Books and Bidders



A·S·W·Rosenbach

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Title: Books and bidders
The adventures of a bibliophile

Author: A. S. W. Rosenbach

Release date: March 27, 2024 [eBook #73272]

Language: English

Original publication: Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1927

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/73272

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BOOKS AND BIDDERS



PAGE OF THE GUTENBERG BIBLE, SHOWING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

BOOKS AND BIDDERS

THE ADVENTURES OF A BIBLIOPHILE

BY

A. S. W. ROSENBACH



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1927

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Published November, 1927
Reprinted November, 1927

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS
PUBLICATIONS
ARE PUBLISHED BY
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO
PHILIP H. ROSENBACH

FOREWORD

IT is a pleasant duty to record my appreciation of the assistance rendered me in the writing of these articles by Miss Avery Strakosch (Mrs. W. K. Denham). It was she who, at the suggestion of the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post*, persuaded me to dictate the series of eight articles that appeared in the *Post* in the first part of 1927. The ninth was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in October 1927.

I cannot tell how much I am indebted to her, not only for the form of the articles, but for a friendship that began with the first article and will continue, I trust, long after the last ceases to be read.

A. S. W. R.

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BOOKS AND BIDDERS

I

TALKING OF OLD BOOKS

"GENIUS?" The tall old man with the fan-shaped beard looked eagerly at his companion, then settled back more heavily against the rows and rows of old books lining the walls to the ceiling on all sides of the room. "Of course Edgar was a genius, but in spite of being a gambler and a drunkard—in spite of it, I tell you!"

The other, a thin man of lesser years, his long, inquiring face meditative in the twilight, nodded.

"You are right," he agreed. "But what difference did it make? The only question is, would 'The Raven' have been any greater without his gambling and drinking? I doubt it."

The argument was on, and my uncle, Moses Polock, would lean forward now and again, waving his coatless arms—he handled books easier in shirt sleeves—in an effort to gain a point. His peculiarly young and penetrating blue eyes glistened. Opposite, George P. Philes, a noted editor and book collector, twirled a gray moustache and goatee while balancing in a tilted chair, listening calmly, and patiently relighting a half-smoked cigar which went out often as the verbal heat increased.

I would watch these two, dazed with their heated words concerning authors and their works; hear them make bookish prophecies, most of which came true. A favorite subject was their neurotic friend, Edgar Allan Poe. Both had befriended this singularly unfortunate and great writer, and each had certain contentions to make which led through the fire of argument to the cooler and more even discussion of reminiscences. But they did agree that it would take less than fifty years after Poe's death to make first editions of his works the most valuable of all American authors.

It was in 1885, when I was nine years old, that I first felt the haunting atmosphere of Uncle Moses' bookshop on the second floor of the bulging, red-brick building on Commerce Street in old Philadelphia. At that age I could hardly realize, spellbound as I was, the full quality of mystery and intangible beauty which becomes a part of the atmosphere wherever fine books are brought together; for here was something which called to me each afternoon, just as the wharves, the water, and the ships drew other boys who were delighted to get away from books the moment school was out. Whatever it was,—some glibly speak of it as bibliomania,—it entered my bones then, and has grown out of all proportion ever since. The long walk from the bookshop to my home in the twilight, the moon, just coming up, throwing long shadows across the white slab of Franklin's grave which I had to pass, was sometimes difficult; but as I grew older I learned to shut my eyes against imaginary fears and, in a valiant effort to be brave, hurried past darkened corners and abysmal alleyways, inventing a game by which I tried to visualize the only touches of color in Uncle Moses' musty, dusty shop—occasional

brilliantly bound volumes. Running along, I also cross-examined myself on quotations and dates from books and manuscripts through which I had prowled earlier in the day, unwittingly developing a memory which was often to stand me in good stead.

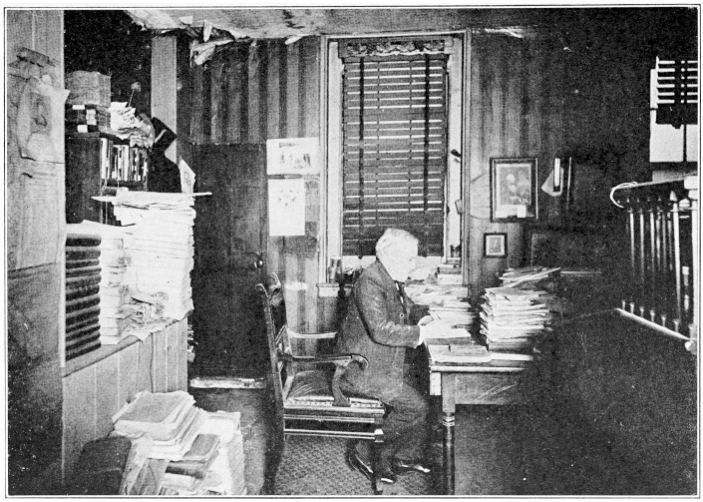
My uncle's appreciation of books showed itself long before he took over the publishing and bookselling business established in Philadelphia in 1780, just before the close of the Revolution. Throughout his youth books had been dear to him, and his father, noting this, encouraged him to keep together the volumes he prized most. Yet he gained local attention, not as a book collector but as a publisher, when with a certain amount of initiative he brought out the works of the first American novelist, Charles Brockden Brown. But I early had my suspicions of him as a publisher. It seemed to me that he used the publishing business as a literary cat's-paw by which he might conceal his real interest and love—searching for, finding, and treasuring rare books.

After all, if one is in a trade, certain expectations are held by the public; and the older Uncle Moses grew the less willing he became to meet these expectations. To publish books and sell them was one phase; but to collect, and then to sell, he considered a different and entirely personal affair. A poor young man, Uncle Moses had acquired the business in an almost magical manner. Jacob Johnson, the original founder, began by publishing children's books only. But in 1800 he decided to branch out, and took a partner, Benjamin Warner. Fifteen years later the firm was sold out to McCarty and Davis. After several successful years McCarty retired, and it was then that Moses Polock was employed as a clerk. They had spread out and were now publishing all sorts of

books. Davis became very fond of his clerk, and when he died, in 1851, left him sufficient money in his will to purchase the business for himself. Luck was evidently with my uncle, for he made a great deal of money in publishing Lindley Murray's Grammar and other schoolbooks of the time.

First as a publishing house and bookstore combined, Uncle Moses' shop became a meeting place for publishers and writers. Here it was that the ill-fed Poe came in 1835 to talk modestly of his writings and hopes.

Such men as James Fenimore Cooper, William Cullen Bryant, Noah Webster, and Herman Melville might be seen going up or coming down the narrow staircase leading to the second floor. George Bancroft, the historian, came, too, and Eaton, who wrote the Life of Jackson; George H. Boker, a distinguished Philadelphia poet, Charles Godfrey Leland, of Hans Breitmann Ballads note, and Donald G. Mitchell, who wrote as Ik. Marvel, and many others—they found their way along the uneven brick sidewalks of Commerce Street. Gradually, however, it developed into a rendezvous for the more leisured group of collectors.



MOSES POLOCK IN HIS BOOKSHOP

Men—and occasionally a woman—who owned many an interesting and valuable volume came to browse and talk. Silent or voluble, enthusiastic or suspiciously conservative, each had in mind some book, of Uncle Moses' he hoped one day to possess. For it took something more than money and coercion to make this old man give up his treasures. Even when he occasionally fell to this temptation and sold the precious volume, in place of the original he would make a pen-and-ink copy of the book, word for word, so that it was typographically perfect. This would take weeks to do, and only when he needed money badly did he consent to part with the original. I have some of these copies and treasure them as curiosities. Not only months but very often years of tireless perseverance were necessary to make him sell a favorite volume. Equally interesting was that other group which came daily—a group composed of impecunious and peculiarly erratic book lovers, found in book haunts the world over: a poverty-stricken intellectual class, who in filling their minds

often forget to provide for their stomachs as well.

All the memories of my childhood centre around the secluded and dusty corners of this shop, where I eavesdropped and prowled to my heart's content. My uncle, at first annoyed at having a little boy about the place prying into musty papers and books, eventually took delight in showing me rare editions purchased by him at auctions and private sales. As he grew older he became somewhat eccentric, and, despite my extreme youth, insisted upon treating me as a book lover and connoisseur, his own equal. Although he lived to be a very old man, he retained the most marvelous memory I have ever known. He could tell without a moment's hesitation the date of a book, who the printer was, where it had been found, any physical earmarks it might have, its various vicissitudes, and how it had reached its final destination.

Among the noted collectors who came to match their wits and learning with my uncle was a younger man, Clarence S. Bement, who developed into one of the greatest American book experts. Even at that time he had a wonderful collection, and I well remember his subtle efforts to add to it constantly. He would talk in a firm, low, rather musical voice, obviously toned with persuasion, hoping to make his friend part with some cherished volume he coveted. As I watched Uncle Moses refuse, I saw a curiously adamant and at the same time satisfied expression spread over his features; I noticed, too, the dignity of movement as he gravely took the volume from Bement's fingers to look at it, with that expressive pride in ownership that verges on madness with many people to whom possession can mean but one thing—books.

Samuel W. Pennypacker, who in later years became

governor of Pennsylvania, was another avid book collector and constant habitué of the old Commerce Street bookshop. His hobby was anything he could lay his hands upon from the Franklin press. He also collected all data relating to the early Swedish settlers of Pennsylvania and his German and Dutch ancestors, as well as any material concerning the development of the state. A large man he was, with serious eyes set in a rather square-shaped head. But his voice fascinated me most of all as it boomed about the shelves when he grew excited, and took on an unforgettable Pennsylvania-Dutch twang.

Pennypacker was a fervent admirer of George Washington, and he had once heard of a letter which General Washington wrote from one of the scenes of his childhood, Pennypacker's Mills. He couldn't seem to forget this letter, for he was always talking about it, hoping to trace it to its owner and eventually make it his own.

I shall never forget the day Uncle Moses told him he had found and bought this letter. He handed it to Pennypacker with a light of triumphant amusement in his eyes. After reading it, Pennypacker put it down on the table before him and, without raising his eyes, said in a peculiarly exhausted way, "Polock, I must have this letter. You can make any bargain you choose, but I must have it!" Hardly waiting for the other to reply, he rushed down the stairs, to return a few moments later with two books under his arm. My uncle's blue eyes were but mocking questions as he pushed them aside after glancing at their title pages. They were two valuable books, but not unusually so. Pennypacker had by this time unbuttoned his coat, and I saw him take from an inner pocket a thin, yellow envelope.

"These"—Pennypacker pointed to his two books "and this." He opened the envelope and gave my uncle its contents. It, too, was a letter from George Washington, yet no sign of emotion swept the old man's features as he read. But the exchange was made rather quickly, I thought, and it would have been, difficult to decide which bargainer was the more satisfied. I have read both letters many times since. The Pennypacker's Mills letter was dated September 29, 1777, and addressed: "On public service, to the Honorable John Hancock, President of Congress, Lancaster." George Washington wrote in part:—

> I shall move the Army four or five miles lower down today from where we may reconnoitre and fix upon a proper situation at such distance from the enemy as will enable us to make an attack should we see a proper opening, or stand upon the defensive till we obtain further reinforcements. This was the opinion of a Council of General Officers which I called yesterday.
>
> I congratulate you upon the success of our Arms to the Northward and if some accident does not put them out of their present train, I think we may count upon the total ruin of Burgoyne.

The letter which my uncle received was written four years later from Philadelphia, in 1781, to Abraham Skinner, Commissary General of Prisoners, and was easily the more important, historically, of the two, as General Washington discussed throughout the surrender of Cornwallis and the exchange of prisoners at Yorktown. He instructed General Skinner not to consent to the exchange of Lord Cornwallis under any conditions.

Even I, with but a short experience as a mere onlooker in the collecting game, realized its greater

value. After my uncle's death this Washington letter sold for $925, and it rests to-day as one of the treasures in the Pierpont Morgan collection.



THE INFANT BIBLIOPHILE

A few years ago I bought back the Pennypacker's Mills letter for $130 from Governor Pennypacker's estate. Because of the incident it recalls I would never part with it.

When I was eleven years old I began book collecting on my own. My first purchase was at an auction in

the old Henkels's auction rooms on Chestnut Street. It was an illustrated edition of *Reynard the Fox*, and was knocked down to me for twenty-four dollars. My enthusiasm rather than my financial security swept me into this extravagance, and after the sale I had to go to the auctioneer, Mr. Stan V. Henkels, and confess that I was not exactly solvent. At the same time I explained I was Moses Polock's nephew, instinctively feeling, I suppose, that such a relationship might account for any untoward action concerning books. I had hardly got the words out of my frightened mouth when Mr. Henkels burst into a fit of laughing which—although I was too young, too scared and self-conscious to realize it at the time—was the beginning of a lifelong friendship between us.

When he ceased laughing, he looked down at me, a sombre little boy with a book under his shaking arm, and said, "I've seen it start at an early age, and run in families, but in all my experience this is the very first baby bibliomaniac to come my way!" With this admission he kindly consented to extend credit, and trusted me for further payments, which I was to make weekly from my school allowance. Giving him all the money I possessed, ten dollars, I marched from the auction room, feeling for the first time in my life that swooning yet triumphant, that enervating and at the same time heroic combination of emotions the born bibliomaniac enjoys so intensely with the purchase of each rare book.

Stan V. Henkels—no one dared to leave out the middle initial—was a remarkable man. Even in his young days he resembled an old Southern colonel, the accepted picture we all have, a man of drooping moustache, rather patrician nose, and longish hair

which he decorated with a large-brimmed, rusty black hat of the Civil War period. He insisted he was an unreconstructed rebel and was always willing to take on anyone in a verbal battle about the Civil War.

By profession an auctioneer of books, Mr. Henkels was the first person to make the dreary, uninteresting work of auction catalogues into living, fascinating literature, almost as exciting reading as fiction. Previous to this, anyone wanting to find out what was in a collection had little luck when searching through a catalogue, beyond discovering names and dates.

Observing this, and that certain items whose contents were of exceptional interest did not sell well, Henkels decided to find out for himself what was between the covers of the books he sold, and to learn what was often told so confidentially in the literary manuscripts and letters, and then to print the most interesting data he could find about each item. This was a great work in itself, and how he found the leisure to give to it was a mystery. Thus he brought in color and life, a human-interest setting, which added thousands of dollars yearly to his business, and which awakened feelings of gratitude in many collectors.



STAN V. HENKELS

Seven years after buying *Reynard the Fox* on the installment plan, I made my first valuable literary discovery. I was studying then at the University of Pennsylvania, and books enthralled me to a disastrous extent. I attended book sales at all hours of the day and night; I neglected my studies; I bought books whether I could afford them or not; I forgot to eat, and did not consider sleep necessary at all. The early stages of the book-collecting germ are not the most virulent, but nevertheless they make themselves felt!

This night I went to the Henkels's auction room several hours before the sale. I looked at many of the books with great delight, sighed when I estimated the prices they would bring, and was beginning to feel rather despondent, when I happened to see a bound collection of pamphlets in one corner of the room.

Now for some unknown reason pamphlets, even from my boyhood, have been a passion with me. I cannot

resist reading a pamphlet, whether it has value or not. The potentialities between slim covers play the devil with my imagination. It is true that books are my real love, but pamphlets flaunt a certain piquancy which I have never been able to resist. One might call them the flirtations of book collecting. I crossed to the corner, disturbed that I had not seen the volume earlier in the evening, that I had so little time to devote to it. But hurried as I felt,—it was almost time for the sale to begin,—I came upon a copy of Gray's *Odes*. It was not only a first edition, but the first book from Horace Walpole's famous Strawberry Hill Press, printed especially for him. Walpole had a weakness for gathering fame to his own name by printing the works of certain famous contemporaries. Delighted at finding this, I observed the title page of a pamphlet, which was bound with it. I could hardly believe my eyes! For in my hands I held, quite by accident, the long-lost first edition of Dr. Samuel Johnson's famous *Prologue*, which David Garrick recited the opening night of the Drury Lane Theatre in London in 1747. Although advertisements in the *General Advertiser* and *Gentleman's Magazine* of Doctor Johnson's day announced the sale of this work for the modest sum of sixpence, no one had ever heard of a copy of this original edition being in existence before or since. Boswell made an allusion to it in his *Life of Johnson*, but that was all that was known of this first issue of the little masterpiece of "dramatick criticism."

I closed my eyes in an effort to steady myself, leaning heavily against the wall. I wanted to buy this pamphlet more than I had ever wanted anything in the world. A wealthy and noted collector entered the room. I gave up hope. Again I looked at the pamphlet, and as I read Doctor Johnson's famous

line on Shakespeare, “And panting Time toil’d after him in vain,” I wished that I might be weak enough to take something which did not belong to me.

Suddenly my plans were made. I would have the *Prologue*! I would do anything honorable to obtain it. Having nothing but my future to mortgage I desperately decided to offer that, whoever the purchaser might be.

Mr. Henkels announced the usual terms of the sale and I gazed cautiously about the room; every member of the audience was just waiting for that volume of pamphlets, I knew. Finally it was put up, and the very silence seemed to bid against me; when, after two or three feeble counter bids, it became really mine for the sum of $3.60, I sat as one in a trance. The news soon spread among the experts of the exceptional find I had made, and I had many offers for it. Several years later, during my postgraduate course at college, when I needed money very badly, a noted collector dandled a check for $5000 before my eyes. It was a difficult moment for me, but I refused the offer. In my private library I retain this treasured volume.

One day previous to this I was in the auction rooms when a white-haired negro said Mr. Henkels had something interesting to show me if I would go to the top floor. I found him standing by an open window fronting Chestnut Street, exhibiting to several curious customers a small gold locket which had belonged to George Washington. It had been authenticated by his heirs, and also the gray lock of hair enclosed within it. As I joined the others, Mr. Henkels opened the locket and held it out for inspection. At that moment an unexpected gust of wind blew into the room, and, sweeping about, took

the curl very neatly from its resting place. So quickly did it happen it was a moment or so before we realized that the prized lock had been wafted out of the window. Then suddenly we all ran to the stairs and raced four flights into the street below. Up and down, searching the block, the gutters, and the crevices of stone and brick, we sought the lost lock of the Father of our Country. After an hour, or so it seemed, we gave it up as useless. As we returned to the entrance of the rooms the old negro employé came out.

“Wait a minute!” Henkels exclaimed, as an idea came to him.

He grabbed the ancient and surprised servant by the hair. Selecting a choice curly ringlet, he clipped it off with his pocketknife, then placed it carefully in George Washington’s locket, closing it tightly.

Several days later I saw the locket put up for sale. The bidding was brisk, and the buyer later expressed himself as being exceptionally lucky. But Henkels, who was the soul of honor, could not listen quietly for long. He told of his, as well as Nature’s prank with the original lock of hair, and offered to refund the money. The purchaser refused, saying he had given no thought to the contents anyway; that his interest lay only in the locket.

It is almost incredible, the number of stories that circulate about the civilized world containing misstatements and garbled information about the values and prices of old books. I am sometimes amused, at other times annoyed, to read in the daily papers statements of prices I and other collectors are supposed to have bought and sold books for. Reporters who descend upon us hurriedly to verify the story of some unusual sale can be divided into

two classes—overenthusiastic and bored. The former often exaggerate the amount paid for a book and its value; the latter are likely to be careless about details and set them down incorrectly.

When I bought a Gutenberg Bible for $106,000 last spring, I was careful to read and correct the original announcement made of the purchase. Such an event was too important in the history of book collecting to be misstated. Even then, many papers carried a story which gave the impression that this was the only Gutenberg Bible in existence, when there are about forty-two known copies—differing in condition, of course. But collectors themselves have often been at fault for the broadcasting of misinformation, for they seldom take time to go out of their way to correct wrong impressions.

It is only in the past few generations that collectors have taken great care of their treasures—a lucky change, too, for had they all pawed books about, wearing them to shreds in the scholastic manner, few rare volumes would have been saved for us to-day. Acquisitiveness, that noble urge to possess something the other fellow hasn't or can't get, is often the direct cause of assembling vast, extraordinary libraries.

Book lovers who were contemporaries of Moses Polock treated him as though he would live forever. It has been noted that those who collect things outlive people who do not. No one notices this so much, perhaps, as the collector himself who has his eye on the collection of another, or the book collector who cannot sleep well at night for the thought of a valuable first edition he would like to own. Book collectors, I make no exceptions, are buzzards who stretch their wings in anticipation as they wait patiently for a colleague's demise; then

they swoop down and ghoulishly grab some long-coveted treasure from the dear departed's trove.

Two years before my uncle's death I gave up my fellowship in English at the University of Pennsylvania to enter professionally the sport of book collecting and the business of selling. Uncle Moses was extremely pleased to have me as a competitor. He often said he believed I had all the necessary requisites for collecting, an excellent memory, perseverance, taste, and a fair knowledge of literature. Alas, all requisites but one—money! He thought if I were fortunate enough to acquire that, I would also have the other virtue—courage: the courage to pay a high price for a good book and to refuse a poor one at any price. And I was fortunate. Two gentlemen whose interest in books was as intense as mine made it possible for me to establish myself as a bookseller. The first, Clarence S. Bement, possessed a glorious collection over which he had spent years of constant study and search. All collectors were eager to secure his volumes, each being fine and rare. As a silent partner he was invaluable to me in many ways, and with the second, Joseph M. Fox, spurred me on to collecting the choicest books and manuscripts as they came on the market, pointing out the fact that at all times there is a demand for the finest things. Mr. Fox, one of the most lovable of men, lived in a very old Colonial house called Wakefield, in the suburbs of Philadelphia, in which he had discovered wonderful Revolutionary letters and documents.



MOSES POLOCK

It is difficult to know at what moment one becomes a miser of books. For many years preceding his death, Uncle Moses kept a fireproof vault in the rear of his office, where he secreted rarities no one ever saw. His books were as real to him as friends. He feared showing the most precious lest he part with one in a moment of weakness. One of the amusing incidents of his life was that he had sold a copy of the Bradford *Laws of New York*, published in 1694, to

Doctor Brinley for sixteen dollars, and many years later he had seen it sell at the Brinley sale for $1600. The money consideration did not cause his regret so much as the fact that he had felt an affection for this volume, which had rested upon his shelves for more than thirty years. By an amusing turn of the wheel of chance, which my uncle might have foreseen, the same volume would be worth to-day $20,000!

At the death of my uncle, in 1903, I came into possession of some of his wonderful books; others were purchased by private buyers and are to-day parts of various famous libraries. I was greatly thrilled when, as administrator of his estate, I entered his secret vault for the first time in my life. In the half light I stumbled against something very hard on the floor. Lighting a match, I looked down, to discover a curious bulky package. Examining it more closely, I found it was a bag of old gold coins. A reserve supply cautiously hoarded, no doubt, to buy further rarities.

My uncle's estate included several books from the library of George Washington, the finest of which was a remarkable copy of the *Virginia Journal*, published in Williamsburg, which I still have. Washington was one of the three presidents who collected books in an intelligent manner. There have been presidents who loved books—the late Theodore Roosevelt, for example—but who were not real collectors. It is always interesting to hazard a guess at a great man's personal likes by noting the titles in his library. In the past years I have bought other books from Washington's collection. There is *The History of America* by William Robertson, in two volumes, Brown's *Civil Law, Inland Navigation*, Jenkinson's *Collections of Treaties*, eight volumes of

the *Political State of Europe*, a four-volume course of lectures by Winchester on the *Prophecies That Remain to be Fulfilled*—in this last Washington wrote: "From the author to G. Washington." These are a heavy literary diet, somewhat one-sided when placed next to *Epistles for the Ladies*, which was also his. Each volume has the signature on the title page—"George Washington"—with his armorial bookplate pasted inside the front cover. There were doubtless book borrowers in those days, too, whose memories and consciences might be jogged at sight of the owner's name. Another, a gift to Washington, is a collection of poems "written chiefly during the late war," by Philip Freneau, one of the few very early American poets whose work has survived. On the title page in Freneau's hand, with his signature, is written: "General Washington will do the author the honor to accept a copy of his poems, as a small testimony of the disinterested veneration he entertains for his character."

The books belonging to Martha Washington are few, merely because she was not a great reader, and the common-sense title of the one book of hers which I have—*Agriculture of Argyll County*—would lead one to think of her as a practical woman rather interested in rural activities.

The collecting passion is as old as time. Even book collecting, which many believe to be a comparatively recent development, can be traced back to the Babylonians. They, with their passion for preserving records on clay tablets, could hardly go in for all the little niceties, such as original paper boards or beautifully tooled bindings, but they were collectors nevertheless.

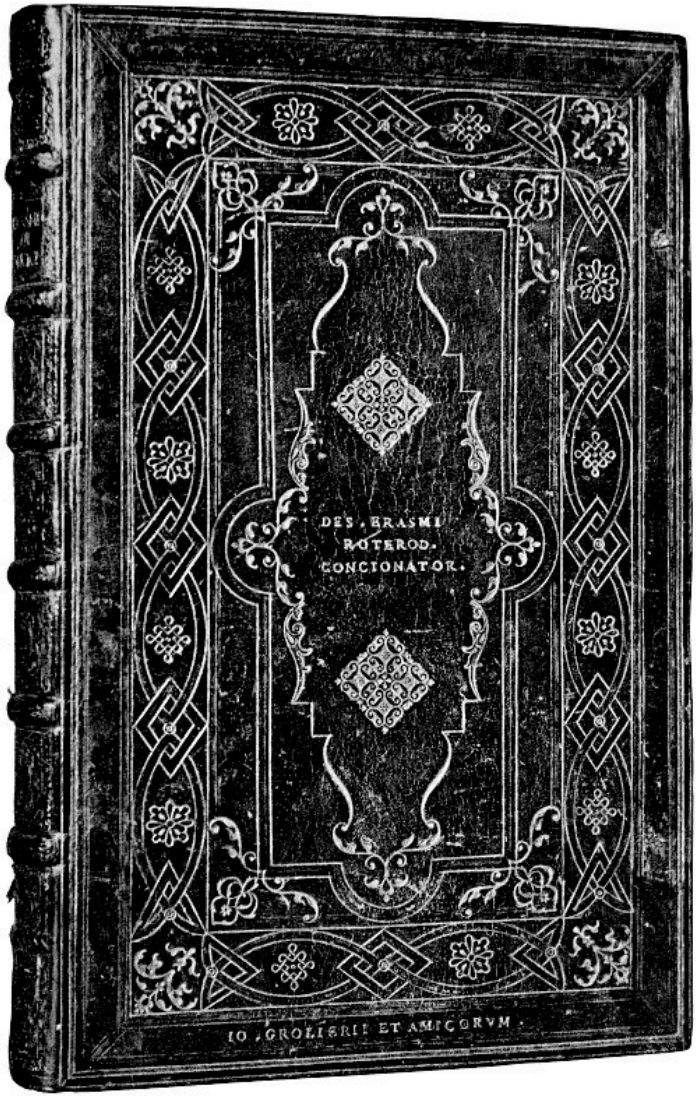
Among the early individual book collectors such

colorful names as Jean Grolier, De Thou, Colbert, and the Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin shine forth. Jean Grolier, a collector of the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth century, now considered the patron saint of modern book collectors, showed unusual vision in selecting his books. Though many libraries of that time are both remarkable and valuable, their worth varies. But every collector is keen to possess a Grolier volume, and at each sale the prices increase. He evidently read what he selected, and his taste showed that he had education and discernment. Aldus Manutius, the most famous printer of that day, dedicated books to him and printed certain works for him on special paper. Aldus was the first to popularize the small-sized book, and that is why many from the Grolier collection are easier to handle than the more gross volumes from other early libraries.

Grolier's generous disposition is indicated by the fact that he has either written in, or had stamped on the outside of the truly exquisite bindings, "Io Grolierii et Amicorum"—his books were for himself and his friends too. Many people have since copied this inscription on their bookplates. The Grolier family were book lovers, and his library was kept intact for three generations. Not until one hundred and sixteen years after his death was it sold, and although many were bought by other famous collectors, old records show that some disappeared entirely. It is just such knowledge that keeps the true bibliophile living in hopes—a long-missing Grolier might turn up any time, anywhere.

