a mirror among the rocks.

But Pietro did not have much time for idle dreaming. His was not an easy life, for Niccolò made but little money with his painting, and the boy had to do all the work of the house besides attending to the shop. But all the time he was sweeping and dusting he looked forward to the happy days to come when he might paint pictures and become a famous artist.

Whenever a visitor came to the shop, Pietro would listen eagerly to his talk and try to learn something of the great world of Art. Sometimes he would even venture to ask questions, if the stranger happened to be one who had travelled from afar.

'Where are the most beautiful pictures to be found?' he asked one day when a Florentine painter had come to the little shop and had been describing the glories he had seen in other cities. 'And where is it that the greatest painters dwell?'

'That is an easy question to answer, my boy,' said the painter. 'All that is fairest is to be found in Florence, the most beautiful city in all the world, the City of Flowers. There one may find the best of everything, but above all, the most beautiful pictures and the greatest of painters. For no one there can bear to do only the second best, and a man must attain

to the very highest before the Florentines will call him great. The walls of the churches and monasteries are covered with pictures of saints and angels, and their beauty no words can describe.'

'I too will go to Florence,' said Pietro to himself, and every day he longed more and more to see that wonderful city.

It was no use to wait until he should have saved enough money to take him there. He scarcely earned enough to live on from day to day. So at last, poor as he was, he started off early one morning and said good-bye to his old master and the hard work of the little shop in Perugia. On he went down the same long white road which had seemed so endless to him that day when, as a little child, he first came to Perugia. Even now, when he was a strong young man, the way seemed long and weary across that great plain, and he was often footsore and discouraged. Day after day he travelled on, past the great lake which lay like a sapphire in the bosom of the plain, past many towns and little villages, until at last he came in sight of the City of Flowers.

It was a wonderful moment to Perugino, and he held his breath as he looked. He had passed the brow of the hill, and stood beside a little stream bordered by a row of tall, straight poplars which showed silvery white against the blue sky. Beyond, nestling at the foot of the encircling hills, lay the city of his dreams. Towers and palaces, a crowding together of pale red sunbaked roofs, with the great dome of the cathedral in the midst, and the silver thread of the Arno winding its way between—all this he saw, but he saw more than this. For it seemed to him that the Spirit of Beauty hovered above the fair city, and he almost heard the rustle of her wings and caught a glimpse of her rainbow-tinted robe in the light of the evening sky.

Poor Pietro! Here was the world he longed to conquer, but he was only a poor country boy, and how was he to begin to climb that golden ladder of Art which led men to fame and

glory?

Well, he could work, and that was always a beginning. The struggle was hard, and for many a month he often went hungry and had not even a bed to lie on at night, but curled himself up on a hard wooden chest. Then good fortune began to smile upon him.

The Florentine artists to whose studios he went began to notice the hardworking boy, and when they looked at his work, with all its faults and want of finish, they saw in it that divine something called genius which no one can mistake.

Then the doors of another world seemed to open to Pietro. All day long he could now work at his beloved painting and learn fresh wonders as he watched the great men use the brush and pencil. In the studio of the painter Verocchio he met the men of whose fame he had so often heard, and whose work he looked upon with awe and reverence.

There was the good-tempered monk of the Carmine, Fra Filipo Lippi, the young Botticelli, and a youth just his own age whom they called Leonardo da Vinci, of whom it was whispered already that he would some day be the greatest master of the age.

These were golden days for Perugino, as he was called, for the name of the city where he had come from was always now given to him. The pictures he had longed to paint grew beneath his hand, and upon his canvas began to dawn the solemn dignity and open-air spaciousness of those evening visions he had seen when he gazed across the Umbrian Plain. There was no noise of battle, no human passion in his pictures. His saints stood quiet and solemn, single figures with just a thread of interest binding them together, and always beyond was the great wide open world, with the white light shining in the sky, the blue thread of the river, and the single trees pointing upwards—dark, solemn cypress, or feathery larch or poplar.

There was much for the young painter still to learn, and

perhaps he learned most from the silent teaching of that little dark chapel of the Carmine, where Masaccio taught more wonderful lessons by his frescoes than any living artist could teach.

Then came the crowning honour when Perugino received an invitation from the Pope to go to Rome and paint the walls of the Sistine Chapel. Henceforth it was a different kind of life for the young painter. No need to wonder where he would get his next meal, no hard rough wooden chest on which to rest his weary limbs when the day's work was done. Now he was royally entertained and softly lodged, and men counted it an honour to be in his company.

But though he loved Florence and was proud to do his painting in Rome, his heart ever drew him back to the city on the hill whose name he bore.

Again he travelled along the winding road, and his heart beat fast as he drew nearer and saw the familiar towers and roofs of Perugia. How well he remembered that long-ago day when the cool touch of the grass was so grateful to his little tired dusty feet! He stooped again to fill his hands with the sweet violets, and thought them sweeter than all the fame and fair show of the gay cities.

And as he passed through the ancient gateway and threaded his way up the narrow street towards the little shop, he seemed to see once more the kindly smile of his old master and to hear him say, 'Thou wilt soon be the greatest man in Perugia, and we will call thee no longer Pietro Vanucci, but Perugino.'

So it had come to pass. Here he was. No longer a little ragged, hungry boy, but a man whom all delighted to honour. Truly this was a world of changes!

A bigger studio was needed than the little old shop, for now he had more pictures to paint than he well knew how to finish. Then, too, he had many pupils, for all were eager to enter the studio of the great master. There it was that one

morning a new pupil was brought to him, a boy of twelve, whose guardians begged that Perugino would teach and train him.

Perugino looked with interest at the child. Seldom had he seen such a beautiful oval face, framed by such soft brown curls—a face so pure and lovable that even at first sight it drew out love from the hearts of those who looked at him.

'His father was also a painter,' said the guardian, 'and Raphael, here, has caught the trick of using his pencil and brush, so we would have him learn of the greatest master in the land.'

After some talk, the boy was left in the studio at Perugia, and day by day Perugino grew to love him more. It was not only that little Raphael was clever and skilful, though that alone often made the master marvel.

'He is my pupil now, but some day he will be my master, and I shall learn of him,' Perugino would often say as he watched the boy at work. But more than all, the pure sweet nature and the polished gentleness of his manners charmed the heart of the master, and he loved to have the boy always near him, and to teach him was his greatest pleasure.

Those quiet days in the Perugia studio never lasted very long. From all quarters came calls to Perugino, and, much as he loved work, he could not finish all that was wanted.

It happened once when he was in Florence that a certain prior begged him to come and fresco the walls of his convent. This prior was very famous for making a most beautiful and expensive blue colour which he was anxious should be used in the painting of the convent walls. He was a mean, suspicious man, and would not trust Perugino with the precious blue colour, but always held it in his own hands and grudgingly doled it out in small quantities, torn between the desire to have the colour on his walls and his dislike to parting with anything so precious.

As Perugino noted this, he grew angry and determined to

punish the prior's meanness. The next time therefore that there was a blue sky to be painted, he put at his side a large bowl of fresh water, and then called on the prior to put out a small quantity of the blue colour in a little vase. Each time he dipped his brush into the vase, Perugino washed it out with a swirl in the bowl at his side, so that most of the colour was left in the water, and very little was put on to the picture.

'I pray thee fill the vase again with blue,' he said carelessly when the colour was all gone. The prior groaned aloud, and turned grudgingly to his little bag.

'Oh what a quantity of blue is swallowed up by this plaster!' he said, as he gazed at the white wall, which scarcely showed a trace of the precious colour.

'Yes,' said Perugino cheerfully, 'thou canst see thyself how it goes.'

Then afterwards, when the prior had sadly gone off with his little empty bag, Perugino carefully poured the water from the bowl and gathered together the grains of colour which had sunk to the bottom.

'Here is something that belongs to thee,' he said sternly to the astonished prior. 'I would have thee learn to trust honest men and not treat them as thieves. For with all thy suspicious care, it was easy to rob thee if I had had a mind.'

During all these years in which Perugino had worked so diligently, the art of painting had been growing rapidly. Many of the new artists shook off the old rules and ideas, and began to paint in quite a new way. There was one man especially, called Michelangelo, whose story you will hear later on, who arose like a giant, and with his new way and greater knowledge swept everything before him.

Perugino was jealous of all these new ideas, and clung more closely than ever to his old ideals, his quiet, dignified saints, and spacious landscapes. He talked openly of his dislike of the new style, and once he had a serious quarrel with the great Michelangelo.

There was a gathering of painters in Perugino's studio that day. Filippino Lippi, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, and Leonardo were there, and in the background the pupil Raphael was listening to the talk.

'What dost thou think of this new style of painting?' asked Botticelli. 'To me it seems but strange and unpleasing. Music and motion are delightful, but this violent twisting of limbs to show the muscles offends my taste.'

'Yet it is most marvellously skilful,' said the young Leonardo thoughtfully.

'But totally unfit for the proper picturing of saints and the blessed Madonna,' said Filippino, shaking his curly head.

'I never trouble myself about it,' said Ghirlandaio. 'Life is too short to attend to other men's work. It takes all my care and attention to look after mine own. But see, here comes the great Michelangelo himself to listen to our criticism.'

The curious, rugged face of the great artist looked good-naturedly on the company, but his strong knotted hands waved aside their greetings.

'So you were busy as usual finding fault with my work,' he said. 'Come, friend Perugino, tell me what thou hast found to grumble at.'

'I like not thy methods, and that I tell thee frankly,' answered Perugino, an angry light shining in his eyes. 'It is such work as thine that drags the art of painting down from the heights of heavenly things to the low taste of earth. It robs it of all dignity and restfulness, and destroys the precious traditions handed down to us since the days of Giotto.'

The face of Michelangelo grew angry and scornful as he listened to this.

'Thou art but a dolt and a blockhead in Art,' he said. 'Thou wilt soon see that the day of thy saints and Madonnas is past, and wilt cease to paint them over and over again in the same manner, as a child doth his lesson in a copy book.'

Then he turned and went out of the studio before any one

had time to answer him.

Perugino was furiously angry and would not listen to reason, but must needs go before the great Council and demand that they should punish Michelangelo for his hard words. This of course the Council refused to do, and Perugino left Florence for Perugia, angry and sore at heart.

It seemed hard, after all his struggles and great successes, that as he grew old people should begin to tire of his work, which they had once thought so perfect.

But if the outside world was sometimes disappointing, he had always his home to turn to, and his beautiful wife Chiare. He had married her in his beloved Perugia, and she meant all the joy of life to him. He was so proud of her beauty that he would buy her the richest dresses and most costly jewels, and with his own hands would deck her with them. Her brown eyes were like the depths of some quiet pool, her fair face and the wonderful soul that shone there were to him the most perfect picture in the world.

'I will paint thee once, that the world may be the richer,' said Perugino, 'but only once, for thy beauty is too rare for common use. And I will paint thee not as an earthly beauty, but thou shalt be the angel in the story of Tobias which thou knowest.'

So he painted her as he said. And in our own National Gallery we still have the picture, and we may see her there as the beautiful angel who leads the little boy Tobias by the hand.

Up to the very last years of his life, Perugino painted as diligently as he had ever done, but the peaceful days of Perugia had long since given place to war and tumult, both within and without the city. Then too a terrible plague swept over the countryside, and people died by thousands.

To the hospital of Fartignano, close to Perugia, they carried Perugino when the deadly plague seized him, and there he died. There was no time to think of grand funerals; the

people were buried as quickly as possible, in whatever place lay closest at hand.

So it came to pass that Perugino was laid to rest in an open field under an oak-tree close by. Later on his sons wished to have him buried in holy ground, and some say that this was done, but nothing is known for certain. Perhaps if he could have chosen, he would have been glad to think that his body should rest under the shelter of the trees he loved to paint, in that waste openness of space which had always been his vision of beauty, since, as a little boy, he gazed across the Umbrian Plain, and the wonder of it sank into his soul.

Leonardo da Vinci

1452 – 1519 A.D.

On the sunny slopes of Monte Albano, between Florence and Pisa, the little town of Vinci lay high among the rocks that crowned the steep hillside. It was but a little town. Only a few houses crowded together round an old castle in the midst, and it looked from a distance like a swallow's nest clinging to the bare steep rocks.

Here in the year 1452 Leonardo, son of Ser Piero da Vinci, was born. It was in the age when people told fortunes by the stars, and when a baby was born they would eagerly look up and decide whether it was a lucky or unlucky star which shone upon the child. Surely if it had been possible in this way to tell what fortune awaited the little Leonardo, a strange new star must have shone that night, brighter than the others and unlike the rest in the dazzling light of its strength and beauty.

Leonardo was always a strange child. Even his beauty was not like that of other children. He had the most wonderful waving hair, falling in regular ripples, like the waters of a fountain, the colour of bright gold, and soft as spun silk. His eyes were blue and clear, with a mysterious light in them, not the warm light of a sunny sky, but rather the blue that glints in the iceberg. They were merry eyes too, when he laughed, but underneath was always that strange cold look. There was a charm about his smile which no one could resist, and he was a favourite with all. Yet people shook their heads sometimes as they looked at him, and they talked in whispers of the old witch who had lent her goat to nourish the little Leonardo when he was a baby. The woman was a dealer in black magic,

and who knew but that the child might be a changeling?

It was the old grandmother, Mona Lena, who brought Leonardo up and spoilt him not a little. His father, Ser Piero, was a lawyer, and spent most of his time in Florence, but when he returned to the old castle of Vinci, he began to give Leonardo lessons and tried to find out what the boy was fit for. But Leonardo hated those lessons and would not learn, so when he was seven years old he was sent to school.

This did not answer any better. The rough play of the boys was not to his liking. When he saw them drag the wings off butterflies, or torture any animal that fell into their hands, his face grew white with pain, and he would take no share in their games. The Latin grammar, too, was a terrible task, while the many things he longed to know no one taught him.

So it happened that many a time, instead of going to school, he would slip away and escape up into the hills, as happy as a little wild goat. Here was all the sweet fresh air of heaven, instead of the stuffy schoolroom. Here were no cruel, clumsy boys, but all the wild creatures that he loved. Here he could learn the real things his heart was hungry to know, not merely words which meant nothing and led to nowhere.

For hours he would lie perfectly still with his heels in the air and his chin resting in his hands, as he watched a spider weaving its web, breathless with interest to see how the delicate threads were turned in and out. The gaily painted butterflies, the fat buzzing bees, the little sharp-tongued green lizards, he loved to watch them all, but above everything he loved the birds. Oh, if only he too had wings to dart like the swallows, and swoop and sail and dart again! What was the secret power in their wings? Surely by watching he might learn it. Sometimes it seemed as if his heart would burst with the longing to learn that secret. It was always the hidden reason of things that he desired to know. Much as he loved the flowers he must pull their petals off, one by one, to see how each was joined, to wonder at the dusty pollen, and

touch the honey-covered stamens. Then when the sun began to sink he would turn sadly homewards, very hungry, with torn clothes and tired feet, but with a store of sunshine in his heart.

His grandmother shook her head when Leonardo appeared after one of his days of wandering.

'I know thou shouldst be whipped for playing truant,' she said; 'and I should also punish thee for tearing thy clothes.'

'Ah! but thou wilt not whip me,' answered Leonardo, smiling at her with his curious quiet smile, for he had full confidence in her love.

'Well, I love to see thee happy, and I will not punish thee this time,' said his grandmother; 'but if these tales reach thy father's ears, he will not be so tender as I am towards thee.'

And, sure enough, the very next time that a complaint was made from the school, his father happened to be at home, and then the storm burst.

'Next time I will flog thee,' said Ser Piero sternly, with rising anger at the careless air of the boy. 'Meanwhile we will see what a little imprisonment will do towards making thee a better child.'

Then he took the boy by the shoulders and led him to a little dark cupboard under the stairs, and there shut him up for three whole days.

There was no kicking or beating at the locked door. Leonardo sat quietly there in the dark, thinking his own thoughts, and wondering why there seemed so little justice in the world. But soon even that wonder passed away, and as usual when he was alone he began to dream dreams of the time when he should have learned the swallows' secrets and should have wings like theirs.

But if there were complaints about Leonardo's dislike of the boys and the Latin grammar, there would be none about the lessons he chose to learn. Indeed, some of the masters began to dread the boy's eager questions, which were sometimes

more than they could answer. Scarcely had he begun the study of arithmetic than he made such rapid progress, and wanted to puzzle out so many problems, that the masters were amazed. His mind seemed always eagerly asking for more light, and was never satisfied.

But it was out on the hillside that he spent his happiest hours. He loved every crawling, creeping, or flying thing, however ugly. Curious beasts which might have frightened another child were to him charming and interesting. There as he listened to the carolling of the birds and bent his head to catch the murmured song of the mountain-streams, the love of music began to steal into his heart.

He did not rest then until he managed to get a lute and learned how to play upon it. And when he had mastered the notes and learned the rules of music, he began to play airs which no one had ever heard before, and to sing such strange sweet songs that the golden notes flowed out as fresh and clear as the song of a lark in the early morning of spring.

'The child is a changeling,' said some, as they saw Leonardo tenderly lift a crushed lizard in his hand, or watched him play with a spotted snake or great hairy spider.

'A changeling perhaps,' said others, 'but one that hath the voice of an angel.' For every one stopped to listen when the boy's voice was heard singing through the streets of the little town.

He was a puzzle to every one, and yet a delight to all, even when they understood him least.

So time went on, and when Leonardo was thirteen his father took him away to Florence that he might begin to be trained for some special work. But what work? Ah! that was the rub. The boy could do so many things well that it was difficult to fix on one.

At that time there was living in Florence an old man who knew a great deal about the stars, and who made wonderful calculations about them. He was a famous astronomer, but he

cared not at all for honour or fame, but lived a simple quiet life by himself and would not mix with the gay world.

Few visitors ever came to see him, for it was known that he would receive no one, and so it was a great surprise to old Toscanelli when one night a gentle knock sounded at his door, and a boy walked quietly in and stood before him.

Hastily the old man looked up, and his first thought was to ask the child how he dared enter without leave, and then ask him to be gone, but as he looked at the fair face he felt the charm of the curious smile, and the light in the blue eyes, and instead he laid his hand upon the boy's golden head and said: 'What dost thou seek, my son?'

'I would learn all that thou canst teach me,' said Leonardo, for it was he.

The old man smiled.

'Behold the boundless self-confidence of youth!' he said.

But as they talked together, and the boy asked his many eager questions, a great wonder awoke in the astronomer's mind, and his eyes shone with interest. This child-mind held depths of understanding such as he had never met with among his learned friends. Day after day the old man and the boy bent eagerly together over their problems, and when night fell Toscanelli would take the child up with him to his lonely tower above Florence, and teach him to know the stars and to understand many things.

'This is all very well,' said Ser Piero, 'but the boy must do more than mere star-gazing. He must earn a living for himself, and methinks we might make a painter of him.'

That very day, therefore, he gathered together some of Leonardo's drawings which lay carelessly scattered about, and took them to the studio of Verocchio the painter, who lived close by the Ponte Vecchio.

'Dost thou think thou canst make aught of the boy?' he asked, spreading out the drawings before Verocchio.

The painter's quick eyes examined the work with deep

interest.

'Send him to me at once,' he said. 'This is indeed marvellous talent.'

So Leonardo entered the studio as a pupil, and learned all that could be taught him with the same quickness with which he learned anything that he cared to know.

Every one who saw his work declared that he would be the wonder of the age, but Verocchio shook his head.

'He is too wonderful,' he said. 'He aims at too great perfection. He wants to know everything and do everything, and life is too short for that. He finishes nothing, because he is ever starting to do something else.'

Verocchio's words were true; the boy seldom worked long at one thing. His hands were never idle, and often, instead of painting, he would carve out tiny windmills and curious toys which worked with pulleys and ropes, or made exquisite little clay models of horses and all the other animals that he loved. But he never forgot the longing that had rilled his heart when he was a child—the desire to learn the secret of flying.

For days he would sit idle and think of nothing but soaring wings, then he would rouse himself and begin to make some strange machine which he thought might hold the secret that he sought.

'A waste of time,' growled Verocchio. 'See here, thou wouldst be better employed if thou shouldst set to work and help me finish this picture of the Baptism for the good monks of Vallambrosa. Let me see how thou canst paint in the kneeling figure of the angel at the side.'

For a while the boy stood motionless before the picture as if he was looking at something far away. Then he seized the brushes with his left hand and began to paint with quick certain sweep. He never stopped to think, but worked as if the angel were already there, and he were but brushing away the veil that hid it from the light.

Then, when it was done, the master came and looked

silently on. For a moment a quick stab of jealousy ran through his heart. Year after year had he worked and striven to reach his ideal. Long days of toil and weary nights had he spent, winning each step upwards by sheer hard work. And here was this boy without an effort able to rise far above him. All the knowledge which the master had groped after, had been grasped at once by the wonderful mind of the pupil. But the envious feeling passed quickly away, and Verocchio laid his hand upon Leonardo's shoulder.

'I have found my master,' he said quietly, 'and I will paint no more.'

Leonardo scarcely seemed to hear; he was thinking of something else now, and he seldom noticed if people praised or blamed him. His thoughts had fixed themselves upon something he had seen that morning which had troubled him. On the way to the studio he had passed a tiny shop in a narrow street where a seller of birds was busy hanging his cages up on the nails fastened to the outside wall.

The thought of those poor little prisoners beating their wings against the cruel bars and breaking their hearts with longing for their wild free life, had haunted him all day, and now he could bear it no longer. He seized his cap and hurried off, all forgetful of his kneeling angel and the master's praise.

He reached the little shop and called to the man within.

'How much wilt thou take for thy birds?' he cried, and pointed to the little wooden cages that hung against the wall.

'Plague on them,' answered the man, 'they will often die before I can make a sale by them. Thou canst have them all for one silver piece.'

In a moment Leonardo had paid the money and had turned towards the row of little cages. One by one he opened the doors and set the prisoners free, and those that were too frightened or timid to fly away, he gently drew out with his hand, and sent them gaily whirling up above his head into the blue sky.

The man looked with blank astonishment at the empty cages, and wondered if the handsome young man was mad. But Leonardo paid no heed to him, but stood gazing up until every one of the birds had disappeared.

'Happy things,' he said, with a sigh. 'Will you ever teach me the secret of your wings, I wonder?'

It was with great pleasure that Ser Piero heard of his son's success at Verocchio's studio, and he began to have hopes that the boy would make a name for himself after all. It happened just then that he was on a visit to his castle at Vinci, and one morning a peasant who lived on the estate came to ask a great favour of him.

He had bought a rough wooden shield which he was very anxious should have a design painted on it in Florence, and he begged Ser Piero to see that it was done. The peasant was a faithful servant, and very useful in supplying the castle with fish and game, so Ser Piero was pleased to grant him his request.

'Leonardo shall try his hand upon it. It is time he became useful to me,' said Ser Piero to himself. So on his return to Florence he took the shield to his son.

It was a rough, badly-shaped shield, so Leonardo held it to the fire and began to straighten it. For though his hands looked delicate and beautifully formed, they were as strong as steel, and he could bend bars of iron without an effort. Then he sent the shield to a turner to be smoothed and rounded, and when it was ready he sat down to think what he should paint upon it, for he loved to draw strange monsters.

'I will make it as terrifying as the head of Medusa,' he said at last, highly delighted with the plan that had come into his head.

Then he went out and collected together all the strangest animals he could find—lizards, hedgehogs, newts, snakes, dragon-flies, locusts, bats, and glow-worms. These he took into his own room, which no one was allowed to enter, and

began to paint from them a curious monster, partly a lizard and partly a bat, with something of each of the other animals added to it.

When it was ready Leonardo hung the shield in a good light against a dark curtain, so that the painted monster stood out in brilliant contrast, and looked as if its twisted curling limbs were full of life.

A knock sounded at the door, and Ser Piero's voice was heard outside asking if the shield was finished.

'Come in,' cried Leonardo, and Ser Piero entered.

He cast one look at the monster hanging there and then uttered a cry and turned to flee, but Leonardo caught hold of his cloak and laughingly told him to look closer.

'If I have really succeeded in frightening thee,' he said, 'I have indeed done all I could desire.'

His father could scarcely believe that it was nothing but a painting, and he was so proud of the work that he would not part with it, but gave the peasant of Vinci another shield instead.

Leonardo then began a drawing for a curtain which was to be woven in silk and gold and given as a present from the Florentines to the King of Portugal, and he also began a large picture of the Adoration of the Shepherds which was never finished.

The young painter grew restless after a while, and felt the life of the studio narrow and cramped. He longed to leave Florence and find work in some new place.

He was not a favourite at the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent as Filippino Lippi and Botticelli were. Lorenzo liked those who would flatter him and do as they were bid, while Leonardo took his own way in everything and never said what he did not mean.

But it happened that just then Lorenzo wished to send a present to Ludovico Sforza, the Duke of Milan, and the gift he chose was a marvellous musical instrument which

Leonardo had just finished.

It was a silver lute, made in the form of a horse's head, the most curious and beautiful thing ever seen. Lorenzo was charmed with it.

'Thou shalt take it thyself, as my messenger,' he said to Leonardo. 'I doubt if another can be found who can play upon it as thou dost.'

So Leonardo set out for Milan, and was glad to shake himself free from the narrow life of the Florentine studio.

Before starting, however, he had written a letter to the Duke setting down in simple order all the things he could do, and telling of what use he could be in times of war and in days of peace.

There seemed nothing that he could not do. He could make bridges, blow up castles, dig canals, invent a new kind of cannon, build warships, and make underground passages. In days of peace he could design and build houses, make beautiful statues and paint pictures 'as well as any man, be he who he may.'

The letter was written in curious writing from right to left like Hebrew or Arabic. This was how Leonardo always wrote, using his left hand, so that it could only be read by holding the writing up to a mirror.

The Duke was half amazed and half amused when the letter reached him.

'Either these are the words of a fool, or of a man of genius,' said the Duke. And when he had once seen and spoken to Leonardo he saw at once which of the two he deserved to be called.

Every one at the court was charmed with the artist's beautiful face and graceful manners. His music alone, as he swept the strings of the silver lute and sang to it his own songs, would have brought him fame, but the Duke quickly saw that this was no mere minstrel.

It was soon arranged therefore that Leonardo should take

up his abode at the court of Milan and receive a yearly pension from the Duke.

Sometimes the pension was paid, and sometimes it was forgotten, but Leonardo never troubled about money matters. Somehow or other he must have all that he wanted, and everything must be fair and dainty. His clothes were always rich and costly, but never bright-coloured or gaudy. There was no plume or jewelled brooch in his black velvet beretto or cap, and the only touch of colour was his golden hair, and the mantle of dark red cloth, which he wore in the fashion of the Florentines, thrown across his shoulder. Above all, he must always have horses in his stables, for he loved them more than human beings.

Many were the plans and projects which the Duke entrusted to Leonardo's care, but of all that he did, two great works stand out as greater than all the rest. One was the painting of the Last Supper on the walls of the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, and the other the making of a model of a great equestrian statue, a bronze horse with the figure of the Duke upon its back.

Year after year Leonardo worked at that wonderful fresco of the Last Supper. Sometimes for weeks or months he never touched it, but he always returned to it again. Then for days he would work from morning till night, scarcely taking time to eat, and able to think of nothing else, until suddenly he would put down his brushes and stand silently for a long, long time before the picture. It seemed as if he was wasting the precious hours doing nothing, but in truth he worked more diligently with his brain when his hands were idle.

Often too when he worked at the model for the great bronze horse, he would suddenly stop, and walk quickly through the streets until he came to the refectory, and there, catching up his brushes, he would paint in one or perhaps two strokes, and then return to his modelling.

Besides all this Leonardo was busy with other plans for the

Duke's amusement, and no court fête was counted successful without his help. Nothing seemed too difficult for him to contrive, and what he did was always new and strange and wonderful.

Once when the King of France came as a guest to Milan, Leonardo prepared a curious model of a lion, which by some inside machinery was able to walk forward several steps to meet the King, and then open wide its huge jaws and display inside a bed of sweet-scented lilies, the emblem of France, to do honour to her King. But while working at other things Leonardo never forgot his longing to learn the secret art of flying. Every now and then a new idea would come into his head, and he would lay aside all other work until he had made the new machine which might perhaps act as the wings of a bird. Each fresh disappointment only made him more keen to try again.

'I know we shall some day have wings,' he said to his pupils, who sometimes wondered at the strange work of the master's hands. 'It is only a question of knowing how to make them. I remember once when I was a baby lying in my cradle, I fancied a bird flew to me, opened my lips and rubbed its feathers over them. So it seems to be my fate all my life to talk of wings.'

Very slowly the great fresco of the Last Supper grew under the master's hand until it was nearly finished. The statue, too, was almost completed, and then evil days fell upon Milan. The Duke was obliged to flee before the French soldiers, who forced their way into the town and took possession of it. Before any one could prevent it, the soldiers began to shoot their arrows at the great statue, which they used as a target, and in a few hours the work of sixteen years was utterly destroyed. It is sadder still to tell the fate of Leonardo's fresco, the greatest picture perhaps that ever was painted. Dampness lurked in the wall and began to dim and blur the colours. The careless monks cut a door through the very centre of the

picture, and, later on, when Napoleon's soldiers entered Milan, they used the refectory as a stable, and amused themselves by throwing stones at what remained of it. But though little of it is left now to be seen, there is still enough to make us stand in awe and reverence before the genius of the great master.

Not far from Milan there lived a friend of Leonardo's, whom the master loved to visit. This Girolamo Melzi had a son called Francesco, a little motherless boy, who adored the great painter with all his heart.

Together Leonardo and the child used to wander out to search for curious animals and rare flowers, and as they watched the spiders weave their webs and pulled the flowers to pieces to find out their secrets, the boy listened with wide wondering eyes to all the tales which the painter told him. And at night Leonardo wrapped the little one close inside his warm cloak and carried him out to see the stars—those same stars which old Toscanelli had taught him to love long ago in Florence. Then when the day of parting came the child clung round the master's neck and would not let him go.

'Take me with thee,' he cried, 'do not leave me behind all alone.'

'I cannot take thee now, little one,' said Leonardo gently. 'Thou art still too small, but later on thou shalt come to me and be my pupil. This I promise thee.'

It was but a weary wandering life that awaited Leonardo after he was forced to leave his home in Milan. It seemed as if it was his fate to begin many things but to finish nothing. For a while he lived in Rome, but he did little real work there.

For several years he lived in Florence and began to paint a huge battle-picture. There too he painted the famous portrait of Mona Lisa, which is now in Paris. Of all portraits that have ever been painted this is counted the most wonderful and perfect piece of work, although Leonardo himself called it unfinished.

By this time the master had fallen on evil days. All his pupils were gone, and his friends seemed to have forgotten him. He was sitting before the fire one stormy night, lonely and sad, when the door opened and a tall handsome lad came in.

'Master!' he cried, and kneeling down he kissed the old man's hands. 'Dost thou not know me? I am thy little Francesco, come to claim thy promise that I should one day be thy servant and pupil.'

Leonardo laid his hand upon the boy's fair head and looked into his face.

'I am growing old,' he said, 'and I can no longer do for thee what I might once have done. I am but a poor wanderer now. Dost thou indeed wish to cast in thy lot with mine?'

'I care only to be near thee,' said the boy. 'I will go with thee to the ends of the earth.'

So when, soon after, Leonardo received an invitation from the new King of France, he took the boy with him, and together they made their home in the little chateau of Claux near the town of Amboise.

The master's hair was silvered now, and his long beard was as white as snow. His keen blue eyes looked weary and tired of life, and care had drawn many deep lines on his beautiful face. Sad thoughts were always his company. The one word 'failure' seemed to be written across his life. What had he done? He had begun many things and had finished but few. His great fresco was even now fading away and becoming dim and blurred. His model for the marvellous horse was destroyed. A few pictures remained, but these had never quite reached his ideal. The crowd who had once hailed him as the greatest of all artists, could now only talk of Michelangelo and the young Raphael. Michelangelo himself had once scornfully told him he was a failure and could finish nothing.

He was glad to leave Italy and all its memories behind, and he hoped to begin work again in his quiet little French

home. But Death was drawing near, and before many years had passed he grew too weak to hold a brush or pencil.

It was in the springtime of the year that the end came. Francesco had opened the window and gently lifted the master in his strong young arms, that he might look once more on the outside world which he loved so dearly. The trees were putting on their dainty dress of tender green, white clouds swept across the blue sky, and April sunshine flooded the room.

As he looked out, the master's tired eyes woke into life.

'Look!' he cried, 'the swallows have come back! Oh that they would lend me their wings that I might fly away and be at rest!'

The swallows darted and circled about in the clear spring air, busy with their building plans, but Francesco thought he heard the rustle of other wings, as the master's soul, freed from the tired body, was at last borne upwards higher than any earthly wings could soar.

Filippino Lippi

1459 – 1504 A.D.

The little curly-haired Filippino, left in the charge of good Fra Diamante, soon showed that he meant to be a painter like his father. When, as a little boy, he drew his pictures and showed them proudly to his mother, he told her that he, too, would learn some day to be a great artist. And she, half smiling, would pat his curly head and tell him that he could at least try his best.

Then, after that sad day when Lucrezia heard of Filippo's death, and the happy little home was broken up, Fra Diamante began in earnest to train the boy who had been left under his care. He had plenty of money, for Filippo had been well paid for the work at Spoleto, and so it was decided that the boy should be placed in some studio where he could be taught all that was necessary.

There was no fear of Filippino ever wandering about the Florentine streets cold and hungry as his father had done. And his training was very different too. Instead of the convent and the kind monks, he was placed under the care of a great painter, and worked in the master's studio with other boys as well off as himself.

The name of Filippino's master was Sandro Botticelli, a Florentine artist, who had been one of Filippo's pupils and had worked with him in Prato. Fra Diamante knew that he was the greatest artist now in Florence, and that he would be able to teach the child better than any one else.

Filippino was a good, industrious boy, and had none of the faults which had so often led his father into so much mischief

and so many strange adventures. His boyhood passed quietly by and he learned all that his master could teach him, and then began to paint his own pictures.

Strangely enough, his first work was to paint the walls of the Carmine Chapel—that same chapel where Filippo and Diamante had learned their lessons, and had gazed with such awe and reverence on Masaccio's work.

The great painter, Ugly Tom, was dead, and there were still parts of the chapel unfinished, so Filippino was invited to fill the empty spaces with his work. No need for the new prior to warn this young painter against the sin of painting earthly pictures. The frescoes which daily grew beneath Filippino's hands were saintly and beautiful. The tall angel in flowing white robes who so gently leads St. Peter out of the prison door, shines with a pure fair light that speaks of Heaven. The sleeping soldier looks in contrast all the more dull and heavy, while St. Peter turns his eyes towards his gentle guide and folds his hands in reverence, wrapped in the soft reflected light of that fair face. And on the opposite wall, the sad face of St. Peter looks out through the prison bars, while a brother saint stands outside, and with uplifted hand speaks comforting words to the poor prisoner.

By slow degrees the chapel walls were finished, and after that there was much work ready for the young painter's hand. It is said that he was very fond of studying old Roman ornaments and painted them into his pictures whenever it was possible, and became very famous for this kind of work. But it is the beauty of his Madonnas and angels that makes us love his pictures, and we like to think that the memory of his gentle mother taught him how to paint those lovely faces.

Perhaps of all his pictures the most beautiful is one in the church of the Badia in Florence. It tells the story of the blessed St. Bernard, and shows the saint in his desert home, as he sat among the rocks writing the history of the Madonna. He had not been able to write that day; perhaps he felt dull,

and none of his books, scattered around, were of any help. Then, as he sat lost in thought, with his pen in his hand, the Virgin herself stood before him, an angel on either side, and little angel faces pressed close behind her. Laying a gentle hand upon his book, she seems to tell St. Bernard all those golden words which his poor earthly pen had not been able yet to write.

It used to be the custom long ago in Italy to place in the streets sacred pictures or figures, that passers-by might be reminded of holy things and say a prayer in passing. And still in many towns you will find in some old dusty corner a beautiful picture, painted by a master hand. A gleam of colour will catch your eye, and looking up you see a picture or little shrine of exquisite blue-and-white glazed pottery, where the Madonna kneels and worships the Infant Christ lying amongst the lilies at her feet. The old battered lamp which hangs in front of these shrines is still kept lighted by some faithful hand, and in springtime the children will often come and lay little bunches of wild-flowers on the ledge below.

'It is for the Jesu Bambino,' they will say, and their little faces grow solemn and reverent as they kneel and say a prayer. Then off again they go to their play.

In a little side-street of Prato, not far from the convent where Filippino's father first saw Lucrezia's lovely face in the sunny garden, there is one of these wayside shrines. It is painted by Filippino, and is one of his most beautiful pictures. The sweet face of the Madonna looks down upon the busy street below, and the Holy Child lifts His little hand in blessing, amid the saints which stand on either side.

The glass that covers the picture is thick with dust, and few who pass ever stop to look up. The world is all too busy nowadays. The hurrying feet pass by, the unseeing eyes grow more and more careless. But Filippino's beautiful Madonna looks on with calm, sad eyes, and the Christ Child, surrounded by the cloud of little angel faces, still holds in His

uplifted hand a blessing for those who seek it.

Like all the great Florentine artists, Filippino, as soon as he grew famous, was invited to Rome, and he painted many pictures there. On his way he stopped for a while at Spoleto, and there he designed a beautiful marble monument for his father's tomb.

Unlike that father, Filippino was never fond of travel or adventure, and was always glad to return to Florence and live his quiet life there. Not even an invitation from the King of Hungary could tempt him to leave home.

It was in the great church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence that Filippino painted his last frescoes. They are very real and lifelike, as one of the great painter's pupils once learned to his cost. Filippino had, of course, many pupils who worked under him. They ground his colours and watched him work, and would sometimes be allowed to prepare the less important parts of the picture.

Now it happened that one day when the master had finished his work and had left the chapel, that one of the pupils lingered behind. His sharp eye had caught sight of a netted purse which lay in a dark corner, dropped there by some careless visitor, or perhaps by the master himself. The boy darted back and caught up the treasure; but at that moment the master turned back to fetch something he had forgotten. The boy looked quickly round. Where could he hide his prize? In a moment his eye fell on a hole in the wall, underneath a step which Filippino had been painting in the fresco. That was the very place, and he ran forward to thrust the purse inside. But, alas! the hole was only a painted one, and the boy was fairly caught, and was obliged with shame and confusion to give up his prize.

Scarcely were these frescoes finished when Filippino was seized with a terrible fever, and he died almost as suddenly as his father had done.

In those days when there was a funeral of a prince in

Florence, the Florentines used to shut their shops, and this was considered a great mark of respect, and was paid only to those of royal blood. But on the day that Filippino's funeral passed along the Via dei Servi, every shop there was closed and all Florence mourned for him.

'Some men,' they said, 'are born princes, and some raise themselves by their talents to be kings among men. Our Filippino was a prince in Art, and so do we do honour to his title.'

Vittore Carpaccio

1465 – 1526 A.D.

Like most of the other great painters, Giovanni Bellini had many pupils working under him—boys who helped their master, and learned their lessons by watching him work. Among these pupils was a boy called Vittore Carpaccio, a sharp, clever lad, with keen bright eyes which noticed everything. No one else learned so quickly or copied the master's work so faithfully, and when in time he became himself a famous painter, his work showed to the end traces of the master's influence.

He must have been a curious boy, this Vittore Carpaccio, for although we know but little of his life, his pictures tell us many a tale about him.

In the olden days, when Venice was at the height of her glory, splendid fêtes were given in the city, and the gorgeous shows were a wonder to behold. Early in the morning of these festa days, Carpaccio would steal away in the dim light from the studio, before the others were astir. Work was left behind, for who could work indoors on days like these? There was a holiday feeling in the very air. Songs and laughter and the echo of merry voices were heard on every side, and the city seemed one vast playground, where all the grown-up children as well as the babies were ready to spend a happy holiday.

The little side-streets of Venice, cut up by canals, seem like a veritable maze to those who do not know the city, but Carpaccio could quickly thread his way from bridge to bridge, and by many a short cut arrive at last at the great central water street of Venice, the Grand Canal. Here it was easy to

find a corner from which he could see the gay pageant, and enjoy as good a view as any of those great people who would presently come out upon the balconies of their marble palaces.

The bridge of the Rialto, which throws its white span across the centre of the canal, was Carpaccio's favourite perch, for from here he could see the markets and the long row of marble palaces on either side. From every window hung gay-coloured tapestry, Turkey carpets, silken draperies, and delicate-tinted stuffs covered with Eastern embroideries. The market was crowded with a throng of holiday-makers, a garden of bright colours, and from the balconies above richly dressed ladies looked down, themselves a pageant of beauty, with their wonderful golden hair and gleaming jewels, while green and crimson parrots, fastened by golden chains to the marble balustrades, screamed and flapped their wings, and delighted Carpaccio's keen eyes with their vivid beauty.

Then the procession of boats swept up the great waterway, and the blaze of colour made the boy hold his breath in sheer delight. The painted galleys, the rowers in their quaint dresses—half one colour and half another—with jaunty feathered caps upon their floating curls, the nobles and rulers in their crimson robes, the silken curtains of every hue trailing their golden fringes in the cool green water, as the boats glided past, all made up a picture which the boy never forgot.

Then when it was all over, Carpaccio would climb down and make his way back to the master's studio, and with the gay scene ever before his eyes would try, day after day, to paint every detail just as he had seen it.

There is another thing which we learn about Carpaccio from his pictures, and that is, that he must have loved to listen to old legends and stories of the saints, and that he stored them up in his mind, just as he treasured the remembrance of the gay processions and the flapping wings of those crimson and green parrots.

So, when he grew to be a man, and his fame began to spread, the first great pictures he painted were of the story of St. Ursula, told in loving detail, as only one who loved the story could do it.

But though Carpaccio might paint pictures of these old stories, it was always through the golden haze of Venice that he saw them. His St. Ursula is a dainty Venetian lady, and the bedroom in which she dreams her wonderful dream is just a room in one of the old marble palaces, with a pot of pinks upon the window-sill, and her little high-heeled Venetian shoes by the bedside. Whenever it was possible, Carpaccio would paint in those scenes on which his eyes had rested since his childhood—the painted galleys with their sails reflected in the clear water, the dainty dresses of the Venetian ladies, their gay-coloured parrots, pet dogs, and grinning monkeys.

In an old church of Venice there are some pictures said to have been painted by Carpaccio when he was a little boy only eight years old. They are scenes taken from the Bible stories, and very funny scenes they are too. But they show already what clever little hands and what a thinking head the boy had, and how Venice was the background in his mind for every story. For here is the meeting of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, and instead of Jerusalem with all its glory, we see a little wooden bridge, with King Solomon on one side and the Queen of Sheba on the other, walking towards each other, as if they were both in Venice crossing one of the little canals.

There were many foreign sailors in Venice in those old days, who came in the trading-ships from distant lands. Many of them were poor and unable to earn money to buy food, and when they were ill there was no one to look after them or help them. So some of the richer foreigners founded a Brotherhood, where the poor sailors might be helped in time of need. This Brotherhood chose St. George as their patron saint, and when they had built a little chapel they invited Carpaccio to

come and paint the walls with pictures from the life of St. George and other saints.

Nothing could have suited Carpaccio better, and he began his work with great delight, for he had still his child's love of stories, and he would make them as gay and wonderful as possible. There we see St. George thundering along on his war-horse, with flying hair, clad in beautiful armour, the most perfect picture of a chivalrous knight. Then comes the dragon breathing out flames and smoke, the most awesome dragon that ever was seen; and there too is the picture of St. Tryphonius taming the terrible basilisk. The little boy-saint has folded his hands together, and looks upward in prayer, paying little heed to the evil glare of the basilisk, who prances at his feet. A crowd of gaily dressed courtiers stand whispering and watching behind the marble steps, and here again in the background we have the canals and bridges of Venice, the marble palaces and gay carpets hung from out the windows. Everything is of the very best of its kind, and painted with the greatest care, even to the design of the inlaid work on the marble steps.

As we pass from picture to picture, we wish we had known this Carpaccio, for he must have been a splendid teller of stories; and how he would have made us shiver with his dragons and his basilisks, and laugh over the antics of his little boys and girls, his scarlet parrots and green lizards.

But although we cannot hear him tell his stories, he still speaks through those wonderful old pictures which you will some day see when you visit the fairyland of Italy, and pay your court to Venice, Queen of the Sea.

Michael Angelo Buonarotti

A Boy Who Spent Three Years in a Palace

1475 – 1564 A.D.

When Michael Angelo was a little boy he thought more about drawing than of any other thing in all the world. His father sent him to school but Michael Angelo did not like books and would not study hard. He drew pictures on his books, instead. "I want to learn to draw," he would say to his father.

His father was angry at this. "I do not want you to be an artist, my son," he said. "Artists cannot earn much money and I do not want you to become one."

Poor little Michael Angelo did not want much money. He only wanted to learn to draw well, and he could not get the idea out of his head.

"I would rather do this than any other thing," he told his father.

Michael Angelo's best friend knew a great artist. Often the great artist would let the two boys watch him draw. This made Michael Angelo more eager than ever.

One day the artist went to Michael Angelo's father. "I will pay you for the boy's work if you will let him study with me," he said.

The father was willing to do this, and Michael Angelo studied with the artist for three years.

At that time there lived a prince who loved beautiful statues. He liked them so well he sent all over the world to get the very best there were. This prince was a kind man. He thought it would be well if others could enjoy his fine statues.

He said to the drawing teachers of the city in which he lived, "Choose your two best pupils. Send them to study my fine statues. I will get a teacher to help them."

All the drawing pupils in the city of Florence wanted to see the prince's statues. But only two could be chosen from each class.

One teacher had two bright pupils. They were great friends and both could draw well. It was not hard for this teacher to make his choice. Michael Angelo and his friend were the lucky ones.

You may be sure there were some happy boys in Florence, that day. And Michael Angelo was the happiest of them all. He was always glad to see beautiful things and to learn about them.

While visiting the kind prince, Michael Angelo first spent his time in drawing. Then one day he saw a young man modeling in clay. Michael Angelo thought that he would like this work even better than drawing, and it was not long before he was working in clay, also.

One day, Michael Angelo was making a faun's head. The prince came along and saw him at work. "That is a fine head," the prince said. "But you have made one mistake. The faun should have one tooth missing."

Michael Angelo did not say much. When the prince came around a second time the faun had one tooth less than it had had before. Michael Angelo had changed the head to make it just as it should be.

The prince was much pleased. "My boy," he said. "I see that you are willing to learn. You may come and live with me in my palace. I will get you a teacher and you shall study with my three sons."

Again Michael Angelo was a happy boy, and for three years he worked in the palace, with princes for friends. He spent most of his time carving in marble, now, and his work was becoming more and more beautiful. Indeed, many people

said, "Some day Michael Angelo will be a great sculptor."

After Michael Angelo had lived at the palace for three years, the kind prince died. Michael Angelo had lost a friend but he had not lost his love for the work. He kept on and on, until he became one of the greatest sculptors that has ever lived.

The people of Florence, Italy, had a huge block of marble. One man had tried to carve a giant out of it, but had failed. The people asked Michael Angelo to do something with it.

"I will see what I can do," Michael Angelo promised them. Then he carved and carved, for eighteen months. When he had finished, you could see that a wonderful sculptor had done the work. The huge block was changed into a young man with a sling-shot thrown over his shoulder. He was going forth to fight a giant. It was David, the shepherd boy. Forty men worked four days to move it, and it is a wonder that it did not take longer. It weighed eighteen thousand pounds, or just nine tons!

Someone said, "What a beautiful piece of sculpture it is! Let us put it at the gate of our city. It will help to keep watch over our people."

This is what the people of Florence did, and for many years David the shepherd boy looked quietly upon all who entered the gates of the city.

At another time Michael Angelo carved the statue of Moses. This statue is in Rome. It looks so real it almost seems to speak, as you stand before it.

Michael Angelo carved many more statues also. One is called The Thinker, and is in Florence, Italy. Another is called Day and Night, and still another Twilight and Dawning.

Michael Angelo did not spend all of his time as a sculptor. Once in a while he stopped to paint a few beautiful pictures.

In Rome, there is a large church named St. Peter. This church has many parts, one of which is called The Sistine

Chapel. The ceiling of this chapel is covered with many pictures. Each picture tells some story about the Bible.

If you have ever watched anyone paint the ceiling in your home, you know how hard it is. Painting walls is a much easier task. Only a very great artist could make the pictures look so real and so beautiful.

If you are ever in Rome or Florence, try to see the wonderful work of Michael Angelo.

Michael Angelo Buonarotti

There is a story in verse, telling how a child one sunny day wandered on a hill-side up to a little wood, which was so dense that even the sheep, which cropped the daisies on the hill, venturing in, left their white wool upon the brambles, marking the narrow paths they trod. In the wood, squirrels cracked their nuts, and birds hopped from branch to branch, and sang and built their nests and laid their eggs with no fear of a disturbing passerby. From the hill-side, far as the eye could reach, rose mountains and hill-tops shining in the sunlight, and the breeze bore sweet scents from the flowers over which it blew.

But children love to venture on new ways. It was straight walking on the hill-side, however lovely it might be, and this little one left the open path, and forced her way through the brambles, creeping deep into the wood, pressing aside branches, and losing sight even of the sky in the shelter of the trees. Suddenly the sheep-track ended in an open space, where the sunlight streamed down on moss and blue bells, and the stately trees round which the ivy and wild roses climbed, formed a bower so lovely that the child stood still, filled with wonder and delight.

Resting there, she listened to the songs of blackbirds, linnets, and nightingales, and watched the shadows of the leaves upon the soft moss at her feet; and when she left the wood for the open hill-side, she thought how each day she would wander there while the summer lasted, and rest in this bower that she had found. This was the child's hope that sunny day; but from some cause, perhaps because she took the wrong turning

in the wood, she never found her bower again.

Perhaps the story of the Lost Bower is all a fancy, and it may be such a child never lived. But still the meaning of the story is true, and applies to every child, to boys and girls alike.

To all of us, in youth, come bright visions and happy dreams of some future we will realize: not of a bower in which we will rest, but of some good deeds that we will do, or great worthiness we will reach. To some of us may come the hope of serving, in future years, our country and our fellow-men; to others, of becoming wise and learned, or of lessening the sin and misery in the world, or of becoming pure and good like the saints of olden days. Sometimes in the business, care, and pleasures of life which come upon us afterwards, we lose these dreams of childhood; and in old age, look back with sorrow and wonder to the visions we had when we were young, and grieve for the contrasts we have become. These dreams of future usefulness and worth are really thoughts sent by God. It is for us to keep and cherish them, and we shall find they never deceive.