About the time of the discovery of America a book came out called *The Ship of Fools*, by one Sebastian Brant. In it was an attack on the book fool: a satire

on the passion of collecting, in which the author said that the possession of books was but a poor substitute for learning. That phrase which the layman reader asks the book collector so often with a smirk of condescension, “So you really read them?” undoubtedly originated then. The real book collector, with suppressed murder in his heart, smiles acquiescence, assuming an apologetic air for his peculiar little hobby. His invisible armor is his knowledge, and he has been called a fool so often he glories in it. He can afford to have his little joke. So much for this threadbare gibe.



GROLIER BINDING

Cardinal Richelieu, according to history, sought relaxation from the cares of state in his love of books. His huge library was got together in many ways. Sometimes he bought books; he sent two

learned men on the road, one to Germany and the other to Italy, to collect both printed and manuscript works. Often he would exchange volumes with other collectors, and one can imagine the covert smile of satisfaction on this ecclesiastical politician's lips whenever he got the better of a bargain.

Of course there was always a way to get a rare work, whether the owner cared to part with it or not, by an off-with-his-head policy of intimidation. After the taking of La Rochelle the red-robed Richelieu topped off the victory by helping himself to the entire library of that city. Even though he was something of a robber, his ultimate motive was good—he planned to establish a reference library for all qualified students. Yet it was his nephew, the inheritor of his library, who carried out these plans posthumously. He willed it to the Sorbonne, with a fund to keep up the collection and to add to it according to the needs and progress of the times.

Cardinal Mazarin had the appreciation of books instilled in him from his boyhood, when he attended a Jesuit school in Rome. Following in the footsteps of the famous Richelieu, it was necessary to carry out many of his predecessor's policies. One of these was to weaken the French nobles, who ruled enormous country estates, by destroying their feudal castles. Thus Mazarin, a great but wily character, took his books where he found them. Eventually his library grew to be a famous one, which he generously threw open to the literary men of the day. Fortunately the men who followed Mazarin kept his collection intact, and to-day, in Paris, one may see the great Mazarin Library on the left bank of the Seine.

Colbert, first as Mazarin's secretary, and later a great political leader on his own account, also collected a

fine library in perhaps a more legitimate manner than his patron. He arranged for the consuls representing France in every part of Europe to secure any remarkable works they might hear of. Colbert not only offered the use of his collection to such of his contemporaries as Molière, Corneille, Boileau, and Racine, but pensioned these men as well.

De Thou, also a Frenchman, of the latter half of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, had the finest library of his time. His thousands upon thousands of volumes included many bought from the Grolier collection, and collectors' interest in them has never lessened. De Thou was the truest type of book lover. He had not one but several copies of each book he felt a particular affection for; he ordered them printed on the best paper obtainable, expressly for himself. His bindings are richly beautiful, of the finest leathers, exquisitely designed. They are easily recognizable, as his armorial stamp, with golden bees, is on the sides, and the back is marked with a curious cipher made from his initials. Most of the contents treat of profound but interesting subjects. He was a real student, and wrote an extensive history of his time in Latin. Here is an example of inherited passion for books. His mother's brother and his father were both book lovers.

It is a general belief that books are valuable merely because they are old. Age, as a rule, has very little to do with actual value. I have never announced the purchase of a noted old book without having my mail flooded for weeks afterward with letters from all over the world. Each correspondent tells me of opportunities I am losing by not going immediately to his or her home to see, and incidentally buy, "a book which has been in my family over one hundred

years."

I receive more than thirty thousand letters about books every year. Each letter is read carefully and answered. There are many from cranks. But it is not hard to spot these even before opening the envelope, when addressed, as one was recently from Germany,"Herrn Doktor Rosenbach, multi-millionaire, Amerika." Indeed, the greater number of letters about books are from Germany. One man in Hamburg wrote me of a book he had for sale, then ended by saying he also had a very fine house he would like me to buy, because he felt sure, if I saw it, his elegant garden would appeal to me for the use of my patients! Many people write me, after I have purchased a book at a high price, and say they have something to offer "half as old at half the price!"

Yet one out of every two thousand letters holds a possibility of interest. I followed up a letter from Hagenau not long ago, to discover—the copy was sent me on approval—a first edition of *Adonais*, Shelley's lament on the death of Keats, in the blue paper wrappers in which it was issued. There are only a few copies known in this original condition. I bought it by correspondence for a reasonable price. It is worth at least $5000. On the other hand, I have often made a long journey to find nothing but an inferior copy of a late edition of some famous work. I once heard of a first edition of Hubbard's *Indian Wars*, in Salem, Massachusetts. When I arrived there the family who owned it brought out their copy, unwrapping it with much ceremony from swathings of old silk. Immediately I saw it was a poor reprint made in the nineteenth century, although the original was printed in 1677.

But luck had not deserted me entirely that day. As

my train was not due for an hour, I wandered about the city. In passing one of the many antique shops which all New England cities seem to possess by the gross, I noticed a barrow on the sidewalk before it. In this barrow were thrown all sorts and conditions of books. Yet the first one I picked up was a first edition of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, worth about $150, which I bought for two dollars.

Speaking of this copy of *Moby Dick* reminds me of another, a more valuable one, which I prize in my private library. One day about five years ago John Drinkwater, the English poet and dramatist, and I were lunching at his home in London. Talking of books and the ever-interesting vicissitudes of collecting them, he told me of his *Moby Dick*, found one day, by chance, in a New York bookstore for but a few dollars. It was a presentation copy from the author to his friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, to whom the book was dedicated, and had Hawthorne's signature on the dedication leaf. When Mr. Drinkwater told me of this I became restless; I wanted this copy as much as I had ever wanted any other book, and there was nothing for me to do but tell him so. I offered him twenty times what he had paid for it, and to my surprise and delight he generously let me have it.

Why age alone should be thought to give value to most collectible objects, including furniture, pictures, and musical instruments, I don't know. However, it is a great and popular fallacy. The daily prayer of all true collectors should begin with the words, "beauty, rarity, condition," and last of all, "antiquity." But books differ from other antiques in that their ultimate value depends upon the intrinsic merit of the writer's work. A first edition of Shakespeare, for

instance, will always command an ever-increasing price. The same is true of first editions of Dante, Cervantes, or Goethe. These writers gave something to the world and to life—something of which one always can be sure.

Very often the greatness of an author, the value of what he has written, is not realized until years have gone by. Vital truths are sometimes seen more clearly in perspective. A first folio of Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* was sold in 1864 to the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who paid what was considered an enormous price—£716—for it. Yet only fifty-eight years later my brother Philip bought the same folio for me at Sotheby's in London for £8600, Shakespeare's writings having increased in value more than twelve times in a little more than half a century.

The fallacy of thinking that age is of major importance in judging a book should be corrected by every book lover. Age? Why, there are many books of the fifteenth century which command small prices in the auction rooms to-day, while certain volumes brought out a decade ago are not only valuable but grow more so with each passing year. A first edition of A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young*, printed two years ago, is already more precious than some old tome, such as a sermon of the 1490's by the famous teacher, Johannes Gerson, the contents of which are and always will be lacking in human or any other kind of interest.

The inception of any great movement, whether material or spiritual, is bound to be interesting, according to its relative importance. The Gutenberg Bible, leaving aside the question of its artistic merit and the enormous value of its contents, as the first

printed book is of the greatest possible significance. But it so happens that this wonderful Bible is also one of the finest known examples of typography. No book ever printed is more beautiful than this pioneer work of Gutenberg, the first printer, although it was issued almost five hundred years ago. It has always seemed an interesting point to me that printing is the only art which sprang into being full-blown. Later years brought about a more uniform appearance of type, but aside from this we have only exceeded the early printers in speed of execution. Enormous value is added to some of these earliest books because they are the last word in the printer's art.

The first books printed on subjects of universal interest are the rarest "firsts" of all for the collector. These include early romances of chivalry, of which few copies are found to-day. They are generally in very poor condition, as their popular appeal was tremendous, and they were literally read to pieces. They were really the popular novels of the period. The ones which come through the stress of years successfully are extremely rare. For instance, there are the Caxtons.

William Caxton was the first printer in England, and the first to print books in the English language. When he brought out the second edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in 1484, with its fascinating woodcut illustrations, it was literally devoured by contemporary readers. This and other publications of Caxton were very popular—he evidently had a good eye for best sellers—and now a perfect Caxton is difficult to find.

One of the finest Caxtons in existence is *Le Morte d' Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory, published in 1485. This perfect copy, this jewel among Caxtons, sold at

the dispersal of the library of the Earl of Jersey in 1885 for £1950, approximately $9500. Now this is an excellent example of a book increasing in value for its pristine, perfect state as well as for its alluring contents. Twenty-six years later it brought $42,800 at the Hoe sale. It is now one of the treasures adorning the Pierpont Morgan Library.

The first editions of books which have that quality so glibly called to-day sex appeal, such as Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and his *Amore di Florio e di Bianchafiore*—a wicked old romance of the fifteenth century, truly the first snappy story—are firsts of which there are but few left for our edification. They are extremely precious to the collector, no matter what their condition. The first book on murder; the first book on medicine or magic; the first Indian captivity; the first music book, the first newspaper, the first published account of lace making, or the comparatively modern subject, shorthand—the first book on any subject marking the advance of civilization, is always valuable.

One of the rarest and most interesting books is the first sporting book, *The Book of Hunting and Hawking*, printed at St. Albans, in 1486, by an unknown man, called, for convenience of classification, the Schoolmaster Printer. Women were sports writers even in those days, for this record was written by a woman, Dame Juliana Barnes, sometimes known as Berners. A copy was sold in the Hoe sale in 1911, for $12,000, to Mr. Henry E. Huntington, who formed one of the few great collections of the world. Nearly all of the few existing copies of this work are now in this country. Another one, the Pembroke copy, which I now own, sold for £1800 in 1914. As it is the last one that can ever come on the market, heaven only

knows what it is worth to-day. Like some other famous firsts, it has several novel merits, being one of the first books to contain English poetry, and the first English book to be illustrated with pictures printed in color. This and Walton's *The Compleat Angler* are the two greatest sporting books of all time. Yet, because there are more copies of the latter in existence, a fine copy of the first edition in the original binding is worth not more than $8500 to-day.

Another tremendously rare book is the much-read *Pilgrim's Progress*. No work, with the exception of the Bible, has enjoyed greater popularity all through the years than this powerful imaginative and moral tale. I have almost every edition of it, in every language. A best seller for years after the author's death, and a very good seller to-day, too, the early editions were really read to bits. So it is hardly surprising that only six perfect copies of the first edition exist. A few months ago a copy sold at Sotheby's in London for £6800. The most beautiful one in existence is that famed copy I purchased eighteen months ago from Sir George Holford. I believe if one of the half-dozen perfect first editions were offered in public sale to-day it would easily bring from $40,000 to $45,000.

About five years ago the illness of an English barber's wife brought to light a first edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* which was in good condition, except that it lacked two pages. In the little town of Derby lived this barber, daily plying the trade of his ancestors. Between the lathering and the gossiping he found little time and inclination to read, but sometimes when business was not so brisk as usual he listlessly ran through a small stack of books which he inherited along with the shop. Old-fashioned in text,

some with odd pictures, and leaves missing, he thought them rather funny, and occasionally showed them to customers who shared his amusement. One day someone suggested the books were interesting because they were old, and—following the popular fallacy of which I have spoken—must be valuable. He had heard of a man who once paid two pounds for a book!

But the barber shrugged his shoulders and said he had plenty to do without chasing about trying to sell old, worn-out books. Then came a day when his wife took to her bed and the doctor was hurriedly sent for. While waiting for him the barber tried to think of some way he might amuse his wife. As he went into the shop his eyes fell first upon the books on a low shelf. When the doctor arrived he found his patient's bed loaded down with books, and she was reading a copy of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The doctor was a lover of books in a small way; he felt there was something unusual about this copy. He insisted it should be sent to Sotheby's in London for valuation. Even then the barber believed he was wasting both time and money.

Finally Sotheby's received a package accompanied by a letter, painstakingly written in an illiterate hand, with small *i*'s throughout, and guiltless of punctuation. He was sending this copy, he wrote, because a friend was foolish enough to think it might be worth something. Of course it wasn't. He had inherited it from his people, and his people were poor. They couldn't have had anything valuable to leave him. If, as he believed, it was worthless, would they please throw it away, and not bother to return it, or waste money answering him? I don't know what his direct emotional reaction was when they

replied saying his old book was worth at least £900—more than $4000—and that they would place it in their next sale. Perhaps he was stunned for a time. Anyway, weeks passed before they received a rather incoherent reply. I happened to be in London when it was sold, and I paid £2500—about $12,000—for the copy. I later learned that the barber was swamped for months with letters from old friends he had never heard of before, each with a valuable book to sell him.

As collectors grow older, they find it is better to buy occasionally and at a high price than to run about collecting tuppenny treasures. There is seldom any dispute about the worth of a rare book. Many collectors, however, feel collecting has a value other than monetary; it keeps men young, and as the years pass it proves to be a new type of life insurance.

The late Mr. W. A. White of New York, until his death a few months ago, was as vigorous at eighty-three as he had been thirty years before. He combined a quality of youth with his extraordinary knowledge of books and literature. His wonderful library would take away the load of years from a Methuselah. Even to read over the partial list of his treasures, which was recently published, would have a distinctly rejuvenating effect. Mr. Henry E. Huntington was another successful man who practically gave up his business interests to devote himself to the invigorating pastime of book collecting. He collected so rapidly that no young man could follow in his steps! Even my uncle Moses grew younger and younger as he sat year after year surrounded by books.

Rare books are a safe investment; the stock can never go down. A market exists in every city of the world.

New buyers constantly crop up. The most ordinary, sane, and prosaic type of business man will suddenly appear at your door, a searching look in his eye, a suppressed tone of excitement in his voice. Like the Ancient Mariner, he takes hold of you to tell his story —for he has suddenly discovered book collecting. And if it happens to be at the end of a very long day, you feel like the Wedding Guest, figuratively beating your breast the while you listen. He returns again and again, enthralled by this new interest which takes him away from his business. If he is wealthy, he already may be surfeited with luxuries of one sort or another; but here is something akin to the friendship of a charming and secretive woman. He takes no risk of becoming satiated; there is no possibility of being bored; always some new experience or unexpected discovery may be lurking just around the corner of a bookshelf.

II

A MILLION DOLLAR BOOKSHELF

ONE of my early memories concerns a cold winter night in Philadelphia. I was a little boy of thirteen. Uncle Moses and I had been together undisturbed the entire evening, for the weather was so bitterly cold not one of his book-loving cronies dared venture out. With the shop door locked and the shutters tightly drawn, we sat close to the little wood stove, in the dim light of an oil lamp, while I listened, fascinated, to endless tales about books—how this one was lost and that one found. To this handsome old patriarch books were more vital than people; with ease he held my boyish imagination until I was almost afraid to glance back at the shadowed shelves.

He told me the story of a man in England, a collector, who heard of some Shakespeare folios in Spain; of how, after months of inquiries and exciting adventures, he at last journeyed to a castle in the Pyrenees. There he found an ancient Spanish grandee leaning forward before a great fireplace, feeding the fire with torn bits of paper on which, to his horror, he beheld English printing; how he tore them from the old man's fingers—the remains of a second Shakespeare folio he had sought and found too late! As Uncle Moses spoke, he arose to throw casually some sheets of an old Pennsylvania *Journal* into the stove, while I watched, tense and frightened for fear they, too, might be of value!

At last, as the clock in Independence Hall struck midnight, we felt our way down the dark narrow stairs to the street. In his hand Uncle Moses clasped a cherished volume of the first edition of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, to read when he reached home. The uneven sidewalks were dangerously glazed with ice; as we crept unsteadily toward the corner we were relieved to see a lonely carriage passing, and hailed it. The streets were even worse than the sidewalks, and the horse went his way skiddingly. We came to a bridge which shone like a polished mirror in the moonlight. We were halfway across when suddenly the horse lurched, and both Uncle Moses and I were thrown forward. In the confusion Uncle Moses dropped his precious book. Out it went, slithering along the icy way. I started to climb down after it, but was stopped by a firm hand.

Slowly Uncle Moses got out, walked uncertainly forward. He had not gone two steps before he lost his balance. As he fell I cried aloud in alarm and the driver turned, amazed. Up Uncle Moses got, and down he went again; yet with each fall he came nearer and nearer his book, which lay open face downward in the frozen gutter. At last he reached it and, after securely placing it in his overcoat pocket, started the perilous way back. But he had learned the trick; instead of trying to walk, he crouched down on all fours, and, dignified dean of booksellers that he was, crawled cautiously toward the carriage. Suddenly the sight of him there struck me as being the funniest thing I had ever seen! The glassy bridge, the unreal light, and statuesque Uncle Moses telescoping like a huge caterpillar toward me! I snickered, then burst out laughing. The old driver followed suit, and our rude guffaws echoed across the bridge, through the deserted streets. Uncle

Moses' dark eyes snapped as he reached the carriage.

"You should have let me get your book," I said shamefacedly. "You might have broken your leg!"

"I would risk breaking two legs for this book," he growled back, and we drove on.

In the years which followed I have known men to hazard their fortunes, go long journeys halfway about the world, forget friendship, even lie, cheat, and steal, all for the gain of a book. Improbable as it sounds, there was a man once who murdered so that he might possess a volume for which he had long yearned.

It was in the valuable library of the monastery at Poblet, near Tarragona, just a century ago, that Don Vincente, a Spanish monk, developed his unholy love for books. Years of religious training did not prevent him from seizing every chance to plunder his own and other monastery libraries which were thrown open in a political upheaval of the time. As confusion spread, he found opportunities to take the books he coveted most, and then he vanished. But sometime later he appeared in Barcelona, the proprietor of a bookshop. The one volume he had worshiped at a distance and longed to own was a work of Lamberto Palmart, published in Valencia in 1482. It had been in the collection of a Barcelona advocate for years, and at the dispersal of his estate was offered at auction. It was understood to be the only one of its kind known.

Don Vincente went to the sale and staked every cent he possessed on it; but a competitor, Augustino Paxtot, outbid him by fourteen pesetas. The ex-monk grew white with fury, threatening revenge as he left the room. When, a few nights later, Paxtot's house

burned to the ground and he perished with it, several friends recalled Don Vincente's threats. He was reported to the police, his shop searched, and the rare Palmart volume found. Even when he was arrested, Don Vincente made no effort to deny his guilt. All he seemed interested in was the fate of the little book which had brought disgrace upon him. During the trial his lawyer, making a valiant effort to save him, announced that another copy of the Palmart volume had been found in a Paris library, a few days previous to the alleged crime. It could not be proved, he argued, that the copy in question was the one recently auctioned. But Don Vincente, hearing his book was not unique, burst into violent weeping and showed no further interest in the trial. Alone at night in his cell, and before the court during the final days of his trial, his only words of regret were, "Alas, alas! My copy is not unique!"

To-day book collectors are less violent, although they have their moments when they seethe and writhe inwardly! Just go to any book sale and observe the expressions of competitive buyers—faces that are usually marvelous poker portraits become sharply distorted; eyes which ordinarily indulge in an almost studied innocence shoot sudden darts of fire. Whenever I attend an important sale I make it a point to look neither to the right nor to the left!

I have often been asked why collectors are so enamored of first editions. This is almost unanswerable, because the whole question of first editions hinges on a matter of sentiment, of feeling, almost of emotion. How can one explain the sentimental affections? A first edition is almost as much the original work of its author as the painting is of an artist. I suppose there are people—I've been

told there are intelligent people—who would just as soon have an edition of Keats's *Poems*, for example, well printed on good paper, in a handsome modern binding, as a first edition in its original boards! I only hope I shall never meet them.

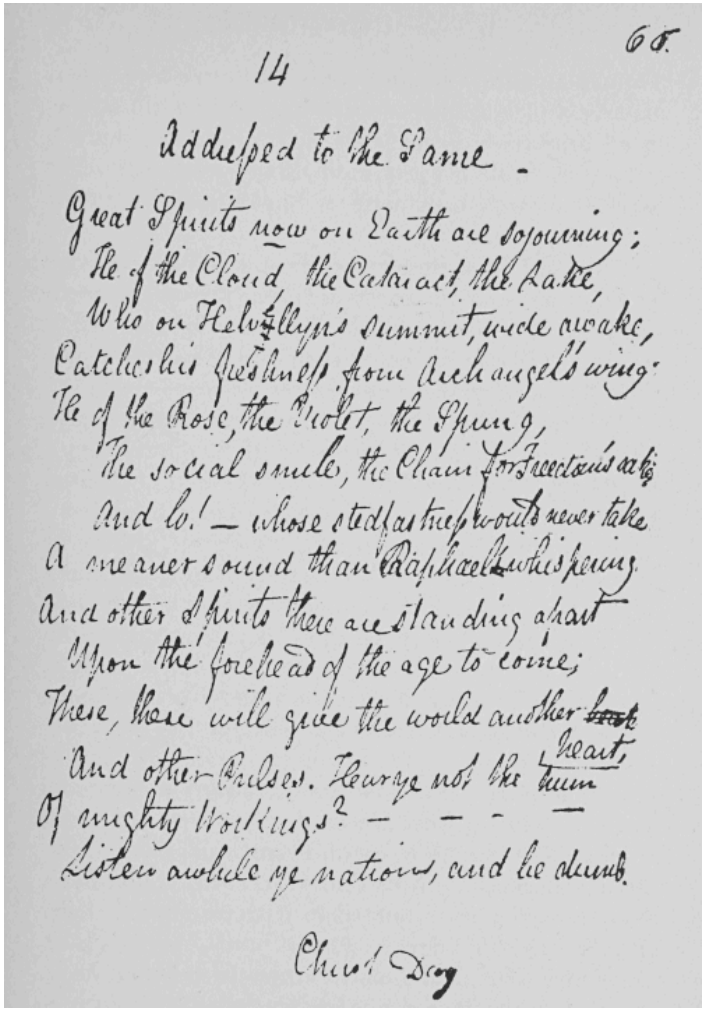
Collectors are very ardent on the subject of association copies, or books inscribed or annotated by the authors themselves. To think that John Keats may have held in his slender white fingers your first edition of his poems; that his luminous eyes, already sunken from the inroads of his fatal illness, may have lingered over the very pages of the copy you possess —this is enough to thrill the Devil himself!

Miss Amy Lowell was, as all the world knows, devoted to Keats. She believed herself spiritually attuned to him. I shall never forget the last time I visited at her home near Boston. After a delightful dinner, we went into her library, where we lighted our cigars and talked. She told me of her colossal work on Keats, which, fortunately for her peace of mind, she lived to see published. Then followed a silence as the blue haze of smoke enveloped her. Suddenly she leaned toward me and, with an excited brightness in her eyes, said, "Doctor, there is a certain book I want more than anything in the world! Keats's own copy of Shakespeare, with his notes through it."

I put my hand in my pocket and smiled. By one of those unusual chances which really do make truth stranger than fiction, I had that very volume in my pocket. She caught her breath and grew quite pale with joy as I handed it to her.

At the Frederickson sale in New York, nearly thirty years ago, Mr. Harry B. Smith bought Shelley's own copy of *Queen Mab*. The poet had presented this to

his future wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, with the wooing inscription, “You see, Mary, I have not forgotten you.” When Mr. Smith was going out of the salesroom, an old gentleman whom he had never seen before stopped him. Brushing tears from his eyes, he asked if he might merely hold the book in his hands for a moment. The history of this same copy, I think, is interesting. General Brayton Ives bought it in 1888 from a London dealer for £20—less than $100. Three years afterward it was sold at the dispersal of the General’s library to Mr. Frederickson for not quite one hundred per cent gain—$190. But when Mr. Smith, the next possessor, bought it, the price jumped to $650. Sometime later I purchased his “Sentimental Library,” as he gracefully termed it, and I also trembled when first holding this *Queen Mab* in my hands. In 1914 I sold it to Mr. William K. Bixby of St. Louis for $12,500. Then it finally passed, as so many of the finest books did, into Mr. Huntington’s collection, where it will remain for all time.



14

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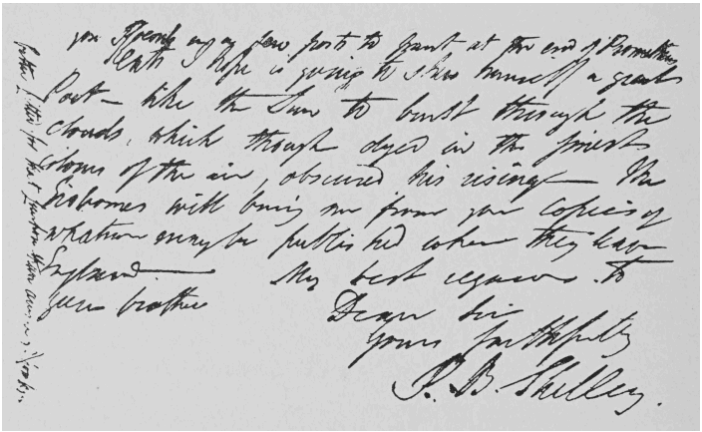
Addressed to the Same -

Great Spirits now on Earth are sojourning;
He of the Cloud the Cataract, the Lake,
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,
Catches his fleshless from Archangel's wing:
He of the Rose, the Violet, the Spring,
The social smile, the Chain for Freedom's sake:
And lo! — whose steadfast thoughts now never take
A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.
And other Spirits there are standing apart
Upon the forehead of the age to come;
These, these will give the world another heart,
And other Pulses. Hear ye not the hum
Of mighty Workings? — — — —
Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

Chas. Dilke

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF KEATS'S FAMOUS "SONNET TO HAYDON"

Buxton Forman's copy of *Queen Mab*, the one Shelley had kept for himself and inestimably enriched by changes and additions for a later edition, is now in the remarkable collection of Mr. Jerome D. Kern of New York.



FROM A LETTER OF SHELLEY SPEAKING OF KEATS

Still another, also containing Shelley's precious notes in his own hand, is in that treasure-house of rarities, the library of Mr. Thomas J. Wise. His catalogue, now wanting only the last volume, is more absorbingly interesting to book lovers than most works of fiction.

When I was in London in 1925 a friend told me a story which he thought something of a joke on me. As he browsed, one fine spring day, through some books in a bookstall, he noticed a young man also reading. Suddenly a clerk from inside the shop came out, exhibiting a cheap dog's-eared copy of Margot Asquith's autobiography.

"How much?" asked the young man cautiously. The clerk replied, "Fourpence."

"Fourpence," repeated the other, scandalized. "Who do you think I am—Dr. Rosenbach?"

A few days before, I had bought in London, at auction, a copy of Richard Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted,* at the Royal Society's sale. I had to pay £6800, or about $34,000, for it. It was a beautiful

copy, printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1664, and the only one known. Translated into the Indian language, it was entitled *Wehkomaonganoo Asquam Peantogig*, and was the painstaking work of that picturesque early missionary, Apostle John Eliot, who a few years before had translated the Bible for the Indians' use too. The auction price of this book—Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*—was quick to take hold of the public imagination; of course it was colorful news, and English editors made the most of it.

The story was cabled over here, and one afternoon soon after my return a man telephoned saying he had a book he must show me. His voice was shaking with excitement, so I could not refuse him. He soon called, a dignified elderly gentleman. Under his arm he held tightly an old book.

"What is this?" he demanded as he proudly waved the volume before my eyes. I glanced at it and answered, "It looks very much like a Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*." I had hardly spoken when he gave a short gasp and pulled a newspaper clipping from his pocket. As I read, I understood this poor fellow's hopes; he believed he had made a great find. The most significant fact about my purchase was not mentioned in the clipping. Its great value lay in that it was the only known copy of Eliot's translation of Baxter's work into the Indian language. When I told him this, and that editions in English were as common as blackberries, he suddenly grew pale and, as he turned away in disappointment, said in a dejected tone, "I feel $34,000 poorer than when I came in!"

It is extremely unfortunate that the price of first editions should occupy so predominant a place in the

public mind. The true book lover gives the question of monetary value the last as well as the least important place in his passion for collecting. If the average reader finds it easier to remember books by their prices in lieu of other earmarks, he can look forward to a time in the near future when he must revalue his entire mental collection. Prices of fine books are rising to new heights. Old records show they have advanced continually since the middle of the seventeenth century. Prices are now bound to go much higher. The world is filled with books, but the number of desirable ones is limited.



BOOKROOM AT 1320 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA

During the past decade many wonderful rarities have been taken off the market forever. They have found a final resting place in public institutions. Two of the greatest private collections in this country, those of Mr. Henry E. Huntington and the late Pierpont Morgan, have been dedicated forever to the people. These splendid gifts comprise, at a very rough estimate, more than one hundred thousand of the

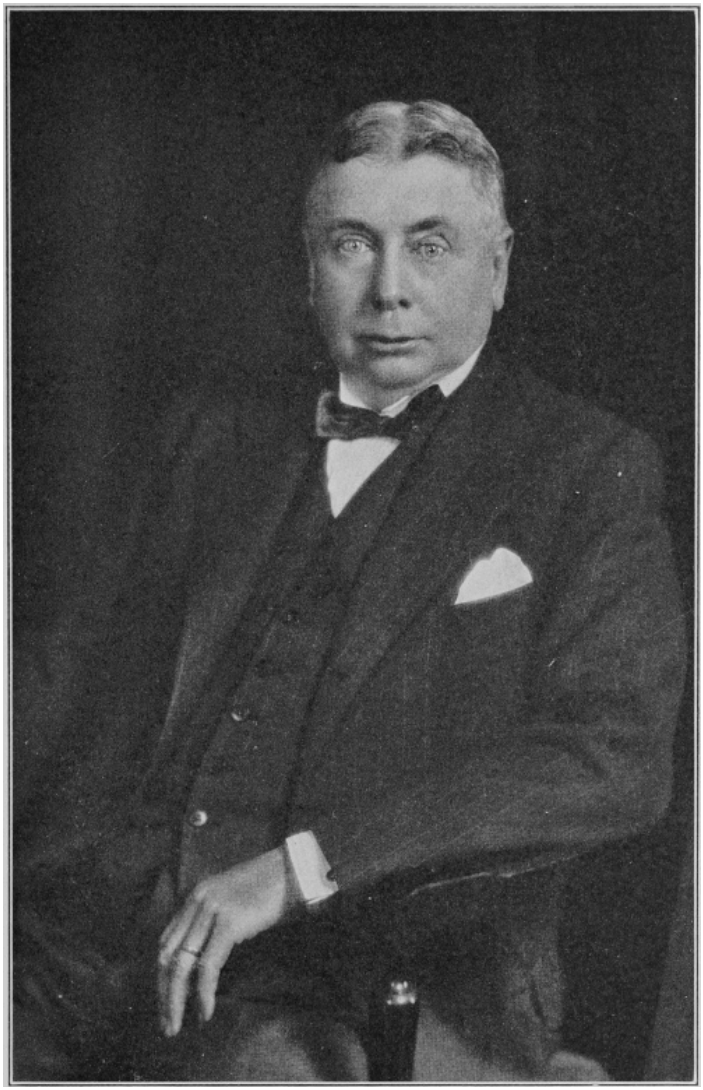
world's choicest literary treasures. Mr. William L. Clements, of Bay City, Michigan, has donated his library of Americana to the University of Michigan, and Mr. William A. Clark, Jr., of Los Angeles, his splendid collection to the southern branch of the University of California, thus removing all possibility of their books ever being offered for sale. Mr. Clark is held in grateful esteem by scholars and lovers of books for his superb series of facsimiles of great English classics in his collection.

The magnificent gift of the library of Harry Elkins Widener to Harvard University is another case in point. Born in Philadelphia, Harry Elkins Widener spent his childhood on the large estate of his grandfather, the late P. A. B. Widener, in a home filled with treasures brought together from all parts of the world. The collector's spirit was his through both inheritance and environment. When a young boy he showed an interest in books, and as he grew older proved himself a born student of bibliography. Books were his life work, his recreation, his passion.

I think if Harry Elkins Widener had lived he would have been the greatest collector the world has ever known. Of course he began as all collectors do, gathering rather unimportant works. But he weeded them out sooner than most enthusiasts, and by the time he was twenty-six had a library of three thousand volumes; each one of these showed a most fastidious, exacting, and exquisite taste, which he had found possible to gratify through the sympathy and generosity of his grandfather and his mother. When abroad attending various book sales, because of his youth and remarkable learning he attracted the attention of many older collectors. After the Huth sale in 1912 in London, he slipped a volume of

Bacon's *Essays* in his pocket—a second edition which is almost as rare as a first—and, turning to a friend, said, "I think I'll take that little Bacon with me in my pocket, and if I am shipwrecked it will go down with me." With what prophecy he spoke they little knew. A few days later he was one of the victims of the Titanic disaster. His books may be enjoyed by students forever, but they will never again be offered for sale.

To-day there are twice as many people collecting books in this country as there were five years ago. Every year they increase in numbers, and the competition is keener for the best things. Naturally, prices must go up. The much-maligned business man who collects books will at last come into his own. He has been held for many years responsible for musical-comedy successes, but nothing is said of his books and his collecting. It is restful to think of him in his library of an evening instead of in the first row of a crowded theatre.



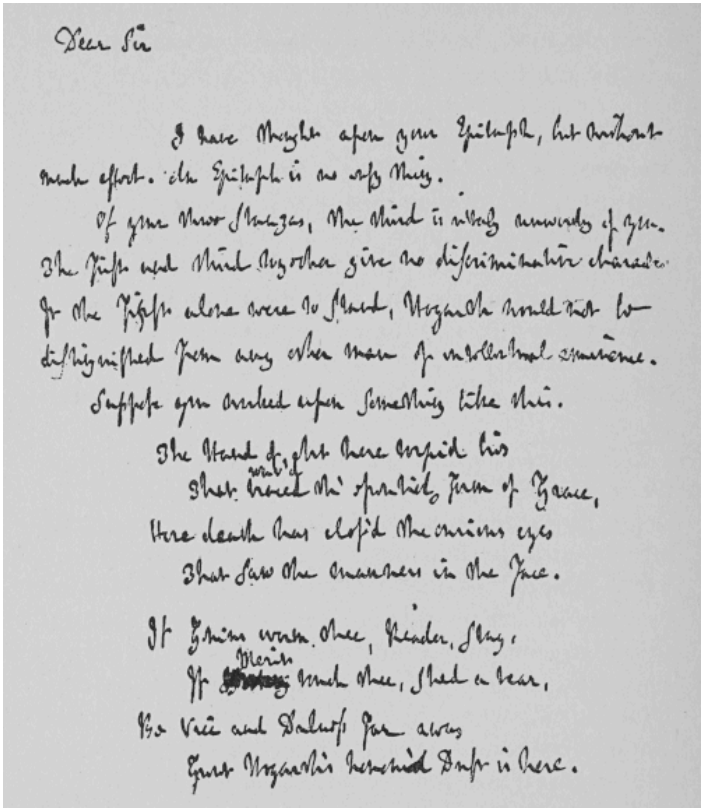
A. EDWARD NEWTON

The increasing number of scholars in this country, with their insistent demands for the original sources of history and literature, is another cause for advancing prices. After all, contemporary documents

are the only authentic tools for the student. The collector renders a real service to scholarship when he uncovers valuable unpublished material. A dear friend of mine has been also largely responsible for the modern esteem of old authors. A. Edward Newton, through his popular and appealing books about books, has inspired many to collect them. His *Amenities of Book Collecting* is the bibliophile's Bible; and his unbounded enthusiasm for Doctor Johnson is so intense that it is now contagious. Everyone has become infected with it. A new Johnsonian interest has spread over the country, and a first edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, published in London in 1791, which used to sell for seventy-five dollars, now brings $450, and in its original covers twice this price.

Certain books have sold for too little in the past. They remind me of people who plod along for years, then, through actual worth or a turn of the wheel, suddenly blossom out, much to their friends' astonishment. As material as it may sound, the increasing wealth in this country is bringing about a new appreciation not only of books but of old prints, paintings, and antique furniture. Books are the final appeal; when the collector is through with the things that decorate his house, he turns to the things that decorate his mind—and these last forever.





Dear Sir

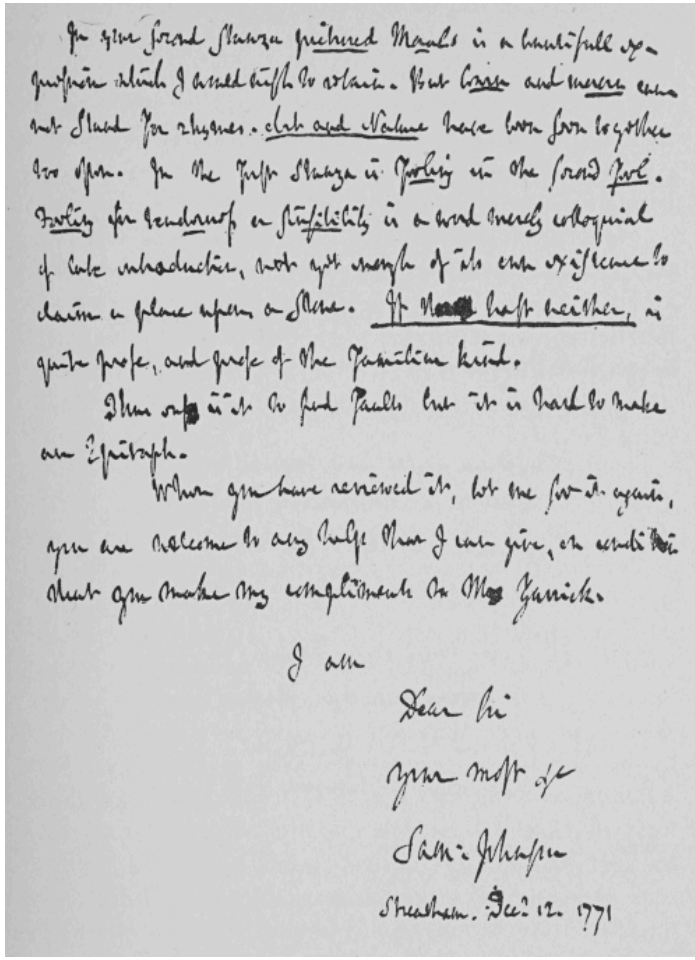
I have thought upon your Epitaph, but cannot make effort. The Epitaph is no easy thing.

Of your Poor Servant, The Mind is wholly unworthy of you. The Pen and Mind together give no discriminative character for the Pen alone were to blame, Therefore should not be distinguished from any other man of unfathomable ignorance.

Suppose you rendered upon Sometning like this.

The Hand that first here inscribed this
That traced the sparkling form of Grace,
Here death has closed the curious eyes
That saw the Creatures in the face.

Ye Genius weep. Thee, Reader, pity,
Ye Merits mark thee, shed a tear,
The Vice and Dulness pass away
Your Virgilio beneath Dust is here.



LETTER OF DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON TO DAVID GARRICK, SUGGESTING
AN EPITAPH FOR HOGARTH WHICH LATER, WITH CHANGES, WAS ENGRAVED ON HOGARTH'S TOMB

The formation of university libraries and historical societies also adds to the value of books. They take them out of reach of the individual collector and place them in their ultimate home. No wonder these libraries are considered tombs by the ardent gatherer

of books. New seats of learning, such as Duke University at Durham, North Carolina, will certainly need adequate libraries. Book clubs, too, are adding fuel to the flames. The Grolier Club of New York has a fine library; the Elizabethan Club at Yale is the enviable possessor of a tiny volume that ranks among the great books of the world. It is a first edition of Bacon's *Essays*, printed in London in 1597. Fifteen years ago, at the Huth sale, it brought £1950—more than $9000. If it were offered for sale to-day it would bring at least $25,000. There are only about five copies of this edition known. One is in the British Museum, Cambridge University has two, and a fourth is in the Huntington Library. Thus, no private collector has the good fortune to own a single copy.

Even though many rare volumes have retired permanently from the salesrooms, it has always been a peculiarity of the collector that he lives in hope. Just as there has always been a great search for ancient manuscripts, so there always will be an endless hunt for important early books. If there were wonderful discoveries in the past, why not others of equal importance in the future? Within twenty years after the invention of printing—about 1475—books became so accessible that even the poorest scholars could afford them. Tracts of various kinds were marketed for a few pennies which at first had sold for pounds. There was so much printing done that some printers were ruined because the supply quickly outgrew the demand. The best printers in Germany perfected their craft and went southward into Italy, where their work took on an added beauty. The city of Venice became a regular hotbed of printing.

When, in the latter part of the fifteenth century,

Italian noblemen saw how common printing had become, they regarded it as vulgar. Although they had at first been the patrons of printing, now some of them ignored it and endowed scriptoriums, in the hope that printing would fall into disfavor. In these scriptoriums men worked tediously on illuminated manuscripts, trying to make them finer than printed books. But of course printing went on, continuing its tremendous strides. Hope springs eternal in the book collector's breast. He will never allow himself to believe that the wonderful old volumes of hundreds of years ago have all been found. To-day, to-morrow, or next week, he must surely unearth some unrecorded book.

What is known among book lovers as the greatest little find in history occurred at Lamport Hall in Northamptonshire, England, in 1867. Charles Edmunds, a London bookseller, while visiting Lamport Hall, the ancient seat of the Isham family, accidentally came upon the old lumber room. His curiosity was immediately aroused, for among the piles of wood and discarded furniture he beheld stacks and stacks of dust-covered books. There were hundreds of them of various sizes and dates; some were chewed to bits, having furnished banquets for generations of mice, descendants of which scampered about as Edmunds searched and hoped for something interesting. Just as he was beginning to believe that they all were valueless, he chanced upon a copy of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. Imagine his surprise when he found it to be a hitherto unknown edition dated 1599, and "Imprinted at London for William Leake, dwelling in Paule's Churchyard at the signe of the Greyhound." Inclosed within the same vellum cover were *The Passionate Pilgrim* and Davies's and Marlowe's *Epigrams and Elegies*. The only other copy

known of the former is in the Capell collection at Trinity College, Cambridge. The third tract in this volume was also an entirely unrecorded edition.

This *Venus and Adonis* was a fourth edition. It sold at the Britwell Court sale at Sotheby's, in 1919, for £15,100—about $75,000. George D. Smith bought it for Mr. Huntington, and it was the highest price ever paid for a book up to that time. Whenever a great sale such as this one is held, prices reverberate throughout the world. Immediately there follows a cleaning out of old attics, a thorough brushing of odd closets; cupboards and lumber rooms are scoured; and a general sorting over of places where odd things have been relegated for years takes place. Naturally, the enormous price of the *Venus and Adonis* caused a sensation when it was sold in London. News of this sale quickly appeared in every paper in England.

A pretty story is told of how, one afternoon, two young Englishmen were playing archery on an estate near Shrewsbury. Perhaps they didn't have a target, or if they did they mislaid it. Anyway, they picked up an old book they found somewhere in one of the buildings on the place, and stuck it against the lower branches of a tree to use for a bull's-eye. About to draw his bow, one of them was not quite satisfied with the angle at which they had placed their target. So he walked forward and turned it around. As he did so, some of the pages fell back, and he read the magic name, "Venus." Looking at the volume further, he exclaimed to his companion, "I believe this old thing is similar to that book which sold for £15,100 yesterday!" It soon sold privately for more than £10,000, or about $50,000. Mr. H. C. Folger of New York, the greatest collector of Shakespeareana, was the buyer.

With these stories indelibly impressed on my mind, my delight was unbounded when I espied on the library shelves of Dorchester House, London, the residence of Sir George Holford, a matchless copy of *Venus* in the second edition, 1594, five years earlier than these famous “fourths.” Only three other copies were known. Be assured that this was one of the first volumes I selected when, the following year, I purchased the greater part of his collection. From a monetary point of view this is the most valuable book that has ever been sold.

To bring these stories down to date, an almost equally interesting find was made after the sale of a signature of Button Gwinnett, at the Anderson Galleries in New York last winter, for which I paid $22,500. Gwinnett was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence from Georgia. His signature is very rare, as his life was snuffed out suddenly in a duel with General Lachlan MacIntosh in 1777, when he was still young. There are but thirty-three of these signatures known. I bought my first Gwinnett, incidentally the first to be sold in many years, in Philadelphia two years ago for $14,000. Some wag figured, at the time, that it was worth exactly $1000 per letter. Mrs. Arthur W. Swann, of New York, happened to read about my purchase in a morning paper, and began to think over the various items of a collection of autograph letters which her grandfather, Theodore Sedgwick, had made, and which she inherited. The more she thought about it, the more significant a hazy remembrance became; she believed her grandfather had secured a Button Gwinnett similar to the one I bought. After carefully searching through the collection she found, much to her surprise and delight, a most beautiful example of Gwinnett’s

signature. In November, 1926, she sold the entire collection, and I bought the Button Gwinnett for $28,500. This was then a record price for any signature in the world's history, the young signer's autograph having jumped to $2000 per letter! After a while, selling a famous man's handwriting by the letter will be as common as selling antique silver by the ounce.

About four years ago a firm of auctioneers in London was requested to sell a great mass of ordinary music belonging to the estate of a late English noblewoman. The manager and his assistants were not very keen about it, as the music was unsorted and on its face almost worthless. But they finally agreed to do it on the condition it should not require sorting. During the sale a dealer bought one of the bundles. Later he sold some of it to other dealers, saving several sheets for himself to take home. Some time passed and one night he chanced to glance over the titles of these songs, catches, and other musical compositions. As he turned one of the pages he fairly started from his seat. He could hardly believe his eyes. A quarto pamphlet it was, and most probably had been placed there years and years before—perhaps as a bookmark—by someone who did not realize its worth. It was a copy of *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson* by Shelley! The author's name was not mentioned, but it was edited by "Fitzvictor," one of Shelley's pen names. Here it lay before him, in the original wrappers in which it was first published. Of course, the news of the discovery spread like wildfire. Later, this work sold for £1210, approximately $6000.

Propagandist pamphlets written by Shelley are extremely rare, and have turned up in the most

extraordinary places. They were generally of an inflammatory or seditious nature, and he and Harriet had the habit of throwing them from the windows wherever they might be staying at the time, in the hope of hitting sympathetic targets. I should like to be struck by one of those missiles!

Shortly after the War began I was informed of a letter written by Amerigo Vespucci, to be offered in the Morrison sale in London. It was the only known letter written by the man who gave his name to two continents. Previous to its finding, the only record of Vespucci's own writing was a receipt bearing his signature. Now, the early stages of the Great War were not exactly propitious times for auctions or any other sales. The buying public of England, as well as auctioneers, dealers, and collectors, all found their minds preoccupied with but one subject—war. *Objets d'art*, books, and manuscripts were put aside as playthings of a leisured hour; nor were they to be considered when relatives and friends were fast becoming a part of the war machinery daily departing for France. So prices did the logical thing —tumbled.

Although I was aware of the situation, I believed it impossible that this Vespucci letter could go for a low figure. Here was an unusual, magnificent autograph more than four centuries old. War? Why, it had known a hundred wars! With little hope and less expectation, I cabled a bid of £2500—about $12,500. The arrival of a reply a few hours later caused me pangs of fear. I tortured myself a few moments with delectable suspense. Was the letter mine or not? A momentous question! At last I gathered courage and read words which were too curt, too few, to seem true. Not only was I the

possessor of this most precious historical letter, but at what a price—a measly £395! It was almost impossible to realize that I had secured for less than $2000 one of the greatest bargains in history.



BOOKROOM AT 273 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

I was under a constant nervous tension until its arrival. When it finally came I went with it into my library, locked the door, and settled down to decipher the old and decorative handwriting. Vespucci had written in Latin a somewhat grave and formal filial epistle to his father. He was in Trivio Mugelli at the time, October 18, 1476. He comments on a commonplace book, belonging to his uncle, Giorgio Antonio Vespucci. These commonplace books were frequently kept in the fifteenth century. They were used to note down Greek and Latin quotations, the common information of the period. I had hardly finished reading this before some mental click went off in my mind. I left my comfortable chair and

walked suddenly to a corner of my bookcase. Quickly I picked out an old manuscript in a fifteenth-century binding. I held in my hands an ancient commonplace book. There on the title page was the written name—Giorgio Antonio Vespucci!

Side by side in my library were Amerigo's only letter and Uncle Giorgio's commonplace book! I was thrilled by it all. In something of a daze I placed the two on the table before me. Separated for nearly five hundred years, they were again together. Where had they been those five centuries? What had they seen and heard? If someone had thrown a diamond into the middle of the ocean, to recover it years later, it could not have been a greater miracle than this almost impossible literary remating. Now the letter and the volume are in the Pierpont Morgan library, united forever.

Some collectors, to my eternal amazement, are completely satisfied with small libraries. This desire for a limited number of exquisite books originated in France centuries ago. Many of the wealthiest and most meticulous book lovers went in for what is known as cabinet collecting. They liked small books which they could handle easily, and found no interest in the first edition of even an important classic if it were large. Diane de Poitiers was one of the first cabinet collectors. The beloved of Henry II, she would doubtless be forgotten by collectors to-day if she had not, like Cardinal Wolsey, loved her books more than her king. When she became a widow, Diane immediately stamped her volumes with a laurel springing from a tomb, with the motto, "I live alone in grief." But when she began her friendship with Henry she suppressed both the tomb and the legend.

In her boudoir in the Château d'Anet, just outside of Paris, long after her death a small case was found filled with the most precious volumes, all in beautiful bindings of red and citron morocco, decorated with the crescents of Diana the book huntress. This little nest of bookish nuggets was not found until 1723, but was in perfect condition. The diversity of its contents was amusing. The fathers of the Church nestled close to some of the most risqué stories of that time, and the poets stood side by side with treatises on medicine and the management of the household. It has always been of interest to me that in the small collection of Diane de Poitiers were two books relating to this country, thus making her one of the earliest collectors of Americana. The first was Servete's edition of Ptolemy's *Geography*, dated 1541, and the other, *Les Singularitez de la France Antartique autrement nommée Amerique*, brought out seventeen years later.

Perhaps the man who makes a covenant with himself to buy only a small number of books, imitating the French collectors, is the happiest and wisest of us all. He knows in his mind the location of every volume on his shelves. At least he runs little chance of finding himself in the position which was forced upon me several years ago. I had purchased a first edition of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719, for which I paid $2500. Along with thousands of other volumes on my shelves, I had not thought for months of poor old Crusoe and his man Friday.

One day, however, a stranger came to see me, announcing with a great air of assurance he had a really fine book which he knew would delight me. Just how much, neither of us realized until it was removed from its brown-paper wrapping. Then I

recognized the binding, and that it was my own *Robinson Crusoe*! I concealed my surprise as I asked for its history and how he had come by it. With charming facility he explained that it was left by his father-in-law to his wife, and I became furious when he wound up with the worn tale of its having been in his family “for over one hundred years.”

After he had finished his finely embroidered story I excused myself from the room for a moment to telephone police headquarters. Returning, I directly accused him of having acquired the book dishonestly. Looking me in the eye, more in sorrow than in anger, he stood by his guns. But when he heard the echo of heavy footsteps beyond my study door he broke down, and told me a sordid hard-luck story which made me feel rather sorry for him. I learned then that he had also bought other volumes from a man who had been employed by me some months before. He paid a few dollars for each book—I asked him for the names of the others, and was relieved that they did not compare in value to the *Robinson Crusoe*—and they were delivered to his junk shop. There was some wistful quality about this fellow; aside from his dishonesty, he spoke of books as though he loved them. I could not prosecute him. Again I left the room, this time to tell the two detectives who were waiting that I would not press the charge. And it did seem most unfortunate for him that he came to me, of all people in the world, with that *Robinson Crusoe*!

The modern book lover who gratifies his taste with a small collection usually starts off with what he calls a logical reason for his fixed policy. Some men will collect everything they can find which has been written by or associated with an author they love,

generally some writer who has had a definite influence upon their lives. Thus there are men who gather every edition, pamphlet, manuscript, autograph, or personal relic of Burns, Shelley, Thackeray, or Dickens, to mention only a few. Other sentimentalists must have every line of verse by the poet whose rhythmic genius has struck sparks of music or passion in their own souls. On the other hand, a practical person, such as an Arctic explorer, will hunt out every known document mentioning the Arctic, while his colleague, the African explorer, follows suit with his desires for all works concerning his favorite quarter of the globe.

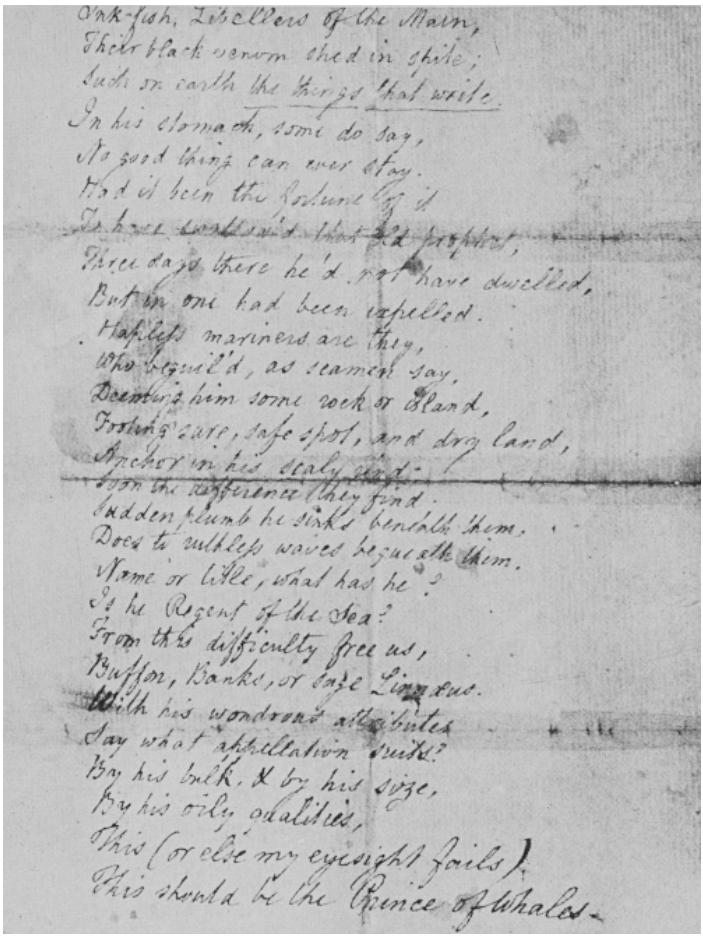
For years I have had a charming customer who is a romanticist if ever there was one. Her enthusiasm is for books on those idealistic lands beyond the mountains or behind the moon about which English writers of all centuries have delighted to weave strange fantastic tales, such as Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. Then there is another customer, with his vivid remembrance of old vintages, whose standing order since the passing of the Volstead Act has kept us busy gathering all editions and early works mentioning ardent spirits. He smacks his lips with gusto when he obtains a particularly rare one. Another great amateur's favorite subject is everything relating to tobacco. English authors from Ben Jonson to Charles Lamb allowed their love of tobacco to permeate their works, and it is therefore a delightful task, especially to an inveterate smoker, to pick up, here and there, old books in which the authors endearingly mention perique and "cigars of the Havana." I recently owned a rare little volume on which Charles Lamb had spilled some ale, and in which were found remnants of tobacco. This might have caused a battle royal

between the two friends above mentioned, and, as I could not divide the volume, I, like King Solomon on a more famous occasion, sold it to a collector who was interested in gentle Elia for his dear self alone.

Very often these specialists have a change of heart. Their tastes broaden and they develop into the maddest collectors of all. Perhaps they suddenly realize the limited span of even a collector's life, and find they are missing many enchanting bypaths along the highroad of books. When Richard Heber, the greatest bibliomaniac who ever lived, began his library, he was interested only in purely classical works. This English gentleman, although he has been dead for nearly one hundred years, still survives, enshrined in every true bookman's heart. To recognize in oneself the symptoms of becoming "the fiercest and strongest of all bibliomaniacs"—so Heber is described—what secret joy and satisfaction! Heber's library grew to enormous proportions, and when he died he left more than one hundred and fifty thousand volumes. Like Earl Spencer, it was necessary for him to have many houses, just to hold his books. Eight establishments there were, on the Continent and in England, each overrun with books. It was he who started the craze for duplicate copies, explaining that no one could afford to be without three copies of a book: one for show, the second for use, and the third for borrowers!

Everybody knows it is never quite safe to lend an umbrella, even to one's dearest friend; the very act of lending seems to demoralize the borrower, who thinks not of the rainy days to come. If there is scant hope of ever seeing the umbrella again, how much less is there for a borrowed book—unless it happens to be a rare one! In that case it may be discovered

several generations later, when the worried and loving owner, who by this time is reclining in some bookish Nirvana, cares little for earthly treasures. How many great literary finds have been made as a result of careless borrowers, I wonder!