The great and noble men and women of the world have listened to these whispers and obeyed them. It is good to read their stories, and see how the visions they had in childhood have been realized by them in later life.

Far away from England, in Italy, in a beautiful plain, through which the river Arno flows, lies the city of Florence. It is an ancient city, with rambling, narrow streets; grand domes and spires, and wonderful buildings, centuries old, surrounded by solid, broad stone walls. From them a wide view may be obtained of the windings of the river-banks, and the inhabitants of Florence may watch the shadows chase each other across the plain, and listen to the music borne to them on the wind from the bell-towers of their beautiful city. Hills covered with cypress, vines, and orange trees rise up behind the town; and in the distance, mountain-summits shut in the view, while far in the west the ridges of Carrara rise against

the sky, reminding the people of Florence where the great quarries lie from which the marble comes of which their towers and palaces are built.

Four centuries ago, on March 6, 1474, Michael Angelo Buonarotti, one of the men who made Florence famous, and whose story you are going to read, was born in the fortress of Caprese, of which his father was governor for that year. The family was of noble descent, and of this little baby it was said that, apart from his high birth, he would make a name for himself, and be celebrated for his deeds in the world.

In these days of which we are reading, little was known of astronomy. The laws guiding the regular movements of the planets were undiscovered; and wondering men used to gaze upon them, and fancy they could read in their journeyings and their approaches to each other, prophecies of the future destiny of human beings. These star-gazers were called astrologers. To them the moon and stars spoke little of the glory and wisdom of God; and the earthly schemes and promises they thought they gained from them, seem very strange to us in these modern times.

So it was that when Michael Angelo was born, two of the planets, Venus and Mars, seemed to the astrologers to foretell the boy's great career; and his name, meaning Michael the Angel, was given to him, perhaps in the hope that he would really prove to be the wondrous celestial being they foretold.

In a year's time, the father's term of office as governor of the castle expired; and Lorenzo Buonarotti went back with his family to the pretty villa which was their home, about three miles from Florence. Built all round this villa was an open gallery with which the rooms communicated; and from this gallery one looked down upon vineyards, where the peasants in their picturesque dresses worked to train the young vine-shoots, or pick the ripened grapes.

It was a custom in Italy to find a nurse, or foster-mother as she was called, who should take care of the early years of a

young child born among the higher ranks, and bring it up amid the wholesome country influences in which her own poorer children were reared. The hills round this pretty villa were rich in quarries, and the country people lived by hewing the stone which was afterwards to be used for statue and building purposes. A poor stone-mason's wife took charge of Michael Angelo, and he gained strength and health by the breezes from the hills, as he played among the rocks in the constant open-air life which he enjoyed with the hardy children of the quarrymen.

Often in later life, Michael Angelo used smilingly to say that his love for sculpture, and his skill in carving marble, came to him in his earliest years with the love he bore his foster-mother and the scenes of babyhood. Great truths are sometimes spoken in jest; and perhaps this man, wise in the experience of life as well as in art, had a deeper meaning in his speech, and suggested the great truth, that the little ones around us are always drinking in with their baby-life daily lessons and tendencies of future character from our ways, of which we sometimes little think. Those who study the subject of the growth and unfolding of human life, tell us that long before speech is gained by a child, character is growing, and the observing faculties are awake. It was well for the stone-mason's home if the little angel Michael gained there the first love of art with which he made the world so rich; and well for all our homes, if we remember the little angels in our midst, and give them only true and good examples which shall bear fruit in later years.

Michael Angelo's father was not a rich man, and he had many sons. He placed some with silk weavers, and others with woollen-weavers, to learn their trades and earn livings for themselves. But as Michael grew up, his father, bearing in mind the prophecies of the astrologers, sent him to the Grammar School in Florence, hoping that he would be the learned man of the family, and grow rich and renowned by the labour

of his brain instead of his hands. Michael Angelo did grow learned, but not in the manner in which his father hoped.

Very early came to him the visions and the heavenly whispers about which we have spoken. These whispers did not lead him to the Grammar School. God gives us different characters and different aims in life, and our usefulness and worth depend upon our obeying these different calls. To some of us He gives strength of limb and health of body, and such may serve him by the hard work they do; by the bricks they make or the roads they form, the houses they build and the comforts they give, and services they do to their fellow-beings who are employed in other ways. To others of us He gives skill or wealth, and they may serve Him then by their inventions and discoveries, and by providing means to bring these into use. To others He gives knowledge, and they may serve Him by teaching their fellow-men what they have learned, and making them wiser and better. To others, again, He gives talents and genius and a love of beauty, and such may serve Him by showing that this life is not only for hard work and ceaseless toil and money-getting: that there is a love of beauty in every soul which unites it to God and heavenly things; and that this beauty which is so enjoyable in music and paintings, is to make our earthly life better and purer, and more like the heavenly life to which we tend.

This was the lesson Michael Angelo was to teach the world. He was to give fresh courage to the many artists who were striving after beauty; to show them where they failed in their best attempts, and to teach them they must follow art for the love of God and for the love of beauty, and not for the hope of fame or for the sake of wealth which they might gain.

Of course, these grand hopes did not fill Michael Angelo's heart when he was a young boy. Only the dawnings of them visited him then; the full daylight would come if he faithfully followed each little glimmer of light which he received. So it was that the school-life could not satisfy him, and all his

vacant hours were filled with attempts to draw. On holidays and summer evenings the little fellow used to be found with pencil and paper, or with soft clay, copying the objects round about him.

'Is this the right occupation for one of noble birth?' his friends used to ask each other angrily; and the boy received many a scolding from those who feared this childish love of art would increase with his growth, and might even become the employment of his life. They did not think of an artist as of one whose work made earth happier and better and more beautiful. In their view, such occupation was lowering and unworthy of the boy of whom great things had been foretold. For a time they forbade him ever to use a pencil; but observing that his spirits drooped, and that holidays ceased to have a charm for him, they saw the folly of this command; and while he still continued to work at the Grammar School, his friends allowed him to spend his spare hours as he chose. They could only hope he would tire of his present fancy.

Now it happened that Michael Angelo had a companion in Florence, three years younger than himself, named Francesco, or as we should say, Francis Granacci. He too loved drawing more than any other employment, and his friends, discovering this, thought it the wisest course to allow him to devote his life to the study of art, that he might have a chance to do some one thing well.

Francesco, so happy himself, felt very sorry for Michael, when he saw him drawing at odd moments by himself, with no help and no sympathy, persevering day after day, and making fresh attempts, unconquered by many failures. He longed to help him by every means in his power, and to give him some of the opportunities which came in his own way. So he lent him colours and pencils and copies to draw from, and took him to the churches and public buildings in Florence, where beautiful pictures and statues were to be seen. Often the two young boys might have been observed gazing together at some

sculptured saint or wonderful picture, and pointing out in whispered tones the beauties which it seemed strange such little ones could see.

One day Francesco brought for Michael Angelo to copy, a strange old engraving that had been lately sent to Florence. It was called the 'Temptations of St Anthony,' and the artist had represented the old monk as surrounded by strange monsters and demons, as if the evil thoughts and desires which visited him sometimes had really taken horrible outward shape. Some of these figures had scales like the scales of fish; and to fit himself for the task of copying them correctly, Michael Angelo made many journeys to the fish-market in Florence, and sat there in the noise and bustle, drawing with great pains and care the scales and eyes of fish as they lay in baskets near him. Before he was satisfied, he made two copies of this strange picture.

Sometimes we are apt to think that great men owe their skill and fame to genius and inspiration only, and we do not bear in mind the many hours of toil, and the untiring perseverance, which have helped to make them what they are. A story is told that, when Michael Angelo had become a famous sculptor, he remarked to a friend who wondered at the length of time he took in finishing a statue: 'Recollect that trifles make perfection, and that perfection is no trifle.'

It was this feeling that made him so persevering and painstaking when a boy. Remembering this, you will be less surprised to hear a story that is told of one of his drawings while he was still a boy. Francesco brought him one day an old picture, discoloured with age, which his master had lent him. Michael copied it exactly, and to make his copy similar in colour, he smoked it. Francesco took the two drawings to his master; and the laughter of a companion in the secret only told the master of the joke which had been played.

Francesco's master was known in Florence as Domenicho Ghirlandajo. This was not his real surname. It means 'a

garland,' and was given to him because, in his pictures, he was apt to place garlands round his children's heads. Ghirlandajo was a young man of thirty years of age, but already celebrated; and he and his brother David were known as clever teachers; and their studio was filled with students who came to Florence to learn all that they could teach them.

'Perhaps,' thought Francesco one day, 'Ghirlandajo, who is so anxious for the success of his pupils, would help Michael Angelo. He shall see him and learn how clever he is, and how he loves the art which Ghirlandajo loves.' So he brought Michael Angelo to his master, and by some means, perhaps from the advice of Ghirlandajo, Michael Angelo's father learned the real talent of the boy, gave up the hope that he would be a learned man, and apprenticed him for three years to these brother artists. It was arranged that Michael Angelo should 'live with them to learn the theory and practice of painting, and to fulfil their just commands.'

One peculiar part of this agreement was, that, although customary for the pupil to pay the master a fee, in this case the boy was to receive payment: a proof that his talents were considered to be far above the average. A memorandum made by his father has been preserved, and is as follows: 'This day, April 16th, Michael Angelo received two golden florins in gold.' At this time Michael was fourteen years of age.

You can fancy that it was a pleasure to the boy to take home his first earnings, as his brothers had all done; to be able to give promise that his profession which he had entered and loved so much, would not be so totally without pecuniary rewards as his friends had foretold; but still more you can fancy the joy and feeling that he had entered on the kind of life for which he was fitted.

Many beautiful pictures by Ghirlandajo are to be seen in Florence. One church, which he dearly loved, is full of them. Some of his pupils, and Michael Angelo among the rest, were employed in this church copying the designs which their

master gave them to ornament its walls. Two or three times Michael Angelo astonished Ghirlandajo and his fellow-students by the wonderful drawings which he made. One day Ghirlandajo left the church for a time, and on his return was amazed to find a clever drawing which Michael Angelo had made of the artists working in the church, and the scaffoldings, and desks, and pictures, and he exclaimed aloud: 'This youth already knows more of art than I do myself!'

This was the kind of boyhood which the great painter Michael Angelo spent. His statues and pictures are the wonder of the world, and beautify the churches where the Italian people pray. His poems, too, have brought great and good thoughts to many thirsty souls. The world is far richer for the days he spent on earth: for, besides these works which he left behind him, the memory of a noble life abides; the memory of one who loved beauty for the sake of God and for its own sake, and not for the sake of fame and praise of men.

The boyhood of such a man must have been earnest and persevering. If there were no records of it, we should be sure of this; and it is no surprise to read of the hard work and diligent study given to trifles and details which must always be the foundation of success in any undertaking.

We can fancy this boy giving all his time, without rest or holidays, to his work. On bright sunny days, when other children played in the fields and vineyards round Florence, or holiday-makers feasted their eyes on the distant mountains, he sat in the hot, close studio, or wended his way to the noisy market to study the forms of animals, or painted in the church at Florence till he was ready to sleep from weariness.

Probably, however, there were few happier boys in Florence than Michael Angelo. Work brings happiness with it; and it is so ordained that our idle hours bring with them discontent. Michael Angelo was making the most of the powers and time that God had given him. His family, whom he dearly loved, had consented to this kind of life for him, and delighted

in his success. The friendship and sympathy of his dear friend Francesco Granacci was a constant pleasure to him. The two boys used to talk of the art they loved, and to encourage each other in thinking of the great hopes and work which lay waiting for them in the future. Michael Angelo owed very much to this boy. Granacci's name is little known now, and he painted few pictures. Perhaps his greatest and best work was in helping Michael Angelo to become an artist; in sympathizing with him, sending him copies, showing him grand pictures, and sharing with him the opportunities which he himself enjoyed.

How much better and happier the world would be, if, like these Florentine, friends, companions tried to help and raise each other! There would be less quarrelling among boys, and drinking and evil-doing of all sorts among men. Girls and women, too, would make brighter and happier homes; and there would be more honesty in business, better work in factories, less idleness at school, and more earnestness in the lives of grown-up people. Surely we should bring this good time nearer, if we bore in mind that right example and a love of beauty and truth do not act only on ourselves, but influence all around us; and that by our words and deeds we either may help to raise the world a little nearer God, or help to sink it deeper into sin.

So far, Michael Angelo had painted pictures; but he had not begun to carve marble into the wonderful statues which he afterwards formed. This new work was to come to him; but before you can learn how he was led to it, it will be needful to know a little of the history of Florence, and of the great Duke her governor, who was the means of giving Michael Angelo future help in his studio.

Many years before the time about which we are reading, the city had been disturbed by violent quarrels between her nobles and her common people, the Guelfs and Ghibellines, as they were called. Fierce battles were frequent, and in the

open day bands of proud nobles meeting the citizens whom their haughty, overbearing manner enraged, quarrels ensued, and it was said that the streets flowed with blood. At length the people threw off the dominion of the nobles, gained the government of the city, and for a long time any noble who would have any share or interest in the affairs of the State was obliged to resign his claim to rank, and enroll his name in the plebeian order.

Now among those nobles who obeyed this command were the Medici, an ancient family in Florence, who, however, loved power more than they loved their ancient name and descent. This family had acquired great wealth, which became useful to the poorer citizens of Florence to help them in their commerce and industrial undertakings. By degrees, the influence of their wealth and of their character made itself more felt; and so it happened that very gradually the Medici gained power in Florence, and Cosmo de Medici, the head of the family, became leader of the people and chief of the Republic of Florence.

He used his great wealth to found libraries, and to build palaces and beautify the city. His son, and afterwards his grandson, Lorenzo de Medici, succeeded him; and the latter gained the name of the Magnificent, because of the splendour with which he continued, like his grandfather, to adorn Florence, and to display the wealth and treasures of all kinds which he possessed.

Lorenzo had some difficulties to contend against. He had become almost a king over the liberty-loving people of Florence, and once or twice they rebelled against his rule, and, aided by envious foreign powers, even sought his death.

At the time when Michael Angelo was a boy in Florence, the power of Lorenzo the Magnificent was at its height. Lorenzo loved art. He spent his life in making Florence beautiful, and his money in encouraging artists and learned men; but for all this, Florence was not wholly blessed by him. You

must picture the Florentines at this time, in the midst of all the beauty around them, as a people given up to amusement and revelry, with little thought of God, or of the real earnestness and duty of life. Lorenzo constantly planned fresh schemes for their amusement and delight; festivals and shows to keep the people in good humour; and processions, in which he himself took part. At such times, he and his Court traversed the city through the night with torch-bearers and musicians, and awakened the quiet old streets with evil songs; while the excited people, pressing up from all quarters, followed in the ranks, and their voices swelled the sound which Florence echoed till the morning broke.

This was a sad state for any people to be in; and yet Florence was full of churches and convents and priests. Where was the religion of which these surely were the signs? Florence was only like many another town in that fifteenth century. The Roman Catholic Church had fallen away from its early love of God. Long services were held, chants and hymns were sung, offerings made and pilgrimages enforced in praise of God; but pope and priests and people had forgotten that we serve Him best when we try to do His will; and it was thought a wicked life could be atoned for by paying money to increase the riches of the Church.

You may have heard of the Reformers, such as Wickliff and John Huss, who by this time, in England and Germany, had spoken so bravely against the wickedness of the Church. Luther, the chief reformer, was yet to come, and the great reform which he was to bring into the Church was still to be set on foot. Meanwhile the evil grew and spread; and, to return to Florence, you will not wonder to hear that in that city the pope and priests had greatly lost their power. People who do not try to do the will of God, soon lose the wish to love and worship Him. A society of men gained great influence in Florence, who found their highest thoughts and greatest help in the writings of the old Greek philosophers and

ancient wise men who lived long before the birth of Christ. Now there are many noble ideas to be gained from these writings; but it is sad that men should ever be quite satisfied with them, instead of seeking the knowledge of God and far higher faith which Jesus Christ came to teach.

Artists in Florence felt the influence of the 'Platonists,' as these men were called; and their thoughts were turned towards picturing only the legends and myths of ancient Greece and Rome; while they ceased to care to remind the world by their paintings of the stories of Christ and His apostles, and of the noble lives of Christian heroes, and the faces and forms of the martyrs and saints of old.

If Lorenzo had been a true and right leader for his people, Florence would have been a nobler city than it was; but we must be fair to his memory, and remember that, though the liberty of a free, religious people is really the greatest help and encouragement to art, yet the wealth and support of a generous man is of great avail, and Michael Angelo and many another youth at this time owed much to the aid Lorenzo gave.

One day a message came from Lorenzo into Ghirlandajo's quiet studio. For months past the people of Florence had watched the making of a sunny garden adorned with sculpture and courts full of precious casts and ancient statues, and now the duke told its use. He wished, so said the message, to encourage sculpture in Florence as well as painting; and if Ghirlandajo had any pupils who wished for this kind of study, and who would be likely to do honour to Florence, he might send them to copy the art-treasures in the garden he had made.

The two friends Michael Angelo and Francesco Granacci were chosen, and daily they studied together in the garden, and became friendly also with another boy named Torrignano, whom they found at work upon some figures in red clay.

It was a great and happy day for Michael Angelo when he

finished his first study in the garden. He had never before tried to carve marble or to use a sculptor's tools, and had chosen the head of a faun; and with the care and perseverance he always showed, he had copied it exactly, with the exception of the mouth, which he cleverly opened wider, to make the face look as if it were full of merriment. Lorenzo, in his morning walk, passed by, and stopped, as he often did, to give a glance of encouragement to the boy who never idled, and who seemed so grateful for a passing word. Lorenzo was amazed at the talent which Michael showed in this copy; but said in joke, 'You should have remembered that old folks never keep all their teeth, some are always wanting,' and pointed at the perfect teeth which the open mouth of the faun displayed. Michael Angelo, full of love and respect for one to whom he owed so much, thought him in earnest; and by the time Lorenzo returned along the walk, had spoiled the fair row of teeth, broken one out, and filled the gum up as if old age had caused it to fall out

History only tells us that from this time Lorenzo determined that he would help Michael Angelo by every means in his power. I think we can guess what caused him to form this resolution. It was not only because the faun's head which the boy had carved was perfect; it was because he had shown something better than genius; he had shown that he would not be satisfied with anything less than perfection; that, however good his work might be, if it had a single flaw, he must mend it; and he had shown also, that he was willing and anxious to be helped. Such a spirit as this gives the greatest promise for any human being; for the work of younger ones at school, and of older ones in life, and for the growing strength of all in reaching up to the better life of God, and to the help and spirit He alone can give.

Lorenzo sent for the father of Michael Angelo, and asked him to entrust his son to him to be brought up as one of his own family, to sit at his table, and to enjoy the many

opportunities of studying art which a life in the palace could give him. 'And for yourself,' he asked the old man, 'what can I do for you? Look round you in Florence, and if any wish occurs to you, you may command me to the greatest extent of my power.'

Ludovico Buonarotti answered that he had hitherto always lived on his own slender income, using and increasing gradually the possessions left him by his ancestors. But he had heard lately of a vacant office in the Custom House of Florence, and if it were thought well, he should be glad to be chosen to fill the place.

Lorenzo laughed: 'You are destined to be a poor man,' he said. 'I thought you would have asked for something better worth your acceptance; but until something better presents itself, it is at your service.' We are told that Michael Angelo had a violet mantle given to him, a seat at Lorenzo's table among his sons, and a room in the palace.

But the happy days in the garden with Granacci were not yet ended. Still Michael Angelo studied there, always early at his work in the morning, and always careful of the tools and statues lent to him. On account of his trustworthiness, he was at last chosen guardian of the treasures which this garden held; the keys were given to him, and every night and morning he locked and unlocked it for the artists, and lent out to them the casts and statues which they wished to copy.

Torrignano, the boy whom Michael Angelo and Francesco had found there on their first arrival, was still among the students who frequented the garden, and had become intimate with the two friends, as people are apt to become intimate who meet each other, and are engaged in the same interests every day. It is sad to tell that Torrignano, far from rejoicing in the talent and industry of Michael Angelo, grew jealous of it, and of the favour which Lorenzo showed him; and a terrible consequence came of his yielding to those wicked feelings.

It is always better, if possible, to forget the weaknesses and faults of any human being. Our earthly life is but a tiny part of the immortality before us; and the sins which cling about us here will be at last outgrown and laid aside in the eternal life which waits us all. But in this case, the jealousy of Torrignano affected Michael Angelo very closely, and the story of his life would be incomplete if it were left untold. It must often have grieved Michael to see that his success only caused pain to his companion; and often Torrignano's angry looks and words must have marred his delight, but one day, Torrignano's passion gained the mastery, and springing at Michael Angelo, he struck him so violently in the face that his nose was crushed and broken, and he bore the mark of the blow for life. Michael was carried to the palace, and by order of Lorenzo, Torrignano was banished from Florence. This was a dreadful ending to the intercourse of the boys in that sunny, peaceful garden. Years afterwards, during his exile in a foreign land, Torrignano told the story of this blow, and of the change a moment's passion had wrought in his whole life. But if the general spirit of his life had been right and good, that passionate moment never would have come; and because the general spirit of his life was wrong, other passionate moments followed that one, and his history is the history of a wrong and wasted life. He spent some years in England, and while there he carved a statue of our King, Henry VII, which is still in Westminster Abbey. His most beautiful work, however, was a statue of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus. Meeting with some disappointment about its sale, in a fit of ungovemed rage he shattered it to pieces with the mallet in his hand; and his passionate life was ended shortly after by a terrible and violent death.

This was the end of Torrignano. As regards Michael Angelo, the beauty of his face was gone; but I think in his search after a truer and more enduring beauty, he forgot to mourn for that; and I think that his friends cared little also,

knowing and loving the beauty of his soul.

No one can become really and truly what God means him to become, unless his whole being is cultivated. Michael Angelo was to be more than a sculptor, and his life in Lorenzo's palace educated the other parts of his nature. There he met with poets and learned men, and made friends who influenced him and led him to the love of books as well as of statues and paintings. One of these friends was Politian, a learned man who had been helped to his learning by Lorenzo, and now taught Lorenzo's sons. He and Lorenzo were dear companions, and spent much time together; and Politian took charge of the precious gems and papers of which the palace libraries were full.

In addition to Politian, Michael Angelo had another friend, a prince named Pico, who had fled from Rome and the pope's anger on account of his religious views, and taken refuge in Florence. Lorenzo built for him a villa on the slopes of the hill Fiesole, and from here he looked down upon forests and upon the shining roofs and domes of Florence, and studied the Bible, and thought out his holy thoughts in peace. Here Politian and Michael Angelo used to meet and read and talk with Pico. From this quiet villa the young artist used to love to gaze upon the changing beauties of the hills, and on the glorious sunsets, which bathed the distant plain in golden light. At such times, their talk often turned upon a man who even more than Politian or Pico was to influence Michael Angelo, and who was then beginning to cause great excitement among the people of Florence.

Seven years before this time, when Michael Angelo was still a little boy of nine years old, learning at the Grammar School, a monk had preached two or three times in one of the churches of Florence. Each time he had gone back to his convent in a neighbouring city disheartened, with the knowledge that his stammering words had made little impression on his hearers. Prince Pico after those visits chanced to hear him

again, however; but this time it was with no hesitating speech, but with bold earnestness, that the monk warned the people who listened to him of the wickedness in which they were living. The prince returned home, and begged Lorenzo, who had brought so many famous men to Florence, to invite this wonderful preacher there also. Glad to oblige Pico and to increase the fame of his city, Lorenzo agreed, and in 1490 Savonarola entered the great Convent of St. Mark in Florence. There he was appointed teacher to the novices, as youths were called when they first entered the convent. But the same earnest spirit and longing to do God's work which had changed him, once so timid, into a bold preacher, made itself felt wherever he was placed, and the older monks flocked with the novices to listen to his words. Before long, those outside the convent begged to be taught by him, and pressed up to the convent walls, while Savonarola, from amid roses in the convent garden, uttered new warnings of the sinful ways of the Court and people of Florence.

'Can this be the same man,' they cried, 'who stuttered here before?' He was soon made Prior of St. Mark's Convent, and his influence increased every day both there and in the city. No convent wall could be his pulpit now; even the cathedral could not hold his hearers. They climbed up to the windows and held on to the pillars; wherever a man could cling, there the people pressed. Tradesmen closed their shops till his preaching hour was over; and peasants from far villages left their quarries and vineyards to hear the great monk preach. Summer and winter, in heat and snow, the front of St. Mark was thronged, and a change came gradually over the life and morals of the people to whom he preached.

This was the great desire of Savonarola's heart. Years before, shocked by the wickedness of the world, he had entered the convent walls expecting to find purity and goodness among the monks. But, to his grief, he found that the same sin from which he fled had entered there, and he determined

to spend his life in preaching to sinful men, and in trying to lead them right instead of seeking a refuge for himself. He was not content, however, with seeing great crowds thronging to hear his words; with hearing their sobs and sighs, and observing earnest, tearful faces upraised to his own. He knew this excitement would pass away. The question with him was: Would their penitence last? Did his hearers lead better lives at home? Was there less drunkenness and quarrelling, and were there fewer bad words spoken in Florence? Were they reformed in deed as well as in word?

Savonarola taught the monks of St. Mark; but he remembered also the ignorant little children in the streets of Florence. He gathered them into schools and had them taught, and wrote simple hymns for them, which they sang to well-known tunes. All this work was done by Savonarola for the love of God. He had not even a passing thought as to the praise or blame of men. When he spoke, as he often did, against the vices of the Court of Florence, and Lorenzo sent messengers to beg him to be more careful, and to remember that he might endanger the peace of the city, Savonarola had no fear of the displeasure of the great man who had made him Prior of St. Mark. He answered: 'Tell Lorenzo that he is a Florentine, and the head of the Republic, whereas I am only a stranger and a poor monk; but entreat him in my name to repent of his errors, for calamities from on high impend over him and his family.'

Michael Angelo and Granacci used to mingle with the crowds that listened to Savonarola; and the preacher had something to say to the young artists who were so numerous in Florence. He told them that a religious spirit, must be brought into every work in life, that the art which they loved and lived for might be full of God's spirit, and followed for His sake. He told them that the Christian faith was far more beautiful than any fables of Greek or Roman gods, and that the inspiration and power to become a really great artist must

come from God alone. Probably it was owing in great measure to Savonarola's teachings that Michael Angelo's saints and holy pictures were so grand and beautiful, and that people gave him the name of the 'Divine Master,' seeing so plainly that he gained his help from God.

Now you have heard of Michael Angelo's chief friends while he was still a young man living in Lorenzo's palace. It was a rich and happy life for him, thus studying art and reading the writings of great men, talking with the learned people who frequented the Court of Florence, and often listening to the earnest religious words of such a teacher as Savonarola.

But one day, a sad day indeed to the grateful Michael, who deeply loved the great man who had been so generous to him, this happy life came suddenly to an end. Lorenzo died of fever in his country villa, and Michael Angelo returned to his father's house in the deepest grief.

Lorenzo's son, Piero, succeeded him in the government of Florence, and very soon sent for Michael Angelo to take his old place in the palace. Gratitude to Lorenzo caused him to obey the summons. He felt he must fulfil, as far as he could, the wishes of the son of one who had been so great a benefactor to him. But he could never again find his old place or home in the palace.

Piero was a very inferior man to his father, notwithstanding all the care and training of Politian. He only cared for beauty and art as they served his pleasure and amusement, not for any higher reason; and you will see the proof of this in the fact that one of his first commands to Michael Angelo was that he should spend his time and genius in making a statue of snow in the palace court-yard for the amusement of himself and his friends. He used to boast that his palace contained two wonderful men—one, Michael Angelo the sculptor; the other, a Spanish athlete who was so swift a runner, that a fleet horse could not overtake him.

I think you will not be surprised to hear that, under this

man, the Court of Florence became more wicked and impure, and Savonarola's warnings more earnest and indignant. At length, going on from bad to worse, to serve his own selfish ends, Piero promised to deliver up the city of Florence to the French King, Charles VIII, who had put forth a claim to inherit Italy. History tells us that the Italian cities, filled with rich and indolent inhabitants, fell an easy prey to the French invaders, who, entering the different towns, passed quickly on through the land; and, as quickly satisfied with their easy conquest, led their army back to France. It was not so easily ended for Piero, however. He found himself looked upon as a traitor, and was forced to flee for his life from Florence.

Michael Angelo, as one of Piero's household, was obliged to save himself by flight; and the next thing we hear of him is as a resident in the household of Aldivrandi, one of the governors of Bologna, a city to the north of Florence, and separated from it by the Apennine Mountains. In this new home, Michael Angelo was never idle. He carved statues, some of which were to adorn this city which had given him a refuge in his flight; and he spent many hours in reading to his friend Aldivrandi the grand Italian poems he had learned to love with Prince Pico and Politian.

More than a year passed thus, and Aldivrandi pressed him to spend the rest of his life with him in Bologna. But the love Michael Angelo bore for his old home, and his sympathy with Savonarola and the people among whom he was born, made him feel that he had a greater field of work waiting for him in Florence, and that he would waste his life if he spent it any longer in this quiet resting-place.

So he took leave of Aldivrandi, and once more crossed the Apennines and entered Florence. He found the city entirely under the influence of Savonarola; and the people excited by his sermons against the vices of the pope and priests, and by his demands for the reformation of the Church and the nation. We do not know much about the kind of life

Michael Angelo led in Florence in these restless days. We may be sure, however, that it was no quiet, peaceful time of intercourse with learned men, and of happy hours spent in Pico's house, while he watched the sun setting over the broad plain. He was far too full of sympathy with Savonarola and with the people, whom the monk was teaching to govern themselves, and to be fit for liberty, for any enjoyment in such a life as that. We know that he was not idle. He carved many beautiful statues; but we can only guess at the way in which he worked to help on Savonarola's plans.

Perhaps he may have addressed the crowds in the public market-place, or in the evening assemblies which Savonarola often called together. Or perhaps he may have kept his hopeful words for the quieter chance meetings with neighbours in the streets, or on the walls of Florence. Wherever they were spoken, words from so true and earnest a man must always have had much power. Still more, the unspoken influence of such an one as Michael Angelo, who was always striving after perfection and beauty, must have been felt by people who were beginning to learn from Savonarola that there was something better worth living for than self-indulgence, idleness, and sin.

When he had spent thus a year or two in Florence, Michael Angelo received a summons to Rome from Pope Julius II. The fame of his carving had spread from Florence, and the pope was anxious to have a grand monument carved by Michael Angelo for the adornment of his own tomb. It seems strange to us that a man should spend so much time and thought during his lifetime on the decoration of his burial-place. It was no unusual thing, however, in those days, and the carved figures of angels and holy men made beautiful the churches in which the tombs were placed. Michael Angelo was glad of this summons to Rome. It opened out to him greater chances of usefulness and progress in his art than he could have had in Florence. For this reason an artist always

gladly accepted any chance offered to him of studying the works of art which Rome contained.

But, although it brought him many benefits, this life in Rome brought difficulties and trials also, and he required all the patience he possessed to bear them. The pope did not always treat him justly or generously; and sometimes obliged him to waste precious time in doing work which others should have been hired to do for him. For instance, at one time, Michael Angelo was obliged to spend eight months in the marble quarries at Carrara, superintending the quarrying out of marble for his statues, just because the pope would not spend a little of his great wealth in paying some one else to overlook the labours of the quarrymen.

We who read his history can see how his early training must have helped to prepare him for meeting with such difficulties. He had learned lessons of patience when, as a boy, he worked at the Grammar School, and waited for the help to become an artist which at one time seemed so little likely to be sent to him. He learned patience, too, in his work at the fish-market, and in Ghirlandajo's studio, and Lorenzo's garden. But while still a young man, Michael Angelo had a great fault to fight against—that of a hasty and impetuous temper. Two or three times he gave up his work in Rome and left the city, angry at the thoughtless, unfair treatment which he received. But as he grew older, we see how he learned to bear with the annoyances in his way, and to remember that the pope meant well in the end, and to laugh off vexations that at first seemed so unbearable.

Sad news came to him from Florence in the year 1498. The brave, noble Savonarola had been burned in the city for which he had done so much; and his ashes had been thrown into the river Arno. His sermons against the sins of the Roman Catholic Church had roused great anger in the minds of certain powerful people in the Church, and with the permission of the pope's representatives in Florence, this

martyrdom had taken place.

On receiving the news, Michael Angelo returned to Florence for a time. This message Savonarola left for his friends greeted him on his arrival: 'Pray for me, and tell my friends not to be discouraged at my death; but to continue stedfast in my doctrine, and to live in peace.' Florence no longer seemed to him like the same city in which he had spent his boyhood. Of course the beautiful buildings remained; and the distant mountains and winding river and wide plain were as lovely as ever; but he sadly missed Savonarola and Lorenzo, and all the friends now dead or scattered with whom he had spent so many happy hours. There was only one thing to be done, and that Michael Angelo did—to try to be in his turn to younger people what his lost friends had been to him. It is well for all of us, as it was well for him, that in the ordering of Providence we may ever thus make fresh, warm, and happy human bonds, while our dear earthly ties are being raised to heaven.

Pupils were sent to study with Michael Angelo, as he had studied in his boyhood with Ghirlandajo. He did not only interest himself in their drawings and sculpture; but in their homes also and daily interests, and thus made them grateful and firm friends for life. One boy, Georgio Vasari, who afterwards wrote a life of Michael Angelo, remembered gratefully in after years, how, when obliged, as you will hear, again to leave Florence, Michael Angelo was not satisfied with having done all he could for his pupil until that time; but visited the new master under whom the boy was then to be placed, spoke kindly of him, and recommended him specially to his care. Sometimes he would give one of his own statues to a pupil, that he might sell it and gain help out of some difficulty with the money which he thus obtained. Although one woman, about whom you will soon hear, became in Rome his dearest friend, Michael Angelo found no loving wife with whom he could make a happy home. Perhaps on this account he rejoiced the more to hear of the homes which other people

formed, and often gave the prices which his statues gained to the young sisters of his pupils, as the marriage portion which their parents were too poor to provide.

While reading about Michael Angelo's pupils, you may as well hear the story of an event that occurred later in his life in connection with the pupils whom he taught in Rome. Two of them, sadly wicked and ungrateful, stole some of his designs; and the magistrates seizing them, returned the stolen property to the owner, and would have passed a severe sentence on the boys. Michael Angelo seeing they were penitent, and believing that poverty had tempted them to sin, begged for their pardon, and found them additional carving to do, which would give them regular employment and help them out of want.

There would be little use in telling you the names of all the statues and pictures which have made Michael Angelo famous, nor of the frequent journeys he made between Florence and Rome. It would not interest you either to hear of the many changes in the popes who governed the Church at that time. It is enough to know that eleven different popes reigned in Rome during Michael Angelo's lifetime.

The chief part of his later days he spent in Rome; but he always loved Florence, and was anxious to serve the Florentines in any way in his power. When in great need during those unsettled times, in which Italy was harassed by enemies both of her own people and of foreign lands, the Florentines went to tell him that the army of the Prince of Orange was approaching their walls, and to beg his help in planning barricades and defences. He gave up his work in Rome at once, and came to their help, using his skill and money too, in the protection of the beautiful spires and towers. He did not look for gratitude in return for his labour; but when some of those whom he had served even formed a plot to deliver him up to the invaders, he merely concealed himself for a few days in one of the bell towers he knew so well when a boy, and

returned to the occupations he had left in Rome.

You will like to hear something about Michael Angelo's life in Rome. He had an old servant named Urbino, whom he dearly loved, and who reverenced his master more than any other man on earth. Urbino took care of his house and nursed him in sickness; and Michael Angelo fearing lest, on his death, Urbino should be left among strangers, settled a sum of money on him which should keep him from any fear of want. Urbino often used to wish his master would take more rest and pleasure. It distressed the kind old man to see Michael Angelo rising in the night to work at some statue over which he had toiled without ceasing all the day, and to find him chiselling for hours at a time, caring for no meal but the very simplest one that could be prepared, and at night lying down in his clothes too wearied to take proper rest in bed.

Michael Angelo had more work waiting for him to do in Rome than he could get through, notwithstanding all his ceaseless diligence. He was constantly employed in making plans for the beautifying of the city, and one of his best known works, which took him many years to complete, was the painting of the ceiling in a chapel called the Sistine Chapel in Rome, which one of the popes requested him to undertake. It is said that when first this work was given to him, Michael Angelo begged to be excused, saying that sculpture, not painting, was the occupation to which he wished to devote himself, and he was then busy with some carvings to which he wished to give all his time and attention. The pope would hear of no refusal, however, and finding the work must be done, though his sorrow at giving up his sculpture for the time was so great that tears filled his eyes as he left the pope's presence, Michael Angelo set to work with all his heart, drew his plans, and had the scaffolding raised, and then spent months over the ceiling, which is now the wonder and delight of so many travelers to Rome. The only way in which the painting could be accomplished was in a most painful position, lying

on his back on the scaffolding. He was never daunted by difficulties, and thought little of the weariness this caused, or of the fact that his eyesight was so much injured by the work, that for months after he was unable to paint at all. One Christmas day his work was done, and all Rome flocked into the chapel to gaze upon the wonderful paintings, and talk of the Bible stories which the painted ceiling brought to their remembrance.

Michael Angelo had other interest in Rome besides his artist's work. Remembering Politian and Prince Pico, and the happy intercourse he had had with them, he sought out men in the city who wanted help to pursue their studies, and spent much of his wealth in enabling them to obtain the learning for which they longed. By some means, too, he became acquainted with a kind of wandering pedlar, who used to earn his living by travelling through country places, and selling pictures and little images to the peasants. This pedlar's name was Manighella; and you may be sure it seemed a great honour to him to be allowed to visit the famous sculptor Michael Angelo when he came to Rome to collect images in the intervals between journeys.

Michael Angelo used to listen with great interest to his stories of the peasants among whom he went as pedlar, and laughed til he cried sometimes at their odd sayings, and the kind of purchases they made. Occasionally he laid aside all employments to make carved crosses or little statues that would beautify the peasants' cottages, and bring in some money to the hard-working Manighella. During his life in Rome, too, Michael Angelo wrote many poems and sonnets. The following is a translation of a well-known hymn by him:—

'The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed,
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray;
My unassisted heart is barren clay,

That of its native self can nothing feel.
Of good and pious works Thou art the seed,
That quickens only where Thou sayest it may;
Unless Thou show to us Thine own true way,
No man can find it: Father! Thou must lead.
Do Thou then breathe those thoughts into my mind,
By which such virtue may in me be bred,
That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread;
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of Thee,
And sound Thy praises everlastingly.'

While he lived in Rome, Michael Angelo made the dearest friendship of his life with a good and learned woman named Vittoria Colonna. She was a widow lady who had passed through much trouble, and, like Michael Angelo, had no happy home ties. But, like him, she lived a loving, useful life, such as make loneliness impossible, and found work for herself in a convent not far from Rome, where she became as a second mother to many young girls who were training there, and who would carry with them into the homes they afterwards made, loving thoughts of the beautiful woman who lived in the quiet convent, happy in the love of God and in her work.

Vittoria Colonna was deeply interested, as Savanarola had been, in the reformation of the Roman Catholic Church; and perhaps that common interest may have formed the basis of the strong friendship which existed between herself and Michael Angelo. Whenever she came to Rome, these dear friends used to meet; and when she died, in the year 1547, in the palace of a relative in Rome, Michael Angelo was with her to the end.

In the year 1547, when over seventy years of age, he began his greatest work, the Cathedral of St. Peter in Rome. Travellers approaching the city watch eagerly for the first sight of

the grand dome rising above the other spires and towers of Rome. It was a matter of rejoicing to Michael Angelo to think that his last work on earth was a church, where, for centuries to come, prayers would rise up to God from so many millions of people. From this year, 1547, he gave up his time and thought to the work; but he refused all the money and rewards the pope would have given him as architect, saying that he would do it for the love of God alone. Once only he left Rome to spend a few days among the mountains, and found great enjoyment in his peaceful rest among them. He greatly needed this change; for perplexities and troubles of many kinds came to him. The interference of the pope and cardinals, and the complaints against his work by people who, sad to tell, were jealous of his power, were very hard to bear; but we no longer read of angry replies from him, nor of sudden departures from Rome, nor of quarrels with the pope. It is good to see how, as he gradually grew towards perfection as a sculptor, he also grew nobler as a man; and as old age advanced he became more loving and forgiving, and more anxious to live in peace with all men.

Another trouble came to him when his faithful old servant Urbino died. Michael Angelo nursed him through his illness, and never left him day and night; and his great grief for his loss may be seen in the following letter, which he wrote in reply to one of his old pupils in Florence, who wrote him on hearing of the event:—

'My dear Georgio—I can but ill write at this time, yet to reply to your letter I will try to say something. You know that Urbino is dead, and herein I have received a great mercy from God; but to my heavy grief and infinite loss. The mercy is thus: that whereas in his life he has kept me living, so in his death he has taught me to die, not only without regret, but with the desire to depart. I have had him twenty-six years; have ever found him singularly faithful; and now that I have made him rich, and hoped to have in him the staff and

support of my old age, he has disappeared from my sight; nor have I any other hope than that of rejoicing him in Paradise. But of this God has given me a foretaste in the most blessed death that he has died; his own departure did not grieve him, as did the leaving me in this treacherous earth with so many troubles. Truly is the best part of my being gone with him, nor is anything left me except an infinite sorrow. And herewith I bid you farewell.—M.A. Buonarotti'

Still working, between eighty and ninety years of age, with his eyesight failing and feebleness increasing, the lonely old man watched the great church which he had planned rising higher each month, and lived in the rich memories of the past, and the hopes of renewed youth and usefulness in the immortality to come. In the last winter of his life, he was observed one bitter day crossing the snow to study the ruins of the great Coliseum in Rome, still as anxious to learn as he had been when a young boy in Florence. Some one, surprised to see him, when so feeble, out alone on such a day, asked him whither he was going; and he made the reply that will be remembered as long as the memory of his name lasts—'I still go to school that I may continue to learn.'

His friends in Florence, knowing his loneliness and the vexations he endured in his work, wrote pressing letters begging him to return to them and spend the end of his life in peace. For all their arguments he sent loving messages and thanks; but told them it was in vain to ask him to leave this work, which he had undertaken for the love of God. To his nephew he wrote: 'I have not yet been able to succeed in advancing the building to that point which I desire, for the want of money and men; and being old, and not having any one else to whose care I could leave the undertaking, and as I serve for the love of God in whom is all my hope, I am not willing to abandon it.'

He was able to give another proof of the love he bore for the people of Florence. Just before his death, he sent a plan

for the building of a beautiful church for Florentines living in Rome. 'He was glad,' so he sent them word, 'to be occupied in his old age with things sacred, and such as were for the honour of God. It rejoiced him, too, to do something for his own people, to whom his heart was ever true.'

Finding that they could not move him from his work to find a home with them, his friends in Florence made arrangements that some one in Rome should look in upon the lonely old man each day, and make them aware in Florence how he prospered.

In the spring of the year, when he would be ninety years of age, his nephew, who was very dear to him, set off to Rome, determined to take care of Michael Angelo for the rest of his life himself. He found the old man dead, and learned how peaceful his end had been, and that he had died while still speaking to those about him of the sufferings of Christ, leaving his soul to God, his body to the earth, and his possessions to his nearest relatives. One strong wish Michael Angelo had expressed—that his remains might be removed to Florence, to rest among the scenes where so much of his life had been spent. The pope's will was that the great artist's tomb should be in St. Peter's Church. It seemed fitting to him that the burial-place of Michael Angelo should be in the midst of the beauty which he had done so much to create; and accordingly, splendid funeral rites were held in Rome. Then, lest the powerful will of the pope should prevent the fulfilment of Michael Angelo's desire and the longing of his friends in Florence, a strange event took place. The lifeless body was wrapped up in bales of cloth like merchandise on its removal to another town, and secretly conveyed out of Rome, borne the long journey through the country to Florence, and there laid before the great altar in one of the churches of the city.

Next day, when the sun had set, eager multitudes gathered in the narrow streets, for it was known that at midnight the body of their great townsman would be removed to the

chief church of Santa Croce, to be there buried in state. As the hour approached, sculptors and painters from far and near gathered in silence round the altar; and as the older men raised the lighted torches which had been prepared for them, the younger artists lifted the heavy bier, and the procession set out from the church. On that night of March 20, 1563, there were few citizens in Florence who were not seeking to do honour to the memory of Michael Angelo. It was difficult to force a way through the streets, so great was the pressure of the crowd. When at last the funeral service was over, surely the people returning to their homes felt they did not leave the real Michael Angelo in the quiet church. Though his spirit had entered the unseen world, he lived on among them still in the works he left behind him, and the spirit and example of his life. It was well for those artists who had gathered round his tomb, if they gained encouragement from his example to use their talents faithfully, and to be true to the ideal of beauty planted in their souls. It was better still, if the poor and ignorant people filling the streets outside, remembered that they too might help to enrich earth by pure deeds and words, and a love of all things beautiful and true; for 'God uses us to help each other so.'

Raphael

1483 – 1520 A.D.

Childhood of Raphael

Far away across the sea lies the sunny land of Italy. Blue are the sparkling waters of its seas. Still more blue is the cloudless sky. Nestling among the mountains are many little villages. Urbino is one of these. The gray stone houses can scarcely be seen against the background of trees. From a window of one of these houses one may see the valleys with their beautiful vineyards. Here the dark-eyed Italian children are picking purple grapes.

About four hundred years ago, in a beautiful house in Urbino, lived Giovanni Sanzio. His wife was an Italian woman. She had soft, dark eyes and a low, musical voice. Very much like her was their little son Raphael. They loved him so dearly they gave him the name of an angel. His eyes were deepest blue. They were thoughtful and dreamy. His brown hair floated lightly over his shoulders. In his little blue cap and suit he was as beautiful as an angel.

Raphael's father was an artist. Let us visit his home. We may see there a picture of his wife and child. The loving father has painted them as the Madonna and the Christ-child. The painting was done on the plaster of the wall. It is still there.

When a very small boy, Raphael loved to play in his father's studio. There were many little tasks that he could do to help his father. There were brushes to be washed and palettes to be cleaned. Oh, there was work in plenty for little Raphael! Giovanni Sanzio painted beautiful angels and holy Madonnas. His little son was often at his side as the work was

going on.

In Italy, one loves to be out of doors. Raphael spent much of his time in the bright, sunshiny air. There was much to be seen in those olden times, if one used his eyes. Perhaps one might see a procession of monks climbing up the mountain road. Sometimes a red-robed cardinal on a white mule rode among them. At another time, the peasants might be seen coming to market. Their donkeys carried loads of olives and melons. Again, a troop of soldiers would march past. See the flags flying and plumes waving! How their lances glitter in the bright sunshine! All of these sights were dear to our little Raphael. He loved to hear the trumpets sound from the castle on the hill. That meant that the duke and his friends were soon to ride forth. The horses pranced and tossed their heads. How rich the garments of the men and how noble their faces!

Raphael enjoyed the beauties that were always about him. All that was lovely in the landscape he saw. He looked, and thought, and grew. The wise father left the little dreamer to himself. He felt sure that Raphael would one day paint the beautiful things he saw.

In the streets of Urbino a house was brightly lighted one night. A feast was being held there. The sound of music was heard. The murmur of happy voices came from the open doors. Guest after guest entered the mansion. No one was more welcome than Perugino.

Perugino was one of the best painters in Italy. All the guests hurried to welcome him. The wife of Giovanni came forward leading her little son, Raphael. The artist smiled as he saw the lovely mother and her boy. "You are welcome," she said in her soft, musical voice. She placed the hand of Raphael in that of the artist. He laid his other hand on the boy's head, saying tenderly, "God bless you, my son."

"How glad we are that you are here to-day," said Giovanni, "for this is our son's birthday." Perugino was greatly pleased with the child. He said, "Let the boy come to live with

me. I will take him as my pupil." A bright smile, like a sunbeam, darted across Raphael's face. His mother could not think of sparing her little boy yet. She said he might go when he was older.

Alas! before that day came the gentle mother died. The father was left to care for the boy alone. Giovanni and his son were now constantly together. Raphael loved his father dearly. How sad and lonely he was when three years later his father died. After this, Raphael's uncle took the place of his father.

Once Raphael went to visit Andrea, an old friend of his father's. Andrea was an artist who lived in a town near by. Andrea's welcome was hearty. It made Raphael feel at home. He almost forgot that he was in a strange place. The first day he was there, the house door closed suddenly. Looking up, Raphael saw a man in the garb of a priest. "Why does he move so cautiously and seem to feel his way along the wall?" thought Raphael. As he approached, Raphael saw that he was blind.

"Draw near, good stranger. I should like to know you," said the priest. The youth went slowly up to him. The priest passed his hand lightly over the boy's face. "Thou art very young," he said in great surprise. "How could thy parents let thee leave thy home so soon?" "They are no longer living, but I have been taught that God cares for me." The priest raised his cap and said, "Blessed are they who put their trust in Him. What is thy name, my son?" "Raphael," answered the boy, "and my father was well loved in Urbino."

The good priest, who was Andrea's brother, led the way to the kitchen. In the middle of the room stood a table covered with a white cloth. On the table was a dish heaped with juicy grapes and figs. Beside it a pitcher of fresh milk had been placed. Andrea and his family were seated about the table.

Raphael was the first to finish his supper. He drew from his pocket a small sketch-book, which his father had given

him. He wished to make a sketch of the blind man. He held the book below the edge of the table. He thought that no one would notice him. Andrea peeped over his shoulder and watched his work. Raphael made a few quick strokes. How surprised Andrea was to see a picture of his brother! Raphael had shown all the love and kindness in the good priest's face.

"Have you any other sketches, Raphaelino? Let me see the book," said Andrea. He looked it through, and found among other drawings a Madonna. Andrea was much pleased with the sweet, tender face.

Many happy days Raphael spent with these kind friends. He often went with the priest to the dimly-lighted cathedral. He loved to watch the glimmering candles and listen to the soft music. Very rich were the colors in the windows. The afternoon sunlight fell across pictures of beautiful saints and Madonnas. Happier still were the hours spent with Andrea in the little studio. He watched Andrea at his work. He longed for the time to come when he should study with Perugino. His father had promised this.