Ink-fish, Lubbers of the Main,
Their black venom shed in shite;
Such on earth the things that write.
In his stomach, some do say,
No good thing can ever stay.
Had it been the fortune of it
To have swallow'd that old prophet,
Three days there he'd not have dwelled,
But in one had been expelled.
Hapless mariners are they,
Who beguil'd, as seamen say,
Deeming him some rock or Island,
Footing sure, safe spot, and dry land,
Anchor on his scaly back
Soon the difference they find.
Sudden plumb he sinks beneath them,
Does to rubbish waves bequeath them.
Name or title, what has he?
Is he Regent of the Sea?
From this difficulty free us,
Buffon, Banks, or Daze Linnæus.
With his wondrous attributes
Say what appellation suits?
By his bulk, & by his size,
By his oily qualities,
This (or else my eyesight fails)
This should be the Prince of Whales.

PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF CHARLES LAMB'S "THE TRIUMPH OF THE WHALE"

There is the case of a certain Englishman who, several years ago, "borrowed" some early English

books, printed by Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde, from the libraries of Lincoln and Peterborough Cathedrals. Lest they should be missed immediately, he left behind him the covers of the books, stuffed with newspapers and replaced on the shelves; the contents he carried away in his pockets. But one day someone browsing about chanced to take down these skeleton books. The fraud was discovered and reported to all book dealers and collectors in England, so they should be on the lookout. Some of the volumes, minus bindings, have already turned up at various sales, but where they all are no one knows. They may be discovered again somewhere, some day.

One day before the War a stranger called on Quaritch, one of the most celebrated and astute booksellers in London, to whose shop many rare books, in those days, naturally drifted. This man said he had an old book, but didn't know its value. Quaritch looked at it, and immediately recognized it as the long-lost and valuable edition of the laws of Massachusetts, known to collectors as *The General Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts, collected out of the Records of the General Courts*, and printed at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1648. Inquiring of the owner what he thought he should receive for it, the man would not say; he desired Quaritch to make him an offer.

Quaritch was known far and wide for his fair dealing. Now he took into consideration various facts, the most important of which was that he might have to keep the volume for some years before reselling it. He therefore offered what he felt to be a perfectly fair price—£2500. The man looked at him in "wild surmise," then gasped. He would have

accepted fifty pounds for it! But now, he said, as he put on his hat, with the layman's suspicious look in his eye, he would have to think it over. He was too frightened to make up his mind just then. He never went back to Quaritch, but shopped around a long time, selling it eventually for £5000—a little less than $25,000. Alfred Quaritch told me that it was this experience which cured him forever of making offers on books.

It is amazing how many of these first American editions have been found across the Atlantic. Several years ago, while in England, I was invited by a noted collector to inspect his library. We had been talking books for hours, and as the twilight approached, did not think to turn on the lights. I got up to leave and stumbled against a folio volume which someone had carelessly left on the floor. I carried it quickly to the window to see what it was. Opening the old calf binding in the fading light, I read the written inscription on the title page: "This book was used in the Trial of the Earl of Bellomont, Governor of New York." It was, to my astonishment, my uncle Moses' old *bête-noir*, the very rare *First Laws of New York*, printed by William Bradford in 1694. I was extremely pleased with this volume, and suggested to the owner that inasmuch as it was a New York book, and not particularly interesting to him, he might care to part with it, which to my joy he gracefully did.

Printer Bradford has the distinction of being the first in both Philadelphia and New York. His earlier works, published in Philadelphia, loudly proclaim the hatred he had for some of the Quakers of his day. He was constantly bringing out tracts against them. When they threatened to jail him he found it necessary to leave the City of Brotherly Love, and

settled in New York. Several years ago I attended a sale in Philadelphia and came across a book which no one seemed to know anything about. I showed it to several other collectors, who pushed it aside, believing it worthless, merely an old book. The name of the printer or the place was not upon the title page; I recognized it, however, as coming from Bradford's famous press.

It was a scurrilous attack on one Samuel Jennings, Quaker, printed by Bradford in New York in 1693. Entirely composed in rhyme, by John Philley, it was lengthily titled: *A Paraphrastical Exposition in a Letter from a Gentleman in Philadelphia to his Friend in Boston concerning a certain Person who compared himself to Mordecai*. I could not remember ever having seen an earlier-dated book published in New York. Here, then, was a first, which was valuable from three standpoints. It was the only copy known; it was probably the first book printed in New York; it was the earliest poetical production of the New York press. I am having a reprint made, so that it will be accessible to all students of history.

I am sometimes given credit for discoveries which I am not in the least entitled to. There are many old bookmen, true ferrets, who are always on the lookout for unusual things. They often bring their finds to me. In Paris there is a whole tribe of book seekers who infest the quays along the Seine, where quaint volumes are occasionally found. Collectors do not often have the good fortune to find great rarities there, but my friend Mitchell Kennerley has the distinction of making one of the greatest finds in bookish history. Many years ago, while walking on the left bank of the Seine, he picked up, for a few sous, Champlain's first book on the Indians of

Canada, entitled *Des Sauvages*, issued in Paris in 1603. He kept it in his box at the Lotos Club in New York for more than two years. The whole matter was forgotten until someone, accidentally mentioning old books on the American Indians, recalled to his attention the little volume resting so quietly in its solitary nook. Mr. Kennerley put it into an auction sale in 1907, and no one was more greatly surprised and elated than he when it sold for $2900.

This leads me to remember one of the most colorful incidents of my collecting career, an experience brought about through the consideration of a fellow bookman. It happened when I was in Boston, attending the dedication of the Harry Elkins Widener Memorial Library in 1914. I had arrived on an early train, so I decided to spend several pleasant hours on Park Street with my friend Charles Goodspeed. As I entered his shop he came forward with the exclamation, “I have a manuscript in which you will be interested, I am sure!” He disappeared into the back of his shop, and I waited, filled with curiosity. After a few moments he returned and handed me a small piece of paper. As I read it I could hardly believe that this was the first draft of Benjamin Franklin’s famous epitaph, which is so dear to every lover of old books. At first I was suspicious that it might be a clever forgery. But when Goodspeed explained that it came from the old and noted Aspinwall collection, I needed no further assurance. It was absolutely authentic, and eagerly I purchased it.

This was Franklin’s first attempt at writing his epitaph, dated 1728, and differed slightly in the wording from the fair copy which has been for many years in the Library of Congress in Washington. I

brought it back to Philadelphia in great glee and showed it to Eddie Newton. In an ill-starred moment for him, and to his everlasting regret, he refused it. This is the only time—with one exception, which is another story—that I knew him to fall down. This epitaph has found its resting place in the magnificent Franklin collection of William S. Mason, of Evanston, Illinois.

Nothing better reveals the great American, the man whose sayings have helped the destinies of the New World, than this faded sheet of paper, where the master printer gives, in the parlance of his trade, this noble colophon:—

THE BODY OF B. FRANKLIN,
PRINTER,
LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK,
ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT
AND
STRIPT OF ITS LETTERING & GILDING
LIES HERE
FOOD FOR WORMS.
BUT THE WORK SHALL NOT BE LOST;
FOR IT WILL, AS HE BELIEV'D
APPEAR ONCE MORE
IN A NEW AND MORE ELEGANT EDITION
REVISED AND CORRECTED
BY THE AUTHOR.

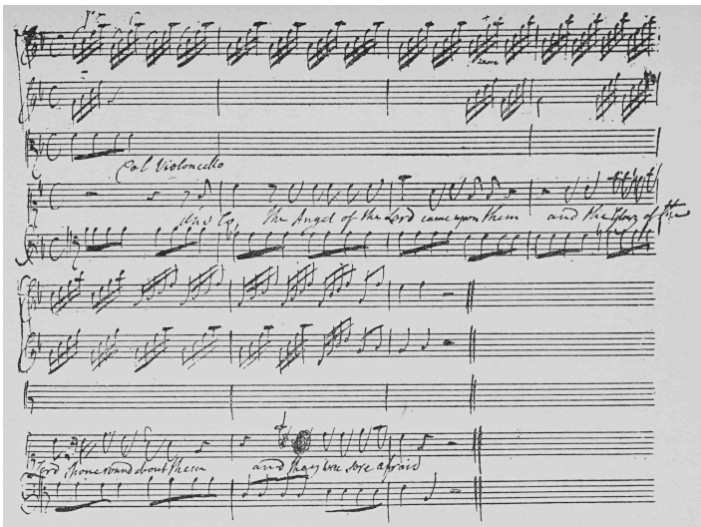
III

SOLD TO DR. R!

THE gas lamps in Stan V. Henkels's auction rooms in Philadelphia were being extinguished. An exciting sale of books had just ended, and I was left a rather bitter young man. The purchaser of the one book I had so eagerly hoped to secure was a thin, wiry man, with a face of rare charm. He was not an auction habitué, at least not at Henkels's, or I should have recognized him. One gets used to the same old faces in an auction room. Earlier that evening I had noticed him two rows ahead of me, a distinguished-looking person; but once the auctioneer's hammer had struck, giving him the final decision on his bid, I changed my opinion, and he now appeared highly distasteful to me.

As I went to open the street door I passed him. He stood showing the book to a group of other buyers. I would have died rather than ask his permission to look at that ancient missal, which I felt he had deliberately taken from me. And what a copy! As perfect as the day it came from the scriptorium in Touraine nearly four hundred years ago. More important still, it had belonged at one time to the exquisite and altogether enchanting Gabrielle d'Estrées. She may have treated her lovers negligently, but to her books she gave the gentlest care. If the truth were known, she had a more tender regard for her books than for Henry IV. Perhaps she

abandoned him to find change and relaxation in looking at the pictures in this volume. I was nineteen; the ephemeral love affairs of great court beauties catch the imagination at that age as they never do in later years.



ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF HANDEL'S "MESSIAH"

And lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them and the Glory of the
Lord shone round about them and they were sore afraid

[Audio content is not currently supported on your device. [MusicXML]

You see, I had been saving every penny I could lay my hands on to buy this book. I had read about it in the sale catalogue. It is not exactly clear to me to-day why I so desperately wanted to own this particular missal. Perhaps it was one of those waxing obsessions which seize book lovers at all seasons of the year. I remember it was a warm, languorous spring. The night air was sweet. As I walked along I asked myself many questions: What good had come

of my hoarding every cent to purchase it? Wasn't it unfair of wealthy men who attend auctions never to give the poor student a chance? I had gone to that sale with fifty-seven dollars in my pocket. It was an enormous sum for me to invest in one book, and I really doubted that anyone would want this particular volume badly enough to pay more than fifty dollars for it. Imagine my surprise when this stranger overbid me by three dollars!

Depressed, I wandered for some time along the ill-lighted street before I was aware of quick steps behind me. It was my successful competitor. And from another direction I saw a horse and cab drive toward me. A dim street light revealed the blurred outlines of a rickety worn-out nag whose driver slouched above on the box. It was Wee-hicle.

Now Wee-hicle was a coachman of local renown. His thin, emaciated, Don Quixotic figure had always attracted my attention. Wee-hicle knew more individuals of prominence in Philadelphia than did the mayor himself. Further, Wee-hicle had vision. To be carried home in the early hours by Wee-hicle boded good. In this way he had sponsored the early careers of more youths who later became distinguished citizens than any Harvard professor. This night he drove to the curb and recognized me. At the same time the footsteps in the darkness quickened and an anxious voice shouted, "Cabby!" Now I wanted to go home with Wee-hicle myself. With a rude bound, I reached the cab door before the person behind me.

"Which way are you going?" he asked me as he came close to the cab. His voice was clear and friendly, nor was the dark too thick to hide the kindliness of his expression. With that forced reciprocal politeness

which often overtakes one in the heat of anger or disappointment, I battled with a desire to grab the book and run off into the darkness.

“I can take you anywhere you care to go,” I answered. He heard the vindictive note in my voice, as I meant him to. He looked at me uneasily. Perhaps he feared I had been drinking.

“I feel like having a bite,” he began. “I’d like to go to McGowan’s. Perhaps you will join me.” Without waiting for a reply, he leaned forward and called out our destination to Wee-hicle.

Those were the days when McGowan’s was an all-night meeting place where convivial souls gathered to eat, drink, and to be quietly merry. It was famous for its terrapin; in fact, it was at that time one of the great restaurants of America. Situated at the corner of Fifteenth and Sansom streets, it had an entrance on either side. When we arrived I told Wee-hicle to wait.

After ordering supper my host picked up the Gabrielle d’Estrées volume and exhibited it in a most tantalizing manner.

“You paid a very high price for that little missal,” I ventured.

He looked up, surprised. “How do you know?”

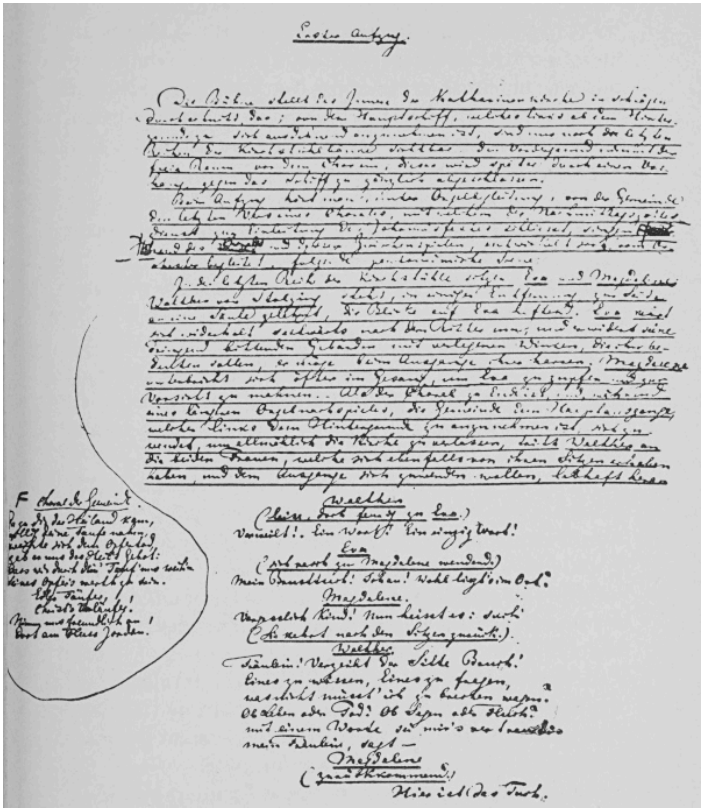
“I was there—at the auction.” At that moment the waiter brought two long-stemmed glasses filled with a golden-brown liquid. It was bitter and warming. “I was the underbidder,” I said.

“You bid me up?” The waiter replaced our glasses with others. We drank silently. “So you wanted this book? Well, well! You love books?” I nodded. His face seemed to soften. “And what would you have

given for it?" He handed the volume across the table to me and my fingers trembled.

"All that I have in the world," I said dramatically. "Fifty-seven dollars." The waiter came forward with our supper. It was a beautiful repast worthy of the skill of Dennis McGowan himself.

As we ate I listened to my new friend through an ever-thickening haze. He told me of his interest in books and manuscripts. He was not a collector exactly, he explained, but a man who bought intermittently as the desire came upon him.



PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF WAGNER'S

“And now,” said he, “since you wanted this book so badly, will you accept it as a proof of our newly made friendship?” He leaned across the table and I grasped his hand. He insisted upon my accepting the volume as a gift! Then we talked of books and bookmen until far into the night. We walked home in the early morning air.

The next day at noon, as I crossed the campus of the University of Pennsylvania, I was aware of a familiar figure who waved and attracted great attention with a coach whip. It was Wee-hicle.

“Say, young Rosenbach,” he holloed, “what do you mean, keepin’ me waitin’ all night on Sansom Street?” He came toward me on a run, accusingly. “Sneakin’ out on Fifteenth Street, you and your friend! I want my money! I waited outside all night long. Twenty-five dollars, night rates!” To quiet his shouting, I motioned him to follow me to my room. I had forgotten him completely. Had the preceding night been a dream or a nightmare? Surely it was neither, for there on my bookshelf was the missal in its old gilt binding—the book which had been forced so generously upon me. I paid Wee-hicle gladly and figured his services cheap at the price. As to the gentleman who presented me with the volume, it was Joseph M. Fox. He later became my partner in the book business.

The auction business is an old, old game. Herodotus, somewhere in his writings, describes the auctions which took place once a year in all Babylonian villages. In those days, before the advent of the bachelor girl, despairing parents hopefully offered their surplus maidens in the auction mart, where

they disposed of them in marriage to the highest bidders. Then there were the auctions which followed military victories. The Romans solved the problem of dividing captives and other spoils of war in this popular manner.

But the first book auctions, as far as records show, began in the latter part of the seventeenth century in Holland. The enterprising Dutchman who originated the idea of selling literary works by competitive bid, whether he was a book lover or interested only in cold commercial hope of gain, should have his memory appreciatively marked by periods of celebration down the years. Can't you imagine every true book lover bowing to the name of this fellow who brought a new and sharp-edged enjoyment into the book game?

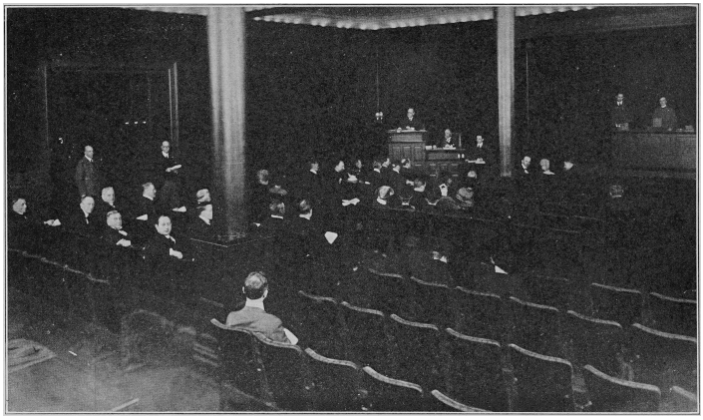
Of all the branches of the sport connected with book collecting, that of attending book auctions is the greatest, the most stirring. I presume some patient mathematician knows the number of facets of the Koh-i-nur diamond, but no one will ever be able to count the emotional reflections which take place during a book auction in the hearts and minds of men and women who are enamored of books. The book auction is an adventure. Other adventures may lose their glamour if you repeat them, but each experience at a sale of books brings a delightful thrill never to be duplicated.

Other experiences in your life may have been exciting, and you will always shrink from repeating them, in the fear, perhaps, that they may lose some one quality. But the book auction, which includes the sale of literary manuscripts and letters, continues to offer those very elements which first fascinated you. Don't be surprised when you find yourself one of the

habitual adventurers. Unsympathetic, misunderstanding friends may accuse you of being a book-auction fiend, but you will listen indulgently and let it go at that.

Most of the great books of the world have found their way to the auction room at one time or another. Bibliophiles of renown have sat restlessly out front bidding against one another. It is these, rare books and the buyers of them, who have given to the auction its illustrious background. Nearly every collector enters the auction field to enjoy its seductive pleasures some time during the period of his fever.

When you first go to an auction you firmly believe that prices are at their highest. The complaint of high prices is as old as the auction game itself. The morning after every sale you read the same old story in your newspaper, of the “crazy,” “mad,” and “exorbitant” prices which were paid. Present prices always seem high. If you keep a record of them you will find, in ten years’ time, that these prices are extremely low. As a matter of fact, prices will never be lower than they are to-day. Certain items may fluctuate, but in general the great classics of all literature can be revalued upward every ten years. Very often you may have the feeling that you paid too much for some book—in other words, you were stung; and it may be so. But the beauty of it all is that an auction holds fair play for all sides. Even the experienced buyer is liable to get stung. You are in good company. And joy of joys, the auctioneer, your arch enemy, sometimes gets charmingly stung himself! For who can say when some bargain will drop unexpectedly into the collector’s maw?



BOOK AUCTION AT THE ANDERSON GALLERIES, NEW YORK, WITH DR. ROSENBACH ATTENDING

I remember a case in point. It was during the third part of the Hoe sale in April 1912. In the catalogue a celebrated autograph play by Lope de Vega was listed. Entitled *Carlos V*, it had been written in Toledo and was dated November 20, 1604. Now manuscript plays by this famous Spanish writer are extremely desirable. Although the greatest book dealers and collectors of England, France, Italy, and Germany were present that night, they either slighted or forgot its value. I purchased it on my first bid, $125.

A collector in Philadelphia had given me a bid of $7500 on it! He was even then sitting at his telephone impatiently waiting to hear if I had secured it for him. The above story is at the expense of a New York house. My next will be on a British concern, in order to balance honors.

At the sale of the Britwell Court Library in London in 1923, I noticed a little book lying sandwiched between Paice's *Fortune's Lottery, or How a Ship of Bristoll Called the Angel Gabriel Fought Against the*

Spanish, and Pallinganius's *The Zodyacke of Lyfe*. It was Philip Paine's *Dailey Meditations, or Quotidian Preparations for and Consideration of Death and Eternity*, printed at Cambridge by Marmaduke Johnson in 1668. As it was passed around the room all my bookman friends looked at it and shook their heads. Of value, they thought, comparatively slight. Only a dull theological work. As I reread the lengthy title something back in my brain made me concentrate more carefully upon it. Somewhere those printed words struck a vaguely familiar chord in my memory. All during the sale I kept turning forward to that page in my catalogue where it was listed. Suddenly I knew! Marmaduke Johnson it was who printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the first Holy Scriptures issued for the North American Indians—the Eliot Indian Bible.

The little book was put up for sale and I asked leave to examine it again for a moment before bidding. I knew at once it was printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and not England. This made it tremendously rare, because it was the only known copy, hitherto unrecognized, of the first volume of verse printed in North America. Those present took it for granted from the catalogue description that the little work was printed in Cambridge, England, and as such, was certainly worth less than the price at which it was soon knocked down to me, fifty-one pounds. After the sale several people, including a great Americana expert and the auctioneer, met me and rather twitted me for paying $250 for a stupid old religious tract worth but a few shillings. They were amazed that I had shown such a lapse of judgment.

When I informed them what the book really was, the

auctioneer sadly asked, “Doctor, what would you really have given for it?”

When I said £8000 or £9000—between $40,000 and $50,000—he was not any too happy. During the following year, when the little tract by Baxter in the Indian dialect appeared for sale, they catalogued it Cambridge, Massachusetts! Thus listed, it sold for $34,000, as I have mentioned before.

You see, we are always reading of record prices and it is very rare to hear of the valuable things that slip through unobserved. It is these latter that give book auctions their zest. And the auction houses, if they only knew it, benefit also by the chance bargain, for it is this very thing that attracts the public.

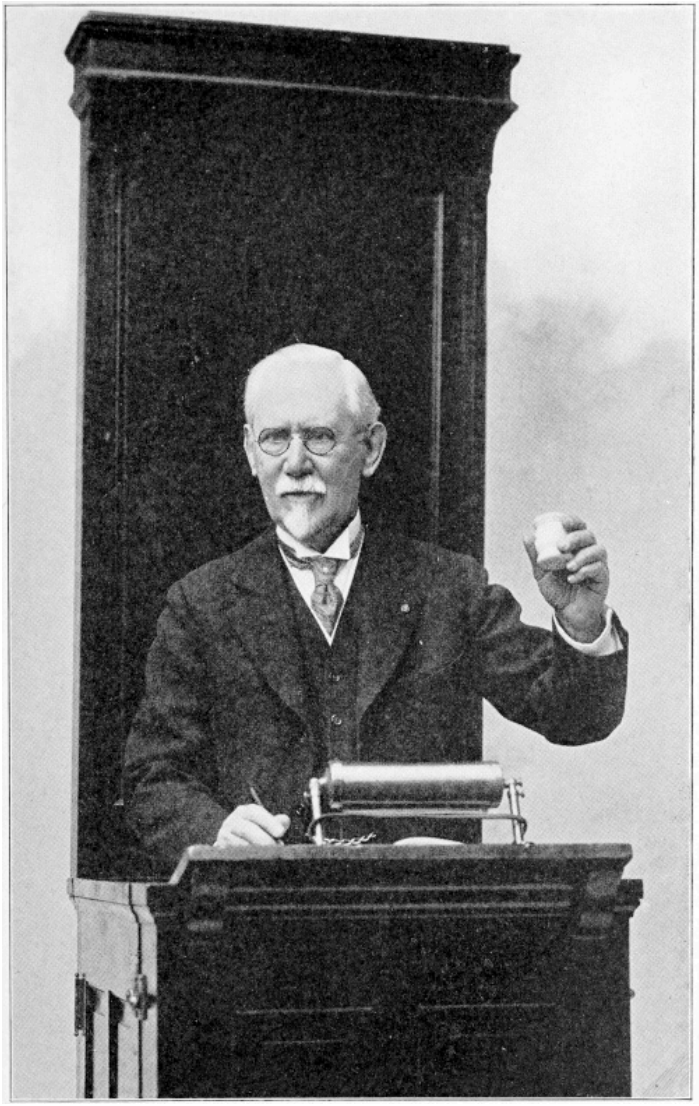
On the other hand, the most experienced buyer never knows when he will have to pay a really high price. It is the average, after all, that counts. Yet here is a phenomenon which has always seemed peculiar to me. When times are bad and prices in Wall Street are tumbling, when Steel sells far below its worth and the oils go begging, rare volumes continue to command an ever-increasing price. In 1907, the year of the panic, books sold for record sums at auctions, while so-called standard securities dipped sharply in a helpless market. Two years later, when national finances were again wobbly, when the bears were having a picnic with the lambs, old books went for higher prices than ever before.

In the Henry W. Poor sale, held in New York in this same year, record prices were established, despite the prediction of the wiseacres, who said that prices must go down. It is for this reason that some of the most discerning men in Wall Street purchase rare books as an investment. I know many a captain of industry who quietly hides away in the secrecy of his

strong box rare little volumes, such as Shakespeare quartos, small pamphlets by Shelley, and even first editions of Joseph Conrad. These rich men realize—and rightly, too—that such treasures will always sell at a premium, even though the market is tumbling and Wall Street is in a panic. Owners of precious books always find they do not have to wait for the chance buyer. Their volumes can be sent to the auction mart at any time, where they will realize, as a rule, their full value.

America has had two really great auctioneers: Stan V. Henkels, of beloved memory, and the late Thomas E. Kirby. The latter in many respects exerted the greatest influence of any person in the auction world of this country. He was the founder of the American Art Association, and his opinions on objects of art were accepted as gospel by the most meticulous collectors, including the late P. A. B. Widener, William A. Clark, and Henry C. Frick. He was really brilliant on the block, and his remarks were frequently the wittiest imaginable. I remember as a youth going to his auctions and being fascinated by his repartee and the rapidity with which he sold.

Stan V. Henkels was the only auctioneer who catalogued every work himself and cried his own sales too. His humor was irresistible, and the audience would often break out in guffaws of laughter at his many bright sallies.



THOMAS E. KIRBY ON THE ROSTRUM

In 1902 I attended a sale at Henkels's where the price of a certain volume caused the book world to hum for months afterward. I was late, and entered

the room as the bidding began on a little book which was placed in full view of the audience. I asked one of the employés for its number in the catalogue and found that it was *The Dying Words of Ockanickon, an Indian King*, and was published in London in 1682. It did not seem to be a volume of much importance. I was acquainted somewhat with its history. The highest price it had ever brought was $52.50, at the Barlow sale in 1890. I leaned forward to whisper to a friend in the row ahead of me and he said $200 would be an enormous price for it.

Suddenly the air seemed charged with electricity, and I looked about to see who was bidding. On one side of the room sat a man I knew, A. J. Bowden, who represented George H. Richmond and Company, of New York. On the other I saw Mr. Robert Dodd, of Dodd, Mead and Company. Both were experienced auction bidders, with the set expression of the mouth and the feverish, alert look. I did not know at the time that both had received instructions to buy this particular work at any price. Each had that most dangerous weapon of the auction game, the unlimited bid.

From sixty dollars the price rapidly jumped. Stan V. Henkels, colorful, suave, provocative, naïve, and humorous, kept egging them on. Up and up the price went, until it reached the $900 mark. Then a murmur of consternation swept the room, followed by a hush. Robert Dodd broke the silence with a $100 raise. Bowden followed with another $100 and Dodd added $100 more. When Bowden finally shouted, “Thirteen hundred dollars,” Dodd smiled.