At length the day arrived. He said good-by to his friends, and set out with a happy heart. He was then sixteen years old. There were many young men in Perugino's studio, but Raphael's work was best of all. When Perugino saw Raphael he said, "Let him be my pupil. He will some day be my master." He remained with his teacher several years. He listened carefully to Perugino. Soon he could paint as well as his master. In fact, one could scarcely tell Raphael's pictures from Perugino's.

The Paintings of Raphael

One day when Raphael was busily painting, a friend entered. "Thou hast done well, my Raphael," he exclaimed, looking at the artist's work. "I have just returned from Florence. How I wish that you might see the works of Leonardo! Such horses! They paw the ground, and shake the

foam from their manes. Perugino is a good man and a good painter. I will not deny that—but Leonardo's horses!"

Raphael threw aside his brush and hastily arose. "Where are you going?" asked his friend. "To Florence!" exclaimed Raphael.

Raphael had always heard of the beauty of Florence. Perugino had often spoken to his pupils of the great artists that lived in that city. He told them of the marble palaces. He described the lovely gardens. He talked with them about the dome of the cathedral, more beautiful than any other in the world. Raphael's heart was filled with a great desire to see fair Florence.

So he went to the beautiful city. He was soon known and loved by the greatest artists in Florence. His beauty, his kindly manner, and sunny temper made friends for him wherever he went. His beautiful drawings made him a favorite in the studios. One of the pictures he painted while in Florence is the Madonna of the Gardens. It now hangs in an art gallery in Paris.

Not far from Florence is the larger city of Rome. It, too, is noted for its beautiful pictures and wonderful buildings. One of these is the palace of the Pope. It is called the Vatican. It has more than a thousand rooms. Some of the walls of this building are covered with paintings. Whenever the Pope heard of a remarkable artist, he sent for him. When Raphael was twenty-five years old, he received an invitation from the Pope to come to Rome, and do some painting in the Vatican.

Raphael's first work in Rome was the painting of frescoes in the Pope's palace. Now you must know that a fresco is a painting on wet plaster. The colors are allowed to dry with the plaster. The Pope was greatly pleased with Raphael's work. He decided that he should decorate all of the halls of the Vatican.

There were many beautiful paintings there by Perugino and other artists. The Pope ordered these to be removed to

make room for Raphael's drawings. When Raphael heard that the work of his teacher was to be taken away, he was very sad. He persuaded the Pope to leave Perugino's paintings untouched. They are still to be seen in Rome.

One of the Madonnas painted in Rome is called the Madonna of the Chair. In this beautiful picture we see the mother holding the Christ-child lovingly in her arms, just as a mother now holds her baby. From an old story we learn how this picture happened to be round.

In one of the beautiful valleys of Italy lived a hermit. An oak tree grew near his hut. It shaded his home in the hot summer, and protected it in winter. The swaying of the branches, and the rustling of the leaves was music to the hermit. He thought of the oak tree as a friend.

Another friend he had, too. This was Mary, the daughter of a vinedresser, not far away. Mary was very kind to the old man. She brought him fresh fruit from her father's vineyard. The hermit often thought of these two kind friends. One had a voice like yours, perhaps. The other spoke only by the movement of its branches.

Once there was a great storm. The oak tree seemed to beckon the old man to come up among its branches for safety. He did so. He saw that the birds, too, had found shelter there.

The little hut was destroyed by the winds, but the hermit was safe. Soon he had eaten the bread that he had taken with him. He grew faint with hunger. Then thoughtful Mary came. She brought him food, and took him to her own home.

The hermit prayed that his two friends might never be forgotten. He wished that when people saw one, they might think of the other. By and by the hermit died. The oak tree was cut down and made into wine barrels. Lovely Mary was married. She became the mother of two boys.

One day, as she sat with her children, the artist Raphael passed by. He saw the young mother and her children. He made a sketch of the lovely group on a cover of a barrel that

stood near by, which had been made out of the wood of the old oak. When he went home, he filled out his sketch in loveliest color.

So the prayer of the hermit was answered. Shall we not always think of the hermit's two friends, when we see the Madonna of the Chair?

In almost every one of his pictures Raphael has painted a lovely child. You have seen the young St. John in the Madonna of the Chair and the little angels in the Sistine Madonna. The story is told that this wonderful picture was painted at first without the angels. Raphael one day found two little boys resting their arms on a ledge under the picture. They were looking up at the child Jesus and the lovely mother. He was so pleased with this, that he at once painted their portraits as angels in the picture.

Another thing that you will notice in Raphael's pictures is the color. It is very soft and yet glowing. One might almost fancy it to be part of a glorious sunset. It is laid on the canvas very thin. The lines of the drawing can sometimes be seen beneath.

Raphael's work in Rome was marvelous. He became known as the greatest painter in Italy. Now, many people think he is the greatest painter in all the world. His studio was filled with artists. They wished to learn something of his secret in painting. It is said that Raphael was greatly loved by these pupils. Sometimes as many as fifty of them would walk with him on the streets. They were glad to be near the master painter.

You have all seen copies of the Sistine Madonna and have felt its great beauty. It is the most lovely of all of Raphael's Madonnas and indeed, of all the Madonnas in the world. It hangs in the Dresden Gallery, in Germany, in a room by itself. As people look upon the Mother and Christ-child, their eyes fill with tears. Men lift their hats and pass silently on. The room is so quiet that one can hear the slightest sound.

Though Raphael died when he was only thirty-seven years old, he lives still in the hearts of all those who have seen his pictures. One cannot see his pictures without loving both them and the gentle artist who painted them.

Raphael

The Child of Urbino

(Adapted from Ouida.)

Raphael was a very happy little boy in old Urbino. He had a loving mother and a father who was very tender. He painted Raphael among the angels of heaven.

It was pleasant in those days to live in Urbino. In the fine old houses every stone was sound. Men built them to live in and to pass on to their children after them. The peasants were good friends with the prince. They knew that in any trouble they could go up to the palace and receive help. Each one did his work in the best way, so all were happy and contented.

They had their day of honest toil from sunrise to sunset. Then they walked out or sat about in the calm evening air. They looked down on the plains below that were rich in grain and fruit. They talked and laughed together, and were content with their own, useful lives.

Can you not picture to yourself good, wise Giovanni Sanzio, and his little son running by his side? It is the holy evening time of a feast day. The deep-toned bells are ringing. The setting sun casts long shadows across the hills. Yes, life was very good in those days in old Urbino.

At this time Urbino was becoming famous for its pottery. Tall vases, graceful jars, and beautiful bowls were made there. When the prince wished to send a gift to any one, he often chose a piece of Urbino pottery.

Now there lived in Urbino a master potter. His name was Benedetto. He was a stern, gray-haired man. He had a beautiful daughter, Pacifica. She was a lovely young woman.

Raphael loved her. He loved everything that was beautiful and everyone who was kind.

The house of Benedetto was a long, stone building. The porch at the back was shaded by rose trees. It looked on a garden where plum trees, pear trees, and wood strawberries grew. This porch was a pleasant spot. It was filled with the song of birds and the perfume of flowers. The little son of neighbor Sanzio ran in and out of this big, wide house and garden whenever he pleased. Pacifica was always glad to see him. Sometimes the master potter would teach him the secret of painting on clay.

One day Raphael was sad. His friend Luca was in trouble. Luca was a strong, manly fellow. He would have liked well to be a soldier. Because he loved Pacifica, he was working with her father to become a potter. The prince had offered a prize for the best painting on a vase. How Luca wished that he might win the prize!

He had heard Benedetto say that the best painter should marry Pacifica. No wonder Luca was troubled. He knew there were many artists in Urbino who could paint better than he. Raphael, too, knew this. He could not bear to see his friend Luca in tears. How could he help his friend? This thought came to him again and again. At last he found a way. He hurried to Luca. "Let me paint the vase," said Raphael.

For three months Raphael worked every day. Where do you think he was? In Luca's attic, before a bowl almost as big as himself. No one but Luca knew what the child was doing. They could not have kept the secret if Raphael's father had been at home; but he was away many weeks, and the child's mother said nothing. She knew well that Pacifica loved Raphael, and that no harm could come to him under her roof. Pacifica herself thought he was watching Luca paint. She loved him all the better for that. How handsome and brave and gentle Luca was! Poor Pacifica cared little whether he could paint or not. He could have made her happy.

In the attic Raphael passed the most troubled hours of his life. He would not allow Luca to look at what he did. When he went away he locked his work in the cupboard. The swallows came in through the open windows of the attic. They fluttered about the room. The morning sunbeams came, too. They touched the boy's fair hair lovingly, and seemed to say, "Be of good cheer, little Raphael." He was only seven years old, yet how faithfully he worked!

He covered hundreds of sheets with drawings. When at last he had them perfect, he sketched them on the clay. Ah, how glad he was now that his father had allowed him to draw ever since he was two years old! He was glad, too, that Master Benedetto had shown him how to lay on the color.

So Raphael worked on and on, there in the attic. The tulips bloomed and withered. The wheat and barley were cut. The three months, all but a week, had passed by. One afternoon Raphael took Luca by the hand and said, "Come." He led the young man up to the attic.

Luca gave a great cry when he saw the vase. Then he fell upon his knees before the child. "Dear Luca, do not do that. If it is good, let us thank God." The colors on the vase shone like melted jewels. The garlands were beautiful. So was the soft light on the mountains. The white-robed figure in the center was still more beautiful. The child painter had given this figure the face of Pacifica.

When the vase was put away, Luca said, "But Raphaelino, I do not see how your wonderful work will help me. I could not let it pass as mine. That would be a shame, a fraud." The child's only answer was, "Do trust me."

At last the great day arrived. All the vases were on a table. Ten young men had tried for the prize. Luca had been obliged to place his work with the rest. Each vase was marked with a number. The prince, followed by Benedetto, came in. Raphael's father and some of the potter's other friends, came, too.

The prince passed from vase to vase. For each one he had words of praise. Before Luca's vase he remained silent. At last, before one that stood at the very farthest end of the table, he gave a cry of delight. Benedetto was greatly surprised and pleased. Giovanni Sanzio came a little nearer. He tried to see over the shoulders of those in front.

"This is by far the most beautiful. It is worth its weight in gold," said the prince as he lifted the great jar. "But whose is it?" he said impatiently. "Master Benedetto, I pray you the name of the artist. Quick, I pray you, quick." "It is marked number eleven, my lord," answered the potter. "Let him who has that number stand out. The prince has chosen your work. Do you hear me?" No one moved.

Then Raphael loosened his hand from his father's hold. He went forward and stood before the master potter. "I painted it," he said, with a pleased smile—"I, Raphael." The prince stepped forward. He took a jewel hung on a gold chain from his own breast. He threw it over Raphael's shoulders. The child kissed the prince's hand with sweetest grace. Then he turned to his father. "Is it true that I have won the prize?" "Quite true, my angel," said Sanzio. Raphael looked up at Master Benedetto. "Then I claim the hand of Pacifica."

"You cannot mean that," answered Benedetto, smiling. "I do, indeed, though," replied the child. "I give the rights which I have won to my dear friend Luca. He is the best man in all the world, and loves Pacifica most truly."

Benedetto burst into tears, saying, "It shall be as you wish." Luca sprang forward, pale as death. He knelt before Raphael, where all the world has knelt ever since.

Raphael

Among the marvellous tales of the Arabian Nights, there is a story told of a band of robbers who, by whispering certain magic words, were able to open the door of a secret cave where treasures of gold and silver and precious jewels lay hid. Now, although the day of such delightful marvels is past and gone, yet there still remains a certain magic in some names which is able to open the secret doors of the hidden haunts of beauty and delight.

For most people the very name of 'Raphael' is like the 'Open Sesame' of the robber chief in the old story. In a moment a door seems to open out of the commonplace everyday world, and through it they see a stretch of fair sweet country. There their eyes rest upon gentle, dark-eyed Madonnas, who smile down lovingly upon the heavenly Child, playing at her side or resting in her arms. The little St. John is also there, companion of the Infant Christ; rosy, round-limbed children both, half human and half divine. And standing in the background are a crowd of grave, quiet figures, each one alive with interest, while over all there is a glow of intense vivid colour.

We know but little of the everyday life of this great artist. When we hear his name, it is of his different pictures that we think at once, for they are world-famous. We almost forget the man as we gaze at his work.

It was in the little village of Urbino, in Umbria, that Raphael was born. His father was a painter called Giovanni Santi, and from him Raphael inherited his love of Art. His mother, Magia, was a sweet, gracious woman, and the little Raphael was like her in character and beauty. It seemed as if

the boy had received every good gift that Nature could bestow. He had a lovely oval face, and soft dark eyes that shone with a beauty that was more of heaven than earth, and told of a soul which was as pure and lovely as his face. Above all, he had the gift of making every one love him, so that his should have been a happy sunshiny life.

But no one can ever escape trouble, and when Raphael was only eight years old, the first cloud overspread his sky. His mother died, and soon after his father married again.

The new mother was very young, and did not care much for children, but Raphael did not mind that as long as he could be with his father. But three years later a blacker cloud arose and blotted out the sunshine from his life, for his father too died, and left him all alone.

The boy had loved his father dearly, and it had been his great delight to be with him in the studio, to learn to grind and mix the colours and watch those wonderful pictures grow from day to day.

But now all was changed. The quiet studio rang with angry voices, and the peaceful home was the scene of continual quarrelling. Who was to have the money, and how were the Santi estates to be divided? Stepmother and uncle wrangled from morning until night, and no one gave a thought to the child Raphael. It was only the money that mattered.

Then when it seemed that the boy's training was going to be totally neglected, kindly help arrived. Simone di Ciarla, brother of Raphael's own mother, came to look after his little nephew, and ere long carried him off from the noisy, quarrelsome household, and took him to Perugia.

'Thou shalt have the best teaching in all Italy,' said Simone as they walked through the streets of the town. 'The great master to whose studio we go, can hold his own even among the artists of Florence. See that thou art diligent to learn all that he can teach thee, so that thou mayest become

as great a painter as thy father.'

'Am I to be the pupil of the great Perugino?' asked Raphael, his eyes shining with pleasure. 'I have often heard my father speak of his marvellous pictures.'

'We will see if he can take thee,' answered his uncle.

The boy's heart sunk. What if the master refused to take him as a pupil? Must he return to idleness and the place which was no longer home?

But soon his fears were set at rest. Perugino, like every one else, felt the charm of that beautiful face and gentle manner, and when he had seen some drawings which the boy had done, he agreed readily that Raphael should enter the studio and become his pupil.

Perugia had been passing through evil times just before this. The two great parties of the Oddi and Baglioni families were always at war together. Whichever of them happened to be the stronger held the city and drove out the other party, so that the fighting never ceased either inside or outside the gates. The peaceful country round about had been laid waste and desolate. The peasants did not dare go out to till their fields or prune their olive-trees. Mothers were afraid to let their little ones out of their sight, for hungry wolves and other wild beasts prowled about the deserted countryside.

Then came a day when the outside party managed to creep silently into the city, and the most terrible fight of all began. So long and fiercely did the battle rage that almost all the Oddi were killed. Then for a time there was peace in Perugia and all the country round.

So it happened that as soon as the people of Perugia had time to think of other things besides fighting, they began to wish that their town might be put in order, and that the buildings which had been injured during the struggles might be restored.

This was a good opportunity for peaceful men like Perugino, for there was much work to be done, and both he

and his pupils were kept busy from morning till night.

Of all his pupils, Perugino loved the young Raphael best. He saw at once that this was no ordinary boy.

'He is my pupil now, but soon he will be my master,' he used to say as he watched the boy at work.

So he taught him with all possible carefulness, and was never tired of giving him good advice.

'Learn first of all to draw,' he would say, when Raphael looked with longing eyes at the colours and brushes of the master. 'Draw everything you see, no matter what it is, but always draw and draw again. The rest will follow; but if the knowledge of drawing be lacking, nothing will afterwards succeed. Keep always at hand a sketch-book, and draw therein carefully every manner of thing that meets thy eye.'

Raphael never forgot the good advice of his master. He was never without a sketch-book, and his drawings now are almost as interesting as his great pictures, for they show the first thought that came into his mind, before the picture was composed.

So the years passed on, and Raphael learned all that the master could teach him. At first his pictures were so like Perugino's, that it was difficult to know whether they were the work of the master or the pupil.

But the quiet days at Perugia soon came to an end, and Perugino went back to Florence. For some time Raphael worked at different places near Perugia, and then followed his master to the City of Flowers, where every artist longed to go. Though he was still but a young man, the world had already begun to notice his work, and Florence gladly welcomed a new artist.

It was just at that time that Leonardo da Vinci's fame was at its height, and when Raphael was shown some of the great man's work, he was filled with awe and wonder. The genius of Leonardo held him spellbound.

'It is what I have dreamed of in my dreams,' he said. 'Oh

that I might learn his secret!'

Little by little the new ideas sunk into his heart, and the pictures he began to paint were no longer like those of his old master Perugino, but seemed to breathe some new spirit.

It was always so with Raphael. He seemed to be able to gather the best from every one, just as the bee goes from flower to flower and gathers its sweetness into one golden honeycomb. Only the genius of Raphael made all that he touched his very own, and the spirit of his pictures is unlike that of any other master.

For many years after this he lived in Rome, where now his greatest frescoes may be seen—frescoes so varied and wonderful that many books have been written about them.

There he first met Margarita, the young maiden whom he loved all his life. It is her face which looks down upon us from the picture of the Sistine Madonna, perhaps the most famous Madonna that ever was painted. The little room in the Dresden Gallery where this picture now hangs seems almost like a holy place, for surely there is something divine in that fair face. There she stands, the Queen of Heaven, holding in her arms the Infant Christ, with such a strange look of majesty and sadness in her eyes as makes us realise that she was indeed fit to be the Mother of our Lord.

But the picture which all children love best is one in Florence called 'The Madonna of the Goldfinch.'

It is a picture of the Holy Family, the Infant Jesus, His mother, and the little St. John. The Christ Child is a dear little curly-headed baby, and He stands at His mother's knee with one little bare foot resting on hers. His hand is stretched out protectingly over a yellow goldfinch which St. John, a sturdy little figure clad in goatskins, has just brought to Him. The baby face is full of tender love and care for the little fluttering prisoner, and His curved hand is held over its head to protect it.

'Do not hurt My bird,' He seems to say to the eager St.

John, 'for it belongs to Me and to My Father.'

These are only two of the many pictures which Raphael painted. It is wonderful to think how much work he did in his short life, for he died when he was only thirty-seven. He had been at work at St. Peter's, giving directions about some alterations, and there he was seized by a severe chill, and in a few days the news spread like wildfire through the country that Raphael was dead.

It seemed almost as if it could not be true. He had been so full of life and health, so eager for work, such a living power among men.

But there he lay, beautiful in death as he had been in life, and over his head was hung the picture of the 'Transfiguration,' on which he had been at work, its colours yet wet, never to be finished by that still hand.

All Rome flocked to his funeral, and high and low mourned his loss. But he left behind him a fame which can never die, a name which through all these four hundred years has never lost the magic of its greatness.

Andrea del Sarto

The Border Wonderful

1486 – 1576 A.D.

In the workshop of Josefo the goldsmith, black-eyed Andrea was assorting the tools. There was no one to talk to, and he didn't like the task a bit. He wanted to be out in the sunshine among the pomegranates and purple-starred myrtles, where he knew Beatrice was waiting for the procession, for he was only seven years old, and this would be the gayest carnival time of all the year. But boys in his day began their life-work very early, and it was already several months since he had been apprenticed to a goldsmith, who believed not at all that one should romp when a trade was to be learned. So there was nothing for him to do but group hammers and knives and chisels, and try to be content with seeing the parade go by.

Would Beatrice forget to signal him, he wondered, with an anxious glance toward the window. Surely not, for she had promised to sing as soon as she saw the outriders. And just then a clear, sweet voice rose in a Florentine greeting song. Yes, it was coming now, the great cavalcade of which people had talked for many days, and he turned from the bench and hurried out into the loggia.

Leaning far out over the railing, he saw her standing under the pomegranates.

"Are they coming, Bice?" he asked, as her merry eyes turned toward him.

"Si, si, Andrea mio," she called back in her musical Tuscan. "Yonder is the advance-guard, and just behind are

the gleaming Medici banners. That means the ducal carriage will soon be here. Ah, it is splendid, splendid!"

And she whirled in a dancing step and broke into song again.

Andrea ran down the stairway, forgetting all about his task in the workshop. Yes, there it came, a gorgeous procession, across the Arno by the Ponte Vecchio and along the Via Guicciardini, horsemen and footmen in fine array, bearing Florence's duke to Florence's great cathedral. His birthday it was, and the people would celebrate it magnificently, Andrea knew, for his father, the jolly tailor, had told him all about it as he bent over his sewing the night before. There would be pomp at the palace and mirth in the streets, and he wished he might roam at will and feast upon it. But suddenly a harsh voice struck his ear, for the goldsmith had come into the shop and found him away.

"Get to your bench, young dullard, and quickly too!" he called. "A nice lot of trouble you make for me with your heedless ways, and I've a mind to send you back to your father."

And looking up at the face framed in the window, the boy saw that the eyes were as angry as the voice.

He was very much frightened. Twice that morning he had been scolded for drawing pictures when he should have been turning the tool grinder, and he wondered what dreadful thing would happen now. So he hurried in through the loggia to his bench; but his lip quivered as Beatrice went on with the crowd, and he thought how hard it would be to stay in the workshop when all the mirth and life of Florence was pulsing in the streets, and tears came so thick and fast that he could hardly tell one tool from another. Then the master went out, and Leonardo, the journeyman, returned from an errand. He was older than Andrea, but they were very good friends, and the doleful face brightened as he came near.

"What's the matter?" he asked, at the sight of the misty eyes. "Wouldn't he let you see the procession?"

The lad shook his head.

"No; he says I am here to work."

"Too bad, too bad," the older boy murmured. "But there will be other festivals, and he isn't often cross like this. He's worried now because he can't get a design for the border on the cardinal's bowl, for, unless it is finished this week there will be no more work from this great man. So it is not strange that he's out of sorts."

Andrea had no idea what a design was, and was too unhappy to care. His mind was on the merriment, and nothing seemed half as bad as having to miss it. But he had to work. So he tried to make the best of it, and his hands moved so rapidly about the bench that soon his task was finished, and he had nothing to do until the master came in and assigned him to another. Leonardo, polishing a plate at his own place, was too busy to talk. So he took a piece of parchment and a bit of charcoal from the table and began to draw.

That made him forget his disappointment. He scratched and scratched on the smooth white surface, and by the time the journeyman had finished his polishing, the sheet was almost covered, and he held it up for him to see.

Leonardo looked, then gave an exclamation.

"Oh, oh! It is a pretty thing you have made, but you've used some of the master's parchment, and he will be angry indeed."

For parchment was costly in those far-off days, and men were very careful of it.

Andrea was terrified, and, at the sight of Josefo coming in at the door, he began to cry.

"What have you been doing now?" the man asked angrily.

"This," he sobbed, laying his hand on the parchment.

Leonardo held his breath, for he was sure that Andrea, who so often irritated the master by his thoughtless ways, would fare badly at his hands. But as the goldsmith looked at the drawing the sternness left his face, and a sort of wonder

came into it.

"You don't mean you did this?" he said.

"Yes," Andrea faltered, "but I'm sorry I spoiled the parchment."

Then, as Josefo laid his big hand on the dark head, Leonardo wondered why he had ever thought him stern.

"Never fear about that," he replied, in a voice they seldom heard in the workshop. "You have done a wonderful thing, and it means much to me. I shall use this border for the cardinal's bowl, and to-morrow, when Gian Barile comes, I'll show it to him. This afternoon you may have a holiday, for you deserve to see the fun for helping me out of my trouble."

And Andrea wondered how it happened that the very thing that had brought him scoldings twice that morning should give him a merry time a few hours later. But he was only seven years old, and too young to realize what a wonderful thing he had done. But this he did know: he was going to have a great deal of pleasure. And beside the carnival fun there was the joy of looking forward to the morrow, when Gian Barile would see his drawing, for he was said by Florentines to be a most excellent painter.

Morning in the bottéga of the goldsmith was a very busy time. Tools must be ground, and knives sharpened, and metal prepared for the melting-pot. Then, too, chiseling and shaping and carving began on new articles, and there was always finishing on those left over from the day before. So Andrea and Leonardo worked busily, while the master carved away at the bowl. They talked and laughed as they bent to their tasks, for now that he had a design that suited him, Josefo was in a jolly mood, and when Beatrice, the gay street-singer, put her head in at the window, he did not scold, but called to her in a merry jest. Together they chatted about yesterday's carnival, and after a while came Gian Barile, to lounge and gossip for an hour.

Andrea saw him saunter up the via, and as he came in

through the loggia whispered to Leonardo, "Do you think he will really show him my drawing?"

And even as they held their heads together, Josefo unrolled the parchment.

"What think you of this for the work of a lad?" he asked, as Barile appeared at the door.

The painter shook his head.

"No lad did that. Or, if it be really true, let me see him, and I will show you another Giotto or Tiziano or perhaps a Leonardo."

And Leonardo the journeyman jumped so that he dropped one of the costliest tools, which would have brought a stern rebuke at any other time. But the master did not notice it. His mind was upon other things.

"Aye, aye," he insisted, "upon the word of an honest Florentine it is the work of a lad, and he but a seven-year-old; young Andrea, the tailor's son."

For a minute Barile did not speak. Perhaps he was silent over the marvel of what the boy had done. Perhaps he thought of how he might aid him. He just stood and looked into the dark eyes, then said slowly, "If you will study faithfully, there will come a day when you will paint more gloriously than I can ever hope to."

And Andrea believed he must have heard wrong, for Barile was one of the celebrated artists of his time.

Then a thought troubled him.

Perhaps his father would not let him do it. He had been eager to have him become a goldsmith, and might think he could not be an artist. So Barile went home with him that night, and as they talked it over, the tailor said his advice seemed good, and he would let his boy follow it.

Which delighted Andrea so much that he ran as fast as he could to the pomegranate-shaded house where Beatrice lived, to tell her he was going to be a painter.

"That will be splendid!" she cried, as she clapped her sun-

browned hands; "and when you are great, I will come and sing for you." And they laughed together, thinking how fine it would be.

So, soon after he began his apprenticeship to the goldsmith, Andrea left it to work with brushes and pigments. He was a studious and faithful pupil, and progressed so rapidly that Barile soon realized he needed a better master, and spoke concerning him to Piero di Cosimo, the most renowned teacher of Florence, who agreed to take him under his care. Then came years of work, hard, unceasing, but happy work, for Andrea loved his brushes and canvases, and Cosimo loved his pupil, until he became so skilful with pigments that people said it seemed as if he had used them for half a century. Nothing delighted him as much as to blend his precious colors, and, while other lads loitered in the streets or roamed along the Arno, he painted in the shop of Cosimo, improving hour by hour and day by day, until all of Barile's prophecies concerning him were fulfilled, and Florence gloried in the thought of having produced another immortal.

So it wasn't bad, after all, that he had to stay in the workshop that carnival morn, for, although it seemed a hardship then, it brought him to the notice of Gian Barile, and the world came to have one more master painter. Almost four centuries have gone since he lived and worked, but artists still marvel at the beauty of his pictures, and strive, but always unsuccessfully, to copy their exquisite design and hue. Beatrice, singing away the hours under the pomegranates or along the sun-kissed vias, thought him a foolish boy for working so hard, for she could not understand that it was a divine thing that kept him at his pigments and would make him live forever.

And what became of the border he drew on parchment in the old bottéga? No one knows. Perhaps Josefo treasured it throughout his lifetime. Perhaps he sold it or gave it away. But that cannot be proven, because nothing is known of Josefo.

His very name would have been forgotten long ago, had it not happened that once, for a very short time, he had an apprentice boy who gave him a deal of trouble drawing pictures when he should have been assorting tools.

But what then seemed wasted hours have proven to be hours well spent, for the lad grew to be an honor to his city and a glory to his land. And to this day, because he was the child of a maker of garments, he, like Tintoretto, the Venetian dyer's son, is still designated by his father's craft, and is known to the world as Andrea del Sarto.

Andrea del Sarto

Nowhere in Florence could a more honest man or a better worker be found than Agnolo the tailor. True, there were once evil tales whispered about him when he first opened his shop in the little street. It was said that he was no Italian, but a foreigner who had been obliged to flee from his own land because of a quarrel he had had with one of his customers. People shook their heads and talked mysteriously of how the tailor's scissors had been used as a deadly weapon in the fight. But ere long these stories died away, and the tailor, with his wife Constanza, lived a happy, busy life, and brought up their six children carefully and well.

Now out of those six children five were just the ordinary commonplace little ones such as one would expect to meet in a tailor's household, but the sixth was like the ugly duckling in the fairy tale—a little, strange bird, unlike all the rest, who learned to swim far away and soon left the old commonplace home behind him.

The boy's name was Andrea. He was such a quick, sharp little boy that he was sent very early to school, and had learned to read and write before he was seven years old. As that was considered quite enough education, his father then took him away from school and put him to work with a goldsmith.

It is early days to begin work at seven years old, but Andrea thought it was quite as good as play. He was always perfectly happy if he could have a pencil and paper, and his drawings and designs were really so wonderfully good that his master grew to be quite proud of the child and showed the

work to all his customers.

Next door to the goldsmith's shop there lived an old artist called Barile, who began to take a great interest in little Andrea. Barile was not a great painter, but still there was much that he could teach the boy, and he was anxious to have him as a pupil. So it was arranged that Andrea should enter the studio and learn to be an artist instead of a goldsmith.

For three years the boy worked steadily with his new master, but by that time Barile saw that better teaching was needed than he could give. So after much thought the old man went to the great Florentine artist Piero di Cosimo, and asked him if he would agree to receive Andrea as his pupil. 'You will find the boy no trouble,' he urged. 'He has wonderful talent, and already he has learnt to mix his colours so marvellously that to my mind there is no artist in Florence who knows more about colour than little Andrea.' Cosimo shook his head in unbelief. The boy was but a child, and this praise seemed absurd. However, the drawings were certainly extraordinary, and he was glad to receive so clever a pupil.

But little by little, as Cosimo watched the boy at work, his unbelief vanished and his wonder grew, until he was as fond and proud of his pupil as the old master had been. 'He handles his colours as if he had had fifty years of experience,' he would say proudly, as he showed off the boy's work to some new patron.

And truly the knowledge of drawing and colouring seemed to come to the boy without any effort. Not that he was idle or trusted to chance. He was never tired of work, and his greatest joy on holidays was to go off and study the drawings of the great Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. Often he would spend the whole day copying these drawings with the greatest care, never tired of learning more and more.

As Andrea grew older, all Florence began to take note of the young painter—'Andrea del Sarto,' as he was called, or 'the tailor's Andrew,' for sarto is the Italian word for tailor.

What a splendid new star this was rising in the heaven of Art! Who could tell how bright it would shine ere long? Perhaps the tailor's son would yet eclipse the magic name of Raphael. His colour was perfect, his drawing absolutely correct. They called him in their admiration 'the faultless painter.' But had he, indeed, the artist soul? That was the question. For, perfect as his pictures were, they still lacked something. Perhaps time would teach him to supply that want. Meanwhile there was plenty of work for the young artist, and when he set up his own studio with another young painter, he was at once invited to fresco the walls of the cloister of the Scalzo, or barefooted friars.

This was the happiest time of all Andrea's life. The two friends worked happily together, and spent many a merry day with their companions. Every day Andrea learned to add more softness and delicacy to his colouring until his pictures seemed verily to glow with life. Every day he dreamed fresh dreams of the fame and honour that awaited him. And when work was over, the two young painters would go off to meet their friends and make merry over their supper as they told all the latest jokes and wittiest stories, and forgot for a while the serious art of painting pictures.

There were twelve of these young men who met together, and each of them was bound to bring some particular dish for the general supper. Every one tried to think of something especially nice and uncommon, but no one managed such surprising delicacies as Andrea. There was one special dish which no one ever forgot. It was in the shape of a temple, with its pillars made of sausages. The pavement was formed of little squares of different coloured jelly, the tops of the pillars were cheese, and the roof was of sugar, with a frieze of sweets running round it. Inside the temple there was a choir of roast birds with their mouths wide open, and the priests were two fat pigeons. It was the most splendid supper-dish that ever was seen.

Every one was fond of the clever young painter. He was so kind and courteous to all, and so simple-hearted that it was impossible for the others to feel jealous or to grudge him the fame and praise that was showered upon him more and more as each fresh picture was finished.

Then just when all gave promise of sunshine and happiness, a little cloud rose in his blue sky, which grew and grew until it dimmed all the glory of his life.

In the Via di San Gallo, not very far from the street where Andrea and his friend lodged, there lived a very beautiful woman called Lucrezia. She was not a highborn lady, only the daughter of a working man, but she was as proud and haughty as she was beautiful. Nought cared she for things high and noble, she was only greedy of praise and filled with a desire to have her own way in everything. Yet her lovely face seemed as if it must be the mirror of a lovely soul, and when the young painter Andrea first saw her his heart went out towards her. She was his long-dreamed-of ideal of beauty and grace, the vision of loveliness which he had been trying to grasp all his life.

'What hath bewitched thee?' asked his friend as he watched Andrea restlessly pacing up and down the studio, his brushes thrown aside and his work left unfinished. 'Thou hast done little work for many weeks.'

'I cannot paint,' answered Andrea, 'for I see only one face ever before me, and it comes between me and my work.'

'Thou art ruining all thy chances,' said the friend sadly, 'and the face thou seest is not worth the sacrifice.'

Andrea turned on his heel with an angry look and went out. All his friends were against him now. No one had a good word for the beautiful Lucrezia. But she was worth all the world to him, and he had made up his mind to marry her.

It was winter time, and the Christmas bells had but yesterday rung out the tidings of the Holy Birthday when Andrea at last obtained his heart's desire and made Lucrezia his wife.

The joyful Christmastide seemed a fit season in which to set the seal upon his great happiness, and he thought himself the most fortunate of men. He had asked advice of none, and had told no one what he meant to do, but the news of his marriage was soon noised abroad.

'Hast thou heard the news of young Andrea del Sarto?' asked the people of Florence of one another. 'I fear he has dealt an evil blow at his own chances of success.'

One by one his friends left him, and many of his pupils deserted the studio. Lucrezia's sharp tongue was unbearable, and she made mischief among them all. Only Andrea remained blinded by her beauty, and thought that now, with such a model always near him, he would paint as he had never painted before.

But little did Lucrezia care to help him with his work. His pictures meant nothing to her except so far as they sold well and brought in money for her to spend. Worst of all, she began to grudge the help that he gave to his old father and mother, who now were poor and needed his care.

And yet, although Andrea saw all this, he still loved his beautiful wife and cared only how he might please her. He scarcely painted a picture that had not her face in it, for she was his ideal Madonna, Queen of Heaven.

But it was not so easy now to put his whole heart and soul into his work. True, his hand drew as correctly as ever, and his colours were even more beautiful, but often the soul seemed lacking.

'Thou dost work but slowly,' the proud beauty would say, tired of sitting still as his model. 'Why canst thou not paint quicker and sell at higher prices? I have need of more gold, and the money seems to grow scarcer week by week.'

Andrea sighed. Truly the money vanished like magic, as Lucrezia's jewels and dresses increased.

'Dear heart, have a little patience,' he said. 'I can but do my best.'

Then, as he looked at the angry discontented face of his wife, he laid down his brushes and went to kneel beside her.

'Lucrezia,' he said, 'there needs something besides mere drawing and painting to make a picture. They call me "the faultless painter," and it seemed once as if I might have reached as high or even higher than the great Raphael. It needed but the soul put into my work, and if thou couldst have helped me to reach my ideal, what would I not have shown the world!'

'I do not understand thee,' said Lucrezia petulantly, 'and this is waste of time. Haste thee and get back to thy brushes and paints, and see that thou drivest a better bargain with this last picture.'

No, it was no use; she could never understand! Andrea knew that he must look for no help from her, and that he must paint in spite of the hindrances she placed in his way. Well, his work was still considered most beautiful, and he must make the best of it.

Orders for pictures came now from far and near, and before long some of Andrea's work found its way into France; and when King Francis saw it he was so anxious to have the painter at his court, that he sent a royal invitation, begging Andrea to come at once to France and enter the king's service.

The invitation came when Andrea was feeling hopeless and dispirited. Lucrezia gave him no peace, the money was all spent, and he was weary of work. The thought of starting afresh in another country put new courage into him. He made up his mind to go at once to the French court. He would leave Lucrezia in some safe place and send her all the money he could earn.

How good it was to leave all his troubles behind, and to set off that glad May day when all the world breathed of new life and new hope. Perhaps the winter of his life was passed too, and only sunshine and summer was in store.

Andrea's welcome at the French court was most flattering. Nothing was thought too good for the famous Florentine painter, and he was treated like a prince. The king loaded him with gifts, and gave him costly clothes and money for all his needs. A portrait of the infant Dauphin was begun at once, for which Andrea received three hundred golden pieces.

Month after month passed happily by. Andrea painted many pictures, and each one was more admired than the last. But his dream of happiness did not last long. He was hard at work one day when a letter was brought to him, sent by his wife Lucrezia. She could not live without him, so she wrote. He must come home at once. If he delayed much longer he would not find her alive.

There could be, of course, but one answer to all this. Andrea loved his wife too well to think of refusing her request, and the days of peace and plenty must come to an end. Even as he read her letter he began to long to see her again, and the thought of showing her all his gay clothes and costly presents filled him with delight.

But the king was very loth to let the painter go, and only at last consented when Andrea promised most faithfully to return a few months hence.

'I cannot spare thee for longer,' said Francis; 'but I will let thee go on condition that thou wilt buy for me certain works of art in Italy, which I have long coveted, and bring them back with thee.'

Then he entrusted to Andrea a large sum of money and bade him buy the best pictures he could find, and afterwards return without fail.

So Andrea journeyed back to Florence, and when he was once again with his wife, his joy and delight in her were so great that he forgot all his promises, forgot even the king's trust, and allowed Lucrezia to squander all the money which was to have been spent on art treasures for King Francis.

Then returned the evil days of trouble and quarrelling.

Added to that the terrible feeling that he had betrayed his trust and broken his word, made Andrea more unhappy than ever. He dared not return to France, but took up again his work in Florence, always with the hope that he might make enough money to repay the debt.

Years went by and dark days fell upon the City of Flowers. She had made a great struggle for liberty and had driven out the Medici, but they were helped by enemies from without, and Florence was for many months in a state of siege. There was constant fighting going on and little time for peaceful work.

Yet through all those troubled days Andrea worked steadily at his painting, and paid but little heed to the fate of the city. The stir of battle did not reach his quiet studio. There was enough strife at home; no need to seek it outside.

It was about this time that he painted a beautiful picture for the Company of San Jacopo, which was used as a banner and carried in their processions. Bad weather, wind, rain, and sunshine have spoiled some of its beauty, but much of the loveliness still remains. It is specially a children's picture, for Andrea painted the great saint bending over a little child in a white robe who kneels at his feet, while another little figure kneels close by. The boy has his hands folded together as if in prayer, and the kind strong hand of the saint is placed lovingly beneath the little chin. The other child is holding a book, and both children press close against the robe of the protecting saint.

But although Andrea could paint his pictures undisturbed while war was raging around, there was one enemy waiting to enter Florence who claimed attention and could not be ignored. When the triumphant troops gained an entrance by treachery, they brought with them that deadly scourge which was worse than any earthly enemy, the dreadful illness called the plague.

Perhaps Andrea had suffered for want of good food during

the siege, perhaps he was overworked and tired; but, whatever was the cause, he was one of the first to be seized by that terrible disease. Alone he fought the enemy, and alone he died. Lucrezia had left him as soon as he fell ill, for she feared the deadly plague, and Andrea gladly let her go, for he loved her to the last with the same great unselfish love.

So passed away the faultless painter, and his was the last great name engraved upon that golden record of Florentine Art which had made Florence famous in the eyes of the world. Other artists came after him, but Art was on the wane in the City of Flowers, and her glory was slowly departing.

We can trace no other great name upon her pages and so we close the book, and our eyes turn towards the shores of the blue Adriatic, where Venice, Queen of the Sea, was writing, year by year, another volume filled with the names of her own Knights of Art.

Titian

The Boy of Cadore

1488 – 1576 A.D.

The boy's eyes were dark as the hearts of the daisies he carried, and they gazed wistfully after the horseman who was dashing along the white highway.

"Think of it, Catarina!" he exclaimed. "He rides to the wonderful city."

Catarina looked at her brother as if she did not understand. There were many towns along the road that ribboned away to the south, each of which seemed large indeed to the mountain girl, yet she had never thought of them as wonderful.

"The wonderful city?" she repeated. "Where is that, Tiziano?"

"Why, don't you know?" he asked in surprise. "As if it could be other than Venice, the great city of St. Mark!"

But the name did not thrill black-eyed Catarina. Older than her brother, and far less of a dreamer, she had heard that dreadful things happened in the city, and that sometimes people went hungry there. In the mountains there was food enough and to spare, and though no one was rich and lived in palaces with tapestried walls and gorgeous furnishings, neither were there any very poor. So she shrugged her shoulders and replied: "Oh, Venice! I don't know why you call that wonderful. Graziano, the weaver, has been there many times, and he thinks it not half as nice as our own Cadore. There are no mountains there, nor meadows where wild flowers grow. Are you tired of the Dolomites, Tiziano?"

"Ah, no!" came the earnest reply. "But the artists live in the city, and if I could go there, I might study with Bellini, and paint some of the things that are in my heart."

Catarina was just a practical village girl, who thought that if one had enough to eat and wear, he ought to be satisfied. So her voice was chiding and a bit impatient as she answered.

"You talk so much about painting, and seeing things no one else sees, that the villagers say unless you get over your dreaming ways, you will grow up to be of no account. That is why Father thinks of apprenticing you to Luigi, the cobbler. For he can teach you his trade, which would be far better than always thinking about Venice. For, Tiziano, there are other things in the world beside painting."

Tiziano shook his head, but did not reply. Nothing else mattered half so much to him, and many a night, when the rest of the family were sleeping, he lay in his bed wondering how he could persuade his father to let him go away to study. It was well known that he spent many hours drawing on boards, stones, and anything he could find, and that the village priest, the good padrone, had praised his work. But little was thought of that. Other youths of Cadore had sketched as well and amounted to nothing. So why should he be sent to the city just because he could copy a mountain or a bit of woodland? For he could not make them understand that color was what seemed to burn in his soul, because that he could not express with charcoal.

A whistle came from down the road, and Catarina saw her brother Francesco beckoning them to hurry.

"They must be ready to begin weaving the garlands!" she exclaimed.

So they broke into a run toward the village inn.

It was the glowing, fragrant June time of the Italian highlands, when the hillsides and meadows of the fertile Dolomite valleys were masses of many colored bloom, and next day the Festival of Flowers was to take place. They had

spent the afternoon blossom hunting, and now, when sunset was crimsoning the peaks, were homeward bound with their spoils, to aid in preparing for the revelry.

In a few minutes, they joined the other young people at the inn, and began making garlands, and planning games and frolics as they worked. Pieve di Cadore was very far from the world in those days of little travel, and when the time of a festival was at hand, the villagers were as light-hearted as the gay Venetians at carnival time. Songs and merry jests went round, and bits of gossip were told to eager listeners.

"Have you heard that Salvator, the miller's son, is going to Venice to study the art of carving?" asked a girl whose tongue kept pace with her hands. "Since his father has become rich, he has given up the idea of having him follow his own trade, and thinks it more elegant to become a sculptor. At first, Salvator didn't fancy it, but when told that an artist may get to be the favorite of a great lord or even of the doge himself, he was much pleased. Won't it be splendid if he becomes a noted man and lives in a fine house? Then we can say, 'Why, he is one of our Cadorini!'"

Sebastiano, whose uncle was a lawyer's clerk in Bergamo, and who knew more of city ways than the other village youths, remarked: "I didn't know he had the love of carving. It takes something beside a rich father to make an artist."

The talkative girl tossed her head.

"That may be!" she retorted. "But no money, no masters; and without them, pray, how can one do anything?"

"So I tell Tiziano when he talks about going to the city to study painting," Catarina broke in. "Father is not rich, and it would be better for him to think about learning cobbling with Luigi."

Peals of laughter followed the announcement, and some one called out, "Tiziano! Why, he hasn't had even a drawing-master. He builds the tower of his castle before he makes the foundation."

Tiziano's face turned very red. He had no teacher, it was true. But he believed he could prove he was worth one if given a chance.

"Oh, if I only had some paints!" he thought. "Maybe they would stop calling me a dreamer, for I am sure I could make a picture, and then perhaps I could go."

But pigments were rare and costly, and though his father was a well-to-do mountaineer, he had no gold to waste in buying colors for a lad who had never been taught to use them, and of course would spoil them.

The next morning, the boy noticed stains on the stone walk made by flowers crushed there the day before. They were bright and fresh as if painted, and it put an idea into his head. He did not speak of it, however, although it was on his mind so much that, when the gaily decked villagers danced on the green, he did not see them, but, as soon as a chance came, he crept from the revelers and went out into the meadows.

Catarina saw him go, and wondered what took him from the merriment. Her curiosity was greater than her desire for fun, so she followed, and overtook him just as he reached a hillside aglow with blossoms.

"What are you doing, Tiziano?" she called.

The boy looked up as if doubtful whether to tell or not. But he knew his sister loved him even though she did criticize his dreaming, and that she would keep his secret.

"I am going to paint a picture," he answered.

For a minute she stood and stared. Then, thinking he was teasing, she retorted: "Of course you are, without any paints!"

But his earnest face told he was not joking.

"I shall use blossoms," he continued, with a wonderful light in his eyes. "See, all the colors are here, and I have found that they will stain. I saw where they did it on the stone walk."

Catarina was not a dreamer like her brother, and never saw pictures where others found only a bit of color, but she believed that what he proposed to do was not impossible, for

she too had noticed the stains on the stone. And she began to think that he must be a very bright lad, for no ordinary one would have thought of it, and that perhaps his wanting to go to Venice was not a wild idea after all. If it was a splendid thing for Salvator, the miller's son, to become a sculptor, would it not be more splendid for Tiziano to paint pictures, and might not Cadore be proud of him too? She had heard the padrone say that no undertaking that fills the heart is impossible to one who has patience and courage and persistence, and that help always comes to those who try to help themselves. So she decided to help Tiziano, even though it was only in the keeping of his secret and the gathering of materials for the work.

So into the fragrant patches they went and began collecting blossoms of every hue—reds, pinks, blues, and purples such as sunset painted on the mountains, and warm yellows and lavenders that the boy saw in the pictures of his fancy. Then they hurried to an old stone house that stood on land owned by their father. It was a vacant house, seldom visited by the family, and never by the villagers, and there, where he would be safe from molestation, he was to paint the picture that they hoped would be the means of taking him to Venice.

Catarina wanted to stay and watch the work, but Tiziano objected.

"I don't want even you to see it until it is finished, because at first it will not seem like a picture."

So she went away and left him outlining with a bit of charcoal on the wall.

For many days afterward, whenever he could steal away without being noticed, he worked with his flower paints. Catarina went over the meadows on feet that seemed to be winged, always watching that none of the villagers saw her put the blossoms in at the window near which her brother worked. So, while each petal made only a tiny stain, and the boy painted with the rapidity of one inspired, he not once

needed to stop for materials.

Little by little the picture grew beneath the magic of his touch, and he and Catarina kept the secret well. Only the flocks pasturing on the fragrant uplands went near the deserted house, so no one knew that a boy was at work there who was destined to win glory for Italy. Little did the villagers dream, as Catarina skipped over the meadows, that the blossoms she gathered were being put to an immortal use.

One evening, when the sun was dipping behind the peaks and the merry voices of shepherds homeward bound with their flocks sounded down from the heights, Tiziano stepped to the door of the house and called to his sister outside.

"It is finished, Catarina, and is the very best that I can do!"

She went dancing in, filled with joy that the task was done; but when she stood in front of the picture, the merriment went out of her face, and she spoke in tones of reverence:

"Oh, Tiziano, a madonna!"

"Yes," he agreed. "A madonna and child, with a boy like me offering a gift. It is what was in my heart, Catarina."

For some minutes she stood there forgetting everything else in the beauty of the fresco. Then, thinking of what it would mean to her brother when the villagers knew he had done such a wonderful thing, she started out to spread the news.

"Come and see!" she called to Luigi, the cobbler, as she hurried past the door where he was sorting his leather. "Tiziano has painted a madonna on the walls of the old stone house."

Word travels fast when it goes by the tongues of villagers, and soon a group of folk moved toward the building where the lad waited. His father, coming down from a day's hunting in the mountains, saw them go, and followed, wondering what was the matter. But by the time he reached the place, such a

crowd had gathered that he could not see the fresco.

Murmurs of "How did he do it!" "Where did he get his paints?" rose on all sides, and every one was so excited that the father could not find out why they were there. Then he heard Tiziano's voice: "I did it with flowers from the hillsides. Catarina gathered them while I worked."

Exclamations of amazement followed, and the village priest, the good padrone, spoke reverently: "With the juices of flowers! Il Divino Tiziano!"

Antonio Vecelli looked about him as if dazed, for he could not believe what he heard.

"Am I mad," he asked a villager who was standing close by, "or did the padrone call my Tiziano 'the divine'?"

"No," came the answer. "You are not mad."

And when they told him the story, and the crowd stepped back that he might see, he, too, thought it a wonderful thing.

Whether or not Salvator, the miller's son, went to the city to study sculpture, no one knows. But Tiziano did go, and the boy of Cadore became the marvel of Venice. There, guided by the master hand of Bellini, he began plying the brushes that were busy for almost eighty years, painting pictures whose glorious coloring has never been equaled, and proving to the mountain folk that it isn't bad, after all, to be a dreamer, for dreams combined with works do marvelous things.

That was back in the olden days, before Columbus sailed westward. But if the father, who thought he had gone mad when the village priest spoke his boy's name as reverently as he would a saint's, could come again to the valley of flowers in the Italian highlands, he would hear the selfsame words that were used that twilight time in speaking of his lad.

"Ecco!" the villagers say, as they point to a noble statue that looks out toward the meadows in which Catarina gathered blossoms for her brother, "Il Divino Tiziano.—See, the divine Titian!"

And by that name the world knows him to this very day.

Correggio

When the Princess Passed

1489-1534 A.D.

The little Italian town was gay in its holiday dress, for the Princess was coming. On this smiling morning of early April Veronica Gambara, flower of the house of Pio, was to ride in state to the palace to become the bride of Ghiberto of Correggio, and it seemed that nature vied with man in welcoming her. Under a sky of turquoise, roses red as flame and yellow as the gold of Ophir bloomed in odorous array. A thousand banners swung like pendant rainbows across the line of march, and a thousand gaudy sashes flashed on the waists of village girls. Mummers sang their blithest melodies, and in gardens beyond the crowd larks trilled to the sun. Yes, it was a fitting day for the union of two lordly houses.

Some one gave a shout and the crowd pressed nearer the street, for the procession was coming, and with eager eyes the people watched the approach of the splendid, stately cavalcade. Now they could see the advance guard of soldiers, now the red uniforms of the outriders, the gilding of the royal coach, and the ivory and purple robes of Veronica, all gorgeous in the sun. Resplendent banners gleamed before and behind her, smiling faces greeted her as she smiled back at them, and cheers rang out the homage of the townsfolk as they nodded to each other saying, "She is well suited to become the Lady of Correggio." But one sturdy peasant lad was gravely silent, although his eyes shone as if they had beheld a vision. He was a stocky, short fellow not quite fourteen, and his name was Antonio Allegri. When the others

hurried to the plaza to join in the festivities, he turned toward the cottage of the village baker—a low, stone, whitewashed building with a trellis of climbing roses and a garden plot where grew artichokes and lentils—and people wondered why he went. But they soon forgot about him in thoughts of other things.

All afternoon merriment ran high in the town of Correggio. Up in the palace great folk sat at the wedding feast, and down in the public plaza the townspeople vented their joy in dancing. Those who could afford a present, sent it as a token of good will to Veronica, while those who had nothing to give gathered wayside flowers and piled them before the altar of the Virgin, praying that a blessing might rest on the head of Ghiberto's bride. Every one paid homage to the Princess by joining in the celebration, every one but the baker's boy. He lay in the shadow of the artichokes behind the whitewashed cottage and seemed to be very busy with something.

Toward sundown Catarina, his sister, came from the place of the dancers and went into the house to add a bit of ribbon to her gown. Her cheeks flamed in the joy of the occasion, for it was a day such as Correggio never had seen, and she was glad it came in her time, instead of before or after it. She wondered about Antonio, who had not been to the plaza throughout the afternoon, and failing to find him in the cottage, stood a moment under the roses that crept over the doorway, and then she saw him at the edge of the garden.

"Fratello mio (brother mine)," she exclaimed, "why do you not dance with us in honor of the Lady Veronica? It is not right that you fail in homage to the Princess."

The sturdy lad in the peasant smock came toward her as she spoke.

"I do not fail," he replied. "I pay homage to the Princess with a picture."

Catarina clapped her hands.

"A picture!" she exclaimed. "Do let me see it."

The boy handed her a charcoal sketch, and she sat down on the step to look at it. She was proud of this brother of hers, whose drawing more than once had caused the townsfolk to open their eyes wide. Almost a year before the schoolmaster declared he had talent and might become a painter some day, and since then he had improved much. Her eyes brightened with pleasure as she studied this sketch, for to her it seemed the finest he had ever made. It was a small drawing, no larger than her two brown hands, but it represented a company of angels scattering flowers and fruit in the path of Veronica Gambara, and every figure was perfectly proportioned and clear. She asked that she might keep it to show to some of her friends, tucked it into her bodice, and together they went to the plaza to join the revelers, where there was to be a feast for the townsfolk provided by Ghiberto in honor of his bride.

Then, gay indeed was the evening! Bonfires were lighted and torches gleamed through the olive trees, turning the artichokes and lentils in the garden patches into fantastic creatures, and dancing feet sped to low, delicious music as accordions swelled and shrank between sensitive, skilful fingers. Now some merry masker broke through the crowd and offered a nosegay to whoever could guess his identity, now a husky village youth gave an exhibition of physical skill, Antonio with the rest. At midnight the festivities ended in a blaze of artificial light, and the people went to their homes to remember the glad holiday through many a year to come, to give to their children and their children's children the story of the time when Veronica came among them as a bride. But little did they know that day was the beginning of something that will be a glory to Correggio as long as the world lasts.

Now it happened that Catarina had a friend who was a sister to one of the guards at the palace. To her she showed the drawing, and the girl, thinking it quite wonderful, took it to the soldier brother, who called his captain's attention to it, and finally it came under the notice of Veronica herself. It

pleased the Princess to be portrayed so delightfully, and amazed her to know it was done by a fourteen-year-old. Like most of the great folk of Italy of that day, she understood art and recognized talent when she found it, and that very afternoon the baker's boy was summoned into her presence.

He was putting loaves into the stone oven when the messenger came with the word, and his ruddy face was redder still from the heat. Upon hearing that the Princess wanted to see him, he believed there must be some mistake, and after he got to the palace wished very much he had not gone. Being short and stocky and rather clumsy, he was much abashed in the presence of the royal lady. He was at home in his father's whitewashed cottage and in the garden patch in the shadow of the artichokes, where he bent over his paper and charcoal through many a summer afternoon, and there he knew just what to do with his hands and feet. But in the palace of Correggio they were woefully in the way, and he wished his peasant costume contained ruffles or pockets or something where he could hide them. But when Veronica Gambara began to talk of pictures, his awkwardness fled. He forgot that he was a baker's son who did not know court ways, and his eyes gleamed as they had gleamed that day when the royal coach went by.

The Lady of Correggio told him of the work of Andrea de Mantegna, a most illustrious artist of Mantua, and of Master Leonardo da Vinci, who was then doing wonderful things in Milan, not far away, and as he listened fascinated, exclaimed, "It is my dream to become a painter!"

Then Veronica smiled that rare smile of hers that had inspired poets to write sonnets and caused men to call her, "The flower of the house of Pio," and answered in a low voice, "I shall help to make that dream come true."

She kept her word. From that day the Lady of Correggio was the friend and patron of the baker boy, and from that day Antonio sketched and painted as he never had done before.

He worked with a mighty purpose, for now that Veronica chose to aid him, he knew his father would not stand in his way and insist that he become a tradesman, as once he had wished him to do. Almost nothing is known of his teachers. His uncle gave him some instruction, but his talent was so great that, almost unguided, it expressed itself in work such as Correggio had never seen.

Then, when seventeen, something happened that proved a blessing in disguise to Antonio Allegri. The plague broke out in his home town, and the royal family and many of the people fled to Mantua for safety. The young artist went with the rest, and there, for the first time in his life, beheld the work of a master painter. He began studying the pictures of Mantegna and learned much that he applied to his own work. Returning to Correggio some months later he toiled steadfastly, and day by day Veronica, who delighted in his improvement, marveled at his progress. Now she was very sure he would become a successful painter, but she did not dream that four centuries after her time people from all over the world would go to the town as to a shrine, not to see the palace where the lords of the land had lived, but to behold the spot where Antonio the baker's boy first stretched his canvases, and where he lived and worked and died. Yet that very thing came to pass.

Strange events sometimes shape the careers of men, and a strange and picturesque one now helped to shape that of Antonio Allegri. In Parma, forty miles away, was the Convent of San Paolo, one of the richest institutions of Italy. Its abbess was Donna Giovanna Piacenza, daughter of a powerful nobleman, and every nun within its walls was from one of the lordly houses of Italy. These women loved beautiful things and could afford to have them around them. The pavements over which they walked were adorned with exquisite tile work, and every year or two some artist was employed to brighten the walls and ceilings with frescoes. One day Abbess Giovanna

made up her mind to have a chamber decorated, and hearing from her friend Veronica Gambara of the excellent work of the young painter of Correggio, decided to employ him. So word came to Antonio that he should go to Parma, and he left the low stone house among the artichokes and started on the way, walking all the distance and carrying his painter's supplies with him.

Those he passed thought him a clumsy country peddler bound for the next village to sell his wares, and when the Abbess Giovanna saw how like a simple peasant he looked, she feared she had made a mistake in entrusting the commission to this crude youth, and wished she had employed a finished artist. But great was her surprise when she beheld the completed chamber, and she exclaimed to her legal adviser, "All Italy will come to honor this favorite of Veronica!"

But Antonio did not hear her words of delight, for he was already on his way back to Correggio, hurrying along the dusty highway toward the whitewashed cottage, rejoicing in the satisfaction of work well done.

This was the beginning of great appointments for him. The beauty of the frescoes in the Convent of San Paolo soon became the talk of Parma, and other commissions were given to the young artist. So back to the city he went, first to paint in the Church of St. John the Evangelist, later in the Cathedral, and again his work amazed all who saw it, just as it had amazed the abbess and the nuns, just as it had amazed Veronica Gambara on that sunny April day. The pearl and gold of his flesh tints, the white and orange and rose of his draperies, were unsurpassed even by the master painters of Italy. Neither Raphael nor Titian of Cadore had produced more exquisite work, and his fame traveled. Orders came to him from princes and nobles, but while he executed them with wonderful success, they did not spoil him. He was a man of simple tastes and went on in the old, simple way. Still he lived and worked in the quiet of his home town, surrounded

by his children and those of his sister Catarina, and only a few times in his life did he leave it. Up in the splendid city of Mantua dwelt the brilliant and beautiful Isabella d'Este, a princess powerful as she was fair. She was the friend of Veronica Gambara, and several times Antonio went to her court. But he was not at home there. He could work better in the peace of Correggio among the peasant folk he had known from childhood, and there he stayed.

At that time Italy was in the full glory of the Renaissance, and not far away were cities where marvelous things were being done, but the baker's son did not visit them. He never saw the Venice of Titian and Tintoretto, the Florence where Giotto and Michael Angelo and Andrea del Sarto wrought their wizardry, the imperial city beside the yellow Tiber where Raphael toiled and achieved. His genius was so great he did not need to seek inspiration in the creations of other men, but found it in the skies of morning and evening, the glory of the sun at midday, and in the deep blue silence of the starry night. Instead of gazing across the lagoons that gladdened the eyes of the Venetian painters, he looked out over a sea of vines where vintagers danced when the harvest was over, where scarlet and purple and orange headshawls of peasant women, bending to their work in the sun, gave him ideas of color. Instead of going far to seek models, the eyes and cheeks and lips of the village girls became his pictured faces, while his cherubs and angels were the laughing children who played in the streets of his native town. Perhaps sometimes he dreamed of journeying to the Milan of Leonardo da Vinci. Perhaps he had visions of some day seeing Rome with its Vatican and Borghese Villa—perhaps, but we do not know. We know only that he stayed on in Correggio, and that at forty years of age he died there, in the cottage with its trellis of climbing roses where for so many years he had lived and worked.

Then, as time passed, people grew to appreciate more and more the genius of Antonio Allegri, and canvases for which

he had received very small sums became priceless. Every lord of the land wanted to possess something by Correggio, for, as was the custom in those days, they called him by the name of his native town. Powerful nobles tried to buy his work from churches and convents that held it, and sometimes, being not for sale, carried it away by force. This happened to "The Holy Night," one of his masterpieces now in the gallery of Dresden. The Duke of Modena tried to obtain it by fair means, and, failing in his aim, seized it by foul, leaving the little town in mourning when he robbed it of its treasure. This glorious painting passed from one lordly house to another, until finally, becoming the property of Augustus of Saxony, it came to be one of the art gems of Germany.

"The Madonna of St. Jerome," generally called "The Day," has a similar story. For many years it remained in the church for which it was painted, until the people, fearing for its safety, placed it in the Cathedral of Parma under guard. But that guard meant nothing to Napoleon Bonaparte, who came with his army and took it, carrying it off to France. But after many years and through much effort, Italy got it back, and to-day it beautifies the duomo (cathedral) from which it was stolen, the very one in which, long before, Antonio set his scaffolding and painted frescoes.

Many galleries in many different lands now glory in the work of Correggio. It is scattered throughout Europe, in Austria-Hungary, Germany, England, France, Spain, and Russia, as well as over Italy, which seems strange indeed when one stops to think that he who painted these pictures was never more than forty miles away from his native town. But in no one place in the world is as much of it to be found as in Parma. The Convent of San Paolo, the municipal gallery, the Church of St. John the Evangelist, and the duomo are all rich in his creations. There they are to be beheld on canvas and in fresco form, all marvelously beautiful, all flooded with that peculiar gold and pearly light, the secret of which was known

to this master only. In this one city his work is to be seen in such glorious array that Ludwig Tieck, the German poet and critic, once exclaimed in wonderment, "Let no one think he has seen Italy, let no one believe he has learned the lofty secrets of art, until he has seen thee and thy cathedral, O Parma!"

By which he means the work of Antonio Allegri, better known as Correggio, the baker boy, who stood with the gleaming eyes of one who has beheld a vision when Princess Veronica Gambara, the flower of the house of Pio, passed on her way to the palace to become the bride of the young Lord Ghiberto.

Tintoretto

Jacopo, the Little Dyer

1518 – 1594 A.D

He was a handsome lad, strong-limbed and sturdy, and although dressed in the dun-colored smock worn only by Venetian youths of low degree, was as happy as if his father had been one of the Council of Ten. For it was sunset time; and from the balcony of the dim apartment that served as the family living-room, he could look out on the canal, flushed then with glorified light.

A girl with laughing eyes, and hands purple-stained from the dye-pots, came running into the room and called his name. But he did not turn, because he did not hear. He was too busy with his thoughts for familiar sounds to disturb him, for just then everything except the beauty of the shimmering lagoon was crowded out of his mind, and he saw only the amethysts and opals that flashed at every ripple.

The girl was not held spellbound by the wizardry of the sunset. She was just a child of the tintori (the dyers), and she never had fancies beyond those of the money the dyeing would bring, and the trinkets she might buy, and thought it far better to talk of the good fortune come to them that day, than to stand gazing out on the canal. So she went up and shook him violently.

"Jacopo!" she exclaimed. "Jacopo Robusti! Wake up, boy! Don't you know that this is a great day for us? Now that the Dogaressa has sent her goods to be colored, other great folk are sure to patronize this shop, and before long your father will be the most prosperous dyer in Venice. Surely you know

that, Jacopo!"

The boy turned slowly, as if reluctant to take his eyes from the glowing canal. For now that the heat was over, gondolas were beginning to glide by, and snatches of song came from the lips of the light-hearted rowers. The music, the color, and the swanlike motion of the boats belonged together, and Jacopo loved it all. But no matter how strong its allurement, it could not hold him after his cousin came into the room. For she was a persistent maid, and always kept nagging until she had her way.

"I know," he replied, "and also that the work must be ready to-morrow night, which means that I'll have to stay at home and help, instead of going out on the Canalezzo to see the sunset."

Floria frowned at him.

"The idea of thinking of anything but your father's good fortune!" she rebuked. "The sun goes down every night, and the canal will always be there. But we've never had work from the Dogaressa before, and you ought to be glad to stay at home and lend a hand. Come and look at the stuff. It is silk from the Indies, and will be colored crimson."

The odor of boiling dye came in through the open door, and his father's voice called just then. Jacopo knew there was no more standing on the balcony for him, so he followed Floria into the shop that, its walls gay with pictures in fresco fashion, adjoined the living-room; and soon they were at work grinding the colors that were to transform the creamy silk of the Indies into a gorgeous crimson fit for the court robe of a Venetian lady. Robusti the elder was rolling up some material colored that day, while the apprentice tintori, their arms mottled from the dipping, were finishing up the last bit of work. Dust from the grinding pigments and steam from the boiling vats filled the place; and as Jacopo worked, he thought how pleasant it must be on the canal, with odors from many a walled garden wafting across it, and the soft singing of lithe-

limbed gondoliers. But he was a true Venetian lad, and, when the father spoke, had no thought save that of obedience. That is why the walls were so brightly tinted. For often when his heart was out on the lagoons and he had to stay at home and help, he filled the intervals between watching the pots and turning the coloring fabrics by making charcoal sketches and tinting them with dyes.

There were dozens of such pictures; here a bit of sea with a sunset sky like a painted canopy above the white-sailed galleys, and there a lord of Venice, gaily robed as Venetian nobles were in those golden days. Scattered among them were groups of tintori, like his father and his father's men, with dye-bespattered arms, and smocks as many colored as Joseph's coat, and sometimes there were snatches of fairy landscape across which fantastic figures flitted, just as in the pictures of his fancy. For when the soul is as full of beautiful things as an overflowing river, some of them are sure to get out where people will see.

The next morning every member of the Robusti household was up before the ringing of the matin-bells. The apprentice tintori came early too, and soon the pots were steaming and a hum of work was about the shop. For the silk had been promised for that evening, and to disappoint the Dogaressa would be ruinous indeed. It would mean that never again would great folk patronize the place, and that would be a calamity, for great folk paid well. So all hands worked with a vim, the men turning and stirring while the dyer directed, Jacopo and Floria both lending a hand. There was water to be brought, and refuse liquor to be carried away, which they could do as well as any one.

Evening came and all was finished, and although Jacopo had not had a chance to go out on the canal, he was so interested that he forgot to be disappointed. The costume-maker who was coming to pass upon the work might arrive any minute, and Jacopo wanted to hear what he had to say. Of course

it was perfectly done, but so much depended upon the success of that dyeing that all looked forward eagerly to hearing the words of approval.

"How splendid it will be when he says it is all right!" Floria exclaimed, as she danced around the table where the sheeny stuff was piled in crimson billows. "Word will go out all over Venice, and nobles will give us their patronage."

And Robusti the elder smiled at her, for he knew that she spoke the truth. But Jacopo said nothing. He was busy drawing on the wall.

Sweetly across the lagoons the Angelus sounded, and for a minute all was quiet in the shop. Jacopo paused from his drawing, and laughing-eyed Floria did not finish her dance, for always those of the Robusti household were faithful in their devotions, and because of gratitude over their good fortune they were more fervid than usual.

Then the inspector came, with pompous bearing and speech abounding in high-sounding words, pronouncing the work perfect, and the Robusti family knew it was the beginning of wonderful things for them. But one blessing it brought of which they had not dreamed, beside which the glory of dyeing the Dogaressa's robe was poor indeed. That faded and wore out, but the other glory, that had its beginning that day, has lasted through five hundred years. For as the inspector turned to go, he saw the figures on the wall.

"Oh, ho!" he exclaimed. "A gay shop you have here. And who is the merry painter, pray?"

Robusti the elder answered in words of apology.

"I do not wonder that you think such walls unfit for a dignified business, and assure you that it is none of my doing. My boy Jacopo defaced them when he had better have been thinking of his trade."

Jacopo turned his wide dark eyes on the man, wondering if he too would reprove him because of his picture-making. He had been scolded so often for wasting his time, and

supposed of course the costume-maker would share the family opinion. But he met with a surprise.

"That sturdy chap yonder?" the man asked. "I've a knowledge of pictures, and this work seems from the hand of one well-nigh grown."

"I did it," Jacopo answered, "but not because I wanted to spoil the shop. I had no other place."

The inspector shook his head.

"I would not have believed it!" he said. "Surely he has the gift."

Then to the father:

"Mayhap your lad will become a good dyer, but he will make a far better artist; and if you are wise, you will set about apprenticing him to a painter. There is Titian of Cadore, the flower of Venetian colorists. Before another day passes, I would see him and beg that he try the boy."

Robusti the dyer was a sensible man. Although there were no horses in Venice, he had lived in Ravenna once, and knew if a steed is built for speed and much travel, it is a mistake to set him to drawing loads. And he was wise enough to realize that, if one has a gift for painting, it is sad indeed to keep him in a dye-shop. The inspector's word meant much, and, as he thought the boy should become an artist, it must be true. So it was decided to place him with a master.

"He shall have a chance to do his best," the father said, as they talked it over that night, "for it shall not be charged to me that I spoiled a good painter to make a second-rate dyer."

The next morning Jacopo and his father set out for the workshop of Titian of Cadore. The pearl-gray of dawn was still over the city, but, through the open spaces between the buildings, reflected rays from the out-peeping sun reached arms of light along the canals. Across the Piazza of San Marco they went, under the clock-tower whose two bronze giants glowed and shimmered, and into the Merceria, where there was a Babel of sound as the merchant folk opened their shops.

But they did not stop to look at the pretty things nor to gossip with the loiterers gathered there, although the boy would have liked to pause a bit before the pictures the men on the benches were painting. But there was no time to lose, as the dyer must soon return to his shop. So straight on they went, across the curving Rialto and down the narrow street beyond, where, taking a boat, they came to the studio of the master.

"Will you try the boy?" the dyer asked, as he explained that the worthy costume-maker himself had recommended a painter's career for him. And in answer the great man told him to come next day and begin work.

Jacopo's heart sang all the way home, and he worked in the shop that afternoon as he had never worked before. For even though he did not like the half-sickening odors and the perpetual steaming of the boiling liquid, he knew he would enter a wonder-world on the morrow, and until that time things disagreeable mattered little. Floria had never seen him so gay, and remarked to her uncle that he was surely the happiest boy in Venice.

"It shows he can be contented at dyeing," she said.

For still she believed that to be of the tintori was better than to be a painter.

But the man shook his head.

"No," he replied, "it is the thought of what is to come that makes him glad."

Jacopo began his work with the master, and Heaven seemed to have opened its gates to him. Titian then had many canvases in his workshop, and the beauty-loving lad drank in the magic of their coloring as thirsty travelers drink from cooling springs, his eyes reveling in the gold and purples and crimsons that surpassed everything he had ever seen except the sunset tints on the lagoons. The working days in the studio were long, yet he was never glad when they came to an end, and always looked eagerly to the beginning of another. It was an enchanted land in which he dwelt, and he was a fairy

prince.

But his joy was to be short-lived, for very soon afterward the master sent him away. Why, no one knows, although many guesses have been made as to the reason, and some have gone so far as to say that Titian was jealous of the gifted youth and feared he might eclipse him. But it does not seem possible that the master-painter of Italy could have feared a mere boy, for he was great enough to know that there is room in the world for more than one genius. But at any rate he sent him away, and dark days began for Jacopo.

Many a lad would have given up and gone back to the dye-shop, but not Robusti's son. He was made of the stuff that wins, and every obstacle in his way goaded him on to greater effort. The greatest master of Venice had refused to teach him. But he determined to teach himself, and the struggle he had in doing it has never been equaled by an artist before or since.

Along the Merceria were elevated benches where the poorer painters sat and did their work before the eyes of the passing throng, selling it sometimes while the canvases were still wet. There Jacopo went day after day, to watch them mix and apply the colors. Once he worked with journeymen printers at San Marco, and once with stone-masons at Cittadella that he might learn the principles of joining. To know the laws of proportion, he watched the people in the streets and modeled them in wax, moving these figures back and forth between lamps to watch the effect of the shadows.

For ten years he struggled on, always studying, always watching and working. It would have been easier to have taken up his father's trade, for in the dye-shop, when the day's toil is over, there follows a night of rest. But Jacopo thought only of being a painter, and was bound to succeed. So he kept on. All the work that paid well was given to Titian, and that Jacopo might get his pictures where people could see them, he had to paint for nothing. But that did not matter. He was

learning and growing, and at last he had his day.

Titian died, and all Venice wondered who would take his place.

"There is no one else," the critics said sadly. "His like will not come again."

But one of the nobles who was wise enough to know that when a work is to be done there is always a man to do it, thought of Jacopo Robusti.

"Why not Tintoretto?" asked this one, whose word was law. And by Tintoretto he meant Jacopo, who because of his father's trade was called "The Little Dyer."

"We will go and see," they said. "And it will be a glad day if he can take the master's place."

So the great of Venice gathered about the paintings of one who had given his work to every church and building that would receive it. In Santa Maria della Orto they found it, in shops along the Merceria, and out Treviso way in village churches where peasants met to worship.

"It is wonderful!" they exclaimed. "What magnificent coloring! What perfection of line! Surely this is the work of the master."

For they did not know that, during the years they had scorned him, his one thought and one aim had been to make his pictures as fine as Titian's, and he had succeeded so well that they mistook them for the master's.

Then it was agreed that he should paint in the Doge's Palace, the greatest honor that could come to a Venetian artist. And there he left much work that still draws to the city of St. Mark art lovers from every quarter of the globe. There is his exquisite "Adoration of the Savior," and there too is the wonderful "Paradise," the largest oil-painting in the world.

But Venice is not the only city that is rich in his handiwork. Many galleries in many lands have given princely sums to obtain it, and his canvases have been carried to France and Germany, and even to the banks of the Thames, where, in the

stately halls they adorn, they give joy to thousands, although the hand that fashioned them has been still for five hundred years. Yet very few know the name of Jacopo Robusti, because to this day, as in the old Venetian time, he is still called in the musical tongue of the lagoons, "Tintoretto—The Little Dyer."

Guido Reni

The Light of Guido's Lamp

1575 – 1642 A.D.

The street was as silent as a deserted place, for it was midnight, and the only human sound that broke the velvet stillness was the slow, measured tread of Cambisti the town crier, as he tramped up and down on his beat. Now he cast eye along the via at the homes of the populace, now across toward the Gothic towers of the Bolognini Palace, that rose ghostly gray among the chestnut trees, crying "All's well! All's well!" And all was well, for the ducal guards were alert in every danger place, and the people of Bologna slept.

Suddenly he stopped and stared with wondering eyes. Out from a window above him shone a streak of light, not strong and brilliant, like the gleam of the many tapers Bologna folk used to brighten their festive halls, but a weak, pale ray, as if from a single fat lamp. It came from the home of Reni the musician, and the crier thought it strange, for he knew Master Daniele had gone early to his house that evening, saying he was tired and wanted to get to rest.

"Mayhap some one is ill and needs ministering unto," he thought. And that he might not disturb a suffering one, he went quietly down the street without calling out in his accustomed way.

The next morning he met Master Reni in the Piazza del Nettuno, and asked him the meaning of the lamp in the night. The musician seemed much surprised.

"What do you mean?" he questioned. "No one was ill in my house and no lamp burned there."

But when Cambisti insisted he had seen a gleam from the window, Daniele looked frightened.

"Can it be that thieves were in," he exclaimed, and asked the crier to go with him and find out.

But there was no trace of pilfering in the house. Nothing was missing nor had been disturbed, and then the musician laughed heartily at the watchman.

"A fine employee of the duke you are," he teased. "You sleep on your beat and see things in dreams. It must be so, for now I am convinced that no light burned in my house last night."

Although Cambisti did not understand it, he did not press the subject. He had no liking for being the butt of any man's jokes, and he knew the ray from Master Reni's window was no dream light. He made up his mind to watch again, for the musician's conduct had aroused his suspicions, and he wondered if his fear of thieves had been feigned. It might be that some dark plot was being concocted there, for certain men of the populace had lately berated the ruling of the Duke of Bologna, and although Master Daniele was not suspected of being of the number, he would watch and find out, as befitted a town crier. So as soon as darkness fell, he betook him to the street by the musician's house. Three times, five, seven, he walked to the spot and peered up at the window from which the light had shone the night before, but not the faintest ray pierced the darkness. He decided that pilferers had gone there, and finding nothing to their liking, departed without leaving any trace—or, as Master Reni had said, maybe he had slept on his beat and dreamed of the light. And thus musing, he started down the street.

Just then the hour bell in the castle tower rang, and turning in the direction of the sound he happened to look toward the Reni windows. His eyes opened wide, and he stood and stared, for shining out, just as it had shone the night before, was a pale, faint light. "So," he murmured. "Cambisti does not

dream on his beat, after all, as Master Reni shall learn."

And hurrying up to the door, he rattled the knocker.

The musician was sleeping soundly when the thumping on the sash awakened him, and as he detested being roused from sleep, he went scowling and grumbling to the door.

"What idiot comes at this hour to disturb an honest man's rest?" he muttered as he thrust back the bolt.

"Master Daniele," Cambisti said in a whisper, "just step outside and find out whether I dream of lights or see them."

Reni was thoroughly awake now, and a little alarmed. Still, he half believed the man had turned demented.

"It would be small wonder if he had," he thought as he followed him down the steps, "with twenty years of town crying."

But suddenly that idea went out of his head. No, the night watch was in full possession of his senses. A light shone from the window just as he had said. Thieves must be abroad, and he shivered, for the ray came from his little son's room.

"And he but a baby, too," he thought.

They held a whispered consultation about what to do, decided to summon help, and go to the place where the light burned. So Reni ran to the house of a neighbor and Cambisti to call some soldiers of the guard. It would be folly for an unarmed citizen and a town crier who was no longer young to go into the house alone, for well they knew the terrible nature of the dreaded Bologna banditti, who were skilled in the use of sword and halberd and whose blows were swift and sure. Such men did not venture into possible danger without being prepared for it, and they who surprised them in their evil doing must be strong and ready, for it meant a battle.

Five minutes later six soldiers, the night watch, and the two citizens crept up the narrow stairway that led from the street. They were not cowards, these men of Bologna, yet they trembled a bit at the thought of the possible fate that awaited them in the lighted room. Cautiously, silently moving, they

reached the door, and each poised his weapon ready to strike as Cambisti thrust it open.

Then, what a sight met their eyes! In the middle of the floor, smiling as if the joy of the world were in his heart, a curly-haired child bent over a paper, drawing by the light of a fat lamp. It was Reni's nine-year-old son, and he was so absorbed in what he was doing that he did not see the group standing behind him, or turn from his work until his father exclaimed, "Guido!"

Then he glanced up, and noticing the armed men, looked in a startled way from one to the other. But before he could ask what it meant, Daniele Reni questioned sharply, "What are you doing there?"

A look of terror flashed across his face, for his father's angry voice and the presence of the soldiers were something he could not understand. He caught up the paper over which he had been bending as if it were a precious thing, and his lip quivered as he answered, "Making pictures."

Daniele Reni was more severe than ever.

"Where did you get that lamp?" he demanded.

Guido did not drop his eyes as if he felt guilty and had something to conceal, but looked steadily into his father's face, replying, "I bought it with my birthday money. Uncle Vittorio told me to spend it for the thing I liked best."

The musician walked close, looking sternly at his son.

"A fine way for you to make a laughing stock of me!" he thundered. "Now get you back to bed."

And blowing out the light, he took the lamp with him, and he and his companions went down-stairs, while the child behind in the dark wondered what it all meant.

As soon as they were beyond Guido's hearing Cambisti and the soldiers laughed uproarously, but Reni did not share their merriment. He scowled and frowned as they talked, picturing to himself how the townsfolk would jeer him when the word was noised abroad.

"It's no mirthful thing to me!" he exclaimed. "That lad cares for nothing but drawing. I wish him to be a musician, which is the calling of the men of my house, but he seems worthless and will not stay at the harpsichord. Thinking to break him of his everlasting picture-making I took paper away from him, but he marked on the walls at night. Then his mother hid the lamp and made him go to bed in the dark, but he has contrived to get another and some more drawing stuff, and what I am to do with him baffles me."

The soldiers nodded sympathetically, and Cambisti and the neighbor went away, thankful that God had sent them daughters instead of boys who might worry them as young Guido worried Daniele.

At that time Bologna was the seat of one of the most elegant and cultured courts of Italy. Nowhere were there finer concerts than in the great hall of the Bolognini Palace, nowhere were there nobler paintings, more exquisite statues, or more splendid tapestries than those possessed by the ducal family. The lord of the province was a lover of art, and creators in every line were invited to his capitol. Thus it happened that Daniele Reni, whose musical ability was recognized throughout Bologna, was summoned to the royal seat one day to assist with his bagpipes at a concert. It was less than a week after they found Guido drawing in the night, and his wife suggested that he take the lad with him.

"Perhaps the fine music he hears will lead him to care for the harpsichord," she remarked as she made the proposition.

Daniele nodded agreement, thinking it a good idea, and a few hours later when he went to the royal residence young Guido trotted along beside him.

The boy was very happy in the thought of going to the palace, and his father was pleased, for he believed the idea of hearing the splendid music delighted him. But although Master Reni was a good piper he was a poor guesser, and did not know what was in his son's mind. If he had, he would have

left him at home.

To the lad the trip meant a sight of glorious pictures, a glimpse of the works of the master painters of Italy. He knew the Duke of Bologna loved music, but he knew he loved color too, and that was why his eyes gleamed so pleasurably as he and his father hurried along the via.

They did not stop to look at any of the sights along the way, although it was Maytime and the gardens were gay in their blossom dresses. Rapidly they walked along the broad Via Castiglione, past the rich gateways and imposing colonnades of the Pepoli Palace, until the spacious piazza of Santo Stefano spread out before them. Beyond, majestic in its Gothic splendor, was the Bolognini Palace, set in the midst of a park whose beauty was celebrated from the Alps to the Bay of Naples. Daniele Reni told his son he might play under the trees until a page summoned him into the concert hall, for a rehearsal was to precede the performance, and he wanted the boy to hear the music in its perfection rather than in the crudity of the making.

Young Guido liked the idea much, for there was many a fountain and grotto and bit of copse-wood there that he wanted to examine. In his delight at finding so many interesting things he forgot that he had been told to stay close to the Santo Stefano entrance, and began to ramble about as if he had the entire day to spend in the garden. Now it was a sculptured fountain that claimed his attention, now a trellised path along which ladies of the castle went on their way to the bath, now an aviary where tropical birds flashed their gorgeous plumage, vying in color and splendor with the roses and pomegranate flowers beyond.

Now it happened that the Lord of Bologna not only patronized artists by inviting them to give concerts at the palace and embellishing his halls with their work, but sometimes he gave them apartments and board and keep, that they might be free to create unworried by the thought of rent and

food bills. Not long before Dionisio Calvart, a famous Flemish painter, had established a workshop and school under the protection of the beauty-loving noble, and young Guido, in the course of his ramble, came upon his studio.

The lad felt that he had entered a wonderland. His eyes flashed as he saw the marvels of brush and color there, his face brightened as if electrified, and one of Dionisio's pupils, seeing the delight which his every look and gesture expressed, called the teacher.

Calvart turned from his canvas and looked at the boy, who was standing before a madonna, making strokes with his hands as if they held an imaginary brush, studying every line and hue of the pictured face.

"What are you doing?" the painter asked kindly, wondering at such interest being shown by one so young.

Guido turned toward him with wonder-wide eyes.

"Oh, the picture!" he exclaimed. "If only I could paint like that! If only father would let me try!"

Master Calvart left his work and went over to where the lad stood.

"Do you want to be a painter?" he asked.

Guido nodded.

"Indeed I do. But father is a musician, and says I must be one too. He took my things away so I couldn't draw any pictures but those I made in the dust. Then Uncle Vittorio gave me some birthday money, and I bought a lamp and paper and worked at night. But he took that, too, before I had a chance to finish my drawings."

And he pulled from his blouse a roll of papers and held them up for the artist to see.

Calvart examined them curiously, and asked how old he was.

"Nine last week," Guido replied. "My birthday is just past."

Again the man looked at the drawings, murmuring, "Only

nine! The wonder of it!"

His approval was so evident to the pupils that they turned from their work and gazed from boy to master, eager to know what he would say next.

There was a sound of footsteps in the corridor outside, and a moment later the duke came into the studio. All rose to greet him, and Calvart put the drawings into his hand.

"See what this boy has done," he said. "He tells me he is just nine."

Little Guido was much surprised. Were they very good or very bad, he wondered, that the painter showed them to the duke.

The Lord of Bologna understood art as well as he loved it. For a moment he studied the drawings, then spoke in a kindly voice.

"You did them without help?" he asked.

"Yes, sire," Guido replied.

Then, as other questions were put, he told the story of his struggle to draw.

"So you are the son of Daniele Reni?" the noble remarked. "Well, we will see about it."

Suddenly Guido happened to remember he was to have waited in the park near the Santo Stefano gate.

"Oh!" he exclaimed in dismay. "Father will be angry with me. Maybe he has sent for me already."

The Duke of Bologna laid his hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Have no fear," he spoke. "I'll take you to your father, and I promise you he will not be angry with you."

So together they went, and imagine the surprise of Daniele Reni, just as the pipers were beginning the opening number, to see his boy Guido enter the music hall with the Lord of Bologna. And both man and child smiled happily, so it could not be that he had gotten into mischief about the castle. What did it mean?

He did not have to wonder long, for the duke stopped the

concert to ask him a question.

"Is this your son, Reni?" he inquired.

"Yes," the amazed man answered.

The noble turned to the boy.

"Now tell him, and tell him the truth," he said. "Do you want to be an artist or a musician?"

Young Guido's eyes darkened with earnestness as he spoke.

"Sire, I want to be a painter," came the reply.

Then, turning to the father, the duke asked, "What think you of it, Daniele?"

The man at the bagpipe shook his head.

"It is my wish that he be a musician and follow the calling of the men of my house, which to my notion is a most noble one."

The great noble mused for a moment, while the people wondered what would happen next. He was a kindly man, and wanted to persuade, even though he had the authority to command. So he said gently, "To be sure, yours is a noble calling, but that of the painter is noble also, and since your boy shows such aptitude for being a son of brush and canvas, why not let him follow his desire and become one?"

It was a difficult moment for the father, for ever since Guido was born he had dreamed he would be a musician, a better and more successful one than he had been, and hopes of years are not put aside easily. But he was a sensible man, and a kindly one, and although his eyes were sad his face held a smile as he answered, "So be it, for I have no wish to warp my boy's career. A painter he shall become, if only he will be a good one."

"That only the years can prove," the duke replied, "but it is my belief that they will tell a wonderful story."

Thus, young Guido Reni came to be apprenticed to the artist Calvart. Thus, as an old-time biographer says, "He passed from the concert of voice to the concert of colors."

Rich, eventful days followed that morning when he roamed from the Bolognini garden into the studio of the palace, for his passion for work and the rapidity of his progress was amazing to teacher and fellow pupils. Soon he began to draw from reliefs and from life, and four years later, when only thirteen, had advanced so far that Calvart appointed him to teach, and it seemed that the prophecy of the Lord of Bologna would be fulfilled.

By the time he was eighteen he painted backgrounds for all the pictures in the studio, and often his work, after being slightly retouched, was sold as the master's own. His fellow pupils thought he had learned all it was possible for an art student to learn, but Guido had no such idea. He knew there are no play places on the road to success, and constantly he toiled and studied. He visited other studios, especially that of the Caracci Brothers, then among the most illustrious painters of Italy, observing all that was best in their work and striving to put it into his own. After a time Calvart became jealous of the pupil who already excelled him, criticized his pictures unkindly, and one day rubbed out his most careful work. Guido knew it was far better than much that had won the master's praise, and could not bear such injustice. So he fled from the studio and became a pupil of the Caracci.

From that time forth his progress was almost phenomenal. He began filling orders, and his work was so pleasing to his patrons that they wanted him to paint other pictures and still others, until it seemed he would eclipse the Caracci even as he had eclipsed Calvart. In fact, one day when Ludovicio was instructing him how to paint the flesh of little children, Annibale, one of the brothers, cried, "Do not teach that fellow so much, or some day he will know more than the whole of us! He is never contented, but continually searches into new matters. Remember, Ludovicio, some day this fellow will make you sigh."

And the prophecy came true. In a very short time young

Guido Reni was the glory of Bologna, and then he went to Rome, where he worked as steadily and painstakingly as he had worked in the studio of Calvart. One idea he kept ever before him—the perfect picture—and no matter how splendid a work seemed, or how much praise it received from patrons and critics, he would not let it leave his hand as long as he saw the tiniest detail that could be improved.

Believing his chosen calling to be the noblest in the world, he tried to make every effort worthy of it. He was proud of being of the brotherhood of painters, and had no patience with those of his colleagues who fawned at the feet of royalty, grateful for any favor the high born chose to bestow. One day he was walking with the sculptor Cordiere, who suddenly stepped into the street and ambled along beside the coach of Cardinal Borghese, to tell him of some work he was doing. Guido refused to join him, and when his friend returned to his side, berated him soundly for having acted like a menial.

"How can you expect to win the esteem of the Pope and the highest in the land," he said, "since you trot so contentedly after a cardinal's carriage? Such conduct is not seemly for men of our profession."

Hundreds of commissions came to him in Rome, among them being one to fresco the casino of the Rospigliosi Palace. Guido went to work with all his wonted zeal, determined to create something finer than he had done before, and he succeeded so triumphantly that when the task was finished all of Rome marveled at his achievement, just as the world has marveled at it ever since. For he had painted "The Aurora," that glorious masterpiece in which the god of day, attended by a group of dancing Hours, dashes along in his chariot beside a turquoise sea to usher in the morning. Yes, the years were telling their story, just as the Lord of Bologna believed they would.

This great fresco established Guido as the idol of Italy and the master painter of his day. Commissions came to him in

such numbers that he could not execute half of them, while many other artists were idle. And so it was throughout his long, eventful career. One brilliant success followed another. One noble creation paved the way for something nobler, and like one inspired he toiled and achieved. Often he had to contend with the jealousies of less gifted painters, but usually the kindliness of his nature overcame them. He was courted like a lord of the land—in fact, the mightiest of Italy paid him homage, and once, as he returned to Rome from a visit to Bologna, the carriages of princes and cardinals met him at the Ponte Molle, on the Flaminian Way, each vying with the other for the honor of bearing him into the capital. The high born of the Imperial City pointed with pride to his house, saying, "Yonder lives Master Reni, the painter."

When he died his body was borne to its resting place amid pomp and ceremony seldom seen even in Rome, the pompous city. Knights and prelates in splendid attire, laborers and artisans, men, women, and children of all ranks and ages, thronged the street through which the procession moved on its way to the church of San Domenico—"So many," one of the old chroniclers states, "that the like of it was never seen before, not even when Rome celebrated its deliverance from the plague." Every one mourned the passing of the artist and man, for he had been kindly, charitable, and magnanimous, and numbered friends among all classes. Thousands that day thought of the kind deeds done and favors granted by him, who, though lionized by all of Italy, never lost his graciousness and human sympathy. And men think of them still as they marvel at the beauty of his works.

Thus, the years told a wonderful story. Thus, through the glory of his pictures, the light of Guido's lamp shines down the ages, and helps to brighten the world to-day, just as three centuries ago the ray beheld by the night watchman gleamed through the darkness of old Bologna town.

Washington Irving

Author of Rip Van Winkle, Legend of Sleepy Hollow

1783 – 1859 A.D.

"Please, your Honor, here's a bairn was named after you." Lizzie, the Scotch nurse, pushed into the shop, dragging a short-legged boy by the arm till they were close to the President's side. "Here's a bairn was named after you," she repeated encouragingly. And then President Washington knew what she meant, and laid his hand on the child's tumbled hair in blessing. The boy who received that blessing was Washington Irving. He lived near-by, at 128 William Street, below Fulton Street, in New York City. Eight children were crowded into that two-story city house: William, Ann, Peter, Catharine, Ebenezer, John, Sarah, and Washington. Over the brood presided a stern father, with his "Catechism" and "Pilgrim's Progress"— and a gentle mother who loved and understood.

Doubtless, as the years advanced, that mother knew that her youngest child, Washington, would learn, like all other children, from every source that claimed his interest. Though he was taught hardly more than his alphabet, in the queer little school in Ann Street, he was taught much else by life in the city. He used to "haunt the pier-heads in fine weather" to watch the ships "fare forth" with lessening sails; and there at the wharves, from the smell of salt water, the call of sea birds, and the flapping canvas, he was learning a love of adventure, and was even planning to sail away as his father had done before the War. At home, he trained himself to the hardships of a sailor's life by eating salt pork, fat and greasy—a thing he

loathed; and by getting out of bed at night to lie on the hard floor. Monkey-like, he was learning to climb from roof to roof of the city houses for the pure fun of dropping mysterious stones down mysterious chimneys, and clambering back, half giddy, but chuckling at the wonder he had roused, for he was always a roguish lad. From the queerly-dressed Dutch people, with their queerer language, he was learning that there were other lands besides his own. From the highvaulted roof of Trinity Church, with its darkness and beauty and deep-swelling music, he was learning that there were other religions than the strict Scotch Presbyterianism of his father. He even learned, in time, that dancing and the theater, both forbidden by that father, had their own charms; and he secretly took lessons in the one and let himself down from the attic window to go to the other— always timing himself exactly, to be back at nine for prayers. And then upstairs again and off, by the wood-shed roof, to the ground—and the play.

"Oh, Washington, if you were only good!" the dear impulsive mother used to say. And, yet, in her secret heart, she must have felt that the child was "good" who was always sweet and sunny and loving.

Perhaps it was because she shared his thirst for adventure that she won his confidence. Not allowed by his father to read "Robinson Crusoe" and "Sinbad the Sailor," Washington used to read them at night in bed, or under his desk at school. He liked those books better than his book of sums; such stories carried him into the wild world of his longing, and partly quenched his thirst for adventure—a taste that lasted a lifetime.

In 1800, when Irving was seventeen, he made his first voyage up the Hudson to Albany. In those days, a journey from New York to Albany was like a journey to Europe to-day. Washington's older sisters—Ann and Catharine, who had married young, were living near Albany, and he was to visit them. Boy-like, he packed his trunk at the first mention of the

trip; but, as the sloop would not sail without a certain amount of freight and a certain number of passengers, he unpacked and re-packed many times before her cargo was ready and the wonderful journey began.

To almost any one, that first sail through the Hudson Highlands is a dream of beauty; to Irving, it was a marvel and a rapture. The stern mountains, crowned with forests; the eagles, sailing and screaming; the roar of "unseen streams dashing down precipices"; and then the anchoring at night in the darkness and mystery of the overhanging cliffs, and drifting asleep to the plaintive call of the whippoor-will—it was all new to the worshiping city boy, who had never left the New York streets before, except to wander in the woods with dog and gun.

That journey was the beginning of his many travels. Though he went into Mr. Hoffman's office the next year to study law, he did not continue long at the work. An incessant cough soon developed into consumptive tendencies, and, in July 1803, his employer, who loved him like a father, invited him to join a party of seven on a trip to Canada.

The hardships of this journey, however, were a poor medicine. Beyond Albany, they traveled mainly by wagons, over roads so bad and through woods so thick, that they often had to get out and walk. "The whole country was a wilderness," writes Irving. "We floated down the Black River in a scow; we toiled through forests in wagons drawn by oxen; we slept in hunters' cabins, and were once four-and-twenty hours without food; but all was romance to me."

Naturally, when he returned home, his family found him worse rather than better. Accordingly, feeling that something must be done to save him, the older brothers put their money together—William, who was best able, giving the greatest share—and engaged his passage on a ship sailing for Bordeaux, May 19, 1804. "There's a chap who will go overboard before we get across," hinted the captain, eying Irving

suspiciously.

On ship, his sleeping-quarters were in the cabin with sixteen others "besides the master and mate." "I have often passed the greater part of the night walking the deck," Washington wrote to William; and again: "When I cannot get a dinner to suit my taste, I endeavor to get a taste to suit my dinner." His letters breathe a spirit of gaiety and are hopefully full of his own physical improvement, for he was never a man to complain. His worries were for others. Of his sister Nancy's health he wrote: "I wish to Heaven I had her with me… The rude shocks of the Western winters she has to encounter are too violent for a delicate constitution that is at the mercy of every breeze."

And yet his trip was not all joy: now we read of his Christmas at sea, in a dull, pouring rain, with the captain snoring in his berth; now of a "villainous crew of pirates" who attacked the ship.

After Irving reached port, life, like the sea, seemed smoother; but now he fell a prey to the tempting distractions of travel. His greatest fault was, no doubt, a lack of steadiness of aim. Like a bee, he flew from flower to flower, wherever honey seemed the sweetest. To be sure, he had gone abroad for his health; but his brothers, who had sent him, expected him to turn the time and money to some definitely good account. For a short time the art galleries in Rome fired him with an ambition to "turn painter", for he loved wild landscapes and color, declaring that "cold, raw tints" gave him rheumatism. This art craze, however, amounted to a mere temporary dabbling, like his study of two other subjects. Though his expense-book gives account of two months' tuition in French and of the purchase of a Botanical Dictionary, we do not picture Irving as studying either French or botany very hard. His social instincts were a real impediment to any study. William, in bitter disappointment, declared that he was scouring through Italy in too short a time, "leaving Florence

on the left and Venice on the right" for the sake of "good company." In fact, the younger brother's bump of sociability was very large. In Paris, according to his diary, he went to the theater five nights in succession; we do not imagine that he went alone. In London he met Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles. Fascinated with foreign life and foreign people, he hated the student side of travel, and was frankly tired of palaces and cathedrals. All his countries were *peopled*. That is why "Bracebridge Hall" and the "Sketch Book" are so alive.

We are not surprised, then, to find that on his return to New York he plunged into society life, though he still continued his life as an author, begun before he went to Europe. As a partner of Paulding and of William Irving, he issued in twenty numbers a series of brilliant and original papers called "Salmagundi." These were reprinted in London, in 1811.

While Irving was abroad, the harsh news of his father's and his sister Nancy's death had come, so that on his return we must picture him as living alone with his mother in the old house (now torn down) on the corner of William and Ann Streets. There he wrote his "Letters of Jonathan Oldstyle," "Salmagundi," and "History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker."

Right in the midst of this work came the most terrible bereavement of Irving's life. Under the encouragement of his employer, the fatherly Mr. Hoffman, Irving had attempted to continue the study of the law. Through Mr. Hoffman's friendship, too, and the openness of his hospitable home, the young man had learned a great deal on another subject. He had learned to love Mr. Hoffman's young daughter, Matilda. She was hardly more than a beautiful child, but he loved her for all that she was, and for all that she promised to be. Just when their love was happiest, however, Matilda caught a terrible cold and within two months died. That sorrow lay too deep for any of Irving's family or any of his friends to touch. During her last days of fevered delirium, when he was constantly with

her, her soul had shown itself even more beautiful than it had ever seemed in health; and he never found words to utter his grief. He was twenty-six when she died, and she was only seventeen. But through all his long, lonely life, he cherished her dear love; and after his death, there was found among his treasures a lovely miniature, a lock of fair hair, and a slip of paper bearing her name, "Matilda Hoffman." Through all his travels he had taken her Bible and prayer-book with him, and through all the years, her memory. "I was naturally susceptible," we read in the memoranda, "but my heart would not hold on."