“Fourteen hundred,” he said sweetly.

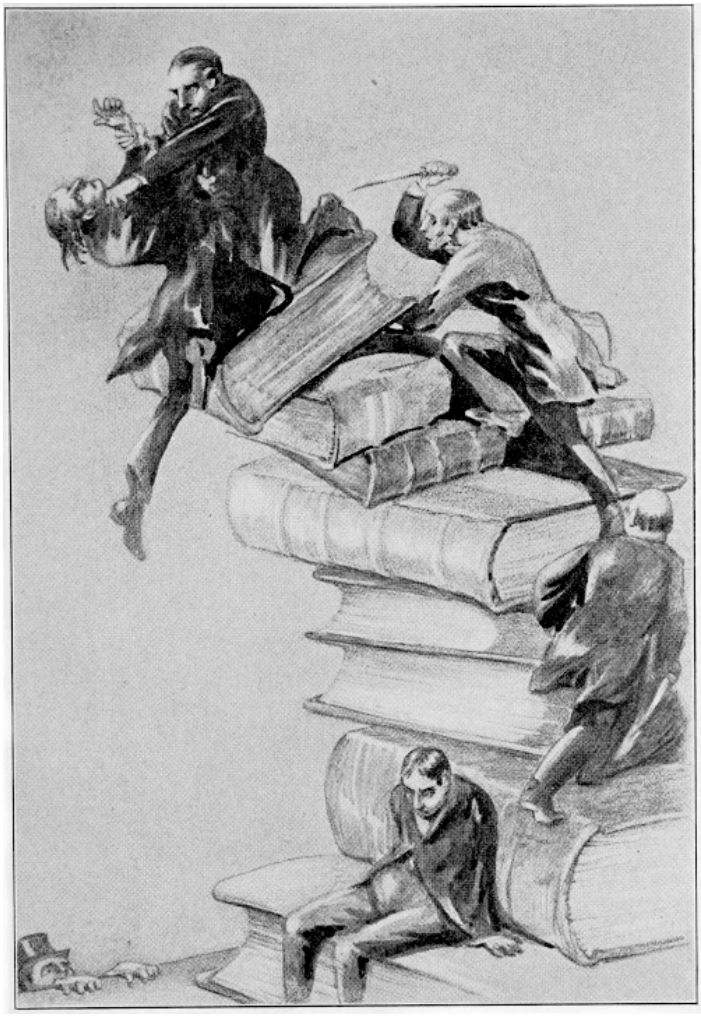
Just at this moment poor old Bowden exhibited his

first sign of weakness. He stopped bidding in hundreds and raised the bid twenty-five.

Dodd saw his chance and brought up his battalion with a crash. Little *Ockanickon* was wrested from Bowden at the freak price of $1450. When Richmond read in the paper next morning the price at which he had so nearly bought *Ockanickon*, he fell out of bed!

Speaking of freak prices, think of my surprise when I went to an auction one day last year and saw with amused amazement a little volume of book mysteries I once wrote. I felt self-conscious, uncomfortable, and pleased, all rolled into one, when the bids on *The Unpublishable Memoirs* jumped up, and it finally sold for sixteen dollars. The joke is that this volume is still obtainable at its published price of $2.50.

The enormous and ever increasing attendance at auction sales in the established city auction rooms is caused by the hope that sometime a real bargain will come your way. This is the lure, the real bait. It has an appeal all its own. But for the young enthusiast it is often a costly and dangerous game. It is wiser to begin your bidding under the guidance of an experienced agent. There are several collectors and owners of great private libraries in this country whose names are entirely unknown in the auction room. They may enter the salesroom incognito, to enjoy watching their agent at battle with others, but they are careful not to run any risks themselves through careless, inexperienced bidding. One of the greatest book collectors in the world, Mr. Henry E. Huntington, never bid. In all the years during which he was buying he never entered the lists to joust for himself.



THE BIBLIO-FIENDS

Drawing by Oliver Herford for Dr. Rosenbach's "Unpublishable Memoirs"

In the forty years I have been bidding I have found a new thrill in every sale. From my earliest years at Henkels's auctions to the most recent sales in London, Paris, and New York, I have repeatedly

known a fine exhilaration. I sniff the air like an old war horse at the smell of powder. How often have I felt my pulses race, my temperature rise with the rising bids! But as I grow older I find I have to fight that deadliest of maladies—conservatism. This is one thing in the world that the collector should pray to be delivered from. Of course it is awfully difficult to pay $500 to-day for a book that in your youth you could have picked up for only twenty, or to buy a book for $1000 which two years ago passed through your fingers for one third as much.

The late George D. Smith, a spectacular figure in the auction mart for more than twenty years, was the only man I ever knew entirely immune from conservatism. I can remember him at the Hoe sale in 1911-12. There he was constantly bidding against the sharpest and most astute members of both the European and the American book trade. How cool and collected he was in the very midst of battle! The comments of his competitors remained unnoticed by him when he paid what were then considered extravagant prices for books and manuscripts. And his judgment was right. To-day these same items can't be bought for two or three times the sums he paid. When he purchased, toward the end of the sale, a Gutenberg Bible for $50,000, everyone said he had gone quite mad. They did not realize that the same remarks were made sixty-five years earlier, when, in 1847, James Lenox had given £500—about $2500—for it. This copy is now in the New York Public Library. In my opinion the Gutenberg Bible was then worth every dollar of the $50,000 which G. D. S. paid for it. Ten years from now it will be cheap at $250,000.

There have been many notable auctions during the

past twenty years, but I shall never forget my first one in England, in 1907. A dear friend of mine, and a most intelligent collector of exquisite taste, Mr. William C. Van Antwerp, of San Francisco, had gathered together a small but delectable library, which he decided to sell at Sotheby's in March of that year. I crossed on the Oceanic with Alfred Quaritch, who occupied a commanding position in the book world.

I was but one of the small fry, out of college only a few years. Quaritch and I had been drawn to each other by the magnet of books. On the way over we talked of the sale, and I dwelt with especial emphasis on the fine first folio of Shakespeare in Van's collection. In a way, I was sounding out Quaritch, for I knew instinctively that it would be useless to bid against this giant of the auction room if he wanted the folio himself. I grew very nervous as we sat in the smoking room one evening when we were about five days out. I decided I had hemmed and hawed long enough. Finally I worked up courage to ask him to execute a bid for me on the folio.



SOTHEBY'S AUCTION ROOM IN LONDON

He seemed surprised, and did not answer for some moments. Then he asked me, “How much do you intend to bid? I warn you, if it’s too low I’ll buy it myself.”

I answered weakly, “Five thousand pounds.”

He opened his eyes wide. “That *is* a bid,” he said, “and I’ll get it for you.”

Then came the day of the auction in London. I remember sitting next to Quaritch, witnessing the battle of wits and bids at Sotheby’s. I was shaking like the proverbial aspen leaf, to a degree that I have never done since. The bidding on the folio opened at £500. After what seemed an interminable length of time, it was knocked down to Quaritch for £3600. I was so completely overcome with joy that I had to walk around the block for air and refreshment to buck me up. This was a handsome copy, bound in morocco by Bedford, a celebrated craftsman of the 70’s.

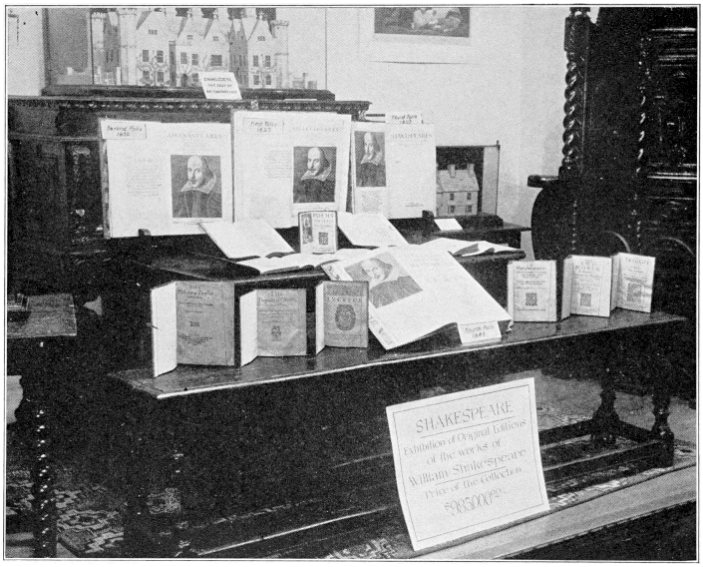
I recall, too, Harry Elkins Widener’s pleasure when this folio passed finally into his possession. I think of all the books of his fine collection, he valued this one the most. Years later, when we paid £8600—a little under $43,000—at the Baroness Burdett-Coutts’s sale, the record price for a Shakespeare folio, I received my brother Philip’s cable, advising me of our luck, without a tremor.

Fifteen years had rolled by; much water had run under the bridge. Poor Quaritch, my dearest friend in the book business, had passed away, only forty-two years old when he died. His death was a great loss to the world of rare books.

The price of a first folio indicates the trend of values in the English market, just as the Boucher Molière,

1734, shows the state of the French market, while the Dante printed in Foligno, 1472, tells the tale of the Italian market. These books are always rising in value, and it is the rapidity of their change in price that shows which way the wind is blowing. To-day, when the condition of a book is everything and collectors pay more attention to it than to anything else, fine first folios of Shakespeare are judged by these three points: First, the copy must have its full number of leaves, each page perfect, without facsimile. Second, the binding. It is, of course, more desirable in the original binding, or, next, rebound in the eighteenth century, or, lastly, in a good modern binding. In years to come the original binding will be the chief of all desiderata. Third, the folio must be of adequate size, about thirteen by eight and a quarter inches. A quarter of an inch one way or another can spell tragedy to the fanatical collector. If you are lucky enough to find a first folio having all three of these qualities, the gods are with you. I have been fortunate to procure such an one, the celebrated copy from Sir George Holford's library. It is perfect in every detail. It is exceptional in having the blank leaves, known in no other copy; its original old calf binding is without a single blemish.

This is the finest first folio known to exist. It is the cornerstone of a collection of Shakespeare's works which I have been gathering for many years. I remember the excitement when we exhibited in our Philadelphia show window the four folios, each in its original binding, the *Poems*, in a similar binding, and forty-one of the early quarto plays. The passionate interest shown by the man in the street indicated his never-flagging enthusiasm for anything pertaining to the greatest writer the world has known.



SHAKESPEARE WINDOW AT 1320 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA

In 1905, Mr. Bernard Buchanan MacGeorge, of Glasgow, sold four Shakespeare folios in their original binding to Marsden J. Perry, of Providence, Rhode Island. He doubtless believed he was using his cunning Scotch wisdom to a high degree when he steadfastly held out for £10,000. At this price he figured he was doing himself a neat turn, because he had paid only £1700 for them six years before. But if he had been a bit cannier, a little more patient, he would have received two or three times the sum Mr. Perry paid him. When the balance of the MacGeorge Library was offered for sale at Sotheby's in July 1924, all the bibliophiles in bookdom would have torn one another to bits to get the Shakespeare folios at the old price. But I was lucky enough to procure them when I purchased *en bloc* the Perry Library, and to-day they are in the library of Mr. Joseph Widener, at Lynnewood Hall, near Philadelphia.

Thank goodness, they are at least near home, where I can look at them to my heart's content.

The history of the Shakespeare folios is an interesting one. Shakespeare's genius was so overwhelming that even the least of the nitwits of his day appreciated him. His greatest contemporaries were the most eager to preserve his works. Immediately after his death in 1616 steps were taken to issue a complete edition of his plays. His manuscripts were probably collected, but, alas, not saved, and scholars of the time, many of whom had known him well, labored to procure a perfect text.

Three years passed. Then, in 1619, the English public was surprised to see issued a single volume containing nine plays. No one knows how many copies composed this edition, but it is a strange circumstance that but one copy is in existence to-day. I once owned it, but it finally passed to Mr. H. C. Folger, of New York, who added it to his remarkable collection of Shakespeareana. This one surviving copy is in its original binding. It has an index, too, in the quaint old handwriting of its first owner, Edward Gwynne, who proudly stamped his name in gilt on the outside cover. Even though I should not care to be dubbed a prophet in my own country, I do not hesitate to say that this book would bring at least $200,000 if it were sold on the block to-day.

This 1619 volume was but a makeshift, playing for its sale upon the magic name of Shakespeare. John Heminge and Henry Condell, both true and tried friends of the great Bard, and fellow actors, mentioned in his will, undertook to give the world a complete and correct edition of his plays. William Jaggard and his son Isaac were responsible for the

printing, a laborious task when you consider that the volume consisted of one thousand double-column pages. Thus, the great first folio was finally issued in 1623, in a plain calf binding. It contained a portrait of William Shakespeare, with a leaf of verses on the opposite page by his famous contemporary, Ben Jonson. These are among the finest lines ever written concerning Shakespeare, and perhaps the greatest from Jonson's pen. The original price of the first folio was five dollars a copy.

One pound in 1623! And yet in the years between 1700 and 1750 it had only advanced to ten, which reminds me of a good story. In 1790 the copy belonging to John Watson Reed was offered for sale. That astute collector, the Duke of Roxburghe, wanted it and commissioned an agent to buy it for him. The bidding started at five pounds and rose to the enormous sum of twenty guineas! Everyone was astounded. The duke's agent grew faint-hearted and passed a slip of paper to him suggesting that His Grace retire from the contest. The duke replied with these memorable and appropriate words:—

> Lay on, Macduff;
> And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"

The folio finally fell to the duke for thirty-five pounds. How often, when I feel myself weakening at a sale, do I think of the old duke's quotation from *Macbeth*. It should be the motto of every auction bidder.

The Duke of Roxburghe's library was sold at Sotheby's in 1812, and it included the first folio. It brought an advance of almost three hundred per cent, being purchased by the Duke of Devonshire for £100. It can be seen now in the Henry E. Huntington

Library. The sale of this collection more than one hundred and fifteen years ago provided a sensation which is still talked about, and was not equaled until the auction of the Gutenberg Bible a year ago last February. As Thomas Frognall Dibdin said, it reverberated around the world. The Valdarfer Boccaccio was the high light in the Roxburghe sale. This notorious volume was the only perfect copy of the first edition of the *Decameron*. I have always thought that his flowery description of the bidding which took place in that "grand æra of Bibliomania," as he was so pleased to term it, applies exactly to the tactics used in the modern auction room. Dibdin wrote as follows:—

> The room was crowded to excess; and a sudden darkness which came across gave rather an additional interest to the scene. At length the moment of sale arrived. Mr. Evans prefaced the putting up of the article by an appropriate oration, in which he expatiated upon its excessive rarity, and concluded by informing the company of the regret and even "anguish of heart" expressed by Mr. Van Praet that such a treasure was not at that time to be found in the imperial collection at Paris. However, it should seem Bonaparte's agent was present. Silence followed the address of Mr. Evans. On his right hand, leaning against the wall, stood Earl Spencer; a little lower down, and standing at right angles with His Lordship, appeared the Marquis of Blandford. The Duke, I believe, was not then present; but my Lord Althorp stood a little backward to the right of his father Earl Spencer. Such was "the ground taken up" by the adverse hosts.
>
> The honor of firing the first shot was due to a gentleman of Shropshire, unused to this species of warfare, and who seemed to recoil from the reverberation of the report himself had made! "One hundred guineas," he exclaimed. Again a pause ensued; but anon the biddings rose rapidly to 500

guineas. Hitherto, however, it was evident that the firing was but masked and desultory. At length all random shots ceased, and the champions before named stood gallantly up to each other, resolving not to flinch from a trial of their respective strengths.

"A thousand guineas" were bid by Earl Spencer—to which the Marquis added "ten." You might have heard a pin drop. All eyes were turned, all breathing well nigh stopped ... every sword was put home within its scabbard, and not a piece of steel was seen to move or to glitter save that which each of these champions brandished in his valorous hand. See, see! They parry, they lunge, they hit; yet their strength is undiminished, and no thought of yielding is entertained by either.... "Two thousand pounds are offered by the Marquis." ...

Then it was that Earl Spencer, as a prudent general, began to think of an useless effusion of blood and expenditure of ammunition—seeing that his adversary was as resolute and "fresh" as at the onset. For a quarter of a minute he paused; when my Lord Althorp advanced one step forward, as if to supply his father with another spear for the purpose of renewing the contest. His countenance was marked by a fixed determination to gain the prize—if prudence, in its most commanding form, and with a frown of unusual intensity of expression, had not bade him desist. The father and son for a few seconds converse apart; and the biddings are resumed.

"Two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds," said Lord Spencer. The spectators are now absolutely electrified. The Marquis quietly adds his usual "ten" ... and there is an END OF THE CONTEST! Mr. Evans, ere his hammer fell, made a due pause—and indeed, as if by something præternatural, the ebony instrument itself seemed to be charmed or suspended "in midair." However, at length down dropt the hammer ... and, as Lisardo has not merely poetically expressed himself, "the echo" of the sound of that fallen hammer "was heard in the libraries of Rome,

of Milan, and St. Mark."

The name Dibdin has come to be almost synonymous with "bibliomaniac." Although Pennypacker, twenty-five years ago, said that the true bibliomaniac was a rarissimo,—nearly as scarce as the dodo,—a new generation of Dibdin men is springing up. There are young men to-day who find it as difficult to pass an old bookstore or a junk shop as did those in years gone by; young fellows who will travel miles to enrich their knowledge of books. I'm afraid it's the old-timer, though, who lives among his books, sleeps among them, surrounded by folios, quartos, books of every size, who thrives in an atmosphere that is musty, who frowns upon cleanliness as a vice. Of course, such peculiarities are hardly necessary or desirable, but such men have lived. The modern Dibdin takes a course in bibliography at college and attends all book sales. He marks down prices, learns the various methods experienced bidders use, thus supplementing his college training with all that he learns in the auction room.

Many years ago I knew a young married man who lived in Orange. He was auction mad. One New York sale we both attended continued for twelve evenings. On the twelfth his bride appeared with him and he introduced her to the other maniacs. In those days it was quite unusual for a woman to appear at a book auction.

"Why did you bring Mrs. Blank to-night?" I inquired.

"Oh," said he, "it came to the point where I just had to prove there were such things as book auctions!"

Although the following tale has nothing to do with book auctions, I am reminded of it because it has distinctly to do with wives. And wives, there is no

doubt about it, have their niche in the book world, if only for the influence they have upon their book-mad consorts.

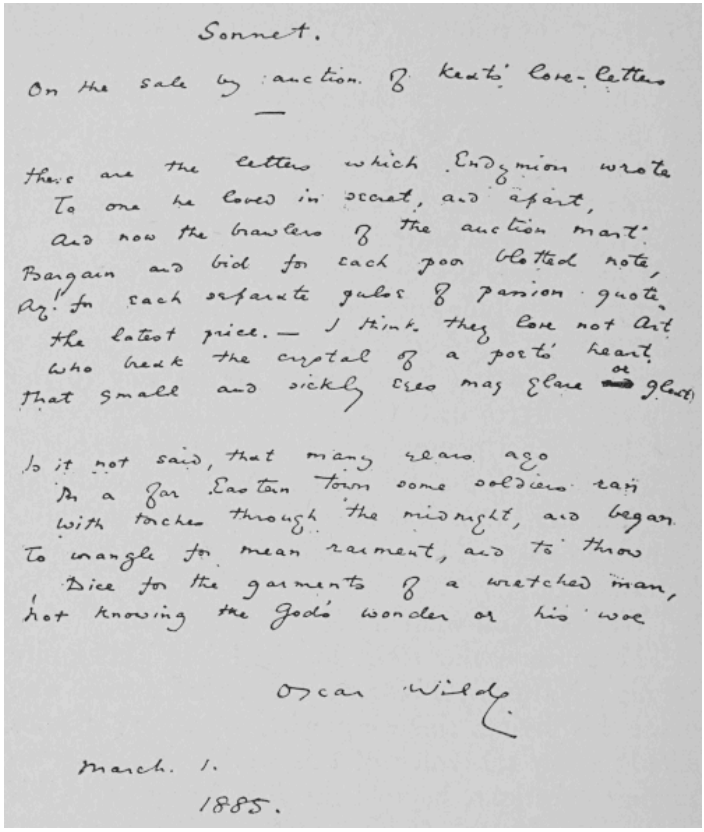
A small man with a shy, walruslike look came to see me one day in Philadelphia. His meek appearance was in marked contrast to the determined manner with which he greeted me. He introduced himself as a piano tuner from Harrisburg.

“I have here, doctor,” he said, pulling out of an inner pocket a blue envelope, “something which will interest you. I found it in a secondhand-furniture store among a bundle of papers on its way to the pulp mill. I rescued it.” He opened the envelope and drew out a pamphlet in brown paper wrappers. It was Poe’s *Prose Romances. No. I. Containing The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, published in Philadelphia in 1843. There are only three or four copies known to exist.

“What do you want for it?” I asked him.

“Three thousand eight hundred,” he said quite calmly. Naturally I was surprised that a man who made his living tinkering with refractory pianos should know the value of this work. In answer to further questions, he told me that he spent all his evenings and some of his days browsing in secondhand stores, in the hope of making a book find.

“And now my dream’s come true. I’m always picking up old books. It makes my wife wild. She always nags me. Wasting time and throwing away good cash, she calls it!”



Sonnet.

On the sale by auction of Keats' Love-Letters

—

These are the letters which Endymion wrote
To one he loved in secret, and apart,
And now the hawkers of the auction mart
Bargain and bid for each poor blotted note,
Ay! for each separate pulse of passion quote
The latest price. — I think they love not Art
Who break the crystal of a poet's heart
That small and sickly eyes may glare or gloat.

Is it not said, that many years ago
In a far Eastern town some soldiers ran
With torches through the midnight, and began
To wrangle for mean raiment, and to throw
Dice for the garments of a wretched man,
Not knowing the God's wonder or his woe

Oscar Wilde.

March. 1.
1885.

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF OSCAR WILDE'S SONNET,
"ON THE SALE BY AUCTION OF KEATS' LOVE-LETTERS"



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

I had to have this book. While I wrote out the check I asked him why he wanted this peculiar sum, and what he would do with it. He answered without hesitation.

“The first thing I’ll do,” he said, “is to hand over $800 of it to the missus and let her go to Europe, like she’s always wanted to do. I told her I’d fix her one day! I guess she won’t nag me any more!”

I recall the crowd present at the sale of the collection of that great editor of Keats, J. Buxton Forman, in 1920. Students, collectors, poets, seers, bookmen were there. Suddenly the auctioneer announced that the next item was a love letter of Keats to Fanny Brawne. Whereupon my friend Kit Morley was inspired and wrote this exquisite sonnet, which he dedicated to me:—

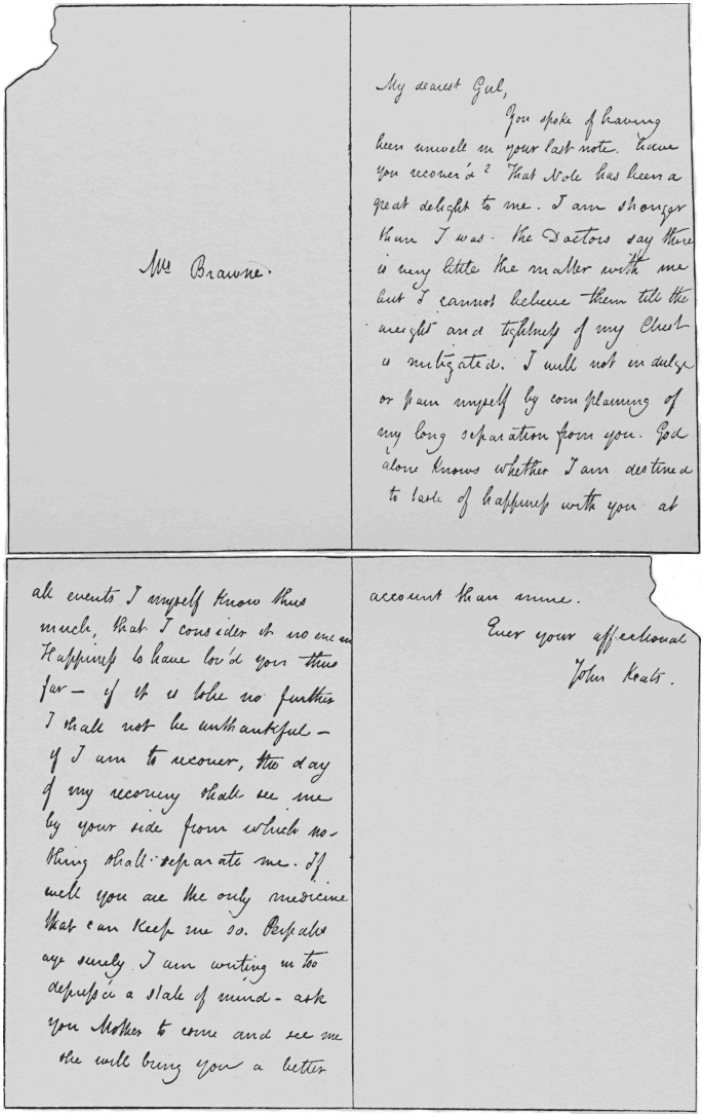
IN AN AUCTION ROOM

Letter of John Keats to Fanny Brawne,
Anderson Galleries, March 15, 1920
To Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach

"*How about this lot?*" said the auctioneer;
"*One hundred, may I say, just for a start?*"
Between the plum-red curtains, drawn apart,
A written sheet was held.... And strange to hear—
(Dealer, would I were steadfast as thou art),
The cold quick bids. (*Against you in the rear!*)
The crimson salon, in a glow more clear,
Burned bloodlike purple as the poet's heart.

Song that outgrew the singer! Bitter Love
That broke the proud hot heart it held in thrall,
Poor script, where still those tragic passions move—
Eight hundred bid: fair warning: the last call:
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Sold for eight hundred dollars—Doctor R.!

Christopher Morley



Mrs Brawne.

My dearest Girl,

You spoke of having been unwell in your last note. Have you recovered? That Note has been a great delight to me. I am stronger than I was. The Doctors say there is very little the matter with me but I cannot believe them till the weight and tightness of my Chest is mitigated. I will not indulge or pain myself by complaining of any long separation from you. God alone knows whether I am destined to taste of happiness with you at all events I myself know thus much, that I consider it no mean Happiness to have lov'd you thus far — if it is to be no further I shall not be unthankful — if I am to recover, the day of my recovery shall see me by your side from which nothing shall separate me. If well you are the only medicine that can keep me so. Perhaps my anxiety I am writing in too depress'd a state of mind — ask your Mother to come and see me she will bring you a better account than mine.

Ever your affectionate
John Keats.

LETTER OF KEATS TO FANNY BRAWNE

IV

SOME LITERARY FORGERIES

"I CAST my bread upon the waters, and it came back to me after many days!"

"What do you mean by that?" I asked the tall white-haired man who sat opposite me in his luxurious library. The room was an enormous one, and thousands of fine books lined the walls from floor to ceiling. My friend seemed in a confidential mood, and I expected to hear something startling. This Gothic room, with its early Spanish religious sculptures, had the very atmosphere of a confessional. My companion had had a somewhat weird career, and as I watched him through the heavy smoke of our cigars I recalled many strange stories of his youth. Once he had been a lawyer's clerk, but now he was a director in many banks, with financial interests all over the world. The variegated stages by which he had risen to such eminence, not only in business but as a collector of pictures and books, were not always clear to the friends of his later years.