No one could have written of this faithful strength of love more beautifully than Thackeray in that gem of an appreciation, "Nil Nisi Bonum": "He had loved once in his life. The lady he loved died; and he, whom all the world loved, never sought to replace her. I can't say how much the thought of that fidelity had touched me. Does not the very cheerfulness of his after-life add to the pathos of the untold story? To grieve always was not his nature; or, when he had a sorrow, to bring all the world in to condole with him and bemoan it. Deep and quiet he lays the love of his heart, and buries it; and grass and flowers grow over the scarred ground in due time."

Nearly thirty years after Matilda's death one of Mr. Hoffman's granddaughters, who was rummaging in a drawer for music, found a piece of faded embroidery. "Washington," said Mr. Hoffman, "this is a piece of poor Matilda's work." But Irving had grown suddenly grave and silent, and in a few moments had said good-night and gone home.

That Irving tried to lift the clouds from his own spirit is proved by his continuing, in the midst of his sorrow, his "Knickerbocker's History"—a book rippling and sparkling with merriment. "In his pilgrimage through the lanes and streets, the roads and avenues, of this uneven world," writes Irving, "the author refreshes himself with many a secret smile at occurrences that excite no observation from the dull

trudging mass of mortals." He, himself, was Diedrich Knickerbocker, and it was he who "would sit by the old Dutch housewives with a child on his knee or a purring grimalkin on his lap." If some of the Dutch were nettled by his picture of their ways, others saw that he was writing in "pure wantonness of fun," and that none of his laughter left a sting. Years later, however, Irving wrote: "It was a confounded impudent thing in such a youngster as I was, to be meddling in this way with old family names."

Yet this special gift of finding fun in little things, and interest in nothings, filled his days with life. Except for wide traveling, there were few events to light his lonely way. The warmth of his family affections was always one of the sweetest and strongest things in his nature: now he was helping Ebenezer and his many children; now bolstering Peter with money loans, always offered with that graciousness that was a part of his generous delicacy. "We certainly understand each other too well to have any consideration for the laws of *meum* and *tuum* between us," he would say, "or for either of us to care on which side the opportunity of profitable exertion lies." He seems to have had a constant fear that Peter would not "share his morsel with him"; he begs him not to be "squeamish," and pleads: "When you were in prosperity you made it a common lot between us." "I send you a couple of hundred pounds to keep you in pocket-money until the boat begins to pay better…. Let it be as it should be, a matter of course between us."

"Brotherhood," he believed, "is a holy alliance made by God…and we should adhere to it with religious faith."

He and Peter and Ebenezer formed a merchants' firm, to which Washington, though he detested the "drudgery of regular business," lent his time and interest till it was firmly on its feet. This required him to live for a few months in Washington, D.C. His spirit now, as in all his other travels, was the same. "I left home determined to be pleased with

everything, or if not pleased, to be amused."

On his return to New York the following spring, he went into bachelor-quarters, with his friend Brevoort, on Broadway near Bowling Green. It was a jovial time, free and peaceful, but broken, with the peace of the nation, by news of the War of 1812. Irving, adventuresome and loyal, joined the Governor's staff posted at Sackett's Harbor. His letters of that time are full of "breastworks, and pickets of reinforced militia," but also of his own good health, "all the better for hard traveling," and of "love to Mother and the family."

Soon after the news of the victory of New Orleans and the tidings of peace, Irving sailed for Europe, little dreaming that he would stay for seventeen years. He had expected to return in a short time and settle down beside his dear old mother for the rest of her life. These plans and hopes, however, were suddenly broken by the news of her death in 1817. That was the saddest event of his travels; the happiest was his friendship with Scott.

At Abbotsford, Scott made Irving more than welcome, and found in him a kindred spirit. They were both glad, hearty, natural men who loved out-door life in the same boyish way. Besides this, Scott found that Irving was a man who needed nothing explained—a man who could tramp with him through his own Tweedside, and understand all its beauty. We can imagine how welcome the Scotchman's cordiality was to Irving's fireside heart! To be included as part of Scott's home, not only by the father and mother and four children, but by the cat, the packs of barking dogs, and the noble horses—that was what Irving loved; for, in spite of his outward cheer, he suffered from the loneliness of the inner self. As he said, he was not meant to be a bachelor; and when he writes letters of blessing on the wives and children of Brevoort and Paulding and others of the "knot of queer, rum old bachelors" (for seventeen years brought many changes), there is an undertone of pathos in the music. "You and

Brevoort have given me the slip… I cannot hear of my old cronies, snugly nestled down with good wives and fine children round them, but I feel for the moment desolate and forlorn." "Heavens! what a haphazard, schemeless life mine has been, that here I should be, at this time of life, youth slipping away, and scribbling month after month and year after year, far from home."

That is all he *says* and he puts it jestingly then; but the unsaid thoughts lie deep. "Irving's smile is one of the sweetest I know," said a friend, "but he can look very, very sad."

We do not forget that forty years after Miss Hoffman's death, Irving had her miniature repaired because the case was *worn out.*

But enough of the hidden sadness of this *partner of the sunlight.* Let us go with the companionable Irving on his travels, and go in his spirit—as conquerors of loneliness.

Perhaps, like him, we shall yawn in palaces and shift restlessly on the "cursed stone benches" of the Tuileries, but we shall love the Hartz Mountains because their forests are like our own American forests and we shall love the columns of the vast cathedrals that reach upward like the dear old trees of home. What a mongrel tongue—of English, French, and German—Irving talks to the driver of the *diligence*; and what humor twinkles from his eyes at the "garrulous old lady" who shows us Shakespeare's home.

A rapid journey ours must be, a journey of seventeen years in part of an hour; and yet we must have time for slow steps in the silent Abbey—the most hallowed spot of all England—and time to bow our souls in reverence while the "deep-laboring organ" rolls its music up to Heaven. And we shall need time to enjoy the English Christmas as Irving enjoyed it "While I lay musing on my pillow," he writes, "I heard the sound of little feet pattering outside of the door, and a whispering consultation. Presently a choir of small voices chanted forth an old Christmas carol, the burden of which was

'Rejoice, our Savior He was born
On Christmas day in the morning.'

I rose softly, slipt on my clothes, opened the door suddenly, and beheld one of the most beautiful little fairy groups that a painter could imagine. It consisted of a boy and two girls, the eldest not more than six, and lovely as seraphs. They were going the rounds of the house and singing at every chamber door; but my sudden appearance frightened them into mute bashfulness. They remained for a moment playing on their lips with their fingers, and now and then stealing a shy glance from under their eyebrows, until, as if by one impulse, they scampered away, and as they turned an angle of the gallery, I heard them laughing in triumph at their escape."

Friendly and glad, Irving was heartily welcomed into the English home—to family prayers and church and the Christmas dinner with its wassail-bowl. And when he left that brother-land, with what a kindly feeling did he grace its memory to the world! How he has made us see its grassplots and hanging blossoms and "little pots of flowers." And what a benediction he sheds in his "Peace be within thy walls, oh England! and plenteousness within thy palaces." "Do not destroy the ancient tie of blood." "We have the same Bible, and we address our common Father in the same prayer."

So much for his books of English travel; his books on Spain are no less charming. In fact, Spain must have been even more fascinating to a man of Irving's imagination; to the mind that conceived the mystic dwarfs and "wicked flagon" of Rip Van Winkle, and the headless horseman of Sleepy Hollow. Spain was a land rich in legend as well as steeped in beauty. The roads were infested with robbers. Every Andalusian carried a saber. There was often a lantern hidden beneath his cloak. Here and there a cross by the roadside or in a worn ravine, told where some muleteer had been murdered. And there was a subterranean stable where lived a

goblin horse.

Sometimes, as Irving rode through this threatening country, "the deep tones of the cathedral bell would echo through the valley." Then "the shepherd paused on the fold of the hill, the muleteer in the midst of the road; each took off his hat and remained motionless for a time, murmuring his evening prayer."

"Who wants water—water colder than snow?" came the carrier's cry as they neared the city. The shaggy little donkey, with water-jars hung on each side, was all too willing to wait.

Arrived at the Alhambra, Irving found it at once a fortress and a palace, every stone breathing poetry and romance. "A little old fairy queen lived under the staircase, plying her needle and singing from morning till night." The Andalusians lay on the grass or danced to the guitar, and everywhere were groves of orange and citron and the music of singing birds and tinkling fountains. It was an enchanted palace. In the evening, Irving took his lamp and, in a "mere halo of light", stole dreamily through the "waste halls and mysterious galleries." There were no sounds but echoes. Everything, even the garden, was deserted. Nevertheless the scent of roses and laurel, the shimmer of moonlight, the murmur of hidden streams, had made the garden a fairy-land, only it was a fairy-land where flitting bat and hooting owl were much at home. To Irving, the owl had a vast knowledge of "astronomy and the moon," and Irving respected the knowledge which he could not share. In short, the Alhambra just suited his fancy; and when, as he said, the summons came to return into the "bustle and business of the dusty world", that summons ended one of the pleasantest dreams of his life—"a life perhaps you may think, too much made up of dreams."

But poets should not be bound, nor birds caged; nor do we need to take the poet at his own low estimate. Given to hospitality, and consequently open to many interruptions, inclined to postpone, and hating the labors of rewriting, Irving

was, nevertheless, a hard worker. Those seventeen years were not all dreams. To them we owe "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," written "by candle-light in foggy London"; "Bracebridge Hall," dashed off in Paris in six weeks; and "Rip Van Winkle," which was not, as some have supposed, drawn from life, but was an imagined picture: when Irving wrote that story, he had never visited the Catskills; he had merely seen them from the river on his boyhood's first journey. To these years, too, we owe a longer, harder work than any of the rest —"The Life of Columbus." When the poet Longfellow took his early morning walks in Madrid, he often saw Irving writing at his open study-window at six o'clock; he had risen at five to work on the "Life." "I must make enough money," he would say to himself, "to be sure of my bread and cheese."

As a rule, however, Irving had a great indifference to money-getting. Perhaps this will partly account for his rare generosity, though I think generosity was in his blood. With his customary faithfulness, he gave the "Sketch Book" to his old publisher, Moses Thomas, even at the risk of loss. Utterly without envy, he pushed Bryant's work before the public, popularized Scott in America, gave plots to Poe, and, most generous of all, resigned, in favor of Prescott, his whole scheme for writing on the Conquest of Mexico, though Irving had hugged the hope of such a work since childhood, and had definitely written on it for over a year. Perhaps, blessed with eyesight himself, he thought he would do his blind friend this service. At all events, without consulting any one, he burned his own manuscript. It was a great sacrifice, but Prescott never knew.

Imagine how hard it was for such a warm nature as Irving's to be misjudged by his best friends. But he was misjudged. Some went so far as to think that those seventeen years spent abroad were a proof that he did not love his country and home; whereas Irving was all too weary of foreign society. He was, to quote his letters, "tired of being among strangers";

"sick of fashionable life and fashionable parties"; bored at having to "dress for court"; and altogether weary of mingling in all the "littleness and insipidity of city life." If ever there was a home-loving man it was Irving. During those seventeen long years he felt himself

> "Strange tenant of a thousand homes
> And friendless with ten thousand friends."

He called it what it was, "a poor, wandering life." "I have been tossed about 'hither and thither' and whither I would not; have been at the levee and the drawing-room, been at routs and balls, and dinners and country-seats, been hand and glove with nobility and *mob*-ility, until like *Trim*, I have satisfied the sentiment, and am now preparing to make my escape from all this splendid confusion."

But the world did not understand. The newspaper attacks hurt him. At last criticism became too keen for his sensitive nature to bear. Then began for him "sleepless nights and joyless days," with the sharp thought that the "kindness of his own countrymen was withering towards him." Even Brevoort and Paulding, even his brothers, began to chide him with not wanting to return.

When he did stand before them once again, however, with his truth-telling, sunlit face, they questioned his love no more. Irving's return to New York was heralded by a dinner in his honor. Now Irving, as Moore said, had never been "strong, as a lion," though he was "delightful, as a domestic animal." He himself said it was "physically impossible for him to make a speech." A manuscript under his plate did not help at all. When, at a dinner in England, he had been announced with loud cheers, he had simply responded: "I beg to return you my sincere thanks." And now when, before his fellow-countrymen, the toast was proposed, "To our illustrious guest, thrice welcome to his native land," the shy author who hated speech-making, could only stammer and blush. "I trembled

for him," said one of his friends, "until I saw him seize the handle of a knife and commence gesticulating with that; then I knew he would get on."

"I am asked how long I mean to remain here," Irving said. "They know but little of my heart and feelings who can ask me that question. I answer: 'As long as I live!'" He hesitated, stood still, and looked about him, the old genial smile beaming from his dark gray eyes. Then a rousing cheer told him that he had won again the trust of all, and he sat down, satisfied—a tired exile welcomed home.

Except as Irving was twice sent to Europe by our nation, once to England as secretary of legation, and once as Minister to Spain, he did stay home all the rest of his life. It is as a home-maker and a home-lover that he was happiest and best known, and no part of life was so sweet to him as the life at Sunnyside. Let us visit him there in his own little house among the trees. Though the house is small, and already filled with his nieces, there is always room for one more. We take the train from New York for Irvington, near Tarrytown. Sunnyside, a ten-acre farm, bought by Irving in 1835, is only about ten minutes' walk from the station. The grounds look out on the blue Hudson. There is a cove and a cozy beach, and a spring "welling up at the bottom of the bank." A stony brook, shaded by trees, "babbles down the ravine, throwing itself into the little cove." On the rock at the edge of the lawn, Irving often sits, resting in his love of the shining river, and building his "castles at seventy" as he did at seven. The house described by Irving, is a "little old fashioned stone mansion, all made up of gable ends, and as full of angles and corners as an old cocked hat." It used to be called "Wolfert's Roost" (or Rest) and over the door is an old motto meaning "Pleasure in Quiet", a motto that was written in its master's heart.

Though you may not find any of the old Indian arrowheads about the place, nor Brom Bones's pumpkin in the garden, you will find the spirit of Wolfert's Roost unchanged.

Crickets skip in the grass; humming-birds whirr among the trumpet-vines; the phœbe-bird and wren have built under the eaves. The thick mantle of Melrose ivy, which almost hides the eastern end of Sunnyside, grew from one of Scott's slips. Very lately Irving built the near-by cottage for his gardener.

Within, Sunnyside is plainly furnished; there are not even many books. Everything, however, looks comfortable and made for use. For instance, the writingtable is a mass of disorder. It is one of the sweet elements of our welcome that nothing is changed to receive us. As part of the family, we will have Tow-boat picnics on the Tappan Zee. We can perch by Irving on the old stone wall and chat with "Uncle Brom," or see Jesse Merwin—the original Ichahod Crane in his old school of tough little Dutchers. We can visit Irving's "tree encircled farm." Those two elms on the lawn were planted by the author's own hands; he carried the saplings on his shoulder. The fruits and vegetables, he will tell you, were raised at "very little more than twice the market-price." Out in the pig pen is Fanny—a fat pig of "peerless beauty," named for Fanny Kemble, the actress. Purring thunderously, Imp will come and rub his silky head against you, and Toby will bark a greeting and dash away to the other pets. There are cows and setting geese, cooing pigeons, and "squadrons of snowy" ducks. Dandy and Billy, the old coach horses, are as "sleek as seals" and "Gentleman Dick," Irving's saddlehorse, puts his cheek against his master's and lays his head on his shoulder. Though Irving will say nothing about it, perhaps you will notice that the saddle hanging near is an old one, furbished up. The father of so many borrowed children could not afford a new saddle.

"Dick now and then cuts daisies with me on his back; but that's to please himself, not me," laughs Irving, patting the horse's glossy side; and perhaps he may add that Gentleman Dick has thrown him once. It was after a second accident, when Irving was seventy-two, that his nieces forced him to

sell this "Gentleman that had proved no Gentleman." "Poor Dick!" Irving said. "His character was very much misunderstood by all but myself."

That word "all" covered a big household. Irving's dearest brother, Peter, had died; and so had William and John; but Ebenezer, now growing very deaf, and his sister Catharine made their home at Sunnyside, and there were six adoring nieces who kept Irving "almost as happy" as if he were "a married man."

To see how happy he was, we should have visited him at Christmas when "The Tappan Zee was covered with sparkling ice and the opposite hills with snow," and when holly reddened the hearth of Sunnyside. Then, indeed, the cottage rang with shouts, while the king of the cottage tiptoed round to be first with his "Merry Christmas," acted a jovial Santa Claus, and filled all the stockings with presents. "Children who do not believe in Santa Claus are too wise to be happy," he used to say. "When I was a child, I believed in Santa Claus as long as I could, until they put snow-balls in my stockings."

His understanding of children was wonderful. Once when he had amused two fretful little things on a long train journey, the mother thanked him with "Any one can see you're the father of a large family." There are two delightful stories of Irving and the boys who robbed his orchard. One day a little fellow came up to him with winning secrecy and said: "I'll show you the old man's best tree, if you'll shake it for me." "Agreed!"—"By George, Sir," laughed Irving, "if he didn't take me to the very best tree on my own place!"

Another time, when he came unexpectedly on an apple squad, he said, picking out the leader, "Boys, these are very poor apples. I know a much better tree." Then he led them on, skulking in the shadows and dodging the gardener, in true boy style.

"Be quiet! Keep near the hedge!" he cautioned.

"We're afraid the old gentleman will catch us."

"He's not there now. There, the best tree's just beyond the hedge."

The prickly hedge tore the boys' trousers and faces and hands, but the seekers were too near their Hesperides to be daunted.

"Now, boys, this is the tree I spoke of, and I am the owner of it—Mr. Irving." There was a pause, during which the boys intently studied the grass. "Don't be afraid," Irving went on, "I sha'n't punish you; the prickly hedge has done that. I only wish that when you take my fruit, you would come to me and ask for it." He gave them a genial, forgiving smile, and was gone, the dear old man with the heart of a boy and the immortal spirit of play.

Up to the very end of life, at seventy-six, he could laugh at pain and sleeplessness, and at weariness of mind and body. Let no one underrate the heroism of those last years—the hard work wrought with aching hands. With the press dogging Irving's heels, the "Life of Goldsmith" was written in sixty days. "Are you sure it doesn't smell of apoplexy?" asked the doubting author, for "selfcriticism was apt to beset him and cuff him down at the end of the work when the excitement of composition was over." He spoke of his writings as "literary babblings" or as "water spilt on the ground." Many times during the composition of the "Life of Washington"—his last work— he was at the point of putting it into the fire. His letters and journal show that writing had become a "toil of head and fagging of the pen." "I am still muddling with the 'Life of Washington'," we read. "It lags and drags." Often he would be scribbling in his study at half-past twelve at night, long after the family were in bed and asleep, or he would "rise at midnight, light his lamp, and write for an hour or two." If he rested in the evening, with the girls sewing round him, it was because he had "passed the whole morning in his study, hard at work" and had "earned his recreation." Feverish and full of fears, he thought: "I must get through with the work I

have cut out for myself. I must weave my web and then die." The belief that he might not live to finish the "Life" became a torment; and when, near the end, he sank into a kind of delirium, he was possessed with the idea that he had a "big book to write before he could sleep."

Through those last years, though he made a pitiful struggle for sleep, asthma and nervousness combined against him, except when he slept from pure exhaustion. Now we read that he got "a little sprinkling of sleep"; now that he had taken "sleeping potions enough to put a whole congregation to sleep." And still he made merry. Turning to one of his nieces, he said: "I am apt to be rather fatigued, my dear, by my night's rest," and again, as he took up his candle: "Well, as the ghost in Hamlet says, 'The time has come when I to sulphurous and tormenting flames must render up myself.'"

Besides this sleeplessness, Irving had an aggravated form of sickness that had warned him years before in Paris: a lameness of the ankles hindered walking and an inflammation of the wrists hindered writing. Without doubt Irving injured himself standing outdoors in the cold and wet while the builders were enlarging Sunnyside. Cheerful as ever, the dear old bachelor refused "to be bullied by a cold"; and of course the home must be enlarged that it might hold more people. He still hoped to be

> "Once more able
> To stump about my farm and stable."

And he did manage to hobble round, wearing his customary old slouch hat and muffled in a big gray shawl. Once when his lameness was at its worst, he spoke of getting well: "I shall feel like a boy with a new coat who thinks everybody will turn round and look at him and say, 'Bless my soul, how that gentleman has the use of his legs,'—one cannot help being puffed up a little on having the use of one's legs." As a kind of benediction on surgeons and dentists he exclaimed: "May

their good deeds be returned upon them a thousand-fold! May they have the felicity, in the next world, to have successful operations performed upon them to all eternity!"

His greatest fear of doctors was that they would prolong his life beyond his period of usefulness. "Strange that a harp of a thousand strings should keep in tune so long!" he would muse. He did not long to die; but he longed to go down "with all sails set." He dreaded being a burden to those about him; being "mewed up at home" like an "old fogy." "A man, as he grows old, must take care not to grow rusty or fusty or crusty —an old bachelor especially." It was his daily prayer that his old age might be lovable; that he might keep his mind and keep his sunnyness. "Happy is he who can grow smooth as an old shilling as he wears out; he has endured the rubs of life to some purpose."

And he did grow smooth and tuneful and placid. Though his voice was hoarse and his step faltering, his gray eyes kept their twinkle and his heart was young and singing to the end.

It was, blessedly, a sudden end—just one sharp cry, a fall, and death. One frosty November day the solemn bells told the farmers and sailors, the boys who loved the apples, and all the waiting neighbors of the glen, that the Master of Sunnyside had gone. But the frost melted soon and gracious Indian summer filled the air. "It's one of his own days," thought the loving ones who stood beside the grave.

If you take the "lazy country road" that winds its drowsy way to Sleepy Hollow, you can find the place where Irving rests. Peter is buried there, and the mother; and Washington's grave is where he asked to have it, close to hers. If his fame had never gone beyond the "old Dutch Church" and turnpike-road, the stone could not have been more simple:

WASHINGTON
Son of William and Sarah S. Irving
Died

Nov. 28, 1859
Aged 76 Years, 7 Mo., and 25 Days.

Sunnyside was left, as we might have expected, to Ebenezer and his daughters, "to be kept forever as an Irving rally place." But Irving left a far greater bequest: besides his books, rich in humor and kindliness, and written in "the language of the heart," he left the dear example of one who loved and lost, and smiled, and gave; of one who sought the good and found it, whether in music or pictures, free country, books, or people; and of one who sheds a constant blessing, even now, like the sunshine from the sky.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Author of Paul Revere's Ride,
Song of Hiawatha, Evangeline
1807 – 1882 A.D.

Henry had a grandfather who lived far away. This was his grandfather Wadsworth. He had been a soldier, and was once captured by the British. The boys were very fond of hearing him tell stories of the war.

They were a little afraid of the old gentleman, however. He dressed in what was to them a strange and old-fashioned way. He used to wear a red coat, yellow vest and "small-clothes," white ruffled shirt, white stockings, and silver-buckled shoes. His hair was powdered and braided into a queue. He was a good man, and had been so brave a soldier that he had been made a general.

Near General Wadsworth's house was a little lake called Lovell's Pond. Years before there had been an Indian fight on its shores. Henry had often heard the story and was deeply interested in it.

When he was thirteen years old he wrote a poem about it. As these verses were the first ever published by Henry W. Longfellow, you will perhaps enjoy reading them.

The Battle of Lovell's Pond

Cold, cold is the north wind and rude is the blast
That sweeps like a hurricane loudly and fast,
As it moans through the tall, waving pines loan and drear,
Sighs a requiem sad o'er the warrior's bier.

The war whoop is still, and the savage's yell
Has sunk into silence along the wild dell;
The din of the battle, the tumult, is o'er,
And the war clarion's voice is now heard no more.

The warriors that fought for their country—and bled,
Have sunk to their rest; the damp earth is their bed;
No stone tells the place where their ashes repose,
Nor points out the spot from the graves of their foes.

They died in their glory, surrounded by fame,
And Victory's loud trump their death did proclaim;
They are dead; but they live in each patriot's breast,
And their names are engraven on honor's bright crest.

Henry wanted very much to have his poem printed, so he sent it to *The Portland Gazette.* He told the secret to his sister, and you may imagine how eagerly they waited for the day on which the paper was to come.

Henry's father was the first to open *The Gazette* when it arrived. He slowly unfolded it and spread it before the fire to dry. The two children found it hard to wait in patience until he had finished reading it, so anxious were they to see whether the verses had been printed or not.

At last their time came, and, to their joy, they found the poem in "The Poets' Corner" of the paper. They read it again and again, thinking it better each time. But a great disappointment was in store for the young poet.

That evening Mr. Longfellow called on his friend Judge Mellon. He took his son with him as Henry and Frederic Mellon, the Judge's son, were friends.

The two gentlemen began to talk of poems and poetry. In the course of the conversation Judge Mellon said to Mr. Longfellow, "Did you see the piece in to-day's paper? Very stiff, remarkably stiff; moreover it is all borrowed, every word of it."

Poor Henry! We can only imagine what a mortification

this was to him, but we can be sure he bore it bravely. Far from becoming discouraged he tried and tried again, until, as we know, he became one of our greatest American poets.

The Poet

From his early youth Mr. Longfellow had been writing poems and other compositions for various papers and magazines.

The poems were collected and published in volumes later. Now most of the editions of *Longfellow's Poems* contain all his miscellaneous poetry, although there are many books in which are found single poems or a selected few.

One of the most familiar poems is *The Psalm of Life.* Mr. Longfellow wrote this on the back of an envelope, one bright sunny morning.

It came from the depths of his heart, and perhaps that is why it touched the depths of so many other hearts. It was no sooner published than it made a great stir in the literary world. It was copied, learned, sung and talked about everywhere. People of all ages, but young men especially, seemed to be impressed by it, and many of them wrote to Mr. Longfellow, telling him so.

The Reaper and the Flowers was written with tears in the eyes of its author. It has brought the same sort of tears to the eyes of many readers.

The Wreck of the Hesperus was written shortly after a terrible storm, which wrecked more than one ship on the reef of Norman's Woe.

Excelsior was suggested to him by the emblematic picture which formed part of the heading of a New York paper.

The Village Blacksmith worked in Cambridge, "under the spreading chestnut tree."

In the later years of Mr. Longfellow's life, a chair was made from the wood of this tree, and presented to him by the school

children of Cambridge. Mr. Longfellow was so touched by this that it was for them the poem "From My Arm-chair" was written.

The *Poems on Slavery* were composed on the voyage home after the poet's third journey to Europe. They created a great deal of comment. He was both severely criticized and highly commended for writing them.

The Old Clock on the Stairs stood in a house in Pittstfield, Massachusetts, where lived relatives of Mrs. Longfellow. The poet and his second wife visited this house on their wedding journey, and often afterwards.

The story of the poem called *"The Arsenal at Springfield"* is a pleasant one.

It was during their wedding journey that Mr. and Mrs. Longfellow visited the arsenal. Charles Sumner was with them. He told his friends the money spent for munitions of war would be much better expended on books.

Mrs. Longfellow said that the shining gun barrels, ranged along the wall, reminded her of a great organ on which Death would one day make sad music.

It was this remark, and Mrs. Longfellow's urging her husband to write a peace poem rather than a war song, which suggested the verses.

"The Arrow and the Song" flashed into the poet's mind one Sunday morning, as he stood by the fire waiting for church time. He wrote it down immediately just as it came to him.

The story of how the poem *Evangeline* came to be, will interest all who have read it, or will read it.

Mr. Longfellow's friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, dined with him one day. He brought with him a Mr. Conolly.

This gentleman had been telling Hawthorne a story which had been told to him. It was about two Acadian lovers who, having been separated, sought vainly for each other for many years.

Mr. Conolly wanted Hawthorne to weave this story into

one of his charming tales, but it did not strike the author's fancy.

Mr. Longfellow said that, if Hawthorne did not want it for a story, he would like it for a poem. Hawthorne was more than willing that he should have it, and thus it was that one of the most widely read of Longfellow's poems had its beginning.

While studying books of Indian legends and folklore in preparation for Hiawatha, Mr. Longfellow had the opportunity of seeing a large panorama, or moving picture, of the Mississippi River, which was exhibited in Boston. He enjoyed this very much, commenting on his good fortune in having the river brought to him when he could not go to the river.

The Children's Hour is a poem which allows us for the moment to go into the poet's home life.

We sit with him in the study; we hear the patter of little feet in the room above; we feel for the rest of our lives a love for and interest in "Grave Alice and laughing Allegra, and Edith with golden hair."

The poem beginning "Come to me, O ye children" was written in this same study to the music of these same pattering little feet in the chamber above.

I hope as you grow older you will read more and more of Longfellow's beautiful poetry. The words are full of music and of noble thoughts; the stories told in verse are as interesting as they are instructive; in reading what Longfellow has written we go with him into other times, other places and other lives; we also go deep down into one of the truest hearts that ever beat.

The Father

Mr. and Mrs. Longfellow had six children. Charles and Ernest were the eldest two. Then came a daughter, Fanny, who died while she was a baby. It was after her death that the other three girls were born.

It is the eldest of these, Miss Alice, who is now living in

Craigie House and who so often kindly welcomes visitors to this American shrine.

No children were ever blessed with a more loving mother and father than these, none ever had a more beautiful home, none ever received a more tender care. When they were ill Mr. Longfellow's distress was greater than their own; he found it impossible to write; he was not himself until they were well again.

He always took part in the birthday parties and holiday celebrations, of which there were many. He often recorded them in his journal. Some were in the summer, among the apple trees and haycocks. Others were held in winter in the warm, fire-lighted rooms.

At one of these Ernest took the part of the Old Year, wearing a great white beard and boots. His sister Alice, with a wreath on her head, was the little New Year.

At one of Charles' birthday parties the seat in the old apple tree, where Mr. Longfellow sat when he wrote *The Wreck of the Hesperus,* was turned into a fort.

It is pleasant to think of the great poet, whose name is so revered, building snowhouses, and buying hoops, railroad cars, velocipedes and dolls for the children he so tenderly loved. One envies them their walks through the shady streets of Cambridge, with so wise and good a companion.

We can imagine the many pleasant rambles among the ponds, brooks and hills of Pittsfield, and along the beach at Nahant, for the family often visited among the lovely Berkshire Hills, and spent many summers on the seashore.

During the winter they of course went often into Boston. The Longfellow children must have walked down historic Beacon Street many times. They must often have passed through Boston Common, and by the quaint old churches and burying grounds, which are in the heart of the city. Bunker Hill, Faneuil Hall, The State House and the Old South Church were familiar sights to them.

They went to museums and libraries, and even to the circus, in the company of the father who was so good a friend. With him, the boys saw the launchings of the ships Merrimac, Hartford and Minnehaha.

They went with him to Boston to see the celebration of the laying of the Atlantic cable, in 1858. They must have greatly enjoyed the ringing of bells, the bands of music, the flying flags and the marching soldiers.

The first school these boys attended was near the Washington Elm, in Cambridge. It was under this famous tree, which is still standing, that Washington took command of the American Army.

Mr. Longfellow went to school with the boys on their momentous "first day."

He very often read aloud to them, at home, and taught them to love good books. If you ever hear the Indian legend of the Red Swan, or the stories from a book called "The Parents' Assistant," you can think of the Longfellow children as having these very tales read to them by their father.

His love and sympathy were always with them, in his journal, which is so full of beautiful and noble thoughts, one finds the children's doings noted on Valentine's Day, April Fool's Day, and many other days besides.

After Mrs. Longfellow's death, Mr. Longfellow had to be father and mother both, to his children. He never allowed his own bitter grief to shadow their young lives.

He took his boys with him on a trip to Niagara Falls, which, of course, they enjoyed very much.

"Edith, with golden hair," at one time opened a correspondence with her father. The post-office was under her pillow, and it was there she found the answers to her letters in the morning.

During the Civil War, the eldest son Charles, joined the army. Though not yet twenty years old, he was made a lieutenant of Cavalry.

Later his father received a telegram saying that he had been severely wounded at the last battle on the Rapidan.

In company with his son Ernest, Mr. Longfellow left for Washington, expecting to find his son in a hospital there, but in this he was disappointed. He was obliged to wait for several days in great anxiety before the wounded men were sent up from the South.

Charles had been shot through both shoulders. The wound was a very serious one. The surgeons said he would not be fit for service for at least six months. His father and brother brought him home, where he was most tenderly and carefully nursed back to health.

In writing to a friend, his father said of him: "How brave these boys are! Not a single murmur of complaint though he has a wound through him a foot long. He pretends that it does not hurt him."

Mr. Longfellow's love for his own children gave him a keen interest in those of other people.

He was much amused, one day in Portland, in watching a crowd of boys on the shore. They were capturing a wounded crane, and one small poet ran past shouting

> "It was a crane
> Flew down the lane."

It reminded him of one of his own boyhood days when, mounted on a stick, in company with two other boys, he dashed along with the cry

> "We three
> Champions be!"

In one of the journals Mr. Longfellow makes a tender mention of a little sick boy next door, whose funeral he attended later.

A little neighbor was one day visiting Mr. Longfellow in his library. He looked at the rows and rows of books, and then

asked the poet if he had Jack the Giant Killer.

Mr. Longfellow said that he had not, and the next day the little fellow brought him some of his own money with which to buy a copy.

All over the United States the children had been learning to know and love the Cambridge poet.

In 1880 his birthday was celebrated in the public schools of Cincinnati. Fifteen thousand children took part in the commemoration.

This was the first of many similar celebrations, especially in the West. To-day Longfellow's birthday, the twenty-seventh of February, is known and honored by most of the children in the country.

The Man

If "a man is known by the company he keeps," Henry W. Longfellow must stand for a very prince among men. He drew to himself throughout his whole life, the noblest and best from two continents. No man every had more or warmer friends than he; no man ever held them more firmly, or valued then more highly.

The list of their names would be a very long one, were it written. On it would appear Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Prescott, Irving, Bryant and Hawthorne.

He knew Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and also Daniel Webster and Henry Clay. Thackeray was a welcome guest at Craigie House. Tennyson was one of his correspondents. Charles Dickens was proud to be called his friend.

In England, during his last visit, Mr. Longfellow breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone, was entertained by the Queen at Windsor Castle, and called, by request, on the Prince of Wales.

During the patriot Kossuth's visit to this country in 1852, Longfellow was one of those invited to dine with the

distinguished stranger. He took a prominent part in the entertainment provided for the Prince of Wales on his visit to Boston.

One of Mr. Longfellow's nearest and dearest friends was Charles Sumner, whose honorable career he followed with a loving and sympathetic interest.

Few men have exhibited so well-rounded a character as our great poet. He was much more than a poet. He was a man, in the highest sense of the word.

His social nature was strongly developed. He loved society, and was always a welcome figure in the social gatherings of Cambridge and Boston.

He was most hospitable in his home. The doors of Craigie House stood wide open, not only to friends, but to all who chose to call. No matter how occupied he was, Mr. Longfellow received often obtrusive and troublesome strangers with a courteous welcome.

From childhood he was a most loving and dutiful son, writing constantly to his parents in Portland, and often visiting them there.

He neglected none of his duties, even such as were irksome to him. He held his place in the community as a man and a citizen should.

He was especially kind to poor and distressed foreigners, many of whom found their way to his door.

He often tired himself out writing autographs for the many people who asked for them. He sometimes was asked for large quantities of them to be sold at church fairs.

In his later life his correspondence became a great burden to him. People from all over the world wrote to him on all sorts of subjects, and for all sorts of reasons.

He often received as many as sixty letters a day. Up to the last, he was invariably kind and courteous to these unknown writers and admirers. As long as he was able, he answered the letters himself, but toward the end of his life was obliged to

have it done for him.

He was always fond of air and exercise. He took many long walks, and enjoyed both skating and bathing.

His poems tell us how fond he was of Nature, of music, of books and of study.

At one time, he had trouble with his eyes. They caused him much discomfort and inconvenience. With his wife's help, he kept on with his writing, his study and his work, bravely overcoming the difficulties as best he could.

One of the pleasantest stories told of Mr. Longfellow is of a disagreeable person who had caused him considerable annoyance, but to whom he was unfailingly kind.

Being told by one of his friends that he ought no longer submit to such impositions, he replied, "But, Charles, who will be kind to him if I am not?"

There was great sorrow in both America and Europe when the death of Henry W. Longfellow was made known.

He died on March twenty-fourth, having lived seventy-five beautiful and blameless years. He was buried in Mt. Auburn, by the side of his wife and little daughter.

Those who loved him in England have placed his marble image in the "Poets' Corner" of Westminster Abbey. Statues have been erected to his honor in both Portland and Cambridge.

His best monument, however, is in the hearts of the people—men, women and children, who know and love him through the poems which make him one of the first among our American Poets.

The Boyhood of John Greenleaf Whittier

1807 – 1892 A.D.

The life of Whittier may be read in his poems, and, by putting a note here and a date there, a full autobiography might be compiled from them. His boyhood and youth are depicted in them with such detail that little need be added to make the story complete, and that little, reverently done as it may be, must seem poor in comparison with the poetic beauty of his own revelations.

What more can we do to show his early home than to quote from his own beautiful poem, "Snow-bound"?

There the house is pictured for us, inside and out, with all its furnishings; and those who gather around its hearth, inmates and visitors, are set before us so clearly that long after the book has been put away they remain as distinct in the memory as portraits that are visible day after day on the walls of our own homes. He reproduces in his verse the landscapes he saw, the legends of witches and Indians he listened to, the schoolfellows he played with, the voices of the woods and fields, and the round of toil and pleasure in a country boy's life; and in other poems his later life, with its impassioned devotion to freedom and lofty faith, is reflected as lucidly as his youth is in "Snow-bound" and "The Barefoot Boy."

He himself was "The Barefoot Boy," and what Robert Burns said of himself Whittier might repeat: "The poetic genius of my country found me, as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha, at the plow, and threw her inspiring mantle over me." He was a farmer's son, born at a time when farm-life in New England was more frugal than it is now, and with no

other heritage than the good name and example of parents and kinsmen, in whom simple virtues—thrift, industry, and piety—abounded.

His birthplace still stands near Haverhill, Mass.—a house in one of the hollows of the surrounding hills, little altered from what it was in 1807, the year he was born, when it was already at least a century and a half old.

He had no such opportunities for culture as Holmes and Lowell had in their youth. His parents were intelligent and upright people of limited means, who lived in all the simplicity of the Quaker faith, and there was nothing in his early surroundings to encourage and develop literary taste. Books were scarce, and the twenty volumes on his father's shelves were, with one exception, about Quaker doctrines and Quaker heroes. The exception was a novel, and that was hidden away from the children, for fiction was forbidden fruit. No library or scholarly companionship was within reach; and if his gift had been less than genius, it could never have triumphed over the many disadvantages with which it had to contend. Instead of a poet he would have been a farmer like his forefathers. But literature was a spontaneous impulse with him, as natural as the song of a bird; and he was not wholly dependent on training and opportunity, as he would have been had he possessed mere talent.

Frugal from necessity, the life of the Whittiers was not sordid nor cheerless to him, moreover; and he looks back to it as tenderly as if it had been full of luxuries. It was sweetened by strong affections, simple tastes, and an unflinching sense of duty; and in all the members of the household the love of nature was so genuine that meadow, wood, and river yielded them all the pleasure they needed, and they scarcely missed the refinements of art.

Surely there could not be a pleasanter or more homelike picture than that which the poet has given us of the family on the night of the great storm when the old house was

snowbound:

"Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat.
And ever when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed.
The house-dog on his paws outspread,
Laid to the fire his drowsy head;
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall,
And for the winter fireside meet
Between the andiron's straddling feet
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And close at hand the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood."

For a picture of the poet himself we must turn to the verses in "The Barefoot Boy," in which he says:

"O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;

Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden-wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches, too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!"

I doubt if any boy ever rose to intellectual eminence who had fewer opportunities for education than Whittier. He had no such pasturage to browse on as is open to every reader who, by simply reaching them out, can lay his hands on the treasures of English literature. He had to borrow books wherever they could be found among the neighbors who were willing to lend, and he thought nothing of walking several miles for one volume. The only instruction he received was at the district school, which was open a few weeks in midwinter, and at the Haverhill Academy, which he attended two terms of six months each, paying tuition by work in spare hours, and by keeping a small school himself. A feeble spirit would have languished under such disadvantages. But Whittier scarcely refers to them, and instead of begging for pity, he takes them as part of the common lot, and seems to remember only what was beautiful and good in his early life.

Occasionally a stranger knocked at the door of the old homestead in the valley; sometimes it was a distinguished Quaker from abroad, but oftener it was a peddler or some vagabond begging for food, which was seldom refused. Once a foreigner came and asked for lodgings for the night—a dark,

repulsive man, whose appearance was so much against him that Mrs. Whittier was afraid to admit him. No sooner had she sent him away, however, than she repented. "What if a son of mine was in a strange land?" she thought. The young poet (who was not yet recognized as such) offered to go out in search of him, and presently returned with him, having found him standing in the roadway just as he had been turned away from another house.

"He took his seat with us at the supper-table," says Whittier in one of his prose sketches, "and when we were all gathered around the hearth that cold autumnal evening, he told us, partly by words and partly by gestures, the story of his life and misfortunes, amused us with descriptions of the grape-gatherings and festivals of his sunny clime, edified my mother with a recipe for making bread of chestnuts, and in the morning, when, after breakfast, his dark sallow face lighted up, and his fierce eyes moistened with grateful emotion as in his own silvery Tuscan accent he poured out his thanks, we marveled at the fears which had so nearly closed our doors against him, and as he departed we all felt that he had left with us the blessing of the poor."

Another guest came to the house one day. It was a vagrant old Scotchman, who, when he had been treated to bread and cheese and cider, sang some of the songs of Robert Burns, which Whittier then heard for the first time, and which he never forgot. Coming to him thus as songs reached the people before printing was invented, through gleemen and minstrels, their sweetness lingered in his ears, and he soon found himself singing in the same strain. Some of his earliest inspirations were drawn from Burns, and he tells us of his joy when one day, after the visit of the old Scotchman, his schoolmaster loaned him a copy of that poet's works. "I began to make rhymes myself, and to imagine stories and adventures," he says in his simple way.

Indeed, he began to rhyme very early and kept his gift a

secret from all, except his oldest sister, fearing that his father, who was a prosaic man, would think that he was wasting time. He wrote under the fence, in the attic, in the barn—wherever he could escape observation; and as pen and ink were not always available, he sometimes used chalk, and even charcoal. Great was the surprise of the family when some of his verses were unearthed, literally unearthed, from under a heap of rubbish in a garret; but his father frowned upon these evidences of the bent of his mind, not out of unkindness, but because he doubted the sufficiency of the boy's education for a literary life, and did not wish to inspire him with hopes which might never be fulfilled.

His sister had faith in him, nevertheless, and, without his knowledge, she sent one of his poems to the editor of The Free Press, a newspaper published in Newburyport. Whittier was helping his father to repair a stone wall by the roadside when the carrier flung a copy of the paper to him, and, unconscious that anything of his was in it, he opened it and glanced up and down the columns. His eyes fell on some verses called "The Exile's Departure."

"Fond scenes, which delighted my youthful existence,
With feelings of sorrow I bid ye adieu—
A lasting adieu; for now, dim in the distance,
The shores of Hibernia recede from my view.
Farewell to the cliffs, tempest-beaten and gray,
Which guard the loved shores of my own native land;
Farewell to the village and sail-shadowed bay,
The forest-crowned hill and the water-washed strand."

His eyes swam; it was his own poem, the first he ever had in print.

"What is the matter with thee?" his father demanded, seeing how dazed he was; but, though he resumed his work on the wall, he could not speak, and he had to steal a glance

at the paper again and again, before he could convince himself that he was not dreaming. Sure enough, the poem was there with his initial at the foot of it—"W., Haverhill, June 1st, 1826"—and, better still, this editorial notice: "If 'W.,' at Haverhill, will continue to favor us with pieces beautiful as the one inserted in our poetical department of to-day, we shall esteem it a favor."

Fame never passes true genius by, and when it came it brought with it the love and reverence of thousands, who recognize in Whittier a nature abounding in patience, unselfishness, and all the sweetness of Christian charity.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Author of Uncle Tom's Cabin

1811 – 1896 A.D.

A Glimpse at the Life of a Writer

An amusing and at the same time most interesting account of her struggles to accomplish literary work amid her distracting domestic duties at this time is furnished by the letter of one of her intimate friends, who writes:—

"It was my good fortune to number Mrs. Stowe among my friends, and during a visit to her I had an opportunity one day of witnessing the combined exercise of her literary and domestic genius in a style that to me was quite amusing.

"'Come Harriet,' said I, as I found her tending one baby and watching two others just able to walk, 'where is that piece for the "Souvenir" which I promised the editor I would get from you and send on next week? You have only this one day left to finish it, and have it I must.'

"'And how will you get it, friend of mine?' said Harriet. 'You will at least have to wait till I get housecleaning over and baby's teeth through.'

"'As to house-cleaning, you can defer it one day longer; and as to baby's teeth, there is to be no end to them, as I can see. No, no; today that story must be ended. There Frederick has been sitting by Ellen and saying all those pretty things for more than a month now, and she has been turning and blushing till I am sure it is time to go to her relief. Come, it would not take you three hours at the rate you can write to finish the courtship, marriage, catastrophe, éclaircissement, and al; and this three hours' labor of your brains will earn enough to

pay for all the sewing your fingers could do for a year to come. Two dollars a page, my dear, and you can write a page in fifteen minutes! Come, then, my lady housekeeper, economy is a cardinal virtue; consider the economy of the thing.'

"'But, my dear, here is a baby in my arms and two little pussies by my side, and there is a great baking down in the kitchen, and there is a "new girl" for "help," besides preparations to be made for house-cleaning next week. It is really out of the question, you see.'

"'I see no such thing. I do not know what genius is given for, if it is not to help a woman out of a scrape. Come, set your wits to work, let me have my way, and you shall have all the work done and finish the story too.'

"'Well, but kitchen affairs?'

"'We can manage them too. You know you can write anywhere and anyhow. Just take your seat at the kitchen table with your writing weapons, and while you superintend Mina fill up the odd snatches of time with the labors of your pen.'

"I carried my point. In ten minutes she was seated; a table with flour, rolling-pin, ginger, and lard on one side, a dresser with eggs, pork, and beans and various cooking utensils on the other, near her an oven heating, and beside her a dark-skinned nymph, waiting orders.

"'Here, Harriet,' said I, 'you can write on this atlas in your lap; no matter how the writing looks, I will copy it.'

"'Well, well,' said she, with a resigned sort of amused look. 'Mina, you may do what I told you, while I write a few minutes, till it is time to mould up the bread. Where is the inkstand?'

"'Here it is, close by, on the top of the tea-kettle,' said I.

"At this Mina giggled, and we both laughed to see her merriment at our literary proceedings.

"I began to overhaul the portfolio to find the right sheet.

"'Here it is,' said I. 'Here is Frederick sitting by Ellen, glancing at her brilliant face, and saying something about

"guardian angel," and all that—you remember?'

"'Yes, yes,' said she, falling into a muse, as she attempted to recover the thread of her story.

"Ma'am, shall I put the pork on the top of the beans?' asked Mina.

"'Come, come,' said Harriet, laughing, 'You see how it is. Mina is a new hand and cannot do anything without me to direct her. We must give up the writing for today.'

"'No, no; let us have another trial. You can dictate as easily as you can write. Come, I can set the baby in this clothes-basket and give him some mischief or other to keep him quiet; you shall dictate and I will write. Now, this is the place where you left off: you were describing the scene between Ellen and her lover; the last sentence was, "Borne down by the tide of agony, she leaned her head on her hands, the tears streamed through her fingers, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What shall I write next?'

"'Mina, pour a little milk into this pearlash,' said Harriet.

"'Come,' said I. '"The tears streamed through her fingers and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What next?'

"Harriet paused and looked musingly out of the window, as she turned her mind to her story. 'You may write now,' said she, and she dictated as follows:

"'Her lover wept with her, nor dared he again to touch the point so sacredly guarded"—Mina, roll that crust a little thinner. "He spoke in soothing tones"—Mina, poke the coals in the oven.'

"'Here,' said I, 'let me direct Mina about these matters, and write a while yourself.'

"Harriet took the pen and patiently set herself to the work. For a while my culinary knowledge and skill were proof to all Mina's investigating inquiries, and they did not fail till I saw two pages completed.

"'You have done bravely,' said I, as I read over the

manuscript; 'now you must direct Mina a while. Meanwhile dictate and I will write.'

"Never was that a more docile literary lady than my friend. Without a word of objection she followed my request.

"'I am ready to write,' said I. 'The last sentence was: "What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?" What next?'

"'Shall I put in the brown or the white bread first?' said Mina.

"'The brown first,' said Harriet.

"'What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?' said I.

"Harriet brushed the flour off her apron and sat down for a moment in a muse. Then she dictated as follows:—

"'Under the breaking of my heart I have borne up. I have borne up under all that tries a woman,—but this though,—oh, Henry!'"

"'Ma'am, shall I put ginger into this pumpkin?' queried Mina.

"'No, you may let that alone just now,' replied Harriet.

She then proceeded:—

"'I know my duty to my children, I see the hour must come. You must take them, Henry; they are my last earthly comfort.'"

"'Ma'am, what shall I do with these egg-shells and all this truck here?' interrupted Mina.

"'Put them in the pail by you,' answered Harriet.

"'They are my last earthly comfort,'" said I. 'What next?' "She continued to dictate—

"'You must take them away. It may be—perhaps it must be—that I shall soon follow, but the breaking heart of a wife still pleads, 'a little longer, a little longer.'"

"'How much longer must the gingerbread stay in?' inquired Mina.

"'Five minutes,' said Harriet.

"Thus we went on, cooking, writing, nursing, and laughing, till I finally accomplished my object.

The piece was finished, copied, and the next day sent to the editor."

The Writing of Uncle Tom's Cabin

Dr. Beecher had been the intimate friend and supporter of Lovejoy, who had been murdered by the slaveholders at Alton for publishing an anti-slavery paper. His soul was stirred to its very depths by the iniquitous law which was at this time being debated in Congress—a law which not only gave the slaveholder of the South the right to seek out and bring back into slavery any colored person whom he claimed as a slave, but commanded the people of the free States to assist in this revolting business. The most frequent theme of conversation while Mrs. Stowe was in Boston was this proposed law, and when she arrived in Brunswick her soul was all on fire with indignation at this new indignity and wrong about to be inflicted by the slavepower on the innocent and defenseless.

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, letter after letter was received by Mrs. Stowe in Brunswick from Mrs. Edward Beecher and other friends, describing the heart-rending scenes which were the inevitable results of the enforcement of this terrible law. Cities were more available for the capturing of escaped slaves than the country, and Boston, which claimed to have the cradle of liberty, opened her doors to the slave-hunters. The sorrow and anguish caused thereby no pen could describe. Families were broken up. Some hid in garrets and cellars. Some fled to the wharves and embarked in ships and sailed for Europe. Others went to Canada. One poor fellow who was doing good business as a crockery merchant, and supporting his family well, when he got notice that his master, whom he had left many years before, was after him, set out for Canada in midwinter on foot, as he did not

dare to take a public conveyance. He froze both of his feet on the journey, and they had to be amputated. Mrs. Edward Beecher, in a letter to Mrs. Stowe's son, writing of this period, says:—

"I had been nourishing an anti-slavery spirit since Lovejoy was murdered for publishing in his paper articles against slavery and intemperance, when our home was in Illinois. These terrible things which were going on in Boston were well calculated to rouse up this spirit. What can I do? I thought. Not much myself, but I know one who can. So I wrote several letters to your mother, telling her of various heart-rending events caused by the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. I remember distinctly saying in one of them, 'Now, Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is.'…When we lived in Boston your mother often visited us…Several numbers of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' were written in your Uncle Edward's study at these times, and read to us from the manuscripts."

A member of Mrs. Stowe's family well remembers the scene in the little parlor in Brunswick when the letter alluded to was received. Mrs. Stowe herself read it aloud to the assembled family, and when she came to the passage, "I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is," Mrs. Stowe rose up from her chair, crushing the letter in her hand, and with an expression on her face that stamped itself on the mind of her child, said: "I will write something. I will if I live."

This was the origin of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The purpose of writing a story that should make the whole nation feel that slavery was an accursed thing was not immediately carried out. In December, 1850, Mrs. Stowe writes: "Tell sister Katy I thank her for her letter and will answer it. As long as the baby sleeps with me nights I can't do much of anything, but I will do it at last. I will write that thing if I live."

January 12, 1851, Mrs. Stowe again writes to Professor Stowe at Cincinnati: "Ever since we left Cincinnati to come here the good hand of God has been visibly guiding our way. Through what difficulties have we been brought! Though we knew not where means were to come from, yet means have been furnished every step of the way, and in every time of need. I was just in some discouragement with regard to my writing; thinking that the editor of the 'Era' was overstocked with contributors, and would not want my services another year, and lo! He sends me one hundred dollars, and ever so many good words with it. Our income this year will be seventeen hundred dollars in all, and I hope to bring our expenses within thirteen hundred."

It was in the month of February after these words were written that Mrs. Stowe was seated at communion service in the college church at Brunswick. Suddenly, like the unrolling of a picture, the scene of the death of Uncle Tom passed before her mind. So strongly was she affected that it was with difficulty she could keep from weeping aloud. Immediately on returning home she took pen and paper and wrote out the vision which had been as it were blown into her mind as by the rushing of a mighty wind. Gathering her family about her she read what she had written. Her two little ones of ten and twelve years of age broke into convulsions of weeping, one of them saying through his sobs, "Oh, mamma! slavery is the most cruel thing in the world." Thus Uncle Tom was ushered into the world, and it was, as we said at the beginning, a cry, an immediate, an involuntary expression of deep, impassioned feeling.

Twenty-five years afterwards Mrs. Stowe wrote in a letter to one of her children, of this period of her life: "I well remember the winter you were a baby and I was writing 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' My heart was bursting with the anguish excited by the cruelty and injustice our nation was showing to the slave, and praying God to let me do a little and to cause my cry for them

to be heard. I remember many a night weeping over you as you lay sleeping beside me, and I thought of the slave mothers whose babies were torn from them."

Uncle Tom's Cabin came from the heart rather than the head. It was an outburst of deep feeling, a cry in the darkness. The writer no more thought of style or literary excellence than the mother who rushes into the street and cries for help to save her children from a burning house thinks of the teachings of the rhetorician or the elocutionist.

A few years afterwards Mrs. Stowe, writing of this story, said, "This story is to show how Jesus Christ, who liveth and was dead, and now is alive and forever-more, has still a mother's love for the poor and lowly, and that no man can sink so low but that Jesus Christ will stoop to take his hand. Who so low, who so poor, who so despised as the American slave? The law almost denies his existence as a person, and regards him for the most part as less than a man—a mere thing, the property of another. The law forbids him to read or write, to hold property, to make a contract, or even to form a legal marriage. It takes from him all legal right to the wife of his bosom, the children of his body. He can do nothing, possess nothing, acquire nothing, but what must belong to his master. Yet even to this slave Jesus Christ stoops, from where he sits at the right hand of the Father, and says, 'Fear not, thou whom man despiseth, for I am thy brother. Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.'"

Uncle Tom's Cabin is a Work of Religion

Uncle Tom's Cabin made the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law an impossibility. It aroused the public sentiment of the world by arousing in the concrete that which had been a mere series of abstract propositions. It was…an appeal to the imagination through a series of pictures. People are like children, and understand pictures better than words. Some one

rushes into your dining-room while you are at breakfast and cries out, "Terrible railroad accident, forty killed and wounded, six were burned alive."

"Oh shocking! Dreadful!" you exclaim, and yet go quietly on with your rolls and coffee. But suppose you stood at that instant by the wreck, and saw the mangled dead, and heard the piercing shrieks of the wounded, you would be faint and dizzy with the intolerable spectacle.

So "Uncle Tom's Cabin" made the crack of the slave-driver's whip, and the cries of the tortured blacks ring in every household in the land, till human hearts could endure it no longer.

Mrs. Stowe had no reason to hope for any large pecuniary gain from this publication, for it was practically her first book. "I did not know until a week afterward precisely what terms Mr. Stowe had made, and I did not care. I had the most perfect indifference to the bargain."

In writing of this critical period of her life Mrs. Stowe says:—

"After sending the last proof-sheet to the office I sat alone reading Horace Mann's eloquent plea for these young men and women, then about to be consigned to the slave warehouse of Bruin & Hill in Alexandria, Va—a plea impassioned, eloquent, but vain, as all other pleas on that side had ever proved in all courts hitherto. It seemed that there was no hope, that nobody would hear, nobody would read, nobody pity; that this frightful system, that had already pursued its victimes into the free States, might at last even threaten them in Canada."

Filled with this fear, she determined to do all that one woman might to enlist the sympathies of England for the cause, and to avert, even as a remote contingency, the closing of Canada as a haven of refuge for the oppressed.

Then, having done what she could, and committed the result to God, she calmly turned her attention to other affairs.

In the mean time the fears of the author as to whether or not her book would be read were quickly dispelled. Three thousand copies were sold the very first day, a second edition was issued the following week, a third on the 1st of April, and within a year one hundred and twenty editions, or over three hundred thousand copies of the book, had been issued and sold in this country. Almost in a day the poor professor's wife had become the most talked-of woman in the world, her influence for good was spreading to its remotest corners, and henceforth she was to be a public character, whose every movement would be watched with interest, and whose every word would be quoted. The long, weary struggle with poverty was to be hers no longer; for, in seeking to aid the oppressed, she had also so aided herself.

In due time Mrs. Stowe began to receive answers to the letters she had forwarded with copies of her book to prominent men in England, and these were without exception flattering and encouraging. Lord Carlisle wrote:

"I return my deep and solemn thanks to Almighty God who has led and enabled you to write such a book. I do feel indeed the most thorough assurance that in his good Providence such a book cannot have been written in vain. I have long felt that slavery is by far the topping question of the world and age we live in, including all that is most thrilling in heroism and most touching in distress; in short, the real epic of the universe. The self-interest of the parties most nearly concerned on the one hand, the apathy and ignorance of unconcerned observers on the other, have left these August pretensions to drop very much out of sight.

Hence my rejoicing that a writer has appeared who will be read and must be felt, and that happen what may to the transactions of slavery they will no longer be suppressed."

To this letter, of which but an extract has been given, Mrs. Stowe sent the following reply:

"MY LORD—It is not with the common pleasure of

gratified authorship that I say how much I am gratified by the receipt of your very kind communication with regard to my humble efforts in the cause of humanity. The subject is one so grave, so awful—the success of what I have written has been so singular and so unexpected—that I can scarce retain a self-consciousness and am constrained to look upon it all as the work of a Higher Power, who, when He pleases, can accomplish his results by the feeblest instruments."

Edward Everett Hale

Author of The Man Without a Country

1822 – 1909 A.D.

The boyhood of Edward Everett Hale reads like a chapter in one of his own stories of home life. There was nothing miraculous or romantic in it; no prodigious feats of learning, no martyrdom, and no canonization of saints.

His father and mother were just the kind of people that he holds up to admiration in his books—full of good sense, liberality, and originality; controlling their children with a secure hand, but directing instead of driving them, and reasoning with them instead of scolding. Piety in that household never wore a long face; benevolence worked in deeds and not in words.

At the end of his first month in the Boston Latin School, the boy came home with a report which showed that he was ninth in a class of fifteen; and he dreaded handing it to his mother, as he thought she would be displeased to find him so low in the class. "Oh," she said, "that is no matter. Probably the other boys are brighter than you. God made them so, and you cannot help that. But the report says that you are among the boys who behave well. That you can see to, and that is all I care about."

This little incident shows the reasonableness which guided the conduct of the Hale household. A boy was expected to do all in his power, but no more; and if he could not do it one way, he was allowed to attempt it by some new method, which often proved to be no less successful on account of its novelty. He was not forced to conform to

patterns, simply because they fitted other boys, though there was no lack of discipline and no toleration of the wilful misuse of time. The motto that has since become famous was so closely lived up to, that it might have been as unceasingly in the ears of the family as the ticking of the clock:—

"Look up, and not down;
Look forward, and not back;
Look out, and not in;
Lend a hand."

The boy who was born in Boston on April 3, 1822, came of a stock which justified the expectation of a brilliant and useful career for him. His grand-uncle was Nathan Hale, who, when he was led out to execution as a spy in the Revolutionary war, said with his last breath, "I regret that I have only one life to surrender for my country;" and his uncle on his mothers side was Edward Everett the orator, after whom he was named. His father was a man who combined scholarship with activity in public affairs, and it was through his advocacy that the first steam railway was built in Massachusetts.

Great are the changes that have taken place in Boston since then. The boy is a man, and looking back says, "I have sailed my bark boat on the salt waters, where I now can sit in the parlors of my parishioners. I have studied botany on the marshes, where I now sit in my own study to prepare the notes which I read to you. I rode in triumph on the locomotive which hissed over the first five miles that were ready of that highway to the West, where now she might run five thousand."

A good half of Boston is built on land recovered from the sea; and there are solid streets and houses where, less than half a century ago, the water flowed, sinking and rising with the tides.

He was sent to a dame-school while he was still an infant; but he learned little there, and probably was not expected to

learn. As the children droned through their lessons, he sat quietly watching the motes of dust dancing in the sunbeams that streamed through the blinds, and his greatest interest was in the making of sand-pies on the floor. When he was placed in a big yellow chair in the middle of the room, he could not be made to understand that it was for some misconduct.

Then he was sent to a school kept by a man who was amiable but incompetent, and he gathered scarcely more here than he did in watching the sunbeams. "A featherpillow sort of a man was 'Simple' the master—a goodnatured, innocent fellow, who would neither set the bay on fire nor want to, who could and would keep us out of mischief for five or six hours a day, and would never send us home mad with rage, or injustice, or ambition."

He was sometimes late in coming to school; and in order to reproach him, Edward Everett Hale, then a small and audacious lad, marshalled all the boys in their seats, and had a class out to recite before he arrived.

This saucy boy had strong opinions on many subjects at this early age, and he put little value on schools and schoolmasters. But he was a great reader, and his reading fertilized his mind as a field is fertilized before the sower scatters the seed.

Grimm's "Fairy Stories" opened the world of magic to him; and the poems of Sir Walter Scott had such a fascination for him, that there never was a time after he had read them, when he could not quote long passages from memory. As with all imaginative boys, a book of travels transported him to the very spot described; and as he read an account of the Arctic regions, the house melted into air, and he seemed to be fitting in the cabin of an icebound ship, held fast in the jaws of the polar sea, with the aurora flashing up and down the sky. Happy is the boy whose imagination has such a spread of wing that he can leave every care on earth behind, and forget himself in a book! Life has no greater boon than this, and it is the special

gift of youth which age can seldom claim.

When he was nine years of age he was sent to the Boston Latin School, where Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Edward Everett, and Charles Sumner had been educated. It is the oldest school in America, and one of the best; and in it the subject of our sketch made substantial progress, though he seldom stood higher than ninth in a class of fifteen. Unlike most budding authors, he was fond of arithmetic; and another peculiarity of his was, that he could not for the life of him see why his opinions on matters of education were not regarded with as much consideration as the master's. "I had a very decided feeling that it was as fitting that he should consult me as I him," he says with charming frankness.

All the while he was reading diligently; and two summers he was taken out of school to read at home, an excellent plan when a boy is growing fast, though it would be a pity if he should miss the hardening and sharpening which come from association with other boys.

Another privilege he had which any boy who aspires to become an author or a journalist might well envy. Who that is stirred with such an ambition has not looked up with awe and longing, to the front of a great newspaper-office, wishing that he might be admitted to its secrets, its labors, and its honors? Nothing in the world has seemed so glorious, not even the Capitol, pillars, steps, dome, and all, as a newspaper-building in some by-street of the city, with its lights shining in the upper story where the compositors are setting type, the presses rattling in the basement, and the entrance with editors, reporters, and messengers coming and going at all hours of the day and night.

Well, the father of Edward Everett Hale was the editor of the Boston "Advertiser," and the offices of that paper resembled a nursery to his son, who, like William Dean Howells, learned to set type almost as soon as he had learned to read.

He not only mastered the mechanical parts of the business of making a newspaper, but wrote articles for the "Advertiser" while he was still a boy, and he translated an article from a French paper for it before he was eleven: a good beginning for one who in after-life was to fill in turn every position, from that of a reporter, to the much loftier perch of the controlling editor.

In 1835 he entered Harvard University, where Lowell was already a student; and his literary tastes were fostered there by Edward Tyrrel Channing, the professor of English language and literature, who also taught Dana, Story, Holmes, Parkman, and many others who have since made their mark in authorship. Longfellow was another of the professors. "He came to Cambridge in our first years. He was not so much older than we as to be distant, was always accessible, friendly, and sympathetic. All poor teachers let the book come between them and the pupil. Great teachers never do: Longfellow never did. We used to call him 'Head,' which meant head of the modern language department."

Hale was graduated in 1839, and about that time he made the acquaintance of two new authors through their books. One was Alfred Tennyson, and the other John Ruskin. The first copy of Tennyson that fell into his hands had been brought from England by Emerson, who was always kind to young people, and lent his books freely. Then Ruskin appeared, and his writings developed the love of the beautiful in the young student, and gave him the habit of a close observation of nature out of doors. Scarcely any thing in the shape of a book was uninteresting or unprofitable to him; but he confesses that he could not enjoy Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," and that he went to sleep over it.

After his graduation, he taught Latin and Greek for two years, and at the same time wrote articles and stories for the papers. He is as widely known now as an author as he is as a preacher; but when he was twenty-four he entered the

Christian ministry, and he has never given it up. The best of his endeavors have been devoted to it, and in his life he has been governed by a principle which he uttered before a college society—"We professional men must serve the world, not, like the handicraftsman, for a price accurately representing the work done; but as those who deal with infinite values, and confer benefits as freely and nobly as Nature."

General Lew Wallace

Author of Ben-Hur

1827 – 1905 A.D.

In his study, a curiously-shaped building without the accompaniment of a window, and combining in equal proportions the Byzantine, Romanesque and Doric styles of architecture, the gray-haired author of "Ben Hur," surrounded by his pictures, books and military trophies, is spending, in serene and comfortable retirement, the evening of his life. As I sat beside him and listened to the recital of his earliest struggles and later achievements, I could not help contrasting his dignified bearing, careful expression, and gentle demeanor, with another occasion in his life, when, a vigorous, black-haired young military officer, in the spring of 1861, he appeared, with flashing eye and uplifted sword, at the head of his regiment, the gallant and historic Eleventh Indiana Volunteers.

General Wallace never repels a visitor, and his greeting is cordial and ingenuous.

"If I could say anything to stimulate or encourage the young men of today," he said, when I had explained the object of my visit, "I would gladly do so, but I fear that the story of my early days would be of very little interest or value to others. So far as school education is concerned, it may be truthfully said that I had but little, if any; and if, in spite of that deficiency, I ever arrived at proficiency, I reached it, I presume, as Topsy attained her stature—'just growed into it.'"

He Was a Careless Student

"Were you denied early school advantages?" I asked.

"Not in the least. On the contrary, I had most abundant opportunity in that respect. My father was a lawyer, enjoying a lucrative practice in Brookville, Indiana—a small town which bears the distinction of having given to the world more prominent men than any other place in the Hoosier state. Not long after my birth, he was elected lieutenant-governor, and, finally, governor of the state. He, himself, was an educated man, having been graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, and having served as instructor in mathematics there. He was not only an educated man, but a man of advanced ideas generally, as shown by the fact that he failed of a reelection to congress in 1840, because, as a member of the committee on commerce, he gave the casting vote in favor of an appropriation to develop Morse's magnetic telegraph. Of course, he believed in the value, and tried to impress upon me the necessity of a thorough school training; but, in the face of all the solicitude and encouragement which an indulgent father could waste on an unappreciative son, I remained vexatiously indifferent. I presume I was like some man in history—it was Lincoln, I believe—who said that his father taught him to work, but he never quite succeeded in teaching him to love it.

"My father sent me to school, and regularly paid tuition—for in those days there were no free schools; but, much to my discredit, he failed to secure anything like regular attendance at recitations, or even a decent attempt to master my lessons at any time. In fact, much of the time that should have been given to school was spent in fishing, hunting and roaming through the woods."

He Loved to Read

"But were you thus indifferent to all forms of education?"

"No, my case was not quite so hopeless as that. I did not

desert the schools entirely, but my attendance was so provokingly irregular and my indifference so supreme, I wonder now that I was tolerated at all. But I had one mainstay; I loved to read. I was a most inordinate reader. In some lines of literature, especially history and some kinds of fiction, my appetite was insatiate, and many a day, while my companions were clustered together in the old red brick schoolhouse, struggling with their problems in fractions or percentage, I was carefully hidden in the woods near by, lying upon my elbows, munching an apple, and reveling in the beauties of Plutarch, Byron or Goldsmith."

"Did you not attend college, or the higher grade of schools?"

"Yes, for a brief period. My brother was a student in Wabash College—here in Crawfordsville—and hither I also was sent; but within six weeks I had tired of the routine, was satiated with discipline, and made my exit from the institution. I shall never forget what my father did when I returned home. He called me into his office, and, reaching into one of the pigeonholes above his desk, withdrew therefrom a package of papers neatly folded and tied with the conventional red tape. He was a very systematic man, due, perhaps, to his West Point training, and these papers proved to be the receipts for my tuition, which he had carefully preserved. He called off the items, and asked me to add them together. The total, I confess, staggered me."

A Father's Fruitful Warning

"'That sum, my son,' he said, with a tone of regret in his voice, 'represents what I have expended in these many years past to provide you with a good education. How successful I have been, you know better than anyone else. After mature reflection, I have come to the conclusion that I have done for you in that direction all that can reasonably be expected of any parent, and I have, therefore, called you in to tell you that

you have now reached an age when you must take up the lines yourself. If you have failed to profit by the advantages with which I have tried so hard to surround you, the responsibility must be yours. I shall not upbraid you for your neglect, but rather pity you for the indifference which you have shown to the golden opportunities you have, through my indulgence, been enabled to enjoy.'"

"What effect did this admonition have on you? Did it awaken or arouse you?"

"It aroused me, most assuredly. It set me to thinking as nothing before had done. The next day, I set out with a determination to accomplish something for myself. My father's injunction rang in my ears. New responsibilities rested on my shoulders, as I was, for the first time in my life, my own master. I felt that I must get work on my own account. After much effort, I finally obtained employment from the man with whom I had passed so many afternoons strolling up and down the little streams in the neighborhood, trying to fish. He was the county clerk, and he hired me to copy what was known as the complete record of one of the courts. I worked for months in a dingy, half-lighted room, receiving for my pay something like ten cents per hundred words. The tediousness and regularity of the work was a splendid drill for me, and taught me the virtue of persistence as one of the avenues of success. It was at this time I began to realize the deficiency in my education, especially as I had an ambition to become a lawyer. Being deficient in both mathematics and grammar, I was forced to study those branches evenings. Of course, the latter was a very exacting study, after a full day's hard work, but I was made to realize that the time I had spent with such lavish prodigality could not be recovered, and that I must extract every possible good out of the golden moments then flying by all too fast."

His First Literary Effort

"Had you a distinct literary ambition at that time?"

"Well, I had always had a sort of literary bent or inclination. I read all the literature of the day, besides the standard authors, and finally began to devote my odd moments to a book of my own—a tale based on the days of the crusades. When completed it covered about three hundred and fifty pages, and bore the rather high-sounding title, 'The Man-at-Arms.' I read a good portion of it before a literary society to which I belonged; the members applauded it, and I was frequently urged to have it published. The Mexican War soon followed, however, and I took the manuscript with me when I enlisted; but before the close of my service it was lost, and my production, therefore, never reached the public eye."

"But did not the approval which the book received from the few persons who read it encourage you to continue writing?"

"Fully fifty years have elapsed since then, and it is, therefore, rather difficult, at this late day, to recall just how such things affected me. I suppose I was encouraged thereby, for, in due course of time, another book which turned out to be 'The Fair God,'—my first book to reach the public—began to shape itself in my mind. The composition of this work was not, as the theatrical people would say, a continuous performance, for there were many and singular interruptions, and it would be safe to say that months, and, in one case, years, intervened between certain chapters. A few years after the war, I finished the composition, strung the chapters into a continuous narrative, leveled up the uneven places, and started East with the manuscript. A letter from Whitelaw Reid, then editor of the New York 'Tribune,' introduced me to the head of one of the leading publishing houses in Boston. There I was kindly received, and, delivered my manuscript, which was referred to a professional reader, to determine its literary, and also, I presume, its commercial value.

"It would be neither a new nor an interesting story to acquaint the public with the degree of anxious suspense that pervaded my mind when I withdrew to await the reader's judgment. Every other writer has, I assume, at one time or another, undergone much the same experience. It was not long until I learned from the publisher that the reader reported in favor of my production. Publication soon followed, and for the first time, in a literary sense, I found myself before the public, and my book before the critics."

"How long after this did 'Ben Hur' appear, and what led you to write it?"

The Origin of "Ben Hur"

"I began 'Ben Hur' about 1876, and it was published in 1880. The purpose, at first, was a short serial for one of the magazines, descriptive of the visit of the wise men to Jerusalem as mentioned in the first two verses of the second chapter of Matthew. It will be recognized in 'Book First' of the work as now published. For certain reasons, however, the serial idea was abandoned, and the narrative, instead of ending with the birth of the Savior, expanded into a more pretentious novel and only ended with the death scene on Calvary. The last ten chapters were written in the old adobe palace at Sante Fe, New Mexico, where I was serving as governor. It is difficult to answer the question, 'what led me to write the book?' or why I chose a piece of fiction which used Christ as its leading character. In explanation, it is proper to state that I had reached an age in life when men usually begin to study themselves with reference to their fellowmen, and reflect on the good they may have done in the world. Up to that time, never having read the Bible, I knew nothing about sacred history; and in matters of a religious nature, although I was not in every respect an infidel, I was persistently and notoriously indifferent. I did not know, and, therefore, did not care. I resolved to begin the study of the good

book in earnest.

Converted While Writing His Own Book

"I was in quest of knowledge, but I had no faith to sustain, no creed to bolster up. The result was that the whole field of religious and biblical history opened up before me, and, my vision not being clouded by previously formed opinions, I was enabled to survey it without the aid of lenses. I believe I was thorough and persistent. I know I was conscientious in my search for the truth. I weighed, I analyzed, I counted and compared. The evolution from conjecture into knowledge, through opinion and belief, was gradual but irresistible; and at length I stood firmly and defiantly on the solid rock. Upward of seven hundred thousand copies of 'Ben Hur' have been published, and it has been translated into all languages from French to Arabic; but, whether it has ever influenced the mind of a single reader or not, I am sure its conception and preparation, if it has done nothing more, has convinced its author of the divinity of the lowly Nazarene who walked and talked with God."

Mary Mapes Dodge

Author of Hans Brinker, of the Silver Skates

1831-1905 A.D.

Mrs. Dodge had already proved herself a clever essayist and capital story-teller for grown-up readers when she published her first book, a collection of short tales for children, under the name of "Irvington Stories." It was a modest little muslin-covered duodecimo, with three or four illustrations by Darley; a book quite out of print now, but dear to the heart of many a young man and woman who were children eighteen years ago. So successful was it as not only to pass through several editions, and receive the warmest encomiums of the press, but to elicit praise from the "North American Review," at that time the "big bowwow" of our literature, which saw that the stories had just enough of improbability to suit the minds of children, for whom the age of fancy and fable renews itself in every generation. "They are not sermons in words of two syllables," said Rhadamanthus, "they are not prosy, but what is gracious and lovely in childhood is appealed to indirectly, with something of motherly tenderness in the tone. Good books for children are so rare, and books to make little spoonies so common, that this should be praised."

The publisher begged for a second series of "Irvington Stories." Mrs. Dodge, meantime, had begun another story, as a short serial, to run through several numbers of the juvenile department of a weekly religious paper.

Like the rest of the reading world, she had been thrilled and fascinated by the lately-published histories of Motley, the "Rise of the Dutch Republic," and the "History of the United

Netherlands." She resolved to make Holland the scene of a juvenile tale, and give the youngsters so much of the history of that wonderful country as should tell itself, naturally, through the evolution of the story. The subject fascinated her, and grew upon her hands. It passed the limits which the weekly paper set, and developed into a volume. The publisher, disappointed at not receiving a second collection of short stories, was tempted to reject the manuscript offered him. But the author had nothing else ready, he could not afford to forego the prestige of her former success, and so, reluctantly and doubtfully, he issued the most successful juvenile tale of our time, "Hans Brinker; or, The Silver Skates." No tenderer, sweeter, loftier story was ever told. Boys' hearts beat quicker as they read it, with the thrill and stir of action, and old eyes dimmed with tears over the unwritten pathos of the humble lives it recorded. The critics seemed to take it for granted that a new book by the author of "Irvington Stories" would be worthy of its parentage, and praised the story in a matter-of-course way, but with one accord dwelt on the perfection of the local coloring, which, as the work of an artist who had never seen the Low Countries, was a marvellous achievement. On closing the book one did not seem to have been reading about Holland, but to have been living in Holland; nay, to have been born and bred there; and to have grown so familiar with the queer customs of that queer country that neither customs nor country any longer seemed queer.

From the moment of its publication, sixteen years ago, the success of "Hans Brinker" was instant and assured, and today it is one of the books of steady sale. It has had a very large circulation in America; has passed through several editions in England: and has been published in French, at Paris; in German, at Leipsic; in Russian, at St. Petersburg; and in Italian, at Rome. A version in French under the title of "*Patins d'Argent*" was awarded one of the Monthyou prizes, of fifteen hundred francs, by the French Academy. But the crowning

tribute to its excellence is its perennial sale in Holland in a Dutch edition, which, when Mrs. Dodge was in Amsterdam a few years ago, was recommended to one of her party by a zealous bookseller, as the most attractive juvenile in his collection.

This success, of course, was no lucky hit, but the merited reward of the hardest work. Mrs. Dodge ransacked libraries, public and private, for books upon Holland; made every traveller whom she knew tell her his tale of that unique country; wrote to Dutch acquaintances in Amsterdam and Haarlem; and submitted every chapter to the test of the criticism of two accomplished Hollanders living near her. It was the genius of patience and toil, the conscientious touching and retouching of the true artist, which wrought the seemingly spontaneous and simple task.

Louisa M. Alcott

Author of Little Women, Little Men, Jo's Boys

1832 – 1888 A.D.

In a pleasant, shady garden in Concord, Massachusetts, under a gnarled old apple-tree, sat a very studious looking little person, bending over a sheet of paper on which she was writing. She had made a seat out of a tree stump, and a table by laying a board across two carpenter's horses, whose owner was working in the house, and no scholar writing a treatise on some deep subject could have been more absorbed in his work than was the little girl in the garden.

For a whole long hour she wrote, frequently stopping to look off into the distance and bite the end of her pencil with a very learned look, then she would bend over her paper again and write hard and fast. Finally, she laid down her pencil with an air of triumph, jumped up from the stump and rushed toward the house.

"Mother! Anna! I've written a poem about the robin we found this morning in the garden!" Dashing into the library she waved the paper in the air with a still more excited cry: "Listen!" and dropped on the floor to read her poem to a much thrilled audience of two. With great dramatic effect she read her lines, glancing up from time to time to see that she was producing the proper effect.

This is what she read:

TO THE FIRST ROBIN

Welcome, welcome, little stranger,
Fear no harm and fear no danger,
We are glad to see you here,

For you sing "Sweet Spring is near."
Now the white snow melts away,
Now the flowers blossom gay,
Come, dear bird, and build your nest,
For we love our robin best.

She finished with an upward tilt of her voice, while her mother excitedly flourished the stocking she was darning over her head, crying: "Good! Splendid!" and quiet Anna echoed the words, looking with awe at her small sister, as she added, "It's just like Shakespeare!"

The proud mother did not say much more in praise of the budding poetesses's effort, for fear of making her conceited; but that night, after the verses had been read to a delighted father, and the young author had gone happily off to bed, the mother said:

"I do believe she is going to be a genius, Bronson!"

Yet, despite the prediction, even an appreciative parent would have been more than surprised had she been able to look into the future and had seen her daughter as one of the most famous writer of books for young people of her generation. The little girl who sat under the apple-tree on that day in early spring and wrote the verses was no other than Louisa May Alcott, and her tribute to the robin was to be treasured in after years as the first evidence of its writer's talent.

Louisa, the second daughter of Amos Bronson and Abba May Alcott, was born in Germantown, Pa., on the 29th of November, 1832, and was fortunate in being the child of parents who not only understood the intense, restless and emotional nature of this daughter, but were deeply interested in developing it in such a way that her marked traits would be valuable to her in later life. To this unfailing sympathy of both father and mother the turbulent nature owed much of its rich achievement, and Louisa Alcott's home surroundings and influences had as much to do with her success as a writer as

had her talent, great as that was.

At the time of her birth her father was teaching school in Germantown, but he was a man whose ideas were original and far in advance of his time, and his way of teaching was not liked by the parents of his pupils, so when Louisa was two years old and her older sister, Anna, four, the family went to Boston, where Mr. Alcott opened his famous school in Masonic Temple, and enjoyed teaching by his own new methods, and when he was happy his devoted wife was equally contented.

Louisa was too young to go to school then, except as a visitor, but her father developed her young mind at home according to his own theories of education, and during the remainder of the all-too short days the active child was free to amuse herself as she chose. To play on the Common was her great delight, for she was a born investigator, and there she met children of all classes, who appealed to her many-sided nature in different ways. Louisa was never a respecter of class distinctions—it did not matter to her where people lived, or whether their hands and faces were dirty, if some personal characteristic attracted her to them, and from those early days she was unconsciously studying human nature, and making ready for the work of later years.

In her own sketch of those early days, she says:

"Running away was one of my great delights, and I still enjoy sudden flights out of the nest to look about this very interesting world and then go back to report!"

On one of her investigating tours, she met some Irish children whose friendliness delighted her, and she spent a wonderful day with them, sharing their dinner of cold potatoes, salt fish and bread crusts. Then—delightful pastime—they all played in the ash-heaps for some time, and took a trip to the Common together. But when twilight came, her new friends deserted her, leaving her a long way from home, and little Louisa began to think very longingly of her mother and

sister. But as she did not know how to find her way back she sat down on a doorstep, where a big dog was lying. He was so friendly that she cuddled up against his broad back and fell asleep. How long she slept she did not know, but she was awakened by the loud ringing of a bell, and a man s deep voice calling:

"Little girl lost! Six years old—in a pink frock, white hat and new green shoes. Little girl lost! Little girl lost!"

It was the town crier, and as he rang his bell and gave his loud cry, out of the darkness he heard a small voice exclaim:

"Why, dat's *me!*"

With great difficulty the crier was able to pursuade the child to unclasp her arms from the neck of the big friendly dog, but at last she left him, and was taken to the crier's home and "feasted sumptuously on bread and molasses in a tin plate with the alphabet round it," while her frantic family was being notified. The unhappy ending to that incident is very tersely told by Louisa, who says: "My fun ended the next day, when I was tied to the arm of the sofa to repent at leisure!"

That the six years spent in Boston were happy ones, and that the budding spirit of Louisa was filled with joy at merely being alive, was shown one morning, when, at the breakfast table, she suddenly looked up with an all-embrasive smile and exclaimed:

"I love everybody in *dis* whole world!"

Despite the merriment which was always a feature of the Alcott home, as they were all blessed with a sense of humor which helped them over many a hard place, there was an underlying anxiety for Mr. and Mrs. Alcott, as the school was gradually growing smaller and there was barely enough income to support their family, to which a third daughter, Elizabeth, the "Beth" of *Little Women*, had been added recently. During those days they lived on very simple fare, which the children disliked, as their rice had to be eaten without sugar and their mush without butter or molasses. Nor did

Mr. Alcott allow meat on his table, as he thought it wrong to eat any creature which had to be killed for the purpose. An old family friend who lived at a Boston hotel sympathized strongly with the children's longing for sweets, and every day at dinner she saved them a piece of pie or cake, which Louisa would call for, carrying a bandbox for the purpose. The friend was in Europe for years, and when she returned Louisa Alcott had become famous. Meeting her on the street one day, Louisa greeted her old friend, eagerly:

"Why, I did not think you would remember me!" said the old lady.

"Do you suppose I shall ever forget that bandbox!" was the quick reply.

As time went on, Mr. Alcott s school dwindled until he had only five scholars, and three of them were his own children. Something new had to be tried, and quickly, so the family moved out of the city, into a small house at Concord, Mass., which had an orchard and a garden, and, best of all, the children had a big barn, where they gave all sorts of entertainments; mostly plays, as they were born actors. Their mother, or "Marmee," as the girls called her, loved the fun as well as they did, and would lay aside her work at any moment to make impossible costumes for fairies, gnomes, kings or peasants, who were to take the principal parts in some stirring melodrama written by the girls themselves, or some adaptation of an old fairy tale. They acted Jack the Giant-killer in fine style, and the giant came tumbling headlong from a loft when Jack cut down the squash-vine running up a ladder and supposed to represent the immortal beanstalk. At other performances Cinderella rolled away in an impressive pumpkin, and one of their star plays was a dramatic version of the story of the woman who wasted her three wishes, in which a long black pudding was lowered by invisible hands and slowly fastened onto her nose.

But though the big barn often echoed with the sound of

merry voices, at other times the girls dressed up as pilgrims, and journeyed over the hill with scrip and staff, and cockle shells in their hats; fairies held their revels among the whispering birches, and strawberry parties took place in the rustic arbor of the garden.

And there we find eight-year-old Louisa writing her verses to the robin, with genius early beginning to burn in the small head which later proved to be so full of wonderful material for the delight of young people.

"Those Concord days were the happiest of my life," says Miss Alcott. "We had charming playmates in the little Emersons, Channings, Goodwins and Hawthornes, with the illustrious parents and their friends to enjoy our pranks and share our excursions… My wise mother, anxious to give me a strong body to support a lively brain, turned me loose in the country and let me run wild, learning of Nature what no books can teach, and being led—as those who truly love her seldom fail to be—'through Nature up to Nature's God.'"

The Alcott children were encouraged to keep diaries in which they wrote down their thoughts and feelings and fancies, and even at that early age Louisa's journal was a record of deep feelings and of a child's sacred emotions. In one of her solemn moods, she makes this entry:

"I had an early run in the woods before the dew was off the grass. The moss was like velvet, and as I ran under the arch of yellow and red leaves I sang for joy, my heart was so bright and the world so beautiful. I stopped at the end of the walk and saw the sunshine out over the wide 'Virginia meadows.'

"It seemed like going through a dark life or grave into heaven beyond. A very strange and solemn feeling came over me as I stood there, with no sound but the rustle of the pines, no one near me, and the sun so glorious, as for me alone. It seemed as if I felt God as I never did before, and I prayed in my heart that I might keep that happy sense of nearness all

my life."

To that entry there is a note added, years later: "I have, for I most sincerely think that the little girl 'got religion' that day in the wood, when dear Mother Nature led her to God."—L.M.A. 1885.

That deep religious note in Louisa Alcott's nature is very marked and is evident in all of her work, but, on the other hand, she had a sparkling wit and such a keen sense of humor that in her blackest moods she could always see something funny to amuse her, and frequently laughed at her own expense.

That her conscience was as active as her mind and her body is shown by one of her "private plays," which she makes Demi describe in *Little Men*. He says:

"I play that my mind is a round room, and my soul is a little sort of creature with wings that lives in it. The walls are full of shelves and drawers, and in them I keep my thoughts, and my goodness and badness and all sorts of things. The goods I keep where I can see them, and the bads I lock up tight, but they get out, and I have to keep putting them in and squeezing them down, they are so strong. The thoughts I play with when I am alone or in bed, and I make up and do what I like with them. Every Sunday I put my room in order, and talk with the little spirit that lives there, and tell him what to do. He is very bad some times and won't mind me, and I have to scold him."

Truly a strange game for a child to play, but the Alcotts were brought up to a reverent knowledge of their souls as well as their bodies, and many a sober talk at twilight did mother or father have with the daughters to whom the experience of the older generation was helpful and inspiring. A very happy family they were, despite frequent lack of luxuries and even necessities, but loyalty and generosity as their marked characteristics. No matter how little money or food an Alcott had, it was always shared with any one who had less, and the

largest share was usually given away.

On Louisa's fourth birthday, she tells of a feast given in her honor in her father's school-room in Masonic Temple. All the children were there, and Louisa wore a crown of flowers and stood upon a table to give a cake to each child as they all marched around the table. "By some oversight," says Louisa, "the cakes fell short, and I saw that if I gave away the last one, I should have none. As I was queen of the revel, I felt that I ought to have it, and held on to it tightly, until my mother said: 'It is always better to give away than to keep the nice things; so I know my Louy will not let the little friend go without.'" She adds: "The little friend received the dear plummy cake, and I…my first lesson in the sweetness of self-denial—a lesson which my dear mother illustrated all her long and noble life."

At another time a starving family was discovered, when the Alcotts, forming in a procession, carried their own breakfast to the hungry ones. On one occasion, when a friend had unexpected guests arrive for dinner, too late to secure any extra provisions, the Alcotts with great glee lent their dinner to the thankful hostess, and thought it a good joke. Again, on a snowy Saturday night, when their wood-pile was extra low, and there was no way of getting any more that week, a poor child came to beg a little, as their baby was sick and the father on a spree with all his wages. At first Mrs. Alcott hesitated, as it was bitterly cold and Abba May, the little baby sister, was very young, but Mr. Alcott decided the matter with his usual kindly optimism.

"Give half our stock and trust in Providence; the weather will moderate or wood will come," he declared. And the wood was lent, Mrs. Alcott cheerily agreeing: "Well, their need is greater than ours. If our half gives out we can go to bed and tell stories!"

A little later in the evening, while it was still snowing heavily, and the Alcotts were about to cover their fire to keep

it, a farmer who was in the habit of supplying them with wood knocked at the door and asked anxiously:

"Wouldn't you like me to drop my load of wood here? It would accommodate me, and you need not hurry to pay for it. I started for Boston with it but the snow is drifting so fast, I want to go home."

"Yes," answered Mr. Alcott, and as the man went away, he turned to his wife and exclaimed: "Didn't I tell you that wood would come if the weather didn't moderate?"

Again, a tramp asked Mr. Alcott to lend him five dollars. As he had only a ten-dollar bill, the dear man at once offered that, asking to have the change brought back as soon as possible. Despite the disbelief of his family in the tramp's honesty, the man did bring the five-dollar bill soon with profuse thanks, and the gentle philosopher's faith in human nature was not crushed.

Still another experiment in generosity proved a harder one in its results to the Alcotts, when Mrs. Alcott allowed some poor emigrants to rest in her garden while she treated them to a bountiful meal. Unfortunately for their generous benefactor, in return they gave small-pox to the entire family, and, although the girls had light cases, Mr. and Mrs. Alcott were very sick and, as Miss Alcott records later: "We had a curious time of exile, danger and trouble." She adds: "No doctors and all got well."

When Louisa Alcott was almost ten years old, and Anna twelve, Mr. Alcott took a trip to England, hoping to interest the people there in his new theories of education and of living. So enthusiastically and beautifully did he present his theories that he won many converts, and one of them, a Mr. Lane, returned to America with him to help him found a colony on the new ideas, which were more ideal than practical, and so disapproved of by Mr. Alcott's friends, who thought him foolish to waste time and money on them.

However, after months of planning, Mr. Alcott, Mr. Lane

and other enthusiasts decided to buy an estate of one hundred acres near Harvard Village, Mass., and establish the colony. The place was named "Fruitlands," in anticipation of future crops, and the men who were to start the community were full of hope and enthusiasm, in which Mrs. Alcott did not share, as she knew her husband's visionary nature too well not to fear the result of such an experiment. However, she aided in making the plan as practical as she could, and drew such a rosy picture of their new home to the children that they expected life at Fruitlands to be a perpetual picnic.

Alas for visions and for hopes! Although life at Fruitlands had its moments of sunshine and happiness, yet they were far overbalanced by hard work, small results and increasing worry over money matters, and at last, after four years of struggle to make ends meet, Mr. Alcott was obliged to face the fact that the experiment had been an utter failure, that he had exhausted his resources of mind, body and estate. It was a black time for the gentle dreamer, and for a while it seemed as if despair would overwhelm him. But with his brave wife to help him and the children's welfare to think of, he shook off his despondency bravely, and decided to make a fresh start. So Mrs. Alcott wrote to her brother in Boston for help, sold all the furniture they could spare, and went to Still River, the nearest village to Fruitlands, and engaged four rooms. "Then on a bleak December day the Alcott family emerged from the snowbank in which Fruitlands, now re-christened Apple Stump by Mrs. Alcott, lay hidden. Their worldly goods were piled on an ox-sled, the four girls on the top, while father and mother trudged arm in arm behind, poorer indeed in worldly goods, but richer in love and faith and patience, and alas, experience."

After a winter in Still River they went back to Concord, where they occupied a few rooms in the house of a sympathetic friend—not all their friends were sympathetic, by any means, as most of them had warned Mr. Alcott of this ending

to his experiment. But all were kindly as they saw the family take up life bravely in Concord again, with even fewer necessities and comforts than before. Both Mr. and Mrs. Alcott did whatever work they could find to do, thinking nothing too menial if it provided food and clothing for their family. Naturally the education of the children was rather fragmentary and insufficient, but it developed their own powers of thinking. Through the pages of their diaries in which they wrote regularly, and which were open to their mother and father, they learned to express their thoughts clearly on all subjects. Also they were encouraged to read freely, while only the best books were within their reach. Louisa's poetic and dramatic efforts were not ridiculed, but criticized as carefully as if they had been masterpieces, so she had no fear of expressing her deepest thoughts, but acted out her own nature freely and fearlessly.

In fact the four daughters were happy, wholesome, hearty girls, whose frolics and pastimes took such unique forms that people wondered whether they were the result of Mr. Alcott's theories, and Miss Alcott tells of one afternoon when Mr. Emerson and Margaret Fuller were visiting her mother and the conversation drifted to the subject of education. Turning to Mr. Alcott, Miss Fuller said:

"Well, Mr. Alcott, you have been able to carry out your methods in your own family; I should like to see your model children."

A few moments later, as the guests stood on the door step, ready to leave, there was a wild uproar heard in the near distance and round the corner of the house came a wheel-barrow holding baby May, dressed as a queen; Miss Alcott says: "I was the horse, bitted and bridled, and driven by my sister Anna, while Lizzie played dog and barked as loud as her gentle voice permitted.

"All were shouting and wild with fun, which, however, came to a sudden end, for my foot tripped and down we all

went in a laughing heap, while my mother put a climax to the joke by saying with a dramatic wave of the hand:

"Here are the model children, Miss Fuller!"

When Mrs. Alcott's father, Colonel May, died, he left his daughter a small property, and she now determined to buy a house in Concord with it, so that whatever the varying fortunes of the family might be in future they would at least have a roof over their heads. An additional amount of five hundred dollars was added by Mr. Emerson, who was always the good angel of the family, and the place in Concord known as "Hillside" was bought, where life and work began in earnest for Louisa and her sisters, for only too clearly they saw the heavy weight that was being laid on their mother s shoulders.

Louisa was growing in body and spirit in those days, stretching up physically and mentally, and among the sources of her finest inspiration was the gentle reformer, philosopher and writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was ever her father's loyal friend and helper. Louisa's warm little heart enshrined the calm, great-minded man who always understood things, and after she had read Goethe's correspondence with Bettine, she, like Bettine, placed her idol on a pedestal and worshipped him in a truly romantic fashion. At night, after she had gone to her room, she wrote him long passionate letters, expressing her devotion, but she never sent the letters—only told him of them in later years, when they laughed together over her girlish fancy. Once, she confessed to having sat in a tall cherry-tree at midnight and sung to the moon until the owls scared her to bed; and of having sung Mignon's song under his window in very bad German, and strewed wild flowers over his door-step in the darkness. This sounds very sentimental and silly, but Louisa was never that. She had a deep, intense nature, which as yet had found no outlet or expression, and she could have had no safer hero to worship than this gentle, serene, wise man whose friendship for her family was so practical in its expression. Also at that period, which Louisa

herself in her diary calls the "sentimental period," she was strongly influenced by the poet and naturalist, Thoreau. From him she learned to know Nature in a closer and more loving intimacy. Thoreau was called a hermit, and known as a genius, and more often than not he could be found in his hut in the woods, or on the river bank, where he learned to look for the bright-eyed "Alcott girl," who would swing along his side in twenty-mile tramps, eager and inquisitive about everything, learning new facts about flowers and trees and birds and insects from the great man at her side. Truly a fortunate girl was Louisa, with two such friends and teachers as the great Emerson and Thoreau. Hawthorne, too, fascinated her in his shy reserve, and the young girl in her teens with a tremendous ability to do and to be something worth while in life could have had no more valuable preface to her life as a writer than that of the happy growing days at Concord, with that group of remarkable men.

At that time she did not think seriously of having talent for writing, as she had only written a half-dozen pieces of verse, among them one called "My Kingdom," which has been preserved as a bit of girlish yearning for the best in religion and in character, sweetly expressed, and some thrilling melodramas for the "troupe" in the barn to act. These were overflowing with villains and heroes, and were lurid enough to satisfy the most intense of her audience.

Later some of them were collected under the title of "Comic Tragedies"—but at best they only serve to show how full of imaginative possibilities the girl's nature was.

Although the Alcotts had their own home in Concord now, it was yet almost impossible to make ends meet, and with the sturdy independence which proved to be one of her marked traits, Louisa determined to earn some money and add to the family income. It was no easy thing to do, for there were few avenues of work open to girls in that day. But she could teach, for it was quite a popular resource to open a small

school in some barn, with a select set of pupils. Louisa herself had been to one of these "barn schools," and now she opened one in Mr. Emerson's barn, but it paid very poorly, as did everything which the Alcotts attempted to do. The brave mother was so completely discouraged, that when one day a friend passing through Concord called on her, Mrs. Alcott confessed the state of her financial affairs. As a result of that confession, the family once more migrated to Boston, leaving the Hawthornes as occupants of "Hillside." In the city Mrs. Alcott was given a position as visitor to the poor by a benevolent association, and she also kept an employment agency —a more respectable occupation than it was in later years. Once more there was money in the treasury, and with their usual happy optimism the family cheered up and decided that life was worth living, even under the most trying circumstances. While his wife was busy in that way, Mr. Alcott gradually drew a circle of people around him to whom his theories of life were acceptable, and who paid a small price to attend the "conversations" he held on subjects which interested him to discuss. Being appreciated, even by a small audience, was balm to the wounded spirit of the gentle philosopher, whose "Fruitlands" experiment had been such a bitter one, and now he was as happy as though he were earning large amounts by his work, instead of the meager sum paid by his disciples to hear him talk of his pet theories. But he was contented, and his happiness was reflected by his adoring family. Mrs. Alcott, too, was satisfied with the work she was doing, so for a time all went well with the "Pathetic Family" as Louisa had christened them.

Louisa, meanwhile, was learning many lessons as she traveled slowly up the road to womanhood—learning courage and self-denial, linked with cheerfulness from mother and father, and enjoying a wholesome comradeship in the home life with her sisters.

Anna, the oldest daughter, was much like her father. She

never worried about her soul or her shortcomings as Louisa did; she accepted life as it came, without question, and was of a calm nature, unlike turbulent, questioning Louisa, who had as many moods as there were hours in a day and who found ruling her tempestuous nature the hardest piece of work life offered her. She confesses in her diary: "My quick tongue is always getting me into trouble, and my moodiness makes it hard to be cheerful when I think how poor we are, how much worry it is to live, and how many things I long to do—I never can. So every day is a battle, and I'm so tired I don't want to live, only it's cowardly to die till you have done something." Having made this confession to an unresponsive page of her journal, the restless nature gave up the desire to be a coward, and turned to achieving whatever work might come to her hand to do, little dreaming what was before her in the coming years. She was very fine looking, of which she evidently was conscious, for she says in her diary:

"If I look in my glass I try to keep down vanity about my long hair, my well-shaped head, and my good nose." Besides these good points of which she speaks so frankly, she was tall and graceful, with a heavy mass of glossy, chestnut-brown hair. Her complexion was clear and full of color, and her dark-blue eyes were deep-set and very expressive.

During those years in Boston, the Alcotts spent two summers in an uncle's roomy house, where they enjoyed such comforts as had not before fallen to their lot, and calm Anna, sweet retiring Beth, or Betty, as she was called, and artistic May, the youngest of the flock, revelled in having rooms of their own, and plenty of space for their own belongings. May was a pretty, golden-haired, blue-eyed child with decided tastes, and an ability to get what she most wanted in life without much effort—an ability which poor Louisa entirely lacked, for her success always came as the result of exhausting work.