He told me that he had been so poor as a boy he had often known hunger; that, as a scrivener in the lawyer's office, he had eked out a most pitiable existence copying deeds and other legal documents. In 1885 he happened to read in the newspapers of famous auction sales of autographs in London, and of the first arrival in this country of representatives of

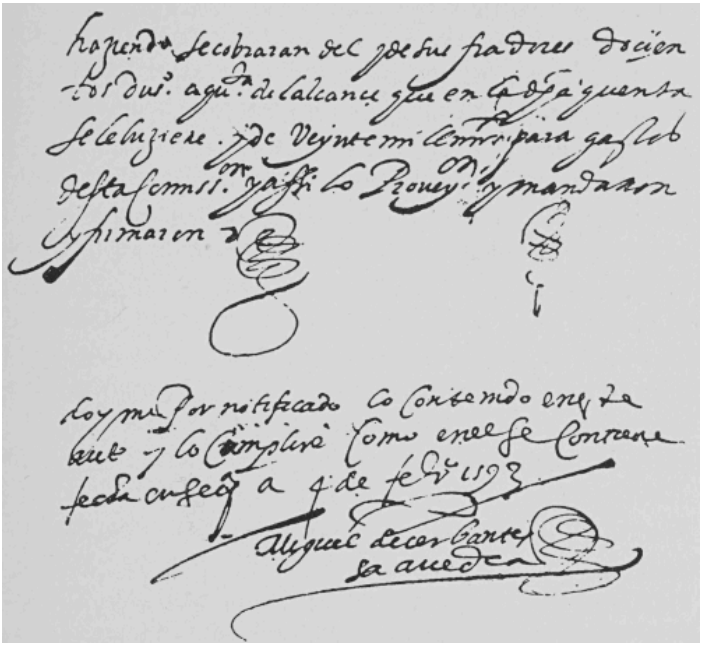
the English book houses. For instance, Bernard Quaritch was holding his first exhibition in New York at the Hotel Astor. General Brayton Ives, Robert Hoe, and other great collectors of the glaring ‘80’s were beginning to form their libraries. My friend was fascinated, and as he had no capital to invest in great rarities himself, he thought he would make a few. He determined to try his hand at imitation.

Just about that period there was an awakened interest in the ill-fated Major André, who had suffered death as a British informer. In his grimy boarding house on Grand Street my friend practiced imitating André’s handwriting. He finally manufactured a splendid letter in which Major André wrote to General Washington requesting that he be shot as a soldier and not hanged as a spy. As he described his youthful fabrication his mouth lighted with a smile of pleasure, and he confessed that he had been very proud of this forgery; it had been a work of art! He finally actually sold this pseudo-André letter for $650! Those were the days when unpedigreed rarities were more easily disposed of, as there were not so many autograph sharks around as there are to-day.

Thirty years elapsed. My friend had grown in riches and in reputation. Now he was a noted collector; forgotten were the peccadillos of his youth. In 1915, during the Great War, he noticed the advertisement of a sale in London containing an André letter. He cabled an unlimited bid, as was now his custom. The letter was bought for him for £280. A few weeks later, upon opening the package which he received from the custom house, the inclosed autograph letter looked familiar to him. A closer scrutiny revealed the fact that he had bought back, at three times what he

had received for it, his own fabrication!

Several years ago I had the remarkable good fortune to secure for my own library a letter written by Cervantes. It is the only one known in a private collection to-day. Other letters of his—and they are few—may be seen only in the Spanish National Library at Madrid. Cervantes's autographs are so rare that the British Museum possesses no example of the handwriting of the author of *Don Quixote*, nor is there one in the library of the Hispanic Society in New York City, founded by that great collector, Mr. Archer M. Huntington. From this you may realize to some extent the desirability and scarcity of a letter of Cervantes. Written on two pages, and dated February 4, 1593, it is extremely legible, in a bold Castilian hand, and contains his signature in full: Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, with a fanciful twirling flourish becoming to a great Spanish author. Many an expert eye has passed upon it gloatingly in years gone by, for it has been in the celebrated collections, first of Benjamin Fillon, in Paris, and later of Alfred Morrison, of London.



LAST PAGE OF THE ONLY LETTER IN THIS COUNTRY WRITTEN BY CERVANTES

Some time after acquiring this celebrated autograph I was startled one day in New York, when an agent from a well-known English autograph house telephoned me and said he had a wonderful letter of Cervantes. He asked £3000 for it, which was certainly not too high, when you stop to consider that Cervantes's place in literature is second only to that of Shakespeare. If a Shakespeare letter were found to-day many collectors would not consider $500,000 too much to pay for it. What, then, is a Cervantes letter worth? While I sat mulling over these mathematical problems, the doorbell rang and the dealer came in. His manner was important, almost condescending. His precious letter was inclosed in a fine morocco case, elaborately tooled. He removed it from its costly trappings, and after a

moment of suspense, which was really most effective, he handed the letter to me. I could scarcely believe my eyes. I looked for the date—February 4, 1593. It was an excellently forged copy of the one in my possession.

“Where in the devil did you get this?”

His face turned the color of a carnation and his swanky manner of assurance wilted away.

“Just what do you mean?” he asked me slowly. I motioned him to follow, and took him into my book vault, where I laid his clever forgery next to mine the original. For a moment I thought he would crumple up and fall to the floor. I have never seen anyone so completely nonplussed. He had really believed his Cervantes letter to be the original, and had come in all good faith to sell it to me. I proved to him how some forger, after securing the sheets of old paper, had, through a process of photo-engraving, cleverly produced the letter which he had so exultingly shown to me.

The beautiful thing about the book business is that you must be constantly on your guard. It makes the game exciting to know that there are beings who, like vultures, would pick your bones if you but gave them the chance. Thank heaven for them. The chase is more exhilarating on their account.

The atmosphere of Wall Street is that of a Quaker meetinghouse beside it.



ORIGINAL DRAWING BY DAUMIER OF DON QUIXOTE

Forgeries have been in existence as long as the collecting game itself. During the Renaissance forgers were very active in every field of creative art. Not only did they make imitations of great Greek and Latin classics, which were just beginning their popular vogue in Europe, but they very cleverly copied old medals, and fabricated old gems too. Of course, the collector himself is in a sense morally responsible for the forger. The collector's overdeveloped sense of acquisitiveness leads him to pay extravagant prices for his favorites; he will search out and buy every available pen scratch of some great writer.

A poor wretch in an attic reads in the newspapers that a capitalist has just paid $2000 for an autograph letter of Robert Burns. He then begins to "discover" other letters and documents by the same author. This is the launching of a career that is usually full of excitement and gives full scope to the imagination. The forger is a picturesque figure until he, too, is discovered and publicly condemned. This class of men—I know of no women forgers—is responsible for the literary detective. There is real sport in tracking these fabrications. An ability to tell the original from the false, the genuine from the

spurious, sometimes under the most trying circumstances, has developed almost into a fine art.

There are men who make literary detecting their profession. Their eyes are so well trained that they are seldom wrong when pronouncing judgment. They are as fully aware of the thousand and one tricks of the professional forger's game as they are alert to the peculiarities of each author's handwriting.

These experts could be numbered on the fingers of one hand. When you stop to consider that there are men even now in dark holes in London, in obscure garrets in Paris, in flats in Harlem, and in apartments in Atlantic City, making their livelihood forging autographs, it puts you pleasantly on your guard. These fellows are very often unsuccessful authors with a certain amount of erudition, broken-down booksellers, or other bits of riffraff from the literary world. I once knew a genial old college professor who turned from unlucrative teaching to make an honest penny, as he termed it, by forging.

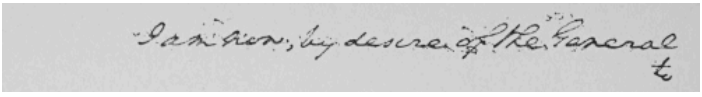
My uncle Moses always told with a chuckle of his experience with an Englishman by the name of Robert Spring. He called at my uncle's shop in Commerce Street one day in the 60's and said he had an old document signed by Washington. In fact, it was a military pass issued to some Revolutionary worthy, permitting him to go through the lines. My uncle naturally pricked up his ears at the mention of his favorite character, General Washington, and immediately asked to see this interesting relic. The Englishman then held it up dramatically, and when Uncle Moses read it he felt like embracing his visitor. For, lo and behold, the pass was made out in the name of one of my uncle's own ancestors!

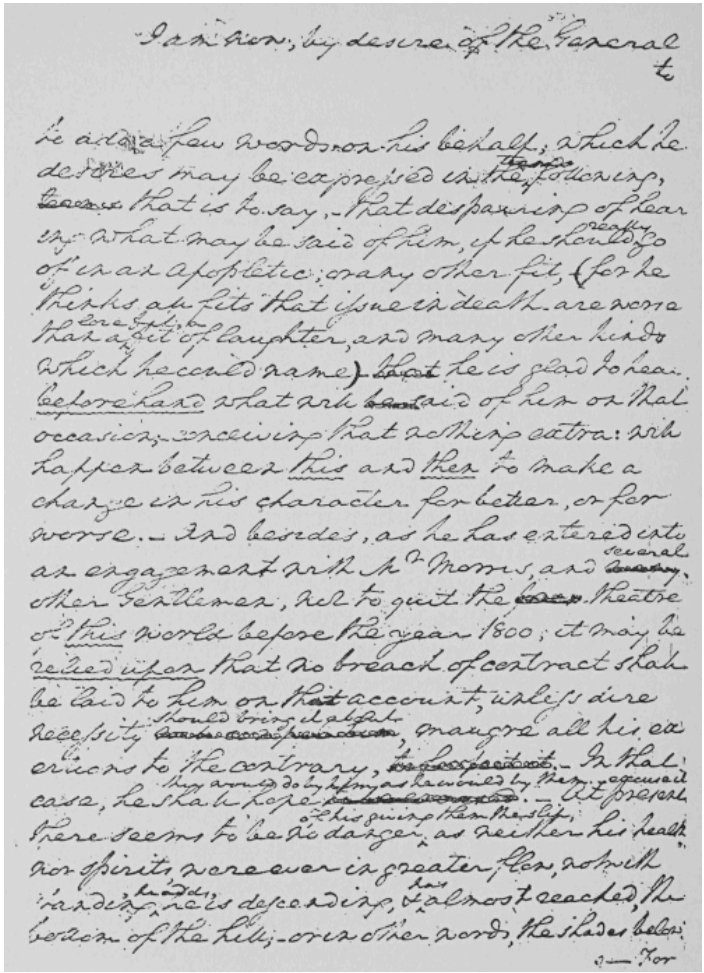
It had every earmark of age, was written on old paper in faded ink, the creases were almost worn through, and the edges were frayed. To his covetous eyes the pass seemed much more desirable on account of its connection with his forbears. He asked the Englishman what he wanted for it and how it had come into his possession. He glibly explained he had found it in an old-fashioned hair trunk in the attic of a house in old Philadelphia. He wanted fifteen dollars for this pass—a large sum in those days, when one could buy a full autograph letter of Washington for that much money. Uncle Moses rose to this thin story as a trout strikes at a fly.

Some years later Ferdinand J. Dreer, of Philadelphia, a connoisseur, came to see him. Among other things, my uncle showed him the faded pass. Mr. Dreer looked at it for a moment, and then, according to Uncle Moses, turned to him and in that cheerfully disgusted tone which one collector uses to a brother who has made a foolish deal, said:—

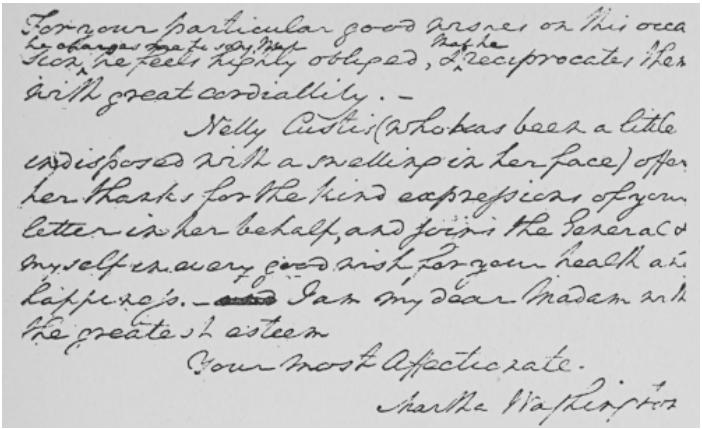
“Mr. Polock, you, of all men, should know better! This thing is an arrant forgery, and worth less than nothing.”

It later appeared that Robert Spring was the first great forger of American documents. He had written many such military passes, all of them with spurious signatures of General Washington. But he was always foxy enough to look up the name of some ancestor of the man on whom he planned to prey. Uncle Moses, nevertheless, remained stoical, and said this outlay of fifteen dollars was one of the most profitable investments he had ever made. It placed him on his guard as nothing had before; was, in fact, an investment that would in time be worth thousands of dollars to him.





I am sure, by desire of the General
to
he add a few words on his behalf; which he
desires may be expressed in the following,
that is to say, - That desparing of hear
ing what may be said of him, if he should go
off in an apoplectic; or any other fit, (for he
thinks all fits that issue in death are worse
than a fit of laughter, and many other kinds
which he could name) that he is glad to hear
beforehand what are said of him on that
occasion, conceiving that nothing extra: ord
happen between this and then to make a
change in his character for better, or for
worse. - And besides, as he has entered into
an engagement with Mr Morris, and several
other Gentlemen, not to quit the Theatre
of this world before the year 1800; it may be
relied upon that no breach of contract shall
be laid to him on that account, unless dire
necessity should bring it about, maugre all his ex
ertions to the contrary, in that respect. - In that
case, he shall hope to be excused by them, as having by them acquired
of his giving them the slip,
there seems to be no danger, as neither his health
nor spirits were ever in greater flow, notwith
standing his descending, but almost reached, the
bottom of the hill; or in other words, the ladder below.
— For


For your particular good wishes on this occa-
sion, he feels highly obliged, & reciprocates them
with great cordiality. –
Nelly Custis (who has been a little
indisposed with a swelling in her face) offers
her thanks for the kind expressions of your
letter in her behalf, and joins the General &
myself in every good wish for your health &
happiness. – I am my dear Madam with
the greatest sincerity
Your most Affectionate.
Martha Washington

FROM A LETTER IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF GEORGE WASHINGTON,
SIGNED BY HIM FOR MARTHA WASHINGTON

Spring's career as a forger lasted a surprisingly long time. He reached a point where he made no effort to conceal from his Philadelphia customers the almost made-to-order character of these documents of his. He salved their feelings by saying he would never think of offering them anything that was not genuine. Of course, he was an excellent penman. Washington was his favorite model, perhaps because he had greatest success in copying his handwriting. He sold most of his productions to persons who lived abroad, who were not regular collectors. He assumed various names when he wrote to members of the English nobility, representing himself sometimes as a widow in want, or as the needy daughter of Stonewall Jackson, thus feeding most lucratively upon the kind-heartedness of wealthy people thousands of miles away. He was arrested several times, but finally reformed. Before dying he grew to be a most proper and meticulously honest dealer in books and engravings, and, I suppose, rests comfortably now in the bookmen's heaven.

I have collected letters and documents of Washington almost from the beginning of my career. To-day I own an interesting, authentic collection of more than two hundred, written between the years 1755 and 1799. He was a prolific correspondent. His handwriting is always legible; the writing of a sensitive, clear-thinking person whose nerves were under excellent control. Many of these letters are the charming messages which any leisured gentleman of that period might write. Others are on military matters of the utmost importance. Another series deals entirely with agriculture, and shows how well the masterly general could play the gentleman farmer.

The years which have passed since his death have seen the world flooded with Washington autographs. But it took a measure of daring and a fanatical spirit of patriotism to forge letters of his while he was still alive and fulfilling with vigor the now historical duties of his military career. It was in May or June of 1777 that a book appeared in London purporting to contain certain letters of Washington written in 1776 to friends and relatives of his in Virginia. These letters paint him as a man whose motives were questionable. The false lines in this book relate his pretended thoughts and feelings about the Revolution in which he was then engaged. They make him say he is tired of it all; that he wishes for peace at any price with the mother country. They reveal him as a military scapegrace with the soul, but not the courage, of a traitor! Despite the publisher's preface explaining his possession of these intimate documents, it was soon proved that the letters were deliberate forgeries. Nevertheless, they were of grave importance at the time, for they served as a powerful propaganda against Washington, and therefore the

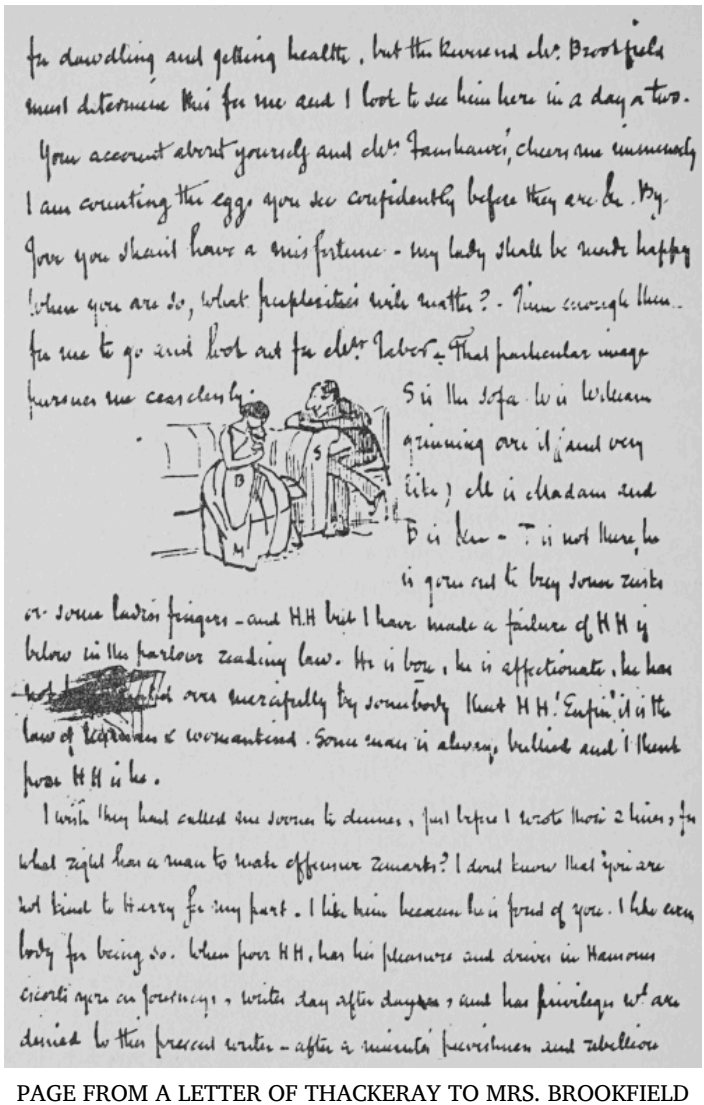
colonies, and made a strong appeal to the ignorant and easily biased mind.

Forgers must have, above all, a keen sense of chronology. This is the first great requisite after their natural skill in imitating handwriting. For instance, they cannot refer to the discovery of America in a letter supposed to have been written before that event took place, or date a letter of Dickens, 1872, two years after his death, and expect to get away with it. Both these slips, strange to say, have occurred. In fact, forgers frequently make similar crude errors, alluding to incidents that hadn't happened at the time the letter was dated.

It is plain, therefore, that the master forger must have his chronology at his finger tips. He should know not only the dates of history, which he can find in any textbook, but he must be familiar with the history of costume, of furnishings, and decorations also. I remember reading the invention of one gentleman's brain and pen in which he alluded to hoop skirts ten years before they put in their dreadful appearance. The literary forger hoping for success should also acquire an almost endless knowledge of the colloquial language of the period in which he writes, and must be naturally a student of orthography and spelling. In fact, he has taken up the one career where he has literally to mind his P's and Q's!

It is fairly easy to imitate the writing of a distinguished character; the most difficult part is to interpret, as well, the thoughts of the equally distinguished mind. A forger of Thackeray wrote the name of the author of *Vanity Fair* in many volumes, together with a short comment about the text. He composed a pointed criticism of each work, or

invented what he believed to be some smart phrase about the author. In this case the signature and the writing itself are so excellent that they almost defy detection, but the thoughts are no more those of the great Thackeray than are mine of Shakespeare.



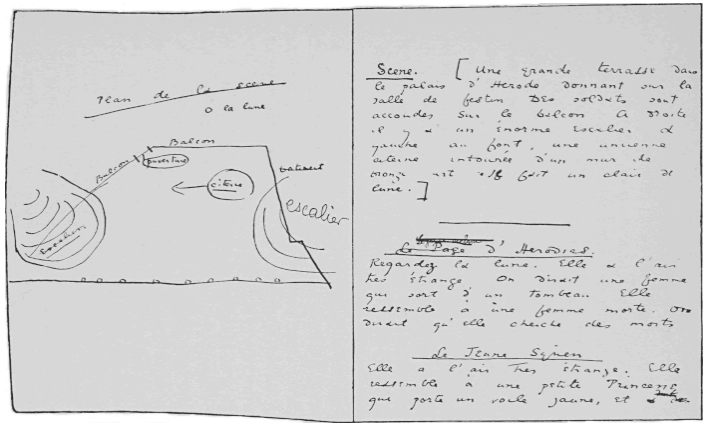
PAGE FROM A LETTER OF THACKERAY TO MRS. BROOKFIELD

Not many are privileged to see presentation copies actually in the making. A friend of mine told me of an experience he had in London. One day he strolled into a little bookshop near the British Museum. He looked over some dusty volumes for a time, and finally found one which he wanted to buy. There was no clerk in the front of the shop, so he walked to the rear, where he discovered a little old man seated at a large table. Before him was a row of books all opened at the title pages. The busy old fellow was bent over another and so absorbed in his work that he heard nothing. My friend looked over his shoulder. He was committing a little quiet forgery! In other words he was caught in "fragrant delectation." On the title page he was painstakingly forming Lewis Carroll's autograph. Before my friend left he had an opportunity to see what was written. He found, much to his astonishment, that the old gentleman was inditing to long-deceased friends of Lewis Carroll, copies of *Alice in Wonderland*, each one with an appropriate inscription. When asked the reason for all this industry, he replied, "I am making them for the American market!"

Among the many bugaboos which the forger has to face are watermarks woven into paper. These are the manufacturer's trade-marks, and often show the date the paper was made. You can see them if you hold the paper to the light. Quite recently I was offered three manuscripts supposed to be in the hand of Oscar Wilde. His exquisite though affected Greek style of handwriting was well enough imitated. But when I pointed out to the man who offered the manuscripts to me that they were written upon paper which bore the watermarks of a manufacturer who had made it during the Great War, he suddenly remembered an appointment and hurriedly made his

departure.

About twenty years ago a celebrated French firm of book and autograph dealers cabled my brother Philip that they were offering for sale the original manuscript of Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*. Wilde, who was a literary exhibitionist if ever there was one, gave *Salomé* to the world in French, and not such very good French at that. As I had an extensive collection of Wilde autographs even then, I was extremely eager to own the original of this famous work also. Before my reply could reach the firm in France, some luckier collector who was on the spot at the time bought it. I was very much annoyed, but concealed my chagrin as best I could, not even inquiring who the buyer was. I suspected it was some French author. The year before last, when on my annual pilgrimage to England, a French journalist came to see me one day at the Carlton Hotel in London, with the news that he knew the man who owned the *Salomé* manuscript, and was informed that he would part with it if paid a sufficiently high price.

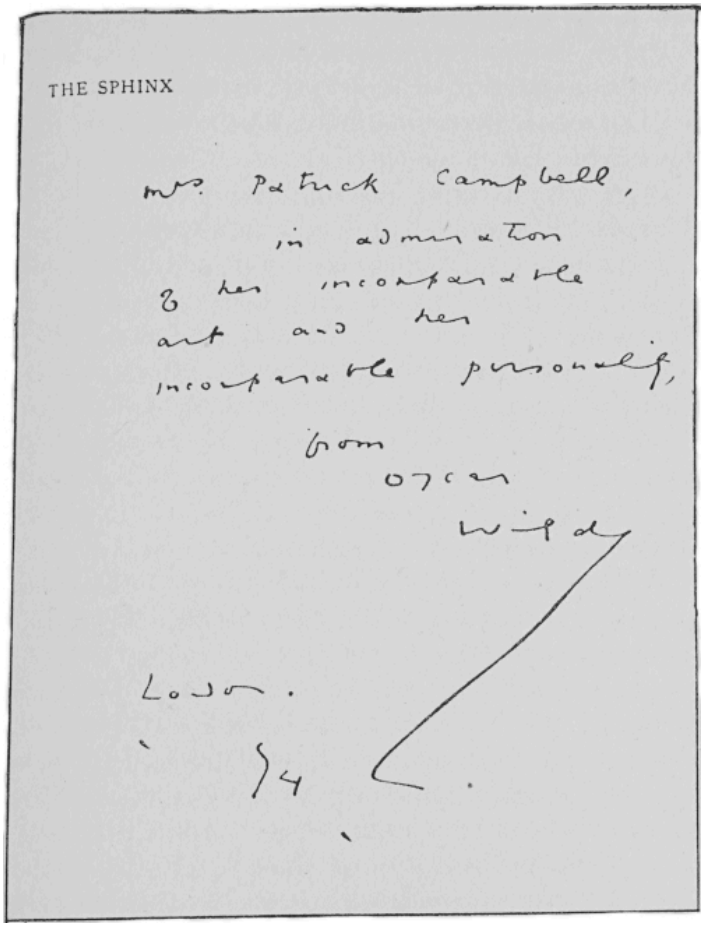


PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF OSCAR WILDE'S "SALOMÉ"

Now, I am never frightened at high prices. I asked my friend to return to France and buy it for me. Two days passed. Then I received the news that I was again too late. It was plain that Salomé was playing hide and seek with me, and placing my head on a charger. After two months in England I went to Paris. I had hardly arrived before the collector who last purchased *Salomé* offered to sell it. I asked him to bring it immediately to my hotel. With my nerves on edge, I kept telling myself that this time she should not escape me. Now, the collector in question was supposed to be a judge of autographs. He arrived and took the manuscript from its case. I fairly grabbed it from him, fearing that the evil Salomé would sprout wings and fly out of the window. I opened the cover to the first page, looked at it, turned the second, then the third. Quickly I closed it and gave it back to him. A silence followed during which he regarded me in amazement.

"No, thank you," I said; "I am looking for Salomé in the flesh, not a will-o'-the-wisp. Your manuscript is a forgery!"

It was plain this poor fellow had been deceived. He walked up and down my room, tearing at his hair in the best French manner, for he had given a good sum for this clever fabrication. I, too, was deeply disappointed, after tracking over Europe for it. Like the villain in the play, Salomé still evaded me.


THE SPHINX

Mrs. Patrick Campbell,
in admiration
of her incomparable
art and her
incomparable personality,
from
Oscar
Wilde

London.
'94

DEDICATION OF OSCAR WILDE'S "THE SPHINX"
TO MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL

In Philadelphia a year later I received a cable from a firm of auctioneers in Paris, offering me the original manuscript of *Salomé* once more. I naturally paid no attention to the offer, thinking it another forgery. I was tired of the wiles of this wicked woman. I had come to the conclusion that this work was not, by some weaving of the fates, for the house of Rosenbach. No more fool's errands for me.

A few weeks after, when dining with a well-known American collector in New York, he said to me:

“Doctor, I have something which will open even your eyes. I have *Salomé*!”

Naturally, I could not suppress a cynical laugh. “Another forgery?” I smilingly inquired.

After dinner we went to his library, and he pointed very proudly to two old copy books on the table. The moment I looked at the pages I knew that at last I held the original in my hands. How envious I was! But I now realized this manuscript could never be mine. I felt truly heartbroken. My friend, seeing I was not exactly elated over his treasure, but rather downcast, asked the reason. I related the whole story of my chase.

With great generosity he replied, with the air of a sultan presenting a favorite slave, “Doctor, I don’t want to stand in your way. If you want her, she is yours.” He told me its history as far as he knew it; the manuscript had been purchased by Pierre Louÿs, the eminent French poet. It was he who had bought it directly from the shop in Paris when I first tried to obtain it twenty years before. It is far more precious to-day than it was then. Not only is it the greatest work from the pen of Oscar Wilde but it is the one work of his that has been translated into all languages. It has also been used as the libretto by Richard Strauss for his startling and beautiful opera.

The up-to-date literary forger always keeps his eye upon the market. Genuine letters of certain famous, or infamous, men and women will always command high prices. Yet the styles in collecting change as in everything else. One decade there may be a sudden craze for Byron letters; the next, autograph letters or

documents pertaining to Keats or Shelley are frantically sought.

So it goes. One cycle begins as another cycle ends. Therefore, forgers' productions often swarm into the market when the popularity of an autograph is on the crest of the wave. There are certain historical characters whose autographs will always sell at top prices. With this in mind, one of the greatest hoaxes ever planned was, for a time, put over by a French forger a few years after the middle of the nineteenth century. Vrain Lucas was his name, and his guileless customer was a noted mathematician, Michel Chasles. I first knew of Lucas's wretched forgeries through hearing my uncle Moses tell of them; in a way, it was rather humorous, for when he told me the story he became as enraged as though Lucas had taken him in, rather than Chasles.