Louisa was now seventeen years old, and Anna nineteen.

At that time came the small-pox siege, and after Anna had recovered partially she was obliged to take a rest, leaving her small school in Louisa's charge. There were twenty scholars, and it was a great responsibility for the girl of seventeen, but she took up the work with such enthusiasm that she managed to captivate her pupils, whose attention she held by illustrating many of their lessons with original stories, telling them in a way they would never forget. When Anna came back the school was so flourishing that Louisa continued to help with the teaching, and it seemed probable that she had found her greatest talent, although little did she guess how many interesting avenues of experience were to widen before her wondering eyes before she was to settle down to her lifework.

Meanwhile she kept on helping Anna with her school, and to liven up the daily routine of a rather dull existence she began to write thrilling plays, which she always read to Anna, who criticized and helped revise them with sisterly severity. The plays were acted by a group of the girls' friends, with Anna and Louisa usually taking the principal parts. From creating these wonderful melodramas, which always won loud applause from an enthusiastic audience, and because of her real ability to act, Louisa now decided that she would go on the real stage. "Anna wants to be an actress, and so do I," she wrote in her diary. "We could make plenty of money perhaps, and it is a very gay life. Mother says we are too young, and must wait."

Wise mother, and firm as wise! The girls were obliged to accept her decree, and Louisa was so depressed by it that for a time she made every one miserable by her downcast mood. Then, fortunately, an interested relative showed one of her plays to the manager of the Boston Theater. He read "The Rival Prima Donnas" with kindly eyes, and offered to stage it. Here was good luck indeed! The entire Alcott family held as great a jubilation when they heard the news as if they had fallen heir to a fortune, and Louisa at once forgot her

ambition to act, in her ambition to be known as a successful play-wright.

Unfortunately, there was some hitch in the arrangements, and the play was never produced, but the manager sent Louisa a free pass to the theater, which gave her a play wright's pride whenever she used it, and her enjoyment in anticipating the production had been so great that she was able to bear the actual disappointment with real philosophy. And by that time her mood had changed. Although she always loved to act, and acted well, her own good sense had asserted itself, and she had set aside a dramatic career, realizing that it included too many difficulties and hardships.

Her next adventure was quite different. To her mother's employment office came a gentleman who wished a companion for his old father and sister. The position offered only light work, and seemed a good one in every respect, and impulsive Louisa, who happened to hear the request, asked her mother, eagerly: "Can't I go? Oh, do let me take it!" Her mother, thinking the experience would not be harmful, let her accept the position, and as a result she had two of the most disillusioning and hard months of her life. She had her revenge later by writing a story called "How I Went Out to Service," in which she described the experience in a vivid way.

An extract from her "heart journal," as she now called her diary, is a revelation of home life which gave to Louisa much of that understanding of human nature which has made her books so popular. She says: "Our poor little home had much love and happiness in it, and was a shelter for lost girls, abused wives, friendless children and weak or wicked men. Father and mother had no money to give, but gave their time, sympathy, help, and if blessings would make them rich they would be millionaires. This is practical Christianity."

At that time they were living in a small house, with Beth as housekeeper, while Anna and Louisa taught, May went to school, and the mother attended to her own work. Mr.

Alcott, too, was doing all he could to add to the family income by his lectures, and by writing articles on his favorite subjects, so all together, they managed to live in some sort of fashion. But Louisa had now made up her mind that she must do more for the comfort of the beloved mother, who was always overworked and worried, despite her courage and cheery manner, and she decided to try to publish a story.

Full of the intention, one night, she sat down on the floor and searched through the pile of papers which included most of her "scribblings" since her first use of a pen. Plays, poems and many other closely written sheets were thrown aside. At last she found what she was looking for, and read and re-read it three times, then set it aside until morning, when, with the greatest possible secrecy, she put it in an envelope, sealed, addressed and mailed it. From that time she went about her work with the air of one whose mind is on greater things, but she was always wide awake enough when it came time for some one to go for the mail, and her sisters joked her about her eagerness for letters, which she bore good-naturedly enough. Then came a wonderful day when she was handed a letter from a well-known firm of publishers. Her hand shook as she opened it, and she gave a suppressed cry of joy as she read the short note, and looked with amazement at the bit of paper enclosed.

Later in the day, when the housework was done and school was over, she sauntered into the room where the family was gathered in a sewing-bee. Throwing herself into a chair with an indifferent air, she asked:

"Want to hear a good story?"

Of course they did. The Alcotts were always ready for a story, and Louisa read extremely well. Her audience listened to the thrilling tale with eager attention, and at the end there was a chorus of cries: "How fine! How lovely! How interesting!" Then Anna asked: "Who wrote it?" With shining eyes and crimson cheeks Louisa jumped to her feet and,

waving the paper overhead, cried:

"Your sister! I wrote it! Yes, I really did!"

One can imagine the great excitement of the group who then clustered around the authoress and asked questions all at once.

That first published story was pronounced by its creator to be "great rubbish," and she only received the sum of five dollars for it, but it was a beginning, and from that time in her active brain plots for stories long and short began to simmer, although she still taught, and often did sewing in the evenings, for which she was fairly well paid.

In mid-winter of 1853 Mr. Alcott went West on a lecture tour, full of hope for a financial success. He left the home group as busy as usual, for Mrs. Alcott had several boarders, as well as her employment office. Anna had gone to Syracuse to teach in a school there, Louisa had opened a home school with ten pupils, and the calm philosopher felt that he could leave them with a quiet mind, as they were all earning money, and this was his opportunity to broaden the field in which the seeds of unique ideas were sown.

So off he went, full of eager courage, followed by the good wishes of the girls, who fondly hoped that "father would be appreciated at last." Alas for hopes! On a February night, when all the household were sleeping soundly, the bell rang violently. All were awakened, and Louisa says, "Mother flew down, crying 'my husband!' We rushed after, and five white figures embraced the halffrozen wanderer who came in tired, hungry, cold and disappointed, but smiling bravely, and as serene as ever. We fed and warmed and brooded over him," says Louisa, "longing to ask if he had made any money, but none did till little May said, after he had told all the pleasant things: 'Well, did people pay you?' Then, with a queer look, he opened his pocketbook and showed one dollar, saying with a smile that made our eyes fill: 'Only that!' My overcoat was stolen, and I had to buy a shawl. Many promises were not

kept, and traveling is costly, but I have opened the way, and another year shall do better.'

"I shall never forget," adds Louisa, "how beautifully mother answered him, though the dear hopeful soul had built much on his success; but with a beaming face she kissed him, saying, 'I call that doing very well. Since you are safely home, dear, we don't ask anything more.'

"Anna and I choked down our tears, and took a lesson in real love which we never forgot...It was half tragic and comic, for father was very dirty and sleepy, and mother in a big night-cap and funny old jacket."

Surely no one ever had a better opportunity to probe to the heart of the real emotions that make up the most prosaic as well as the most heroic daily lives than a member of that generous, happy, loving Alcott family.

And still Louisa kept on doing other things besides the writing, which was such a safety valve for her intense nature. For a short time she worked for a relative in the country, and she also taught and sewed and did housework, and made herself useful wherever her strong hands and willing heart could find some way of earning a dollar.

The seven years spent in Boston had developed her into a capable young woman of twenty-two, who was ready and eager to play her part in the great drama of life of which she was an interested spectator as she saw it constantly enacted around her.

Even then, before she had stepped across the threshold of her career, she unconsciously realized that the home stage is the real background of the supreme world drama, and she shows this by the intimate, tender domestic scenes which made all of her stories bits of real life, with a strong appeal to those whose homes are joyous parts of the present, or sacred memories.

When she was determined to achieve an end, Louisa Alcott generally succeeded, even in the face of obstacles; and

now having decided to take on her own broad shoulders some of the burdens which were weighing heavily on her beloved mother, she turned to the talent which had recently yielded her the magnificent sum of five dollars. In the days at Concord she had told many stories about fairies and flowers to the little Emerson children and their friends, who eagerly drank in all the mystic tales in which wood-nymphs, water sprites, giants and fairy queens played a prominent part, and the stories were thrilling, because their teller believed absolutely in the fairy creatures she pictured in a lovely setting of woodland glades and forest dells. These stories, which she had written down and called "Flower Fables," she found among her papers, and as she read them again she felt that they might interest other children as they had those to whom they were told. She had no money to publish them, however, and no publisher would bear the expense of a venture by an untried writer. But it took more than that to daunt Louisa when her mind was made up. With great enthusiasm she told a friend of the family, Miss Wealthy Stevens, of her desire, and she generously offered to pay for publication, but it was decided not to tell the family until the book should come out. Then in radiant secrecy Louisa burned the midnight oil and prepared the little book for the press. One can fancy the proud surprise of Mrs. Alcott when, on the following Christmas morning, among her pile of gifts she found the little volume with this note:

December 25, 1854.

DEAR MOTHER:

Into your Christmas stocking I have put my first-born, knowing that you will accept it with all its faults (for grandmothers are always kind) and look upon it merely as an earnest of what I may yet do; for with so much to cheer me on, I hope to pass in time from fairies and fables to men and realities. Whatever beauty or poetry is to be found in my little

book is owing to your interest in, and encouragement of, my efforts from the first to the last, and if ever I do anything to be proud of, my greatest happiness will be that I can thank you for that, as I may do for all the good there is in me, and I shall be content to write if it gives you pleasure.

Jo is fussing about,

My lamp is going out.

To dear mother, with many kind wishes for a Happy New Year and Merry Christmas,

I am ever your loving daughter,

LOUY.

Recompense enough, that note, for all a loving mother's sacrifices and attempts to give her daughter understanding sympathy and love—and it is small wonder if that Christmas gift always remained one of her most precious possessions.

Six hundred copies of the little "Flower Fables" were published, and the book sold very well, although their author only received the sum of $32 for them, which was in sharp contrast, she says in her journal, "to the receipts of six months only in 1886, being eight thousand dollars for the sale of books and no new one; but" she adds, "I was prouder over the thirty-two dollars than the eight thousand."

Louisa Alcott was now headed toward her destiny, although she was still a long way from the shining goal of literary success, and had many weary hills yet to climb.

As soon as *Flower Fables* was published, she began to plan for a new volume of fairy tales, and as she was invited to spend the next summer in the lovely New Hampshire village of Walpole, she thankfully accepted the invitation, and decided to write the new book there in the bracing air of the hill town. In Walpole, she met delightful people, who were all attracted to the versatile, amusing young woman, and she was in great demand when there was any entertainment on foot. One evening she gave a burlesque lecture on "Woman, and Her

Position, by Oronthy Bluggage," which created such a gale of merriment that she was asked to repeat it for money, which she did; and so there was added to her store of accomplishments another, from which she was to reap some rewards in coming years.

Her enjoyment of Walpole was so great that her family decided to try its fine air, as they were tired of city life and needed a change of scene. A friend offered them a house there, rent free, and in their usual impromptu way they left Boston and arrived in the country village, bag and baggage. Mr. Alcott was overjoyed to have a garden in which to work, and Mrs. Alcott was glad to be near her niece, whose guest Louisa had been up to that time.

Louisa's comment on their arrival in her diary was:

"Busy and happy times as we settle in the little house in the lane, near by my dear ravine—plays, picnics, pleasant people and good neighbors." Despite the good times, it is evident that she was not idle, for she says, "Finished fairy book in September… Better than *Flower Fables*. Now, I must try to sell it."

In September Anna had an offer to become a teacher in the great idiot asylum in Syracuse. Her sensitive nature shrank from the work, but with real self-sacrifice she accepted it for the sake of the family, and went off in October. Meanwhile Louisa had been thinking deeply about her future, and her diary tells the story of a decision she made, quite the most important one of her life. She writes:

"November; decided to seek my fortune, so with my little trunk of home-made clothes, $40 earned by stories sent to the *Gazette*, and my MSS., I set forth with mother's blessing one rainy day in the dullest month in the year."

She went straight to Boston, where she writes:

"Found it too late to do anything with the book (the new one she had written at Walpole) so put it away and tried for teaching, sewing, or any honest work. Won't go home to sit

idle while I have a head and a pair of hands."

Good for you, Louisa—you are the stuff that success is made of! That her courage had its reward is shown by the fact that her cousins, the Sewalls, generously offered her a home for the winter with them which she gratefully accepted, but insisted on paying for her board by doing a great deal of sewing for them. She says in her diary: "I sew for Mollie and others and write stories. C. gave me books to notice. Heard Thackeray. Anxious times; Anna very home-sick. Walpole very cold and dull, now the summer butterflies have gone. Got $5 for a tale and $12 for sewing; sent home a Christmas box to cheer the dear souls in the snow-banks."

In January she writes: "C. paid $6 for A Sister's Trial, gave me more books to notice, and wants more tales." The entries that follow give a vivid picture of her pluck and perseverance in that first winter of fortune-seeking, and no record of deeds could be more graphic than the following entries:

"Sewed for L.W. Sewall and others. Mr. Field took my farce to Mobile to bring out; Mr. Barry of the Boston Theater has the play. Heard Curtis lecture. Began a book for summer, Beach Bubbles. Mr. F. of the Courier printed a poem of mine on 'Little Nell'. Got $10 for 'Bertha' and saw great yellow placards stuck up announcing it. Acted at the W's. March; got $10 for 'Genevieve'. Prices go up as people like the tales and ask who wrote them… Sewed a great deal, and got very tired; one job for Mr. G. of a dozen pillow-cases, one dozen sheets, six fine cambric neck-ties, and two dozen handkerchiefs, at which I had to work all one night to get them done…I got only $4.00." The brave, young fortune-seeker adds sensibly, "Sewing won't make my fortune, but I can plan my stories while I work."

In May she had a welcome visit from Anna on her way home from Syracuse, as the work there was too hard for her, and the sisters spent some happy days together in Boston. Then they were obliged to go home, as dear little Beth was

very sick with scarlet-fever which she caught from some poor children Mrs. Alcott had been nursing. Both Beth and May had the dangerous disease, and Beth never recovered from the effects of it, although she lived for two years, a serene, patient invalid, who shed a benediction on the sorrowing household. That summer was an anxious time for the family. In her usual way Louisa plunged head-long into housework and nursing, and when night came she would scribble one of the stories which the papers were now glad to accept whenever she could send them. So with varying degrees of apprehension and rejoicing, the weary months passed, and as Beth was slowly improving and she was not needed at home, Louisa decided to spend another winter in the city. Her diary says:

"There I can support myself and help the family. C. offers $10 a month and perhaps more… Others have plenty of sewing; the play may come out, and Mrs. R. will give me a sky-parlor for $3 a week, with fire and board. I sew for her also." With practical forethought, she adds, "If I can get A.L. to governess I shall be all right."

Then in a burst of the real spirit which had animated her ever since she first began to write and sew and teach and act, and make over old clothes given her by rich friends that she need not spend any money on herself, she declares in her diary:

"I was born with a boy's spirit under my bib and tucker. I can't wait when I can work; so I took my little talent in my hand and forced the world again, braver than before, and wiser for my failures."

That the decision was no light one, and that the winter in Boston was not merely an adventure, is shown by her declaration:

"I don't often pray in words; but when I set out that day with all my worldly goods in the little old trunk, my own earnings ($25) in my pocket, and much hope and resolution in my soul, my heart was very full, and I said to the Lord, 'Help

us all, and keep us for one another,' as I never said it before, while I looked back at the dear faces watching me, so full of love, and hope, and faith."

Louisa Alcott's childhood and girlhood, with all the hardships and joys which went into the passing years, had been merged in a triumphant young womanhood—a fitting preface to the years of fame and fortune which were to follow. A brave, interesting girl had become a courageous older woman, who faced the untried future with her small earnings in her pocket, her worldly goods in her trunk, and hopeful determination in her heart to do some worth-while thing in the world, for the sake of those she dearly loved. She had started up the steep slope of her life's real adventuring, and despite the rough paths over which she must still travel before reaching her goal, she was more and more a sympathetic comrade to the weak or weary, ever a gallant soldier, and a noble woman, born to do great deeds. So enthusiastic was she in playing her part in the world's work, that when she was twenty-seven years old, and still toiling on, with a scant measure of either wealth or fame, she exclaimed at a small success:

"Hurrah! My story was accepted and Lowell asked if it was not a translation from the German, it was so unlike other tales. I felt much set up, and my fifty dollars will be very happy money… I have not been pegging away all these years in vain, and I may yet have books and publishers, and a fortune of my own. Success has gone to my head, and I wander a little.

"Twenty-seven years old and very happy!"

The prediction of "books, publishers and a fortune" came true in 1868, when a Boston firm urged her to write a story for girls, and she had the idea of describing the early life of her own home, with its many episodes and incidents. She wrote the book and called it *Little Women*, and was the most surprised person in the world, when from her cozy corner of Concord she watched edition after edition being published, and

found that she had become famous. From that moment Louisa Alcott belonged to the public, and one has but to turn to the pages of her ably edited Life, Letters and Journals, to realize the source from which she got the material for her "simple story of simple girls," bound by a beautiful tie of family love, that neither poverty, sorrow nor death could sever. Four little pilgrims, struggling onward and upward through all the difficulties that beset them on their way, in Concord, Boston, Walpole and elsewhere, had provided human documents which the genius of Louisa Alcott made into an imperishable story for the delight and inspiration of succeeding generations of girls.

Little Women was followed by *Little Men, Old Fashioned Girl, Eight Cousins, Rose in Bloom, Under the Lilacs,* and a long line of other charming books for young people. And, although the incidents in them were not all taken from real life as were those of her first "immortal," yet was each and every book a faithful picture of everyday life. That is where the genius of Louisa Alcott came in. From the depicting of fairies and gnomes, princes and kings, she early turned to paint the real, the vital and the heroic, which is being lived in so many households where there is little money and no luxury, but much light-hearted laughter, tender affection for one another, and a deep and abiding love of humanity.

Well may all aspiring young Americans take example from the author of Little Women, and when longing to set the world on fire in the expression of their genius, learn not to despise or to turn away from the simple, commonplace details of every-day life.

And for successful life and work, there is no better inspiration than the three rules given Louisa Alcott in girlhood for her daily guidance:

Rule yourself;
Love your neighbor;
Do the duty which lies nearest you.

Samuel Clemens: Glimpses of Mark Twain

Author of Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, The Prince and the Pauper, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc

1835 – 1910 A.D.

School Days

But he must have "book-learning," too, Jane Clemens said. On his return to Hannibal that first summer, she decided that Little Sam was ready for school. He was five years old and regarded as a "stirring child."

"He drives me crazy with his didoes when he's in the house," his mother declared, "and when he's out of it I'm expecting every minute that some one will bring him home half dead."

Mark Twain used to say that he had had nine narrow escapes from drowning, and it was at this early age that he was brought home one afternoon in a limp state, having been pulled from a deep hole in Bear Creek by a slave girl.

When he was restored, his mother said: "I guess there wasn't much danger. People born to be hanged are safe in water."

Mark Twain's mother was the original of Aunt Polly in the story of *Tom Sawyer,* an outspoken, keen-witted, charitable woman, whom it was good to know. She had a heart full of pity, especially for dumb creatures. She refused to kill even flies, and punished the cat for catching mice. She would drown young kittens when necessary, but warmed the water for the purpose. She could be strict, however, with her children, if occasion required, and recognized their faults.

Little Sam was inclined to elaborate largely on fact. A neighbor once said to her: "You don't believe anything that child says, I hope."

"Oh yes, I know his average. I discount him ninety per cent. The rest is pure gold."

She declared she was willing to pay somebody to take him off her hands for a part of each day and try to teach him "manners." A certain Mrs. E. Horr was selected for the purpose.

Mrs. Horr's school on Main Street, Hannibal, was of the old-fashioned kind. There were pupils of all ages, and everything was taught up to the third reader and long division. Pupils who cared to go beyond those studies went to a Mr. Cross, on the hill, facing what is now the public square. Mrs. Horr received twenty-five cents a week for each pupil, and the rules of conduct were read daily. After the rules came the A-B-C class, whose recitation was a hand-to-hand struggle, requiring no study-time.

The rules of conduct that first day interested Little Sam. He wondered how nearly he could come to breaking them and escape. He experimented during the forenoon, and received a warning. Another experiment would mean correction. He did not expect to be caught again; but when he least expected it he was startled by a command to go out and bring a stick for his own punishment.

This was rather dazing. It was sudden, and, then, he did not know much about choosing sticks for such a purpose. Jane Clemens had commonly used her hand. A second command was needed to start him in the right direction, and he was still dazed when he got outside. He had the forests of Missouri to select from, but choice was not easy. Everything looked too big and competent. Even the smallest switch had a wiry look. Across the way was a cooper's shop. There were shavings outside, and one had blown across just in front of him. He picked it up, and, gravely entering the room, handed it to Mrs. Horr.

So far as known, it is the first example of that humor which would one day make Little Sam famous before all the world.

It was a failure in this instance. Mrs. Horr's comic side may have prompted forgiveness, but discipline must be maintained.

"Samuel Langhorne Clemens," she said (he had never heard it all strung together in that ominous way), "I am ashamed of you! Jimmy Dunlap, go and bring a switch for Sammy." And the switch that Jimmy Dunlap brought was of a kind to give Little Sam a permanent distaste for school. He told his mother at noon that he did not care for education; that he did not wish to be a great man; that his desire was to be an Indian and scalp such persons as Mrs. Horr. In her heart Jane Clemens was sorry for him, but she openly said she was glad there was somebody who could take him in hand.

Little Sam went back to school, but he never learned to like it. A school was ruled with a rod in those days, and of the smaller boys Little Sam's back was sore as often as the next. When the days of early summer came again, when from his desk he could see the sunshine lighting the soft green of Holliday's Hill, with the glint of the river and the purple distance beyond, it seemed to him that to be shut up with a Webster spelling-book and a cross teacher was more than human nature could bear. There still exists a yellow slip of paper upon which, in neat, old-fashioned penmanship is written:

Miss PAMELA CLEMENS

Has won the love of her teacher and schoolmates by her amiable deportment and faithful application to her various studies.

E. HORR, Teacher.

Thus we learn that Little Sam's sister, eight years older than himself, attended the same school, and that she was a good pupil. If any such reward of merit was ever conferred on

Little Sam, it has failed to come to light. If he won the love of his teacher and playmates, it was probably for other reasons.

Yet he must have learned somehow, for he could read, presently, and was a good speller for his age.

The Writing of Tom Sawyer

It was at the end of January, 1874, when Mark Twain returned to America. His reception abroad had increased his prestige at home. Howells and Aldrich came over from Boston to tell him what a great man he had become—to renew those Boston days of three years before—to talk and talk of all the things between the earth and sky. And Twichell came in, of course, and Warner, and no one took account of time, or hurried, or worried about anything at all.

"We had two such days as the aging sun no longer shines on in his round," wrote Howells, long after, and he tells how he and Aldrich were so carried away with Clemens's success in subscription publication that on the way back to Boston they planned a book to sell in that way. It was to be called *Twelve Memorable Murders,* and they had made two or three fortunes from it by the time they reached Boston.

"But the project ended there. We never killed a single soul," Howells once confessed to the writer of this memoir.

At Quarry Farm that summer Mark Twain began the writing of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.* He had been planning for some time to set down the story of those faroff days along the river-front at Hannibal, with John Briggs, Tom Blankenship, and the rest of that graceless band, and now in the cool luxury of a little study which Mrs. Crane had built for him on the hillside he set himself to spin the fabric of his youth. The study was a delightful place to work. It was octagonal in shape, with windows on all sides, something like a pilot-house. From any direction the breeze could come, and there were fine views. To Twichell he wrote:

It is a cozy nest, and just room in it for a sofa, table, and three

or four chairs, and when the storm sweeps down the remote valley and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond, and the rain beats on the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it!

He worked steadily there that summer. He would begin mornings, soon after breakfast, keeping at it until nearly dinner-time, say until five or after, for it was not his habit to eat the midday meal. Other members of the family did not venture near the place; if he was wanted urgently, a horn was blown. His work finished, he would light a cigar and, stepping lightly down the stone flight that led to the house-level, he would find where the family had assembled and read to them his day's work. Certainly those were golden days, and the tale of Tom and Huck and Joe Harper progressed. To Dr. John Brown, in Scotland, he wrote:

> *I have been writing fifty pages of manuscript a day, on an average, for some time now…and consequently have been so wrapped up in it and dead to everything else that I have fallen mighty short in letter-writing.*

Sketches New and Old went very well, but the book had no such sale as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, which appeared a year later, December, 1876. From the date of its issue it took its place as foremost of American stories of boy life, a place that to this day it shares only with Huck Finn. Mark Twain's own boy life in the little drowsy town of Hannibal, with John Briggs and Tom Blankenship—their adventures in and about the cave and river—made perfect material. The story is full of pure delight. The camp on the island is a picture of boy heaven. No boy that reads it but longs for the woods and a camp-fire and some bacon strips in the frying-pan. It is all so thrillingly told and so vivid. We know certainly that it must all have happened. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* has taken a place side by side with *Treasure Island.*

The Writing of The Prince and the Pauper

Meantime he had renewed work on a story begun two years before at Quarry Farm. Browsing among the books there one summer day, he happened to pick up The Prince and the Page, by Charlotte M. Yonge. It was a story of a prince disguised as a blind beggar, and, as Mark Twain read, an idea came to him for an altogether different story, or play, of his own. He would have a prince and a pauper change places, and through a series of adventures learn each the trials and burdens of the other life. He presently gave up the play idea, and began it as a story. His first intention had been to make the story quite modern, using the late King Edward VII (then Prince of Wales) as his prince, but it seemed to him that it would not do to lose a prince among the slums of modern London—he could not make it seem real; so he followed back through history until he came to the little son of Henry VIII, Edward Tudor, and decided that he would do.

It was the kind of a story that Mark Twain loved to read and to write. By the end of that first summer he had finished a good portion of the exciting adventures of The Prince and the Pauper, and then, as was likely to happen, the inspiration waned and the manuscript was laid aside.

The Inspiration for Joan of Arc

It was just at this time that an incident occurred which may be looked back upon now as a turning-point in Samuel Clemens's life. Coming home from the office one afternoon, he noticed a square of paper being swept along by the wind. He saw that it was printed—was interested professionally in seeing what it was like. He chased the flying scrap and overtook it. It was a leaf from some old history of Joan of Arc, and pictured the hard lot of the "maid" in the tower at Rouen, reviled and mistreated by her ruffian captors. There were some paragraphs of description, but the rest was pitiful dialogue.

Sam had never heard of Joan before—he knew nothing of history. He was no reader. Orion was fond of books, and Pamela; even little Henry had read more than Sam. But now, as he read, there awoke in him a deep feeling of pity and indignation, and with it a longing to know more of the tragic story. It was an interest that would last his life through, and in the course of time find expression in one of the rarest books ever written.

The first result was that Sam began to read. He hunted up everything he could find on the subject of Joan, and from that went into French history in general—indeed, into history of every kind. Samuel Clemens had suddenly become a reader—almost a student. He even began the study of languages, German and Latin, but was not able to go on for lack of time and teachers.

At Villa Viviani, an old, old mansion outside of Florence, on the hill toward Settignano, Mark Twain finished Tom Sawyer Abroad, also Pudd'nhead Wilson, and wrote the first half of a book that really had its beginning on the day when, an apprentice-boy in

Hannibal, he had found a stray leaf from the pathetic story of Joan of Arc. All his life she had been his idol, and he had meant some day to write of her. Now, in this weather-stained old palace, looking down on Florence, medieval and hazy, and across to the villa-dotted hills, he began one of the most beautiful stories ever written, *The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc.* He wrote in the first person, assuming the character of Joan's secretary, Sieur Louis de Conte, who in his old age is telling the great tale of the Maid of Orleans. It was Mark Twain's purpose, this time, to publish anonymously. Walking the floor one day at Viviani, and smoking vigorously, he said to Mrs. Clemens and Susy:

"I shall never be accepted seriously over my own

signature. People always want to laugh over what I write, and are disappointed if they don't find a joke in it. This is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything else I have ever undertaken. I shall write it anonymously."

So it was that the gentle Sieur de Conte took up the pen, and the tale of Joan was begun in the ancient garden of Viviani, a setting appropriate to its lovely form.

He wrote rapidly when once his plan was perfected and his material arranged. The reading of his youth and manhood was now recalled, not merely as reading, but as remembered reality. It was as if he were truly the old Sieur de Conte, saturated with memories, pouring out the tender, tragic tale. In six weeks he had written one hundred thousand words—remarkable progress at any time, the more so when we consider that some of the authorities he consulted were in a foreign tongue. He had always more or less kept up his study of French, begun so long ago on the river, and it stood him now in good stead. Still, it was never easy for him, and the multitude of notes that still exist along the margin of his French authorities show the magnitude of his work. Others of the family went down into the city almost daily, but he stayed in the still garden with Joan. Florence and its suburbs were full of delightful people, some of them old friends. There were luncheons, dinners, teas, dances, and the like always in progress, but he resisted most of these things, preferring to remain the quaint old Sieur de Conte, following again the banner of the Maid of Orleans marshaling her twilight armies across his illumined page.

Twain's Support of Ulysses S. Grant's Memoirs

Mark Twain was now a successful publisher, but his success thus far was nothing to what lay just ahead. One evening he learned that General Grant, after heavy financial disaster, had begun writing the memoirs which he (Clemens) had urged him to undertake some years before. Next morning he

called on the General to learn the particulars. Grant had contributed some articles to the Century war series, and felt in a mood to continue the work. He had discussed with the Century publishers the matter of a book. Clemens suggested that such a book should be sold only by subscription and prophesied its enormous success. General Grant was less sure. His need of money was very great and he was anxious to get as much return as possible, but his faith was not large. He was inclined to make no special efforts in the matter of publiccation. But Mark Twain prevailed. Like his own Colonel Sellers, he talked glowingly and eloquently of millions. He first offered to direct the general to his own former subscription publisher, at Hartford, then finally proposed to publish it himself, offering Grant seventy per cent, of the net returns, and to pay all office expenses out of his own share.

Of course there could be nothing for any publisher in such an arrangement unless the sales were enormous. General Grant realized this, and at first refused to consent. Here was a friend offering to bankrupt himself out of pure philanthropy, a thing he could not permit. But Mark Twain came again and again, and finally persuaded him that purely as a business proposition the offer was warranted by the certainty of great sales.

So the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. undertook the Grant book, and the old soldier, broken in health and fortune, was liberally provided with means that would enable him to finish his task with his mind at peace. He devoted himself steadily to the work—at first writing by hand, then dictating to a stenographer that Webster & Co. provided. His disease, cancer, made fierce ravages, but he "fought it out on that line," and wrote the last pages of his memoirs by hand when he could no longer speak aloud. Mark Twain was much with him, and cheered him with anecdotes and news of the advance sale of his book. In one of his memoranda of that time Clemens wrote:

> *To-day (May 26) talked with General Grant about his and my first great Missouri campaign, in 1861. He surprised an empty camp near Florida, Missouri, on Salt River, which I had been occupying a day or two before.*
>
> *How near he came to playing the d— with his future publisher.*

At Mount McGregor, a few weeks before the end, General Grant asked if any estimate could now be made of the sum which his family would obtain from his work, and was deeply comforted by Clemens's prompt reply that more than one hundred thousand sets had already been sold, the author's share of which would exceed one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Clemens added that the gross return would probably be twice as much more.

The last notes came from Grant's hands soon after that, and a few days later, July 23, 1885, his task completed, he died. To Henry Ward Beecher Clemens wrote:

> *One day he put his pencil aside and said there was nothing more to do. If I had been there I could have foretold the shock that struck the world three days later.*

In a memorandum estimate made by Mark Twain soon after the canvass for the Grant memoirs had begun, he had prophesied that three hundred thousand sets of the book would be sold, and that he would pay General Grant in royalties $420,000. This prophecy was more than fulfilled. The first check paid to Mrs. Grant—the largest single royalty check in history—was for $200,000. Later payments brought her royalty return up to nearly $450,000. For once, at least, Mark Twain's business vision had been clear. A fortune had been realized for the Grant family. Even his own share was considerable, for out of that great sale more than a hundred thousand dollars' profit was realized by Webster & Co.

Orison Swett Marden

Author of Various Inspirational Self-Help Books

1848 – 1924 A.D.

My struggles began when, a double orphan at the age of seven, I was bound out by my guardian, successively, in five different families in the backwoods of New Hampshire. There I began the training and experience in the School of Hard Knocks which ultimately led to the writing of my first book, "Pushing to the Front."

All the year around, with the exception of short periods in winter, when I attended the district school, I had to work very hard for a bare living. Even when I was nearly of age I got only thirteen dollars a month in summer and in winter nothing but my board and clothes.

In a very sparsely settled country twenty-four miles from the nearest railroad station. Books were very scarce, and I saw few of any kind outside the school text-books, until I was grown up. Then, one fateful red-letter day, I happened to get hold of Smiles' "Self Help."

That day marked the turning point in my life. I read and re-read the wonderful book. It was a revelation to me. The stories of poor boys climbing to the top so inspired me that I resolved to get out of the woods, get an education at any cost, and make something of myself.

Up to this time my ambition had not been stirred, and I had not begun to realize that I was such an ignoramus, not having even a decent common school education. I never dreamed that I could get a college education or that there would ever be any chance for me to do anything more than

make a very poor living at hard work as others all about me were doing.

But after reading "Self Help," something kept saying to me "There is a chance for you, and you can do something and amount to something." The picture of Samuel Smiles talking to poor boys, gathered from the streets of London in an old shed, about success in life, showing them their possibilities and trying to arouse their ambition by pointing out that though they were poor and apparently had no opportunity, they might become great men even as other boys as poor as they, had thrilled my imagination. It not only awakened me to a knowledge of my own possibilities but created in me a burning desire to develop them, with the object of one day doing something that would stimulate and encourage struggling American lads like myself, who had no money, no friends or relatives, to develop and make the most of all the powers Nature had given them.

In fact, I resolved then to begin to get together material for a book which I hoped would some time be to the American boy what Smiles' "Self Help" had been to the English boy.

By dint of extra hard work and the most rigid economy I managed to scrape together two dollars, every cent of which I spent for a large blank note book. On the opening page I printed in big letters the motto I had adopted: *"Let every occasion be a great occasion, for you cannot tell when fate may be taking your measure for a larger place";* and in it I planned to jot down every thought and suggestion which came to me as material for my dream book. Nothing that came into my life afterward meant quite so much, was quite so precious to me as that blank note book, in which was outlined the first rough beginnings of "Pushing to the Front."

Not yet being of age when I appealed to my guardian to let me go away somewhere to school, he objected very seriously, and threatened to post me in the county paper if I attempted to leave where I was. But in spite of threats and

opposition, dressed in my best suit, consisting of a woolen shirt, a shabby coat and trousers and a pair of cowhide boots, I started one day for the Colby Academy, New London, New Hampshire, some fifty miles away.

This being my first exit from the wilderness, I was surprised to find how many well-dressed boys and girls there were at the Academy, many of them from the city, and all infinitely further advanced in their studies than I was. In fact, I was ashamed to start in where I belonged, which was pretty far back even in a district school. But I managed to push ahead, paying my way by waiting on the table in the students' boarding house, chopping cord wood in the woods, sawing wood, etc. And always, in reading, and in my odd leisure moments, I was thinking of and working on my dream book, adding new material, filling new note books, from every possible source.

This continued all the way up from my academy days through my college course and post-graduate courses at different universities, until after receiving my degrees I went to Kearny, Nebraska. There I finished the manuscript of "Pushing to the Front," and prepared the manuscripts for several other books.

Then came the tragedy which in a few hours wiped out all the results of years of hard work.

The hotel in which I was living and of which I was proprietor was burned to the ground. Everything I had, including my precious manuscripts and all my valuable note books, was destroyed. Clad only in my underclothing, I barely escaped from the building with my life, being knocked down the stairs from the top floor by burning timbers from the roof.

When I found that every scratch of a pen, all of my precious note books, and everything I had was gone, while the hotel was still smouldering I went down the street and bought a twenty-five cent note book in which I began to re-write whatever I could remember of the lost manuscripts. This was done in a room over a livery stable, where I boarded myself.

While never losing sight of my first ambition, up to this time I had been a business man. But after the fire and the terrible Nebraska drought in which I lost all of my savings, nearly fifty thousand dollars, I decided to give up business, return to Boston and finish re-writing the manuscript of "Pushing to the Front," and try to start *The Success Magazine.*

Not being familiar with publishers' methods, when my manuscript was completed, thinking it might take me many months, perhaps a year, to get a publisher to accept it, I made three copies and submitted one to each of three different publishing houses at the same time— Houghton, Mifflin & Co., T.Y. Crowell Co., and another Boston house. To my great surprise, all three wanted the book. I finally gave it to Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

So doubtful was I of the success of "Pushing to the Front" that even after I had signed a contract I went to the publishers and asked them to let me have the manuscript and re-write it. Mr. Horace Scudder, then editor of *The Atlantic Monthly,* who had passed upon the manuscript, advised me not to touch it. But even then I was not satisfied, and thought I never again would give a publisher such a poor book.

It went through twelve editions in the first year of publiccation, however, and has since been translated into practically all the leading languages of the world. Mr. Gladstone offered to write the introduction to the London edition, but unfortunately he died before this was completed. "Pushing to the Front" has been used for many years as a text book in the government schools of Japan and in the schools of many other countries. It has probably gone through more than two hundred and fifty editions, many more than any other of my forty-odd books.

My experience with "Pushing to the Front" convinced me that no author can really gauge his own work. I would have been glad to sell the manuscript for a thousand dollars. I did sell the German rights for a song, and the German publishers

have sold in the neighborhood of seventy-five thousand copies.

Laura E. Richards

Author of Captain January, Children's Stories

1850 – 1943 A.D.

By far the easiest thing for an author to do, in response to a request for a maiden effort is to send one of those Daisy Ashfordings of which every author has been guilty.

My own concerned a "Marion Gray, a lovely girl of thirteen," the youngest daughter of "a celebrated nobleman in great favor with the king." She was stolen by the gypsies. After five years, when the new king was sitting on his throne condemning a band of gypsies, one young girl stood with downcast eyes before him and, when sentenced, raised her dark flashing eyes upon the king.

Then—"a piercing shriek is heard, the crown and sceptre roll down the steps of the throne, and Marion Gray is clasped in her father's arms!"

As for my first published work:

I made my literary debut in *St. Nicholas* in the goodly company of John Ames Mitchell, founder and for so many years proprietor and editor of *Life*. "Johnny" Mitchell was at that time a young architect working in the same office with my husband, that of Messrs. War and Van Brunt. The two were warm friends and "Johnny" Mitchell was often at our home. I was then (the early '70's) a young mother making nonsense songs for my babies and crooning them to more or less tuneful airs which were born with the songs.

I think it was my husband who first suggested that Johnny should illustrate some of my jingles. He took a parcel of them home and returned a week later, bringing the pictures of "The

Shark," "Little John Bottlejohn," etc., which delighted a generation of St. Nicholas boys and girls. We sent our joint productions to kind Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, then editor-in-chief of *St. Nicholas,* and were most warmly received.

Under the wing of the children's saint, therefore, we both made our bow. For quite a number of years we continued to work more or less together, I sending him a rhyme now and then, he occasionally despatching a picture for me to furnish words. Increasing years and varying cares broke up the delightful partnership of work, but the three of us were always warm friends.

This should, I suppose, be called my maiden effort. I might add a word about one of my early prose efforts, "Captain January," a little story which, after being rejected by every publisher of repute in this country and by several in England, at last fell into the friendly hands of Mr. Dana Estes and had some little success.

Eugene Field

Author of Wynken, Blynken and Nod,
Gingham Dog and Calico Cat
1850 – 1895 A.D.

There are a few men and women in this world who look from the outside just like grown-ups, with gray hair and perhaps a few wrinkles, and yet really they are in their hearts just little boys and girls.

About sixty years ago, in the big city of Saint Louis, there was born a little boy who was to be like this. His name was Eugene Field, and he lived to be a tall man with little sons and daughters of his own, but still he never really grew up all his life long.

There were some very queer things about this queer boy, and here is one of them. He did not know what day his birthday was! And queerer still, none of the family could remember whether it was September 1st or September 2d, so the poor boy had to grow up without a birthday at all. And, worse than that, the four other Field children died one by one, and so Eugene and his brother Roswell had to grow up without them. And worst of all, Eugene had to grow up as well as he could without any mother. He was only six when she died. He and his brother were sent on the cars to New England to live with their Aunt Mary and their Cousin Mary in a sleepy little village among the Pelham Hills. Here Eugene spent his schooldays and his playdays and his churchdays as other boys do, with this difference: Eugene Field never did anything just like other people, even when he played "Hi Spy" with his boy friends after school.

In the first place most boys do not love animals as much as Eugene loved them. Every pet that he owned, from the goat to the tame squirrel, had a queer name of its own, and Eugene believed that the animals knew their names and could talk among themselves in dog-and-catand-goat language as well as he could talk in human fashion. Some of the funny names of his pets were Finniken-Minniken, Dump, and Poog Boog. His first poem was written about a dog that he called the DoolyDog, and began like this:—

Dooly-Dog speaks,—
"Oh, had I wings like a dove I would fly
Away from this world of fleas,
I'd fly all around Miss Emerson's yard,
And light on Miss Emerson's trees."

When he was a grown-up boy, Eugene Field had a little fox terrier, Jessie, with an excited white tail and yellow ears, who used to sit very still on guard while her master wrote, and who growled very fiercely when any one came into the room to disturb him. All his life Eugene loved his pets, and he used to read his poems aloud to them. He even thought that they knew enough to smile at the funny places. His canaries used to hop across the paper while he wrote, getting mixed up with the pen and ink. He hatched out little fuzzy wuzzy chickens in his cellar against the furnace, and kept butterflies and soft silver moths in his closet instead of clothes. One of the poems that he wrote when he grew up began this way—

"I wouldn't give much for the boy 'at grows up,
With no friendship subsistin' 'tween him and a pup."

With all his liking for pets and poetry Eugene was an active boy, full of life and spirit. He was the chosen leader of all the boys in the village, and invented such queer amusements and such lively adventures that the good fathers and mothers of the town would sigh, shake their heads, and say,

"The Field boys are good boys, but full of the Old Nick."

His pranks in school nearly turned his teacher's hair gray. He would set the whole school laughing with the funny pictures he made in his books, and then when the poor teacher came down from the platform to see what he was doing, he always had a history book innocently open before him and seemed to be studying very hard. Sometimes the book was upside down, but Eugene studied it nearly as hard in that way as in any other.

He and five friends built a castle of tree trunks and bushes on a hill behind the schoolhouse. They dug a deep ditch around the foot of the castle and covered it with boughs and leaves so that it looked just like the solid ground round about. One day the teacher followed them up the hill to see what new mischief they were up to. Over the narrow strip of ground they had left across the moat the boys ran into the fort. But when the professor started after them—crash! He fell through the twigs, down into the ditch till he was half buried in the mud and bushes below.

Of course this was a very naughty performance and richly deserved punishment. But Eugene was always sorry for his tricks afterwards, and this time he went to the teacher with such a manly apology that the good man forgave all the small rascals, and merely laughed, "These boys *are* boys, sure enough." Although he did not like to study as well as he did to play—and after all, who does?— Eugene was very bright and quick to learn when he set his mind upon his work. He could write verses, draw pictures, and recite "A Soldier of the Legion" better than any other boy or girl in the school.

One of the greatest treats of his childhood was to be allowed to visit his grandmother in the big, white, old-fashioned house in Amherst. Six days in the week he and his brother and cousins could romp about the fields, hunting for hidden stores of wintergreen, or nuts, or go fishing for trout and dace in the shallows of the silver Connecticut, or play hide-and-

go-seek in the crannies and nooks of the woodshed. But at six o'clock on Saturday the house was swept and dusted, and Sunday began. And there could be no more merriment for a long twenty-four hours. For his grandmother thought that it was almost wrong for a boy to smile on Sunday. Eugene used to carry his grandmother's foot-stove to church for her and light it with coals from the vestry-room fire. Then while grandmother sat with her feet warm and comfortable on the stove and nibbled cassia cakes and wintergreen lozenges to keep from falling asleep, poor Eugene would shiver and nod in the hard pew through the long sermons and Sunday school. He used to watch the sounding-board over the pulpit quiver and shake when the preacher shouted very loudly, as the preachers used to do in those days. Then he would watch the choir-master pitch the tune for the singers with a tuning-fork, and wonder drowsily why it was all right for nice old ladies to eat wintergreen and peppermints in church and not all right for little boys to do the same.

But the sermons and the Bible reading and the hymns all made a great impression on the little boy. When he was nine years old, he wrote a sermon himself called "The Way of the Transgressor is Hard"—a very good sermon, too, for a child to write. But, as I said at the beginning, Eugene Field was not like most boys. And perhaps that is why everybody loved him so well.

Even when he was a mischievous little boy, his aunt and chums and teacher all loved him. And when he was a grown-up boy, the whole world loved him, old folks and middle-aged folks, but most of all the children, his own four children, Trotty, Melvin, Daisy, and Pinny, and all other little boys and girls who have ever read his poems. He wrote about Shuffle-Shoon, Winken, Blinken, and Nod, about the terrible Flubdub, the queer Bingo Bird, the horrid Flimflam, the charming Dinkie Bird and the Doodle Do, and a host of strange beasts and beings, dear to the heart of every child.

Sometimes he wrote funny prose also. Here is something about the Wasp:—

"See the Wasp. He has pretty yellow stripes around his body, and a darning-needle in his tail. If you will Pat the Wasp upon the Tail We will give you a nice Picture Book."

And sometimes it was funny verse that he wrote, like this:—

"Down through the snowdrifts in the street
With blustering joy he steers.
His rubber boots are full of feet
His tippit full of ears."

It was partly because Eugene Field wrote such amusing and pretty poems for the children, partly because he told them such splendid stories, as they perched on his knee, and partly because he knew such happy games to teach them that they all loved him so well, but the greatest reason why the children loved Eugene Field was because he was a child himself always, and never forgot the wonderful secret of how to play.

Henry Van Dyke: Story of the Author's Life from a Child's Point of View

Author of The Mansion, The Other Wise Man

1852 – 1933 A.D.

My father was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, on November 10, 1852; but when he was very young the family moved to Brooklyn, and it was there that most of his boyhood was spent. From the first his relationship with his father was a particularly beautiful one, for besides the natural trust and reverence, there grew up the closest kind of a friendship. It was as comrades that they went off for their day's holiday, escaping from the city and its flag pavements and brownstone fronts and getting out into the fresh country air, to walk through the woods and watch the leaves turn red and gold and brown and drop to the ground, or to skate in the winter, or to listen for the song of the first returning bluebird in the spring. It was under the wise and tender guidance of his father that the boy's instinctive love of nature grew and developed. The stages of this growth are seen in the chapter entitled "A Boy and a Rod."

Boys went to college earlier in those days than they do now, and my father, who had prepared at the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, was ready to enter Princeton at the age of sixteen. Before he went to college he had tried his hand at writing a little. During his college course he became deeply interested in it, and took the Clio Hall prizes for essays and speeches, besides writing along other lines. Thus his enthusiasm for literature was increasing all the time, and from the first the idea of writing was uppermost in his mind. He was

Junior orator in 1872, and at graduation in 1873 his classmates elected him for a class-day speaker. He also received honors from the faculty in belles-lettres and the English Salutatory in recognition of his general scholarship, besides the class of 1859 Prize in English Literature. Through all his course he was a leading man in the classroom, gymnasium, and all class and college affairs.

After teaching for a year in Brooklyn he entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and graduated in 1877. He spent the following year studying at the University of Berlin and in travel, and after being ordained in 1879 he was called to the United Congregational Church at Newport, R.I. In 1881 he married my mother, and a few years later was called to the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York, where he gave seventeen years of the hardest and most untiring labor to a work which did not end with his own congregation or the city itself, but touched thousands of people all over the country. But these years of his life were only a step aside to give a helping hand to two churches which were fast running down, and through it all he felt that his real work was literature, and it was in that field that his best work could be done, though the rush of city life at that time gave him very little chance to do it.

So we were city children, but the woods were our inheritance and fishing became our favorite sport. Our earliest recollections of my father are in connection with fishing or camping expeditions. For when work pressed too heavily and his health showed signs of too much wear and tear, he would take a few days in the spring and spend them catching the first trout of the season out of the Swiftwater, a little river in the Alleghany Mountains in Pennsylvania. When he was away we always thought that he had "gone fishing," and our earliest ambition was to go with him. Somehow, the fact that I was a girl never seemed to make any difference in my castles in the air, and all of us, boys and girls alike, grew up with the

idea that to be like father was the highest possible attainment.

As soon as we were able to read we read his stories of camping that came out in the magazines. The article on "Ampersand" was the first and appeared in *Harper's Magazine* in 1885. But we were too young then, of course, to appreciate them, and I am afraid we preferred the story of "The Little Girl in the Well" and "Tommy Lizard and Frankie Frog," and other wonderful tales that he invented and told us between supper and bedtime.

Every Sunday we sat all in a row up in the second pew in the big church and heard him preach. Then in the afternoon, or on stormy Sundays, we put the chairs in the nursery in rows and one of us would preach while the others were congergation or choir. This was the nearest we ever came to appreciating the sermons that were all the time being made down in the study just below us. During this time he published "The Reality of Religion," "The Story of the Psalms," "God and Little Children," and "The Poetry of Tennyson," besides many magazine articles. The sermons we liked best, though, were the Christmas sermons, which were always stories, and which were afterward published. Among them were "The Other Wise Man," "The Lost Word," and "The First Christmas-Tree." When we saw his books coming out we were fired with the ambition to publish books too, so we had a "Book Company" which he encouraged by his patronage. We wrote stories, laboriously printed them with pen and ink, illustrated them in watercolors, and bound them in cardboard and colored paper. We soon had quite a library, with contributions from all the family, and in all this my father was our wisest friend and critic.

So the making of books was a reality to us, and we were interested not only in the writing, but in the illustrations and binding. I remember one afternoon my father had gone out in a hurry, leaving his study in great disorder. I was always more fond of the study than of any room in the house, probably

because entrance was forbidden most of the time when he was working; so taking advantage of his absence, I slid in and found the floor covered with photographs and prints and piles of books. It looked like a veritable workshop, and the disorder delighted my heart; so I spent the afternoon there, and finally persuaded myself that there would be nothing wrong in taking one small photograph of the Madonna and child, which I especially liked, if I put it back soon. I remember what a time I had returning it to its place the next day, and then with what interest, many months later, I saw the picture reproduced on one of the pages of the "Christ Child in Art" which came out in 1894. I really felt that I had had a part in the making of that book.