Vrain Lucas was a middle-aged man of fair education and rather well read. By his own confession he had manufactured more than twenty-five thousand spurious autographs, many of which he sold to Chasles over a period of eight years. During that time Chasles had doubted his word only once. Lucas immediately offered to buy back everything he had sold him, and thus Chasles's faith was restored.

This charlatan, Lucas, must have had a certain hypnotic influence over Chasles, plus the assurance and the courage of Old Nick himself. Chasles's belief in him, however, proved Lucas's undoing. For when he sold him two letters from Charles V to Rabelais, Chasles, in his excitement and delight, presented them to the Academy of Belgium. The letters for a time were believed to be genuine. Then Lucas came again to Chasles, this time with letters from Pascal to Boyle and Sir Isaac Newton, in which the writer

proved that he, and not Newton, had discovered the law of gravitation.

You can imagine how deeply moved was Chasles, the naïve mathematician. He rushed with them to the French Academy of Science, and at once the scientific world was stirred into a commotion. At the height of this agitation Sir David Brewster came forward and announced that the letters must be from the pen of an impostor, proving conclusively at the same time that Newton was a mere child of ten when these pretended messages of Pascal were written. Thus began the beginning of the end for the forger.

Certain testimony given by Chasles at Lucas's trial before a tribunal of the Seine, in 1870, is almost unbelievable. It seems ridiculous to me that any man, especially a collector, could have been so simple and gullible as was Chasles. He spent 140,000 francs, a lot of money in those days, for a list of autograph letters that is too good to pass over lightly. Although Monsieur Lucas supplied his customer with the important names of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, including Boccaccio, Cervantes, Dante, Racine, Shakespeare, and Spinoza, he likewise delved into the remote past and produced letters from Abélard, Alcibiades, Attila, Julius Cæsar, Charlemagne, Ovid, Pliny, Plutarch, and Pompey!

Lucas was careful enough to mix an ink for his forgeries which, when dry, gave the appearance of age. Then he treated the completed masterpieces in such a way as to make them look worn and of great age. But his cleverness was only half-witted! He had the audacity not only to write these ancient epistles on paper from local mills, which showed the watermarks of Angoulême, but most daringly

inscribed them in modern French!

The late Simon Gratz, in his delightful and authoritative volume, *A Book about Autographs*, gives translations of several of these shameless fabrications. Here is the letter which Chasles believed Cleopatra wrote to Julius Cæsar:—

> Cleopatra, Queen, to her very beloved Julius Cæsar, Emperor.
>
> MY VERY BELOVED:—
>
> Our son Cæsarion is well. I hope that he will soon be able to support the travel from here to Marseilles, where I need to send him to study, as much for the good air one breathes there as for the fine things which are taught. I beg you will tell me how long you will still remain in that country, for I want myself to take our son there and see you on this occasion. This is to tell you, my very beloved, the pleasure I feel when I am near you, and meanwhile I pray the gods to have you in their guard.
>
> The XI March year of Rome VCCIX
>
> CLEOPATRA

Think with what pious glee Monsieur Chasles read the following priceless letter from Lazarus, the resuscitated, to Saint Peter!

> MY DEAR FRIEND PETRUS:—
>
> You tell me you have noticed in the writings of Cæsar and in those of Cicero that one of the most important parts of the Druids' religion consists in sacrificing savage men. It is true they take in an erroneous sense this principle, that men can only appreciate the life God gave them by offering Him the life of a man. They have continued that inhuman and bloody practice until the time of Cicero. This is why he says they soil and profane their temple and altars by offering there human victims, and here Cicero is right in insulting a worship so barbarous, saying it is a strange thing that to satisfy for what

> they owe to their religion they must first dishonor it by some murder. They cannot be religious without being homicides. The infamy of this horrible maxim has reflected on all the Gauls, even if it has been practiced only in some places. But the arms and the conquest of the Romans have wiped out this infamy and I do not believe that it is practiced anywhere now. Amen.
>
> This X August XLVII
>
> LAZARUS

Lucas's interpretation of Biblical characters was rather unusual. Perhaps it was this quality, which so fascinated his generous customer, that caused him to be blind to obvious discrepancies. Here is rather a quaint letter purporting to be from Mary Magdalene to Lazarus:—

> MY VERY BELOVED BROTHER:—
>
> That which you tell us of Petrus, the Apostle of our meek Jesus, gives us hope that soon we shall see him here and I dispose myself to receive him well. Our sister Martha also rejoices of it. Her health is very tottering and I fear her passing away. This is why I recommend her to your good prayers. The good girls who have come to place themselves under our guidance are admirable for us and make us the most amiable caresses. It is enough said, my very beloved brother, that our sojourn in these countries of the Gaul pleases us much, that we have no desire to leave it, also none of our friends suggest it. Do you not think that those Gauls who were thought barbarian nations are not at all so, and judging only by what we have learned it must be from these that the light of science started. I have a great desire to see you and beg our Lord may have you in favor.
>
> This X June XLVI
>
> MAGDALENE

In this fourth epistle, written by Alexander the Great, Lucas, the true Frenchman, does not forget once

more to let words of flattery for France—Gaul—drip from the pen of the King of Macedonia. This letter follows:—

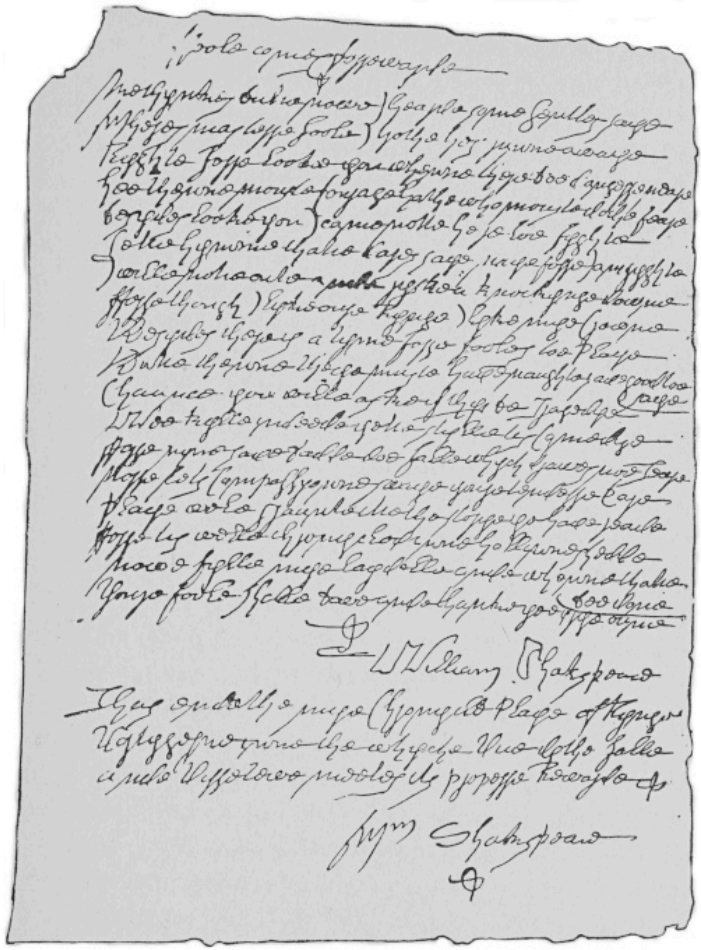
> Alexander Rex to his very beloved Aristotle, Greeting.
>
> MY BELOVED:—
>
> I am not satisfied because you have made public certain of your books which you had to keep under the seal of secrecy, for it is a profanation of their value; and no more render them public without my consent. As to what you asked of me, to travel to the country of the Gauls in order to learn the sciences of the Druids, of whom Pythagoras made so fine a eulogy, not only do I permit you but I entreat you to go for the good of my people, as you are not ignorant in what esteem I hold the nation which I consider as the one that carries the light in the world. I salute you.
>
> This XX of the Kalends of May, year of the CV Olympiad
>
> ALEXANDER

Old Chasles got all that was coming to him, and the 140,000 francs that he spent on the Lucas inventions were as nothing compared with the great joy the world in general, and antiquarians in particular, have experienced in reading these altogether amusing epistles.

Being sometimes called a pirate myself, I have always been interested in reading about them. I remember reveling in *Treasure Island*, soon after it appeared in 1883. But instead of the pieces of eight and flashing gems which Stevenson conjured up for the boyish mind, I substituted, in my youthful imagination, rare books. This seems far-fetched, yet it is absolutely true. Instead of Long John Silver's doubloons and sequins, I put in their place first

editions and manuscripts. They were more to me, then and now, than all the treasure of the Indies. And yet, in the first years of my passion for them, I rarely gave thought to forgeries. I had that superb reliance upon instinct which is a part and parcel of youth. I felt that if there were forgeries about I could sniff them as a dog follows a scent. So I was not really interested in forgers and their works until I read in a book for the first time an account of William Henry Ireland, the greatest fabricator of them all.

Ireland was a youthful scamp, less than eighteen years old, who in 1795 pulled the leg of almost the entire literary world with his “discovery” of many Shakespearean manuscripts. He was the son of an engraver in London, and doubtless inherited the facile fingers which brought him his peculiar fame. Ireland senior reverenced all relics of antiquity, and especially those which were connected with the memory of Shakespeare. He was almost a fanatic on this subject and gave his son to understand that his greatest desire would be satisfied the day that he was lucky enough to find an autograph manuscript of the Bard of Avon. I’ve had that feeling myself. After being dragged hither and yon by his father, who searched every nook and cranny where Shakespeare was supposed to have stayed, the filial William Henry decided upon a course of his own to make his father completely happy.



FORGERY OF SHAKESPEARE MANUSCRIPT
BY WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND

He was apprenticed at the time to an attorney, and it was a part of his daily work to study ancient documents, such as leases and wills. He sometimes read in books the histories of various estates in Great Britain, and occasionally a facsimile of Shakespeare's signature was printed in them. One day he came across some unused parchment at the end of an old

rent roll. His imagination began to work, I suppose, as he studied the Shakespeare facsimile before him, and the echoes of old deeds, with their quaint phrases, doubtless rang in his ears. Thus he set about practising the penmanship of an earlier era. Finding that he wrote with amazing ease, he immediately made up a lease between William Shakespeare and John Heminge, with one Michael Fraser and Elizabeth, his wife. When the ink was sufficiently dried he took it home to his father, who at the sight of it nearly dropped dead with joy. And so began young Ireland's notorious performances.

After finding further facsimiles of signatures of the Elizabethan period, he invented, with the most appalling facility, all sorts of letters and poems. Naturally, his father and others asked where he had found these remarkable manuscripts, whereupon he made up a more or less logical story. He said he had met a gentleman of fortune, whose name he had sworn not to tell, in a coffeehouse in London, and that in the course of conversation they had discovered each other's love for things antique. The new acquaintance then mentioned having in his possession a collection of old deeds and papers tied in bundles. The boy told of his delight at being asked to inspect them; and how he had gone to his friend's house and searched through them. Much to their mutual joy, he had discovered one old paper which clearly established his friend's right to a certain property which had been the subject of litigation for a long time. This friend, he went on to explain, first swore him to secrecy, then presented him with as many of these ancient manuscripts as he wished to have.

It is not difficult to understand why William Henry's

father accepted his boy's story so easily. Remember, those were the days of stern virtues. A son brought up to respect his parents was expected to tell the truth. When the elder Ireland, being a man of substantial reputation, showed the manuscripts to his friends and repeated his son's story, it was accepted. Spurred on by his apparent success in deceiving his father and many visitors, the young forger began to lose his head and daily grew more daring. Under cover of secrecy, in a lonely room where he was apprenticed, he had the temerity not only to forge Shakespeare's signature to documents but to invent an autograph confession of faith for him. This met with success, and he proceeded to compose love lyrics in the form of letters to Anne Hathaway, signed with the name of the great poet.

Here is one of them, in which he inclosed a lock of "thye Willys" hair. It is addressed to Anna Hatherrewaye, and reads as follows:—

> DEARESSTE ANNA:—
>
> As thou haste alwaye founde mee toe mye Worde moste trewe soe thou shalt see I have stryctlye kepte mye promyse I praye you perfume thys mye poore Locke withe thye balmye Eysses forre thenne indeede shalle Kynges themmeselves bowe ande pay homage toe itte I doe assure thee no rude hande hathe knottedde itte thye Willys alone hathe done the worke Neytherre the gyldedde bawble thatte envyronnes the heade of Majestye noe norre honourres moste weyghtye wulde give mee halfe the joye as didde thysse mye lyttle worke forre thee The feelinge thatte dydde neareste approache untoe itte was thatte whiche commethe nygheste untoe God meeke and Gentle Charytye forre thatte Virrtue O Anna doe I love doe I cheryshe thee inne mye hearte forre thou arte ass a talle Cedarre stretchynge forthe its branches ande succourynge smaller Plants fromme nyppynge Winneterre orr the boysterouse Wyndes

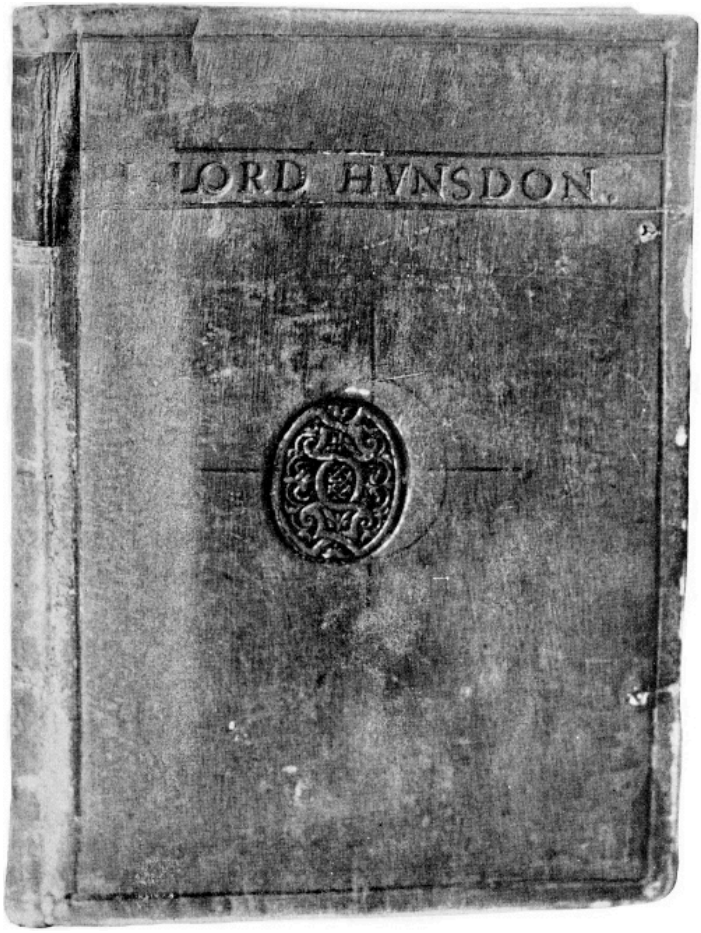
Farewelle toe Morrowe bye tymes I wille see thee tille thenne Adewe sweete Love

Thyne everre

WM SHAKSPEARE

ANNA HATHERREWAYE

Sometime later he made an almost entire transcript of *Lear*, and a few leaves from *Hamlet*, too! In *Hamblette*, as he quaintly called it, he boldly introduced variations in the text, which many of the most learned men of the time read without doubting their authenticity. Boswell, Doctor Johnson's famous biographer, called at the Ireland home one day, inspected the manuscripts, then knelt down before them, enthusiastically kissing a paper here and there as he thanked God for letting him live to see them.



BOOK BELONGING TO THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN, OF WHOSE COMPANY SHAKESPEARE WAS A MEMBER

However, there was one doubting Thomas, who refused to believe, almost from the beginning of the "discoveries," that there was an iota of truth concerning their origin. His name was Edmund Malone. He was the one literary critic who did not make a fool of himself at any time during a controversy which later developed to a furious pitch, and resulted in a full published confession from

Ireland.

Young Ireland's final burst of inspiration led him to write a pretended play of Shakespeare, entitled *Vortigern and Rowena*. This was the straw which eventually broke the camel's back, but not until Sheridan had produced it, with two of the foremost players of the day, John Philip Kemble and Mrs. Jordan, appearing in the leading rôles.

Ireland appealed to me, not because he was a forger but because of a certain further cleverness. When he was discovered and his misdeeds revealed to a curious world, there suddenly sprang up a great demand to behold the handiwork of this delectable young villain. People in England, and collectors and curio seekers everywhere, wanted to own specimens of his fraudulent but interesting papers. They were so much in demand that he was kept busy from morning to night making forgeries of his own forgeries.

The sudden demand was not for Shakespeare's own letter to Anne Hathaway but for Ireland's original imaginary manuscript. What, then, could the poor fellow do? He just had to sit himself down and ply his trade as long as his supply of old paper and precious ink held out.

It was these humorous and at the same time dramatic facts which touched my imagination as a collector. I wanted Ireland's original forgeries, not his double and triple fabrications. I naturally wanted the original manuscript of *Vortigern*, the one the lovely Mrs. Jordan had reverently held in her adoring—and adorable—hands. I thought I knew where they were—in the collection of the Marquis of Blandford, to whom they were sold many years ago. Imagine my surprise when I purchased the library of

Marsden J. Perry, of Providence, to discover in his world-famed collection the actual forgeries not only of *Vortigern* but of *King Lear* and *Hamlet* as well. Here were the original documents which had deceived some of the choicest minds in England. Looking further, I also found the first draft of Ireland's confession. I have the actual drafts with which Richard Brinsley Sheridan was so delighted; the very pages from which Kemble studied the part of Vortigern, and before which Boswell knelt, "a tumbler of warm brandy and water" at his side.

Ireland was not the first spectacular forger of tender years. In his confession he speaks of having been influenced by reading of Thomas Chatterton's career. Chatterton was an English youth who kept the literary world titillating twenty-five years earlier. It is a strange thing, this psychologic kink which sometimes forms in the brains of very young men. Why they should risk bringing the world about their ears through impersonating the famous dead, when they have brains and originality of their own, no one knows.

Poor Chatterton! His is the only great genius which has come to light through the art of forgery. He began writing when he was sixteen, and almost from the beginning produced some of the finest poetry in the history of eighteenth-century literature. Perhaps he was unhappily shy, as boys often are at that age; or he may have suffered from some gloomy mental obsession. His manner of screening his identity when these remarkable poems first appeared has caused many a student to pause and wonder.

Chatterton's first writings appeared with an accompanying explanation. He said his father had found them years before in an ancient chest

belonging to the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe at Bristol. The verses were supposed to have been composed by Thomas Rowley, a monk who had lived in that neighborhood during the fifteenth century. Chatterton, according to his story, had merely copied them. At first, this story was accepted, while critics praised the undeniable beauty of the lines. Then some contemporary littérateur called attention to the incorrect usage of Anglo-Saxon words of Rowley's day, and suspicion hovered over Chatterton. It was soon charged that Chatterton had written the poems of Rowley, using a certain dictionary from which he chose Anglo-Saxon words in order to create the atmosphere and flavor of antiquity.

Among his critics were Horace Walpole and his two poet friends, Mason and Gray. The boy was accused of downright forgery when it was further noted that the poem which Chatterton brought out as the "Battle of Hastings wrote by Turgot the Monk, in the tenth century, and translated by Thomas Rowlie," was wrongly dated. This bit of carelessness on Chatterton's part increased the hue and cry of ridicule. The Battle of Hastings, as every English schoolboy knew, did not take place until the eleventh century! And here the poetic Turgot was relating its history one century before it happened. The goading of Walpole and his acolytes finally drove Chatterton to commit suicide when he was only eighteen years of age.

What a loss it was to England!

Walpole, seated in his comfortable library at Strawberry Hill, surrounded by his precious books and his precious ladies, recognized Chatterton's works as forgeries, but did not recognize his superb genius. A few of the inspired lines of Chatterton's

poems are worth all the famous letters which Walpole so elegantly wrote for a large public, including himself. Although we wade with zest in the delightful mud stream that, with its scandal and veiled allusions, runs so naughtily through Walpole's correspondence, we can never forgive his treatment of poor Chatterton.

Not quite in the same class as a forgery, a quaint and equally difficult sister art has gradually sprung into existence, called the facsimile page. Not that I mean to imply that the making of such pages is always done with an intent to deceive. There is a concern in London which supplies missing pages on order for any book you may have—a business that is done quite openly. Suppose you own a copy of the first edition of one of Shakespeare's folios, in which either the title or last leaf is missing. If you don't happen to be too fastidious and have merely the collector's love for the complete, without his obsession for the perfect as well, you could take your first folio to this firm and in a short time receive a perfect page made to match the others of your book. Only the connoisseur and you yourself would know the difference.

Owing to the assistance of the camera to-day and the modern processes of engraving, it is not difficult to reproduce the printed word as it first appeared several centuries ago. The snag comes, however, in finding a paper that is exactly contemporaneous with the book itself. This London house happens to have a large and wonderful collection of old papers, taken chiefly from the flyleaves of early volumes. There are many unscrupulous dealers in the world, even in New York, who do not acknowledge to their customers that a book which they offer as genuine is

made up in this manner. Any reputable firm would immediately call attention to it. One not quite so particular, with the naïveté of a child, always pleads, when caught, that he was ignorant of the guilty leaf, not being an expert himself. And yet he had ordered the damning page from the London house of facsimiles.

But sometimes it is almost impossible to tell which leaves in a book are facsimile. About seventy-five years ago there was an expert in this line in England by the name of Harris. With the greatest dexterity and cunning, he made leaves for incomplete books, which exactly duplicated the original ones. In those days such work was tedious and had to be accomplished entirely by hand, as it was long before the era of modern photographs. Harris's work was in constant demand. An amusing story is told among booksellers of an order Harris executed for a celebrated collector whose copy of Caxton's *History of Troy* had two leaves missing. Five years later the collector called on Harris. He took this Caxton from his pocket and showed it to him. It was with the greatest difficulty that Harris himself could determine which two leaves were his. In fact, he had to verify them by his records.

If there are great holes or tears in old pages they can be filled in in such a marvelous manner as almost to defy detection. Here again the literary detective enters to discover a clew and solve the mystery. The fellow must have a specialized sense for this sort of thing, just as a born newspaperman has a nose for news. The true literary detective will tell you at a glance if anything is wrong with a printed page. This is a rare faculty, and in the book business amounts almost to genius. Some booksellers are never able to

tell, during their entire careers, which are facsimile leaves and which aren't. Only a few are adept at it.

Another trick is to supply original covers when they are missing from old and precious volumes. Sometimes a copy of an English classic appears in the auction room minus its blue or gray or yellow paper wrappers. In the twinkling of an eye brand-new ones are supplied, aged by the miraculous antiquer, and offered as being in pristine, immaculate state, "very rare in its original paper binding."

Then, to enhance the illusion, an old signature is added to the cover and perhaps the price, "tuppence," written in an old hand. It takes Sherlock Holmes himself to detect these impostures.

I know a gentleman in London who is so expert in detecting forgeries that he goes on a scent like a setter after a bird. But the real safeguard for the collector is to buy his books, not from the transient individual who has two or three bargains to offer, but from the man who is known first of all for his reputable dealing. Then collecting is sheer delight.

V

AMONG OLD MANUSCRIPTS

THE First Folio had lain idly at anchor for two long, sultry days. Then, as a miniature gale swept the threatening clouds of a summer storm across Corson's Inlet just before twilight on the second day, I bowed to the will of the fisherman's god, whoever he may be, and hurried down the beach. Ordinarily I am not the sort of fisherman who waits for the psychological moment, but here it was upon me. After such weather, fish were sure to strike.

As I rowed out to my boat, I heard the telephone bell ring in the house I had just left. It had been an exhausting week for me; every bibliomaniac in the vicinity of Philadelphia had had a book to show and sell me, and my office had telephoned upon the slightest provocation. So when I heard that bell I pulled for the First Folio as though the devil were after me, and carefully rounding the bow, drew up on the port side away from the shore. Once aboard, the captain started the engine and made for the open sea. Even then I could not avoid seeing my man Harrison waving frantically from the beach.



LETTER OF FRANKLIN FROM PHILADELPHIA, 1775

Only the born Izaak Walton knows that lazy defiance of the world's demands which comes with a rod and reel in one's hand. Soon I was fishing; forgotten was the realm of books and manuscripts, forgotten the boring persistence of telephone bells, forgotten poor Harrison on the shore—forgotten everything in the world except the delight of a strike, the thrilling moments of playing my catch, and the breath-taking suspense of reeling in. How long I fished I don't know. The sun emerged again in time to set, as the wind died out completely. I refuse to tell the number of fish I caught, for no one would believe me; but with the advent of a fine six-pounder I felt quite satisfied. I walked to a low deck chair and sat, resting. Perhaps I dozed for a few minutes; I don't know. Suddenly I heard my name. I opened my eyes and was surprised to find the shore close by. We had forgotten to anchor and were drifting in.

"Doctah—doctah!" Harrison's voice lost its slow drawl in excitement. "Mistah Lawlah done phone all dis afternoon! Why fo' you don' answah me, doctah? He say he done fin' ole Mistah Franklin's work book."

How often had hopeful bookmen dreamed of one day discovering this work book of Benjamin Franklin! From my earliest days of collecting, I myself had persistently followed all rumors or clews concerning its whereabouts. None of them led anywhere. I even doubted that it still existed.

"Harrison," I replied, "you can tell Mr. Lawler that I am not exactly partial to a fool's errand on a hot day. Besides, I want to fish." He went indoors, shouted my words over the telephone, then bolted down to the shore again.

"Oh, Lawdy, doctah, do come to de telephone! He

sho am mad if you don't."

When I reached the house I explained once more to the manager of my Philadelphia place that I wished to be left alone to fish.

"Fish!" Mr. Lawler's tone was derisive. "Why, if you'll take the next train and meet me in Camden, I'll show you where you can land a fish bigger than anything you could ever pull out of Corson's Inlet!" This was bait for me, if not for the fish, and I asked for fuller information.

It seemed that after months of patient search Mr. Lawler had located the proprietor of an antique shop at Mount Holly, New Jersey, who owned an old copy book which he claimed was the original in which Franklin kept his accounts. Mr. Lawler had already seen it, and believed it to be authentic; and though I rather dreaded being disappointed once more, there was the chance of a find. I left for the station immediately; there I found no train due for hours. This was doubtless just the obstacle I needed to egg me on. I quickly hired an automobile and motored the seventy miles to Camden. Mr. Lawler met me. He seemed nervous and in a great hurry to make the final lap of our pilgrimage. We had twenty miles farther to go, and as we sped along we discussed the printer's long-lost work book.

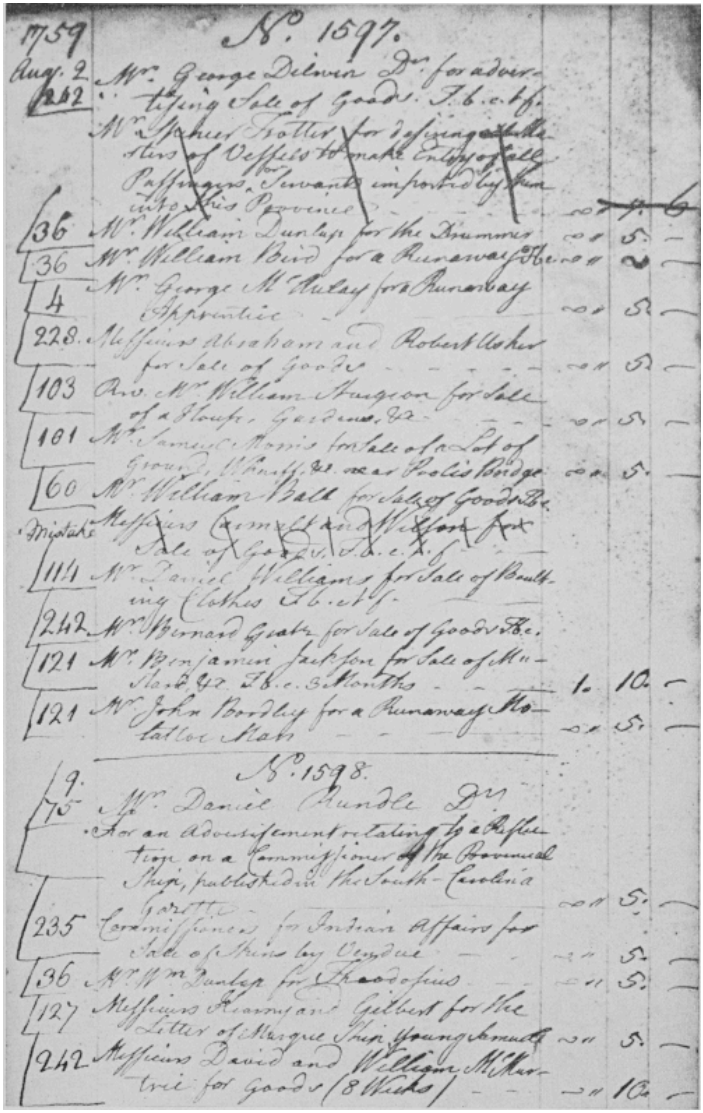
Franklin had mentioned its existence in various writings and letters. He had said that when he was a printer he kept all the records of his business in it.