Of the making of rhymes, too, there was no end. Sometimes at the dinner-table my father would sit perfectly quiet for ten minutes, apparently wrapped in thought, while we chattered and discussed the doings of the morning or planned for the afternoon; and then if we stopped for a moment and looked at him we would see a smile dawning on his face, and a new-made nonsense rhyme was recited much to our delight. We often tried to persuade him to write a book for children, but although he seemed to have plenty of time to make it up, he was always too busy to write it down.

The best times of all, though, were the summer months, when we left the hot, dusty city and went down to the little white cottage on the south shore of Long Island. Here he first taught us the gentle art of fishing, and how well I remember the mornings he spent showing us how to catch the minnows for bait in a mosquito-net (for catching the bait was always part of the game), and then how he stood with us for hours on the high drawbridge across the channel, showing us the easy little twitch of the wrist that hooks the fish, and how to take him off the hook and save the bait. They were only young bluefish, or little "snappers," as we called them, and seldom more than eight inches long, but we were as proud as though

they were salmon. Real trout we had never caught, though we had often jumped up from the supper-table and run to meet him when he came in after dark with his basket full of wet, shiny, speckled ones. Then how exciting it was to weigh the biggest one and hear about the still *bigger* one that got away. That was always a good reason for going back the next day, and sometimes, if we had been very good, he would take one or two of us up under the bridge, and up the narrow, winding stream, till we came to where the branches interlaced overhead and the boat would go no farther. There he left us at the little rustic bridge and waded up the stream above, while we sat breathless to hear his halloo, which meant he was coming back, and to find out what luck he had had in those mysterious mazes above the bridge.

Those were the happiest days of our summer, and, as my father says, it was the stream which made them so.

But these were only day's trips, and I longed for real camping out. Every fall my father went hundreds of miles away up to Canada where there were real bears and wolves in the woods and where you travelled for days without seeing a house or a person. I had often heard him tell his experiences much as they are now recorded in "Camping Out" in this book. Especially did we become interested in the French guides, whose letters to him I read eagerly, though slowly, for they were written in French.

Finally, to my earnest entreaties, there came a sort of half promise that I might go some time when I was bigger and stronger, but it seemed so indefinite that I quite despaired, and great was my surprise and joy one day when my father asked me if I would like to go camping that very day. The tent and the great heavy blankets and rubber sheets were taken out of their canvas wrapping where they were lying waiting for the fall and Canada. My father put on his corduroys and homespun and his old weather-stained gray felt hat, with the flies stuck all around the band, and I donned my oldest sailor

suit, and with a few pots and pans, a small supply of provisions which the family helped us get together, and our two fishing-rods, we were ready for the start. We took the long trip (about a mile) in an old flat-bottomed row-boat, and my mother and little brothers came with us to see us settled. Our camping ground was in a pine grove near a small inlet to the salt-water bay on which our cottage faced, so that, although the stream was blocked with weeds and stumps, the easiest way to get there was by water. We reached the place about four in the afternoon, moored the boat, and carried the tent and provisions up a little hill to the place my father had chosen. It seemed miles and miles from home, and very wild. We had nothing for supper, and I remember wondering whether my father would shoot some wild animal or whether we would catch some fish. The latter course was chosen, much to my disappointment, and after the tent was pitched, the provisions unpacked, and my mother and brothers had left us all alone, we started out with rods and tackle to catch our supper. Fortunately the fish were biting well, and with my rising appetite they came more and more frequently, until we had a basketful. Then we had to stop by the stream to prepare them for the pan, so it was almost dark when we threaded our way back through the deep forest of pines to the little white tent. But we soon built the fire and made things look more cheerful. How good the fish looked as they sizzled away over the glowing fire, and they tasted even better, eaten right out of the same pan they were cooked in. That was one of the best suppers I ever recall eating, and surely half the pleasure came from the comradeship of a father who shared and sympathized with my thoughts and entered into my fun with the spirits of a boy.

It was an experience which I shall never forget, and which, like most of the delightful "first" things I have done, I shall always associate with my father. For he was our guide in everything; and besides the fishing trips, there were long

Sunday afternoon walks through the woods and a growing acquaintance with the songs of the birds and with the wild flowers. He made us listen for the first notes of the bluebird in spring and to the "Sweet—sweet— sweet—very merry cheer" of the song sparrows that sang in the lilac hedge around our cottage. It was there that he wrote "The Song Sparrow" and a good many of the poems that came out later in a book called "The Builders and Other Poems." But my first realization that my father was a poet came when my two brothers and myself were brought down here to Princeton in 1896 to hear him read the ode at the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Princeton College. How proud we felt to be the only children in that grave assembly of gowned and hooded scholars, and how fine it was to see our own father standing there on the platform and reciting the ode for his Alma Mater, the college we had cheered for and whose colors we had worn through defeat or victory every spring and fall. To be sure we were interested in Harvard too, because he had often been elected preacher to the university there, and in Yale, because he had been Lyman Beecher Lecturer there, and in other colleges where he had received academic honors; but we were ever loyal to Princeton, where he and our grandfather and our greatgrandfather had been students.

Our Dutch ancestry was brought to our minds the year he was President of the Holland Society, and our Presbyterianism emphasized when he became Moderator of the General Assembly of that church and brought home a fine white ivory gavel which some Alaskan mission church had sent to him and which he now keeps on one of the library bookcases. Thus in all his work, as well as in his fishing, we have followed him, and he takes us into his plans and tells us as much as we can understand of what he is doing.

In 1900 he was called to be the first occupant of the Murray chair of English Literature in Princeton University, and we now have, what we have always wanted, a home in

the country. Here, though he has left the strain and rush of city life, he seems busier than ever, for he still preaches every Sunday, usually at university and college chapels, and his calendar is always filled with lecture engagements all over the country. Preacher, poet, lecturer— his professions are many, though his aim is one, to lift the world up and make it a better, happier one than he found it.

But with all this work there is a shelf in the library at Avalon on which the line of books is steadily increasing. That is the shelf where my father's books, each one of which he has especially bound and gives to my mother, are kept. Two of the latest additions to this shelf are the books of short stories, "The Ruling Passion" and "The Blue Flower," and I think we have been more interested in the making of these two than in any others. For we have seen the stories grow and have known many of the characters that he has so faithfully drawn. The scenes of some are laid in places that we are very familiar with and many of the incidents have taken place before our eyes. My father keeps a small black leather note-book, one that would fit in a jacket pocket. When a story comes to him he jots down a word or two—a phrase, or something that suggests what is in his mind and would call up the same train of thought—then puts the notebook away till he has had time to think the story out in full, or, more often, until he has time to write it down. Sometimes it is only a catchword, sometimes half a page, but he always seems to have two or three stories ahead of him waiting to be written.

About three summers ago there were so many stories on his waiting-list that my father knew they would give him no peace of mind until written down in black and white. We were spending that summer on an island off the coast of Massachusetts, and our little cottage was in the midst of all the merry-making, near the ocean, and facing a field where all sizes of boys played base-ball every afternoon. It was not at all an atmosphere for writing, so my father, on one of his walks

of discovery to the middle of the island, found an old deserted farm-house standing back from the road on a little rise of ground. There were apple-trees around it and a grape-vine straggling over the trellised porch, and from the window of what once was probably the sitting-room there was a tiny glimpse of the blue sea far away in the distance. No discordant sounds reached this quiet spot, and here my father spent a good part of the summer writing a great many of the stories in "The Blue Flower." He would go out to his farm-house study every morning, returning in body, though not in spirit, to lunch, and then go out again to work for the rest of the afternoon. As soon as a story was finished, we would gather, after supper, around the lamp and he would read it to us. What a delight it was to recognize some of our old friends or familiar places, or to make the acquaintance of new and even better ones. We were sorry when the stories were all finished and the book had gone to the publisher.

My father's latest book is "Music, and Other Poems," and most of these were written here in his study at Avalon, though some he wrote down in Augusta, Ga., where he spent part of last winter. The "Ode to Music" he was almost two years in writing, taking up, of course, other things in the mean time. Several days ago the following came to my father from James Whitcomb Riley:

"Music! yea, and the airs you play—
Out of the faintest Far-away
And the sweetest, too; and the dearest here,
With its quavering voice but its bravest cheer—
The prayer that aches to be all expressed—
The kiss of love at its tenderest.
Music—music with glad heart-throbs
Within it; and music with tears and sobs
Shaking it, as the startled soul
Is shaken at shriek of the fife and roll

Of the drums;—then as suddenly lulled again
By the whisper and lisp of the summer rain.
Mist of melodies, fragrance fine—
The bird-song-flicked from the eglantine
With the dews where the springing bramble throws
A rarer drench on its ripest rose,
And the winged song soars up and sinks
To a dove's dim coo by the river brinks,
Where the ripple's voice still laughs along
Its glittering path of light and song.
Music, O poet, and all your own
By right of capture, and that alone—
For in it we hear the harmony
Born of the earth and the air and the sea,
And over and under it, and all through,
We catch the chime of the Anthem, too.

But in spite of his many duties he still finds time to fish, and since we have lived here he has taken me on a real camping trip in Canada and taught me to catch real salmon, as well as showing me the scenes of a good many of his stories in "The Ruling Passion." So now I know what real fisherman's luck is, for though "we sometimes caught plenty and sometimes few, we never came back without a good catch of happiness," and my father has taught me the real meaning of the last stanza of "The Angler's Reveille":

"Then come, my friend, forget your foes and leave your fears behind,
And wander out to try your luck with cheerful, quiet mind;
For be your fortune great or small, you'll take what God may give,
And through the day your heart shall say,
'Tis luck enough to live."

Brooke van Dyke.

Avalon, Princeton, N.J.,
January 21, 1905.

Kate Douglas Wiggin

Author of Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, The Birds' Christmas Carol, Mother Carey's Chickens

1856 – 1923

My real advent into print was a three-part story, accepted by *The St. Nicholas*, and paid for *(mirabile dictu)* to the extent of $150.

I was seventeen; and why I did not consider myself a full-fledged author embarked upon a successful career I can hardly tell; but a period of common-sense overtook me with considerable severity. I examined myself and though I discovered an intense desire to write I discovered nothing to write about. I had neither knowledge nor experience, nor yet the genius which supplies at a pinch the place of both; so somewhat regretfully, I turned my back on literature (the muse showing a most unflattering indifference) and took a peep into life.

All my instincts led me towards work with children, so I studied educational methods for a year and a half, finishing with a course of kindergarten theory and practice. Then most unexpectedly I found myself in the position of organizing the first free kindergarten work west of the Rocky Mountains, my sphere of effort being a precinct in San Francisco known as "Tar Flat."

This is not the place to describe that experiment which under favoring circumstances took root, blossomed and bore fruit all up and down the Pacific Coast. Suffice it to say I was too busy with living to think of writing. I was helping, in my woman's way (I fear at first it was but a girl's way) to do my share of the world's work, and it absorbed all my energies of

mind, body and soul.

But though the public was generous there was never money enough! Fifty children under school age, between four and six, were enrolled, but the procession of waiting mothers grew longer daily. Patrick's mother, Henri's, Levi's, Angelo's, Leo's, Katarina's, Selma's, Alexandria's stood outside asking when there would be room for more children.

On a certain October day I wondered to myself could I write a story, publish it in paper covers and sell it here and there for a modest price, the profits to help towards the establishment of a second kindergarten?

Preparations for Christmas were already in the air, and as I sat down at my desk in a holiday spirit, I wrote in a few days my real first book, "The Birds' Christmas Carol." It was the simplest of all possible simple tales, the record of a lame child's life; a child born on Christmas Day and named Carol by Mr. and Mrs. Bird, her father and mother.

The Dark Ages in which I wrote were full of literary Herods who put to death all the young children within their vicinity, and I was no exception. What saved me finally was a rudimentary sense of humor that flourished even in the life I was living; a life in which I saw pain and suffering, poverty and wretchedness, cruelty and wickedness struggling against the powers for good that lifted their heads here and there, battling courageously and often overcoming.

If Carol Bird and her family were inclined to sentimentality (as I have reason to fear), the Ruggles brood who lived "in the rear" were perhaps a wholesome antidote. Mrs. Ruggles, and the nine big, middle-sized and little Ruggleses, who inhabited a small house in an alley that backed on the Bird mansion—these furnished a study of contrasts and gave a certain amount of fun to counteract my somewhat juvenile tendency to tears.

All this was more than thirty-five years ago. How could one suppose that the unpretentious tale would endure

through the lapse of years? Yet it appeared again in a brave new dress with illuminated borders to its pages and richly colored illustrations, properly grateful, I hope, but never scornful of the paper covers in which it was born.

I wrote a preface to that new edition, a preface in which I have addressed, not the public, but the book itself, which has grown through the passage of time, to possess a kind of entity of its own.

> To my Dear First Book (so I began):
>
> Here you are on my desk again after twenty-eight years, in which you have worn out your plates several times and richly earned your fine new attire…
>
> You have been a good friend to me, my book—none better… At the very first, you earned the wherewithal to take a group of children out of the confusion and dangers of squalid streets and transport them into a place of sunshine, safety and gladness. Then you took my hand and led me into the bigger, crowded world where the public lives. You brought me all the new, strange experiences that are so thrilling to the neophyte. The very sight of your familiar title brings them back afresh! Proof-sheets in galleys, of which one prated learnedly to one's awe-stricken family; then the Thing itself, in covers; and as one opened them tremblingly in secret there pounced from the text some clumsy phrase one never noted before in all one's weary quest for errors. Then reviews, mingling praise and blame; then letters from strangers; then, years after, the story smiling at one cheerily, pathetically, gratefully, from patient rows of raised letters printed for blind eyes; then, finally, the sight of it translated into many foreign tongues.
>
> Would that I had had more art—even at the expense of having had less heart—with which to en-

> dow you, but I gave you all of both I had to give, and one can do no more. In return you have repaid me in ways tangible and intangible, ways most rare and beautiful, even to bringing me friendships in strange lands, where people have welcomed me for your sake. Then go, little book on your last journey into the world. Here are my thanks, good comrade, and here my blessing! Hail and farewell!

Does all this have too sentimental a ring? I hope not, but at any rate, one always has a bit of license where a first love or a first book are concerned, particularly if the first love or first book have lasted over the silver wedding day.

Kate Douglas Wiggin
A Child's Journey with Dickens

When I was a little girl (I always think that these words, in precisely this juxtaposition, are six of the most charming in the language)—when I was a little girl, I lived, between the ages of six and sixteen, in a small village in Maine. My sister and I had few playmates, but I cannot remember that we were ever dull, for dullness in a child, as in a grown person, means lack of dreams and visions, and those we had a-plenty. We were fortunate, too, in that our house was on the brink of one of the loveliest rivers in the world. When we clambered down the steep bank to the little cove that was just beneath our bedroom windows, we found ourselves facing a sheet of crystal water as quiet as a lake, a lake from the shores of which we could set any sort of adventure afloat; yet scarcely three hundred feet away was a roaring waterfall—a baby Niagara—which, after dashing over the dam in a magnificent tawny torrent, spent itself in a wild stream that made a path between rocky cliffs until it reached the sea, eight miles away. No child could be lonely who lived on the brink of such a river; and then we had, beside our studies and our country sports, our books, which were the dearest of all our friends. It is a long time ago, but I can see very clearly a certain set of black walnut book-shelves, hanging on the wall of the family sitting-room. There were other cases here and there through the house, but I read and re-read the particular volumes in this one from year to year, and a strange, motley collection they were, to be sure! On the top shelf were George Sand's "Teverino," "Typee," "Undine," Longfellow's and Byron's

"Poems," "The Arabian Nights," Bailey's "Festus," "The Lamplighter," "Scottish Chiefs," Thackeray's "Book of Snobs," "Ivanhoe," and the "Life of P.T. Barnum." This last volume, I may say, did not represent the literary inclinations of my parents, but had been given me on my birthday by a grateful neighbor for saving the life of a valuable Jersey calf tethered on the too steep slopes of our river bank. The "Life of Barnum" was the last book on the heterogeneous top shelf, and on the one next below were most of the novels of Charles Dickens, more eagerly devoured than all the rest, although no book in the case had escaped a second reading save Bailey's "Festus," a little of which went a very long way with us.

It seems to me that no child nowadays has time to love an author as the children and young people of that generation loved Dickens; nor do I think that any living author of to-day provokes love in exactly the same fashion. From our yellow dog, Pip, to the cat, the canary, the lamb, the cow, down to all the hens and cocks, almost every living thing was named, sooner or later, after one of Dickens's characters; while my favorite sled, painted in brown, with the title in brilliant red letters, was "The Artful Dodger." Why did we do it? We little creatures couldn't have suspected that "the democratic movement in literature had come to town," as Richard Whiteing says, nevertheless we responded to it vigorously, ardently, and swelled the hero's public.

For periodical literature we had in our household "Harper's Magazine" and "Littell's Living Age," but we never read newspapers, so that there was a moment of thrilling excitement when my mother, looking up from the "Portland Press," told us that Mr. Dickens was coming to America, and that he was even then sailing from England.

I remember distinctly that I prayed for him fervently several times during the next week, that the voyage might be a safe one, and that even the pangs of seasickness might be spared so precious a personage. In due time we heard that he

had arrived in New York, and had begun the series of readings from his books; then he came to Boston, which was still nearer, and then—day of unspeakable excitement!—we learned that he had been prevailed upon to give one reading in Portland, which was only sixteen miles away from our village.

It chanced that my mother was taking me to Charlestown, Massachusetts, to pay a visit to an uncle on the very day after the one appointed for the great event in Portland. She, therefore, planned to take me into town the night before, and to invite the cousin, at whose house we were to sleep, to attend the reading with her. I cannot throw a more brilliant light on the discipline of that period than to say that the subject of my attending the reading was never once mentioned. The price of tickets was supposed to be almost prohibitory. I cannot remember the exact sum; I only know that it was mentioned with bated breath in the village of Hollis, and that there was a general feeling in the community that any one who paid it would have to live down a reputation for riotous extravagance forever afterward. I neither wailed nor wept, nor made any attempt to set aside the parental decrees (which were anything but severe in our family), but if any martyr in Fox's "Book" ever suffered more poignant anguish than I, I am heartily sorry for him; yet my common sense assured me that a child could hardly hope to be taken on a week's junketing to Charlestown, and expect any other entertainment to be added to it for years to come. The definition of a "pleasure" in the State of Maine, county of York, village of Hollis, year of our Lord 1868, was something that could not reasonably occur too often without being cheapened.

The days, charged with suppressed excitement, flew by. I bade good-bye to my little sister, who was not to share my metropolitan experiences, and my mother and I embarked for Portland on the daily train that dashed hither and thither at the rate of about twelve miles an hour. When the august night

and moment arrived, my mother and her cousin set out for the Place, and the moment they were out of sight I slipped out of the door and followed them, traversing quickly the three or four blocks that separated me from the old City Hall and the Preble House, where Dickens was stopping. I gazed at all the windows and all the entrances of both buildings without beholding any trace of my hero. I watched the throng of happy, excited, lucky people crowding their way into the hall, and went home in a chastened mood to bed—a bed which, as soon as I got into it, was crowded with Little Nell and the Marchioness, Florence Dombey, Bella Wilfer, Susan Nipper, and Little Em'ly. There were other dreams, too. Not only had my idol provided me with human friends, to love and laugh and weep over, but he had wrought his genius into things; so that, waking or sleeping, every bunch of holly or mistletoe, every plum pudding was alive; every crutch breathed of Tiny Tim; every cricket and every singing, steaming kettle had a soul.

The next morning we started on our railroad journey, which I remember as one being full of excitement from the beginning, for both men and women were discussing the newspapers with extraordinary interest, the day before having been the one on which the President of the United States had been formally impeached. When the train stopped for two or three minutes at North Berwick, the people on the side of the car next the station suddenly arose and looked eagerly out at some object of apparent interest. I was not, at any age, a person to sit still in her seat when others were looking out of windows, and my small nose was quickly flattened against one of the panes. There on the platform stood the Adored One! His hands were plunged deep in his pockets (a favorite gesture), but presently one was removed to wave away laughingly a piece of the famous Berwick sponge cake, offered him by Mr. Osgood, of Boston, his travelling companion and friend.

I knew him at once!—the smiling, genial, mobile face,

rather highly colored, the brilliant eyes, the watch chain, the red carnation in the button-hole, and the expressive hands, much given to gesture. It was only a momentary view, for the train started, and Dickens vanished, to resume his place in the car next to ours, where he had been, had I known it, ever since we left Portland.

When my mother was again occupied with her book, I slipped away and entered the next car. I took a humble, unoccupied seat near the end, close by the much patronized tank of (unsterilized) drinking-water, and the train-boy's basket of popcorn balls and molasses candy, and gazed steadily at the famous man, who was chatting busily with Mr. Osgood. I remembered gratefully that my mother had taken the old ribbons off my gray velvet hat and tied me down with blue under the chin, and I thought, if Dickens should happen to rest his eye upon me, that he could hardly fail to be pleased with the effect of the blue ribbon that went under my collar and held a very small squirrel muff in place. Unfortunately, however, his eye never did meet mine, but some family friends espied me, and sent me to ask my mother to come in and sit with them.

I brought her back, and fortunately there was not room enough for me with the party, so I gladly resumed my modest seat by the popcorn boy, where I could watch Dickens, quite unnoticed. There is an Indian myth which relates that when the gaze of the Siva rested for the first time on Tellatonea, the most beautiful of women, his desire to see her was so great that his body became all eyes. Such a transformation, I fear, was perilously near to being my fate! Half an hour passed, perhaps, and one gentleman after another came from here or there to exchange a word of greeting with the famous novelist, so that he was never for a moment alone, thereby inciting in my breast my first, and about my last, experience of the passion of jealousy. Suddenly, however, Mr. Osgood arose, and with an apology went into the smoking-car. I never knew

how it happened; I had no plan, no preparation, no intention, no provocation; but invisible ropes pulled me out of my seat, and, speeding up the aisle, I planted myself timorously down, an unbidden guest, in the seat of honor. I had a moment to recover my equanimity, for Dickens was looking out of the window, but he turned in a moment, and said with justifiable surprise:—

"God bless my soul, where did you come from?"

"I came from Hollis, Maine," I stammered, "and I'm going to Charlestown to visit my uncle. My mother and her cousin went to your reading last night, but, of course, three couldn't go from the same family, so I stayed at home. Nora, that's my little sister, stayed at home too. She's too small to go on a journey, but she wanted to go to the reading dreadfully. There was a lady there who had never heard of Betsey Trotwood, and had only read two of your books!"

"Well, upon my word!" he said; "you do not mean to say that you have read them!"

"Of course I have," I replied; "every one of them but the two that we are going to buy in Boston, and some of them six times."

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated again. "Those long thick books, and you such a slip of a thing."

"Of course," I explained conscientiously, "I do skip some of the very dull parts once in a while; not the short dull parts, but the long ones."

He laughed heartily. "Now, that is something that I hear very little about," he said. "I distinctly want to learn more about those very dull parts." And whether to amuse himself, or to amuse me, I do not know, he took out a notebook and pencil from his pocket and proceeded to give me an exhausting and exhaustive examination on this subject; the books in which the dull parts predominated; and the characters and subjects which principally produced them. He chuckled so constantly during this operation that I could hardly help

believing myself extraordinarily agreeable, so I continued dealing these infant blows, under the delusion that I was flinging him bouquets.

It was not long before one of my hands was in his, and his arm around my waist, while we talked of many things. They say, I believe, that his hands were "undistinguished" in shape, and that he wore too many rings. Well, those criticisms must come from persons who never felt the warmth of his handclasp! For my part, I am glad that Pullman chair cars had not come into fashion, else I should never have experienced the delicious joy of snuggling up to Genius, and of being distinctly encouraged in the attitude.

I wish I could recall still more of his conversation, but I was too happy, too exhilarated, and too inexperienced to take conscious notes of the interview. I remember feeling that I had never known anybody so well and so intimately, and that I talked with him as one talks under cover of darkness or before the flickering light of a fire. It seems to me, as I look back now, and remember how the little soul of me came out and sat in the sunshine of his presence, that I must have had some premonition that the child, who would come to be one of the least of writers, was then talking with one of the greatest;—talking, too, of the author's profession and high calling. All the little details of the meeting stand out as clearly as though it had happened yesterday. I can see every article of his clothing and of my own; the other passengers in the car; the landscape through the window, and above all the face of Dickens, deeply lined, with sparkling eyes and an amused, waggish smile that curled the corners of his mouth under his grizzled moustache. A part of our conversation was given to a Boston newspaper next day, by the author himself, or by Mr. Osgood, and a little more was added a few years after by an old lady who sat in the next seat to us. (The pronoun "us" seems ridiculously intimate, but I have no doubt I used it, quite unabashed, at that date.)

"What book of mine do you like best?" Dickens asked, I remember; and I answered, "Oh, I like David Copperfield much the best. That is the one I have read six times."

"Six times—good, good!" he replied; "I am glad that you like Davy, so do I;—I like it best, too!" clapping his hands; and that was the only remark he made which attracted the attention of the other passengers, who looked in our direction now and then, I have been told, smiling at the interview, but preserving its privacy with the utmost friendliness.

"Of course," I added, "I almost said 'Great Expectations,' because that comes next. We named our little yellow dog Mr. Pip. They told father he was part rat terrier, and we were all so pleased. Then one day father showed him a trap with a mouse in it. The mouse wiggled its tail just a little, and Pip was so frightened that he ran under the barn and stayed the rest of the day. Then all the neighbors made fun of him, and you can think how Nora and I love him when he's had such a hard time, just like

Pip in 'Great Expectations'!"

Here again my new friend's mirth was delightful to behold, so much so that my embarrassed mother, who had been watching me for half an hour, almost made up her mind to drag me away before the very eyes of our fellow passengers. I had never been thought an amusing child in the family circle; what then, could I be saying to the most distinguished and popular author in the universe?

"We have another dog," I went on, "and his name is Mr. Pocket. We were playing with Pip, who is a smooth dog, one day, when a shaggy dog came along that didn't belong to anybody, and hadn't any home. He liked Pip and Pip liked him, so we kept him, and named him Pocket after Pip's friend. The real Mr. Pip and Mr. Pocket met first in Miss Havisham's garden, and they had such a funny fight it always makes father laugh till he can't read! Then they became great friends. Perhaps you remember Mr. Pip and Mr. Pocket?" And Dickens

thought he did, which, perhaps, is not strange, considering that he was the author of their respective beings. Mr. Harry Furniss declares that "Great Expectations" was Dickens's favorite novel, but I can only say that to me he avowed his special fondness for "David Copperfield."

"Did you want to go to my reading very much?" was another question. Here was a subject that had never once been touched upon in all the past days—a topic that stirred the very depths of my disappointment and sorrow, fairly choking me, and making my lip tremble by its unexpectedness, as I faltered, *"Yes; more than tongue can tell."*

I looked up a second later, when I was sure that the tears in my eyes were not going to fall, and to my astonishment saw that Dickens's eyes were in precisely the same state of moisture. That was a never-to-be-forgotten moment, although I was too young to appreciate the full significance of it.

"Do you cry when you read out loud?" I asked curiously. "We all do in our family. And we never read about Tiny Tim, or about Steerforth when his body is washed up on the beach, on Saturday nights, or our eyes are too swollen to go to Sunday School."

"Yes, I cry when I read about Steerforth," he answered quietly, and I felt no astonishment.

"We cry the worst when it says, 'All the men who carried him had known him and gone sailing with him, and seen him merry and bold,'" I said, growing very tearful in reminiscence.

We were now fast approaching our destination—the station in Boston—and the passengers began to collect their wraps and bundles. Mr. Osgood had two or three times made his appearance, but had been waved away with a smile by Dickens—a smile that seemed to say—"You will excuse me, I know, but this child has the right of way."

"You are not travelling alone?" he asked, as he arose to put on his overcoat.

"Oh, no," I answered, coming down to earth for the first

time since I had taken my seat beside him—"oh, no, I had a mother, but I forgot all about her." Whereupon he said—"You are a passed-mistress of the art of flattery!" But this remark was told me years afterwards by the old lady who was sitting in the next seat, and who overheard as much of the conversation as she possibly could, so she informed me.

Dickens took me back to the forgotten mother, and introduced himself, and I, still clinging to his hand, left the car and walked with him down the platform until he disappeared in the carriage with Mr. Osgood, leaving me with the feeling that I must continue my existence somehow in a dull and dreary world.

That was my last glimpse of him, but pictures made in childhood are painted in bright hues, and this one has never faded. The child of to-day would hardly be able to establish so instantaneous a friendship. She would have heard of celebrity hunters and autograph collectors and be self-conscious, while I followed the dictates of my countrified little heart, and scraped acquaintance confidently with the magician who had glorified my childhood by his art.

He had his literary weaknesses, Charles Dickens, but they were all dear, big, attractive ones, virtues grown a bit wild and rank. Somehow when you put him—with his elemental humor, his inexhaustible vitality, his humanity, sympathy, and pity—beside the Impeccables, he always looms large! Just for a moment, when the heart overpowers the reason, he even makes the flawless ones look a little faded and colorless!

Kate Douglas Wiggin
The Writing of 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm'

This sketch of my sister's literary career and its attendant happenings has brought before me, as in a magic mirror, all her characters and one by one they have glided across the stage and disappeared. Rebecca only remains, Rebecca in whom I see much of Kate's own eager, dreaming childhood, happy Rebecca, whom Thomas Bailey Aldrich called 'the nicest child in American literature.'

During the progress of a painful illness, she came driving into K.D.W.'s vision one winter in New York, sitting erect on the slippery leather seat of the old stagecoach, her yellow calico frock standing stiffly out around her, her precious pink parasol held carefully by her side. The wheels rattled, the horses' hoofs whirled up the summer dust, and Rebecca Rowena Randall alighted at the gate of the Brick House at Riverboro, holding her bunch of faded lilacs. She *would* come in, she would not be denied, and pencil and paper must be found at once. The nurse was horrified, the doctor shook his head, but finally gave in when assured that the patient had a germ in her system that would raise her temperature to a dangerous height if not speedily removed. A handful of writing materials was all the remedy required and Rebecca's picture, stage-coach and all, was sketched before the vision faded.

When the patient had so far recovered that change of air was advised, my mother and I went with her to Pinehurst, North Carolina. To the eyes of the other travellers we were a party of three, but in reality Rebecca was with us, 'carrying her nightgown,' for it was 'a real journey,' and assuring herself

of the safety of her old hair trunk at every change of cars. Back to New York she came with us again, and later in the season journeyed to a sanitarium in the northern part of the State for a time. There my sister went on with the book from a couch on the roof and posted the concluding chapters to Maine as they were completed, that I might have them typed and sent to the publishers.

It is an interesting fact in a literary way, I think, that the germ of this book must have lain in K.D.W.'s brain since the date of her first published story, 'Half-a-Dozen Housekeepers,' written in California when she was a slip of a girl. I doubt if she remembered herself, after all the years and all the happenings that had come between, that she called the two old spinster sisters in 'Half-a-Dozen Housekeepers' Jane and Miranda Sawyer, that they lived in a brick house, that they had a widowed sister, Aurelia Randall, who was struggling with a large family of children on a farm, 'up-country,' and that on the last page of the book, when the old ladies are speaking of taking one of their nieces to bring up, Miranda says, decidedly, 'Well, Jane, you can write we'll take Rebecca, though I always thought she was a self-willed child, too full of her own fancies to be easily managed.'

The story of this early book has nothing at all to do with Rebecca, whose name is given on the last page only, and but little to do with the Aunts, who are K.D.W.'s initial attempts at painting New England types, but the idea of some day developing this only once-mentioned Rebecca into a character, and showing how 'a child brings hope into a household and forward-looking thoughts,' must have lain somewhere in my sister's mind for many years and suddenly begun to germinate in 1903.

'Aunt Miranda' had prophesied of Rebecca, a quarter of a century or so before her birth as a real book character, that she would be a self-willed child, too full of her own fancies to be easily managed, while her creator used for her

Wordsworth's lovely lines:

> 'Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
> Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
> But all things else about her drawn
> From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
> A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
> To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.'

Probably my sister and Aunt Miranda were both right, for May-time must be far too full of her own delicious fancies to adopt those of anybody else, and Rebecca's eyes 'always had the effect of looking directly through the obvious (in this case, Aunt Miranda!) to something beyond in the landscape.'

The little rustic maiden, like her own sunny brook, 'always full of sparkles the livelong day,' did not have a moment to wait for her welcome when she finally appeared in print, for she had no sooner been helped from the stage by dear old Jeremiah Cobb than notes and letters and telegrams began to pour in upon her author, and not a critic in this country, or across the water, had a word to say in her dispraise, but only called her 'a lovely dear,' 'a precious creature,' or a prototype of 'youth immortal.' An unknown critic in the 'Louisville Evening Post' of June 14, 1907 (to whom be a long and happy life in gratitude for the joy he gave my sister!) sang the following pæan to Rebecca, and because it is so beautifully worded I must needs preserve it here:

It is the fashion of the day [he says and I say he advisedly] to write letters to the heroines of novels—a pretty pastime, and one which is never lacking in opportunities for the critic. Since this is so, it is not out of place to review 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm,' with a letter to Rebecca herself; and, with the example of Abijah the Brave, who writes his love-letter in Latin, the epistolary critics may proceed as follows:

'MY DEAR REBECCA, of Sunnybrook Farm and

the Brick House:

'Oh, *"carissima puella,"* as Abijah Flagg would say to Emma Jane, 'I love you as you are and for yourself':

'For you are gay and you are good; you are obedient and original; you are vivid and you are tender; in a phrase, you are fire and air and earth and dew—and all in a little New England bundle done up in homely little dresses and tied flat with homely little bows. The dresses make no difference, nor the bows, nor the flatness. I know you well; not as Adam Ladd knows you—a harp, a bubble, the shadow of a dancing leaf—but as something quite as delicate and far more enduring. It is you, dear child, who will wear when Emma Jane is faded and the unimaginative have gone to their graves. *For the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and it will keep you alive and beautiful.* To borrow again from the Latin of Abijah: *"Ave atque vale; Vale, carissima, carissima, carissima puella!" De tuo fideli servo.*

'A Critic.'

Kate quoted her own Rebecca when this letter reached her and said it was 'so beautiful beyond compare that you had to swallow lumps in your throat while you read it, and little cold feelings crept up and down your back all the time.' Louisville, a city I have never seen, must be a heavenly place to live in, if all its critics can write like Rebecca's *fideli servo,* and as for Kentucky, known by me heretofore merely for its blue grass, its swift steeds, and its Mammoth Caves, I feel now that it is obviously the very home and haunt of old-time chivalry.

As for my sister's hosts of lovers, in the family and out of

it, here and over the water, we all thought when we read the eulogy, of that nameless archer in the Scriptures who drew his bow at a venture and did such wondrous execution, for, as poets will, sometimes, he saw more than he knew he saw and characterized the creator as well as her creation.

May I venture to transcribe here also Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's beautiful tribute to Rebecca, especially noteworthy as coming from one whose child-portraits are known the world over?

105 MADISON AVENUE, Jan. 18, 1904

DEAR MRS. RIGGS:

I wanted to write to you, and should have done so long ago, but work has made it literally impossible. You see I have read too much fiction not to have become *difficile* and when any one gives me a joy I touch my forehead to the earth before them in salaams of gratitude. You gave me a joy with Rebecca. It is a lovely dear, that book! I wonder how many people recognize that it is a study of the most beautiful thing in the world—the thing which sets life astir and lights all the stars as it passes—the creature who is born with the genius of *temperament*. That is a different thing from the temperament of genius, which is occasionally by way of being rather trying. Rebecca, however, I do suspect of being also a genius, though she is as unconscious as the wind of spring. But about fifteen years after your story ended the world would, I believe, hear of her. It is so sweet, so fine, that you do not once say she is a creature of gifts, of charms, of fascinating qualities. You make only an exquisitely touched, perfectly unaffected picture of an artless, delightful, delighted young human thing, living, breathing and moving with absolute joyfulness in the sunshine

> which—she is not the least aware—radiates from her own being. I call her *delighted* because she is so delighted with everything, with every little joy she picks up by the wayside and touches and glows upon until it unfolds into full flower. The normal spirit and good cheer of her are adorable. Her unconscious leadership is the most lovable and natural thing. It is all so true and inevitable, and you have done it so well—so well. The very point at which you leave it all is of a perfection of harmony and restraint. My love to you; my congratulations.
>
> Yours very truly indeed
> FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

Although my sister's life was by no means an unclouded one, and although she was hampered from her earliest years by a general fragility of health and by frequent illnesses, yet she was, in this, most fortunate, that no manuscript of hers from the day she first began to write ever 'came home to roost,' and not only that, but never even to perch for a moment, preen its feathers, and stretch its wings for a longer flight.

All her books, of course, were not equally successful; she sometimes received unfavorable criticisms, which she invariably read with attention and carefully preserved that, as she expressed it, 'she might learn something from them.' A bulky scrapbook for each one of her stories is to be found in her study at Quillcote, each containing the opinions of the press and the public on its merits and defects, but the Rebecca volumes, for the two books and for the play, need a whole shelf for their accommodation.

One parchment portfolio, made and decorated for her by an artist-friend, holds nothing but letters from eminent men and women about Rebecca, that 'beautiful book,' as Mark Twain called it—'beautiful and moving and satisfying. How

Mrs. Riggs pervades it—her brightest and best and loveliest self!'

One would like to quote verbatim all the personal letters in this exquisite illuminated volume, but a few must really be given, if only to show the appreciative spirit, the loving-kindness of authors to one another.

For instance, Miss May Sinclair writes:

> *Grown-up geniuses are hard to 'do,' but the child genius is only 'done' by the grace of God, and that has certainly been with you, dear Mrs. Wiggin, in the writing of these stories.*

Hamilton W. Mabie writes:

> *I fell in love with Rebecca in the stage-coach and never expect to fall out again. The story is charming throughout; admirable at every point.*

And Mary Mapes Dodge, who knew children, if ever woman did, follows with:

> *Rebecca is delightful in every sense, a masterpiece of simple but vivid characterization.*

Sarah Orne Jewett, exquisite painter of 'The Country of the Pointed Firs,' calls Rebecca 'a live, dear, genuine creature in this pretentious world,' and so the warmhearted, generous praise goes on, quite enough to turn any but the most firmly set of heads.

The letters from unknown admirers are legion, one of them, which especially amused my sister, running:

> *In a recent number of 'Harper's Magazine' Mr. W.D. Howells conveys the impression that authors are not worshipped as they once were, nor looked upon as made of different clay from the rest of us. If this is true (and who should know better than Mr. Howells?), perhaps*

you are not so burdened with letters of appreciation that this one will be the last straw. I remember how poor Louisa Alcott suffered with admirers, beginning with the young woman who fell fainting into the author's arms, with the hysterical request, 'Darling, love me!' and ending with the harmless old lady who begged permission to add an Alcott grasshopper to her collection of those sprightly insects gathered from other famous Concord lawns.

No such fantastic tributes were offered to K.D.W., but physicians, hospital attendants, and trained nurses were eloquent in Rebecca's praise and—rather dubious but heartfelt tribute—the Superintendent of a State Lunatic Asylum wrote, on duly labelled paper, from the Office of the Superintendent: 'I have given "Rebecca" to a number of my patients to read and they have derived great pleasure and benefit from it.'

Certain things occurred while the book was being prepared for publication that may have happened to other authors—as to that, I do not know; but that happened to this one only among my sister's books. For instance, the printers and proof-readers sent her messages of congratulation while they were working on the manuscript, the whole 'Family' of The Riverside Press wired Christmas greetings on the first holiday after the book appeared, and one of the members of the firm, in his happy and appreciative letter on K.D.W.'s success, sounded the first note, in what afterwards proved to be a chorus, when he wrote, 'Did it ever strike you that Rebecca, of all your books, appealed more to men than women?'

The idea had not occurred to Rebecca's author up to that time, but Laurence Hutton followed immediately with his tribute, saying, 'Since Timothy quested himself into my heart I have met nobody in a book who has appealed to me more

than Rebecca. I have laughed over her and I have cried over her'; and Jack London, from his headquarters with the Japanese Army in Manchuria, cries out that she is real, that he loves her, and would travel the whole world to make her his.

Here is a well-known artist in the illuminated volume, who rhapsodizes, 'No man, from Maine to Mexico, be he raw in youth or decrepit in age, but wants Rebecca—wants her now, before that gold-plated and presumptuous Aladdin can get to the Brick House!'

Another romantic painter, well-known in the great world, pours out his soul, dear fellow, as follows:

> MY DEAR MRS. WIGGIN:
>
> I have just come down from the West where it is wild—where I knew mountains better than men —flowers better than children, and was nearer to the stars than to women.
>
> Then suddenly 'Rebecca Rowena' smiled at her reflection in my heart—and took her place there —as child and girl—ready to make room for the woman.
>
> Is there such a woman—save in your own beautiful dream of the eternal Feminine made manifest? But 'Rebecca' must be real—not a mere composite reality— else how could she make me love her so—so long to see her with these physical eyes?
>
> Of course she may be a memory from some happier life—which your lovely picture of her has recalled. But then you must have been there and have known and loved her, too. Will you pardon an unremembered friend for asking if you would

> tell me the day and month of Rebecca's birth on this plane—unless she was merely born of dreams and memories?
>
> I am deeply grateful to you for your love-compelling picture of that child I have dreamed of—that girl I have sought—as the budding promise of the woman who has always lived in my soul since we were parted—æons of ages ago. I am
>
> Sincerely yours.

A Western author-friend telegraphed that if Rebecca hadn't married yet he was coming East 'to take a chance'; a famous actor wired, 'Would I could be Aladdin to so charming, so darling a Rebecca!' and what we know as a 'solid, business-man' became sufficiently liquid to moan, 'Why was Rebecca given to another? As a mother parts with her only daughter at her wedding, so I feel at parting from that child.'

All these tributes from grown men, men of the world, men of experience, are amusing and touching in the same breath; one cannot but smile at their fervor and at the same time be a bit 'teary round the lashes' to think how they long for 'youth immortal, for Spring, for Girlhood, for new-found Poetry.'

Ernest Thompson Seton

Founding pioneer of Boy Scouts of America,
Author of Two Little Savages
1860 – 1946 A.D.

I note that I am to tell about my maiden effort. This is not easy, for the fact is, I made a number of maiden efforts, and the puzzle is, which one is wanted?

The wild animal story I wrote in 1880, and couldn't get any one to publish, so that it is still in my desk (for which I am now thankful as I look over it)? Or the 1882 attempt, which lies with No. 1? Or the No. 3, which having elements of history in it, got into a very local newspaper, which generously made no charge for insertion?

Or the 1884 attempt, which is reposing mustily with its maiden yea, virgin sisters, Nos. 1 and 2?

Or the No. 5 attempt, on "Housebuilding," which, through influence, I got into a local Canadian magazine, and having a very heavy pull through a political friend, I extorted $5.00 for the article of 2,000 words?

Or perhaps you really mean my early 1886 effort which was a chapter of my wild life, and appeared in *Forest and Stream* for June 6th of that year. Or possibly my later attempt that same year (called "The Song of the Prairie Lark") which appeared in the old *American Magazine*, and killed it dead—at least there was no later issue of said magazine.

Now, personally, if I must make a choice of this bunch of maiden efforts, I should select "The Drummer on Snowshoes," which appear in *St. Nicholas* in 1887. For this, with five illustrations, they paid me the incredible sum of fifty

dollars—cash (not promises)—enough to keep me on the prairies for a year.

I showed this story to Joe Collins, the Canadian writer. He had editorial instinct, and said, briefly: "You can sell as many of this kind as you choose to write and as fast as you choose to write them"; and he proved right, for this was later re-written and re-published as "Redruff" in my most successful book of animal stories.

As I look back over these many attempts I realize that the misguided editors rejected all my efforts to be "so very literary" and accepted those in which I tried to tell in simple language a story that came from my heart.

Alice Hegan Rice

Author of Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch

1870 – 1942 A.D.

In my maiden effort in literature I claim the distinction of having broken the record in the use of prose if not poetic license. In the first paragraph I managed to achieve six statements that were not true. It ran as follows:

> *"To begin with I am a typical old maid, living alone in a large city, possessing two cozy rooms, a cat and some books, and living a happy, contented life; but occasionally I indulge in dreams and wonderings as to what would have been my fate had I chosen the more hazardous path of matrimony."*

Now, at the time I wrote those lines I was a school girl, one of a large family, living in a small city, possessing no cat, and giving no thought whatever to "the hazardous path of matrimony." Having just read in Marvel's "Reveries of a Bachelor"—I can still recall the thrill of those lines "Love is a flame; how a flame brightens a man's habitation!"—I decided to write as a school theme a companion piece to it and call it "Reveries of a Spinster."

The little commendation of my English teacher on the margin of my composition was the match that set fire to the heap of literary aspirations that had been accumulating since I was old enough to hold a pencil.

Without taking any one into my confidence I sent my composition, unsigned, to the Louisville *Courier-Journal.* Even at this late date it is a matter of gratification to me that

I launched my own small craft without asking for a friendly push from Marse Henry, in whose home I was a frequent visitor.

For several days I waited anxiously to see what would happen. As usual, it was the unexpected. "The Reveries of a Spinster" was not only printed as a serious contribution but was immediately followed by an indignant protest from "A Married Woman." That was the start of a spirited controversy that raged for some weeks between the married and the unmarried who voiced their opinions from various parts of the state. All of which provided daily amusement for a group of school girls who read the articles at recess, and shrieked with glee over the caustic references to the "cynical old maid" who had begun the discussion.

Having found it thus easy "to start something" with my pen, I continued my efforts from time to time with varying success, but never ventured further than the comic papers until ten years later when I plucked up courage to send my first long story to a publisher. The result was the publication of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," and the same year that found me definitely started on my career as an author found me also a happy adventurer on what I had once regarded as "the hazardous path of matrimony."

Eleanor Gates

Author of The Biography of a Prairie Girl

1875-1951 A.D.

My inspiration was, I remember, *The Youth's Companion.* It reached the ranch every few weeks, tied in a big bundle made up of many issues, and was to me in the nature of a literary spree, for my father, with old-fashioned ideas, kept me pretty strictly to the more classic type of reading-matter. So loving *The Companion* as I did, naturally enough I came to aspire to its pages; and when I had dashed off my initial effort, what was there better to do than try it on the teacher? (I looked for no sympathy at home.)

The teacher and I were not on the best of terms. He was a Swede, tow-headed and milky-eyed. And he loathed me because when he mispronounced words, which he often did, I promptly corrected him—a bit of daring that more than once came near to costing me a public spanking. (It was the year I was eight.) So I was not submitting my story to him with the thought that he could help me any. No, indeed. I was simply hoping to fill him with envy.

The story started off in a most unaffected fashion:

> *"For a long time Mr. Hank Hayes has been promising me that he would let me ride his big gray stallion. So yesterday I went over to his house, and he led the horse out. 'I'm afraid you're going to break your neck,' he said. But I was not afraid. The gray stallion has dapples on his hair, and he jumped around awful when I got on. Then away he galloped."*

The tale wound on in my best blood-curdling style, culled from Cooper, with simplifications. I told how I swam sloughs and leaped coulées, raised the scalps on people's heads, and—subdued the mammoth gray, bringing him back on the Hayes ranch dripping but still dancing, whereupon Mr. and Mrs. Hayes rendered to me both praise and cookies in which were caraway seeds.

The teacher was boarding with us that week, and under the pretense of examining my masterpiece more at his leisure, he brought the thing home in his pocket; then with characteristic (almost brotherly) treachery, he showed it to that paragon of all the virtues, that censor of everything sisterly, my brother Will.

With unconcealed horror and rage Will read my tale. Then he launched into such a storm of blame—against me, against Mr. Hayes, and against Mrs. Hayes—and into such wild threats as to what he intended to say to my mother, that without further delay the author crawled under the sitting-room bed.

From there, lying on my back, with my freckled nose full of goose down, I marked the too-soon entrance of my mother; heard Will break out into his excited tattling; caught the rustle of paper as my story changed hands— all the while scarcely daring to breathe.

"If it's all so," vowed the eldest-born, "then she ought to be licked! And if it ain't so, then it's a lie! And she's under the bed, Ma." Then to me, "Oh, you'd better hide!

You're goin' to catch it!"

I crawled out. I was trembling with fear. The red of shame suffused my small countenance. Never since have I regretted a literary effort more. As I advanced I expected to be shaken and switched.

What happened however was very different from my expectations—also it was far-reaching in its effect, and regrettable. For my mother smiled upon me, held out a welcoming

hand, and drew me to her knee. "So!" she said—and I could see that she was proud about something. "So! We've got a writer in the family!"

And the harm was done.

By the time I was eleven I was writing freely, but, thanks to that stern and scoffing critic, my eldest brother, I was submitting no material. One of these early opera begins thus: "There were two women in the room, and both were dead"—which shows that I was then passing through that period of too-young literary effort always recognizable by the exalting of the ultra-morbid. Fortunately I came through it safely.

Fortunately, also, a man whom I met— I was still at an age when my hair was forever getting snagged on the buttons on the back of my pinafore—gave me some precious advice which (astonishing as it may seem) I took. It was this: "Write, write, write. Get the habit of writing. But! Put it all away. And read, read, read. Don't try to sell anything till you're grown up."

At twenty-four I found myself a junior "special" at the University, where I was merrily flunking in all my courses, due to the fact that I was reading everything except what I should have read; due, also to the other fact that I was writing My Maiden Dramatic Effort, a play called "Gentle Miss Gillette," which was produced at the Macdonough Theatre, Oakland, California. When my "The Poor Little Rich Girl" opened at the Hudson Theatre, New York, it was presumed to be my first dramatic attempt. But between these two plays, during the eleven years intervening, I had collaborated on several.

After that first, and dramatic, work, I allowed myself to be deflected to literary stuff of another kind. Finding all my early stories unutterably awful, I burned them and wrote a new one, called "Badgy." I offered it to *The Century Magazine.* They bought it. That was my first sale. And "Badgy" became a chapter of my Maiden Book, "The Biography of a Prairie Girl."