At last we came to Mount Holly, and as we followed a quiet country street to its end I regretted the trip. The heat of the summer night was oppressive, and the entrance of the shop before which we stopped was the same as a thousand others scattered over the

country. A dull light reflected against the usual sign, “Antiques,” hanging above the doorway. As I entered, a sensation of futility came over me. The rosewood whatnots holding their bits and pieces of glass or china depressed me; broken-down Windsors, old ships’ lanterns, hooked rugs, maple chests, and mahogany bureaus—was this atmosphere conducive to hope? I doubted it, and looked at Mr. Lawler with an accusatory eye. But so great was his excitement now that he had forgotten my existence. Suddenly his face lighted.

The proprietor of the shop, a calm, middle-aged man, came forward. He greeted me, smiling kindly. I must confess this smile revived hope. He seemed sure of himself in a quiet sort of way. I began to think that perhaps I hadn’t come on such a wild-goose chase after all. He was at his desk now, an old desk littered with papers. As his fingers searched through them I watched closely. Then, when he finally drew a long narrow book from beneath a pile of letters, I caught my breath.

I took it from him and went to the dim light. As I opened the battered covers I immediately recognized the work book of “the first civilized American,” as a recent biographer has so aptly called him. Not a page had been tampered with; it was entirely as it had been kept for Franklin, except that it was somewhat yellowed by its hundred and eighty years of age. Very carefully he had listed each work printed by his press. The title of every book, the number of copies made, and the quality of paper used, all commercial details, the costs and selling prices, were methodically written out. Other expenses, too, were set down.


1759 N°. 1597.
Aug. 2 Mr. George Delvin Dr. for adver-
282 tising Sale of Goods &c. &c. &c.
Mr. Archer Trotter for Seizing the
Sloop of Vessels to make Entry of all
Passengers Servants imported by him
into this Province
36 Mr. William Dunlap for the Drummer
36 Mr. William Bird for a Runaway
4 Mr. George M Kelay for a Runaway
Apprentice
228 Messieurs Abraham and Robert Usher
for Sale of Goods
103 Do. Mr. William Sturgeon for Sale
of a Plough Gardens &c.
101 Mr. James Harris for Sale of a Lot of
Ground &c. near Poole's Bridge
60 Mr. William Ball for Sale of Goods &c.
Mistake Messieurs Grimes and Wilson for
Sale of Goods &c. &c. &c.
111 Mr. Daniel Williams for Sale of Build-
ing Clothes &c. &c.
242 Mr. Bernard Gratz for Sale of Goods &c.
121 Mr. Benjamin Jackson for Sale of Ne-
groe Slaves &c. &c. 3 Months
121 Mr. John Bordley for a Runaway Ho-
stler Slave
N°. 1598.
9. Mr. Daniel Rundle Dr.
75 For an Advertisement for taking up a Passen-
ger on a Commissioner of the Provincial
Ships, published in the South-Carolina
Gazette
235 Commissioners for Indian Affairs for
Sale of Skins by Order
36 Mr. Wm. Dunlap for Goods
127 Messieurs Harry and Gilbert for the
Letter of Marque Ship Young Brunette
242 Messieurs David and William M'Mur-
trie for Goods (8 Hhds.)

PAGE OF FRANKLIN'S WORK BOOK

I looked at Mr. Lawler gratefully, and he, inwardly gloating, acted as though the finding of historically invaluable account books was all in an evening's

work. Of course, I could not leave without it, and I lost no time in buying it from the owner. Ten minutes later two jubilant bookmen climbed into the waiting automobile outside, making a triumphal exit as they carried off their treasure from the town of Mount Holly.

It was impossible to realize, when I purchased it, the full historical worth of Franklin's account book. Not until I returned home, where I found leisure to study every word, to compare the contents with published facts concerning Franklin, did I recognize its true import and value to all students of printing in this country. But how did it happen to be in Mount Holly after all those years? This question obsessed me for a long time. The former owner, from whom I purchased it, could tell me nothing. I began searching through the records of Franklin's career as a printer, and found he was in business with David Hall until 1766, at which time they dissolved their partnership. Then it was that he requested his great friend, James Parker, a noted printer in New York, to audit the accounts for him. Later Parker moved to Burlington, New Jersey, probably taking this account book with him. As Burlington is but a few miles from Mount Holly, it is not difficult to imagine how it might have been carried there by some one of Parker's descendants.

Many people imagine they own things of great worth, especially if these things are old. They become excited when they run across a letter in some trunk which has not been opened for years. They are sure they have found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. They are severely shocked, however, when the experienced dealer's appraisal of the ancestral letters is extremely low. Indeed, the

dealer is quite different from the law courts of England, which consider a man innocent until he is proved guilty. Every expert is more or less suspicious of any proffered autograph, especially if the so-called originals are supposed to have been written by celebrated figures of a century or so ago.

The false scent and the fruitless hunt, these the skillful buyer learns to avoid. Sometimes the letters are genuine—sometimes! But it is amazing, too, what tales otherwise honest men and women will fabricate in their eagerness to sell an autograph letter or document. They will swear to heaven that they remember that auspicious day, “over forty years ago, when I was but a mere child,” when the letter was first shown them. I have had many such experiences. Several times I have recognized straight forgeries, letters which were actually written quite recently, and clumsily made to appear old and important. However, there are times when one is due for a delightful surprise. What you believe to be idle vaporings turn out to be something delightfully different.

One day some years ago an old gentleman called upon me in New York. I happened to be walking through my reception room when he arrived, and did not catch his name. But in deference to his extreme age—he appeared to be more than ninety—I immediately invited him into the library. He was very plainly dressed, almost dingy in appearance. I entered into conversation with him and he seemed remarkably well informed. Every celebrity of the past sixty years he appeared to know intimately. We talked of prominent literary figures, of great political and financial leaders. He knew them all!

He even told me of an incident which occurred one

evening at Windsor Castle when he dined with Queen Victoria. I looked at him queryingly, deploring that exaggerated ego which is the pleasure and consolation of old age. He continued with anecdotes of Palmerston, Gladstone, Disraeli, and Lord Salisbury. Lincoln had been his friend, he said, as well as all the Presidents from Lincoln's time; and every corner and crevice of the White House was known to him. I thought to myself that here was certainly an old liar, if ever there was one. A regular Baron Munchausen!

Then I naturally turned the conversation to old books and manuscripts. I mentioned a famous volume, and he said he owned it. I mentioned another; he owned that too! If he had been a younger man I should have had it clearly understood that I no longer cared to be taken for a credulous fool. But being a Philadelphian, of course I could not resist mentioning Benjamin Franklin. The syllables of his name had hardly left my lips when my visitor announced, with something of regret in his voice, that he had once owned the manuscript of Franklin's famous *Autobiography*!

With unbelieving amazement I stared at him. Then it dawned upon me that the gentleman before me was a distinguished American diplomat and everything he said was the truth! As Minister to France many years ago, he had handled with extraordinary tact several serious political situations; one time editor of the *New York Evening Post*, he was also an essayist and historian. I leaned forward and said in a voice which made no attempt to disguise either my surprise or my pleasure, "Have I the honor of addressing the Honorable John Bigelow?"

Mr. Bigelow then told me how in an off moment he had been induced to sell, at what was then

considered a high price, but which would be a mere trifle now, the immortal *Autobiography* of Benjamin Franklin. He disposed of it through a New York firm of booksellers to E. Dwight Church of Brooklyn, and it is now in that bookman's paradise, the library of Mr. Henry E. Huntington, at San Marino, California.

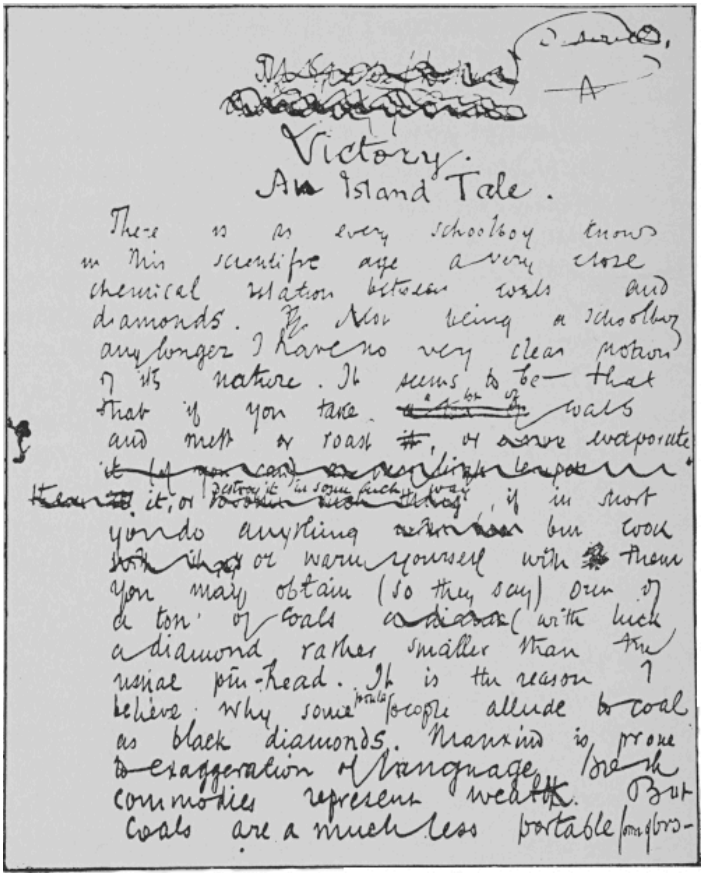
Speaking of manuscripts recalls a rather pretty story of how I unexpectedly secured an autograph essay by a favorite modern.

I remember one day in London, when I was calling upon my dear friend, H. W. Massingham, the beloved editor of the *Nation*. His editorial offices in Adelphi Terrace were directly beneath George Bernard Shaw's apartments in the same old Georgian building. Knowing he was a good friend of Shaw, I asked if he had any of his manuscripts. Massingham looked at me oddly for a moment, as though my request had brought to his mind an entirely new train of thought, then replied, "Oh, yes!" He ran his hand to the bottom of an enormous waste-paper basket under his desk; it was filled to overflowing, as though it had not been emptied for days. He drew out a manuscript which he had thrown away, written in a familiar hand—Shaw's article on the censorship of the press! He offered it to me as a present, and you will well understand that I accepted it eagerly. This little story should delight Bernard Shaw himself.

To-day it is unfortunate that almost all manuscripts are typed. There are, however, rare exceptions. The late Joseph Conrad was one of the very few authors who worked almost entirely in longhand. When I bought the manuscript of his book, *Victory*, at the Quinn sale in New York in 1924, I paid the highest price—$8100—ever given at auction for the manuscript of a living author. It was closely written

on sheets that fill two bulky cases.

The average writer nowadays, after he has corrected the final draft of his work, has it copied by a competent stenographer and then makes any further correction on it he wishes. Many writers find it easier to create their stories directly upon the typewriter, while others dictate. The typewriter—what a curse it has become to the collector! A century from now it will be almost impossible to find the original autograph manuscripts of writers of to-day who stand the test of time. Who knows but that the styles will have changed, and the machine upon which a masterpiece was brought to life will be considered even more precious!

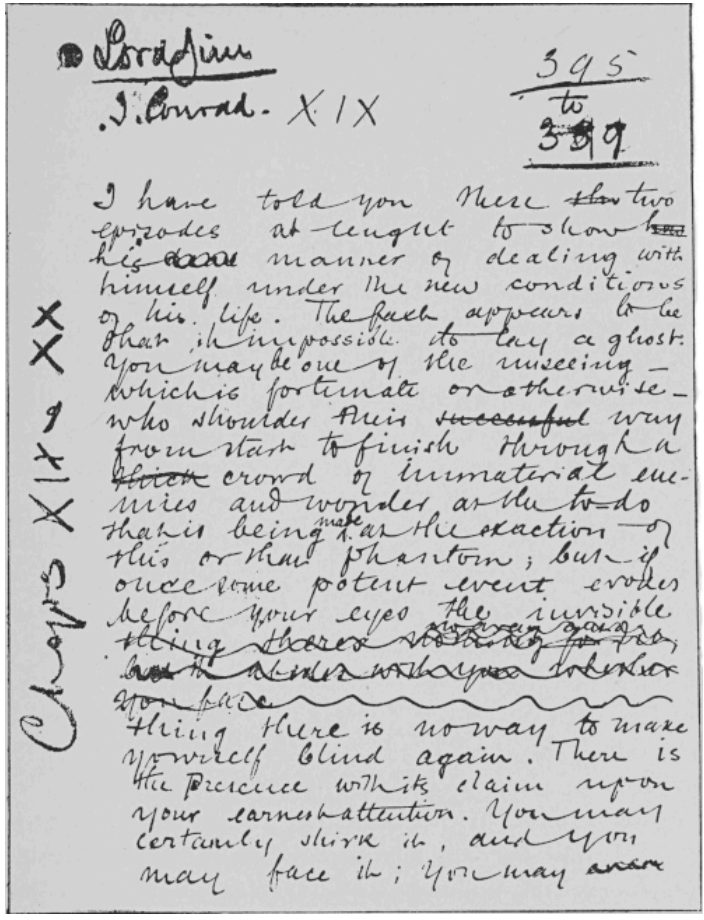


Victory.

An Island Tale.

There is as every schoolboy knows in this scientific age a very close chemical relation between coals and diamonds. Not being a schoolboy any longer I have no very clear notion of its nature. It seems to be that that if you take coals and melt or roast them, or even evaporate it, or [illegible] if in short you do anything but cook or warm yourself with them you may obtain (so they say) one of a ton of coals a diamond (with luck) a diamond rather smaller than the usual pin-head. It is the reason I believe why some people allude to coal as black diamonds. Mankind is prone to exaggeration of language, both in commodities represent wealth. But coals are a much less portable form of

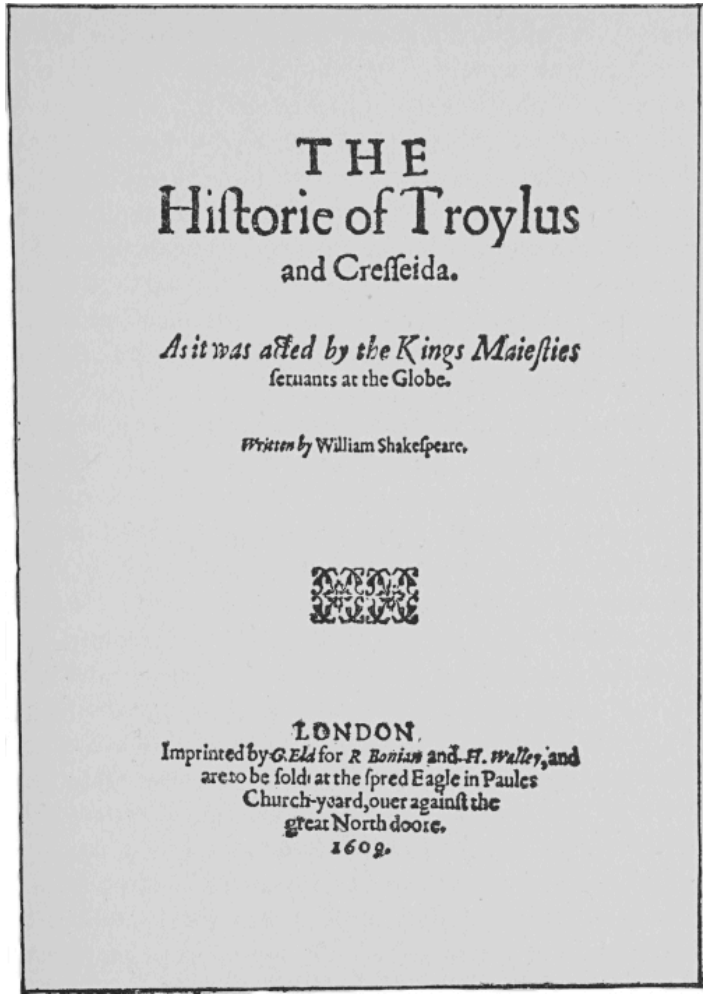
PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF CONRAD'S "VICTORY"


Lord Jim
J. Conrad. XIX
395 to 399
I have told you there two episodes at length to show his manner of dealing with himself under the new conditions of his life. The fact appears to be that it is impossible to lay a ghost: you may be one of the unseeing — which is fortunate or otherwise — who shoulder their successful way from start to finish through a crowd of immaterial enemies and wonder at the to-do that is being made at the reaction of this or that phantom; but if once some potent event evokes before your eyes the invisible thing there is no way for you, but the [illegible] with you to face
thing there is no way to make yourself blind again. There is the presence with its claim upon your earnest attention. You may certainly shirk it, and you may face it; you may

PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF CONRAD'S "LORD JIM"

No one knows exactly why there is hardly a scrap left of the original manuscripts of most of the writers of the Elizabethan period. Perhaps publishers in those days had one fault that is prevalent to-day. They may have been too close to their writers to be able to appreciate the value of the original draft, or perhaps they had scrap baskets like Massingham's. Of Shakespeare's writing only six or seven signatures

are known, and these are attached to his will and other legal documents. They are priceless, and have been kept with great care at Somerset House and at the Record Office in London. How unfortunate it is that not a single line of his original work remains. What would collectors not give now for just one page of *Hamlet*, or even a short note in Shakespeare's own handwriting! Surely, $500,000 would not be too much. Nor is there any manuscript left of either of his noted contemporaries, Christopher Marlowe and Robert Greene. Of these two, who opened the way for the greatest dramatist of all time, not even a signature remains. I was successful this year, however, in obtaining a letter of John Fletcher, who very probably collaborated with Shakespeare in the writing of *Henry VIII*. Fletcher addressed this rhymed epistle to the Countess of Huntingdon. For years it had been in an old English muniment room neglected and unsung; and it is really the nearest approach to Shakespeare I have been fortunate enough to find. When you think that hitherto not a signature of Fletcher's had been known, it makes this find the more remarkable. There are, however, many relics of his great contemporary, Ben Jonson, early drafts of his celebrated plays, and many books are known in which he inscribed comments and notes.



THE
Hiſtorie of Troylus
and Creſſeida.

As it was acted by the Kings Maieſties
ſeruants at the Globe.

Written by William Shakeſpeare.

LONDON,
Imprinted by *G. Eld* for *R Bonian* and *H. Walley*, and
are to be ſold at the ſpred Eagle in Paules
Church-yeard, ouer againſt the
great North doore.
1609.

ONLY UNCUT SHAKESPEARE QUARTO KNOWN, PUBLISHED IN SHAKESPEARE'S LIFETIME

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1609.

I have always been deeply interested in all that remains of the literary lights of the Elizabethan era, and especially in Edmund Spenser, another of the great masters of Shakespeare's magnificent day.

Last year, when I was crossing to England on the Berengaria, another bookseller, truly a friendly enemy, met me on deck one morning, and by way of greeting, said: "Speaking of association copies, what would you give to own a presentation copy of the first edition of *The Faerie Queene*?"

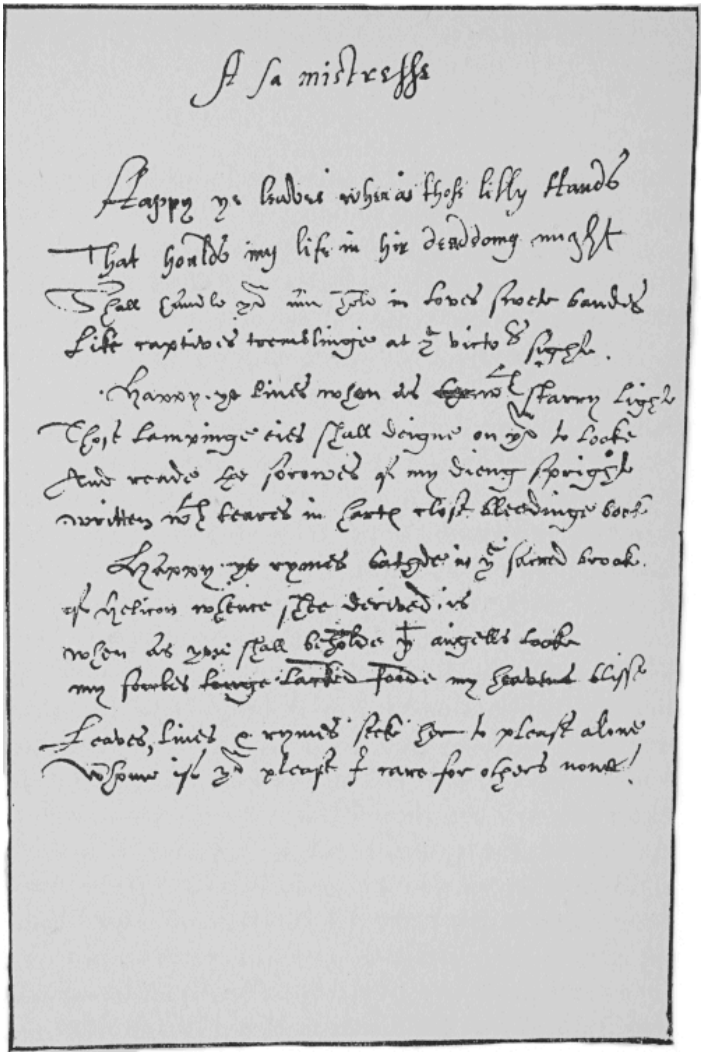
"Why talk nonsense?" I replied. "It's impossible. It doesn't exist." About two weeks later an eminent scholar who has made many great and outstanding discoveries in early English literature called at my hotel to see me, and invited me to go with him to inspect his fine collection. He spoke of one book in particular, which he was sure would interest me, but purposely neglected to say what it was. I arrived at his home and had hardly got beyond the front door when he placed in my hands a volume in its original binding of old calf. It was Spenser's own copy of *The Faerie Queene*, dated 1590, with an inscription in his handwriting on the title page in Greek: "From the author to himself." He had also presented this volume to Elizabeth Boyle, whom he married four years later. On a blank page toward the back of the book he gallantly wrote in French, "A sa mistresse," and under this elegant heading had inscribed the

complete first sonnet from his glorious *Amoretti*, beginning:—

> Happy ye leaves when as those lilly Hands
> That houlds my life in hir dead-doing might,
> Shall handle you and hold in Love's swete bandes
> Like captives trembling at ye victors sight.

The *Amoretti* was not published until five years later, in 1595.

As I stood looking at *The Faerie Queene* I became quite speechless with surprise and delight, as no other presentation copy of Spenser was known to me. Almost before I could regain my equilibrium my host handed me another, a smaller volume. This was bound in old vellum, a quaint little English travel book. With a gasp I read upon the title page a presentation address to Gabriel Harvey, the poet's dearest friend, and incidentally, the bitter literary enemy of Ben Jonson. It read: "The gift of Edmund Spenser, clerk to the Archbishop of Rochester, 1578." What enhanced its preciousness was that Harvey had made notes throughout, commenting upon his happy friendship with Spenser. After such a startling introduction to his collection, I looked upon my friend, this learned book lover, with even greater admiration than before; and if he had further offered me a presentation copy of *Hamlet* I should not have been amazed. To-day these marvelous mementos of the Elizabethan era are treasured among the outstanding volumes in my library.



PRESENTATION INSCRIPTION TO ELIZABETH BOYLE IN "THE FAERIE QUEENE" IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF EDMUND SPENSER

One week later my friend the American bookseller called upon me at the Carlton Hotel in London.

"Hello," I began. "You're just the man I want to see.

I've found a presentation copy of *The Faerie Queene*."

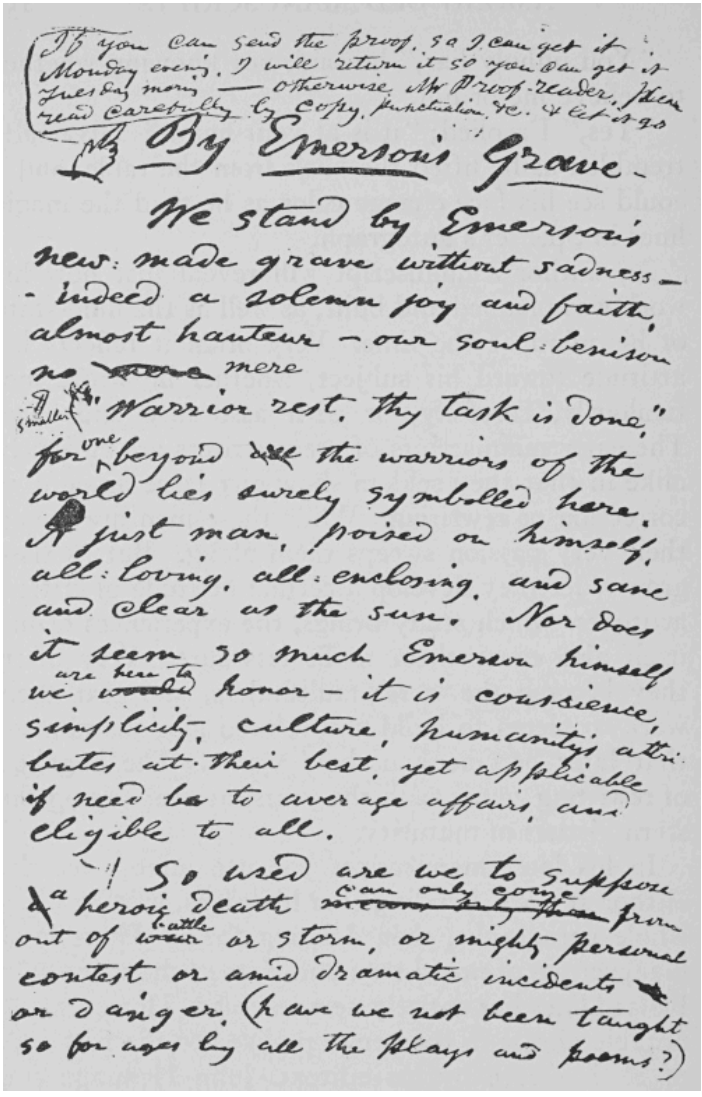
"You unholy liar," he said, not knowing whether to believe me or not.

"Yes," I replied; "it is at your hand." His hands trembled as he lifted the book from the table, and I could see his face change color as he read the magic lines in Spenser's autograph.

An author's manuscript will reveal just how his work was planned and built, as well as the fluid state of his mind at the time. Very often it reflects his attitude toward his subject, whether he wrote meticulously, carefully, or with assurance and ease. The early manuscripts of great writers are curiously alike in that they seldom show any large amount of correction or rewriting. When these men are young their very passion sweeps them along. But as they grow older they develop a certain attitude of critical acuteness which study brings, the experiences of life itself also cause them to be less sure. Very often they become the worst faultfinders, and tear their work to pieces to build and rebuild glorious phrases that later become household words. The bugaboo of rewriting comes with the years, accompanying the stern virtues of maturity.

In his later manuscripts you can almost see the author at work, bending over his pages, writing lines, whole paragraphs, then deleting them. These later manuscripts of noted men and women show not only blotted lines but entirely new readings. However, the notable phrase in the verses prefixed to the first folio of Shakespeare by his editors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, dated 1623, does not apply to most of the modern manuscripts. "And what he thought," they wrote, "he uttered with that easiness, that we

have scarce received from him a blot on his papers."



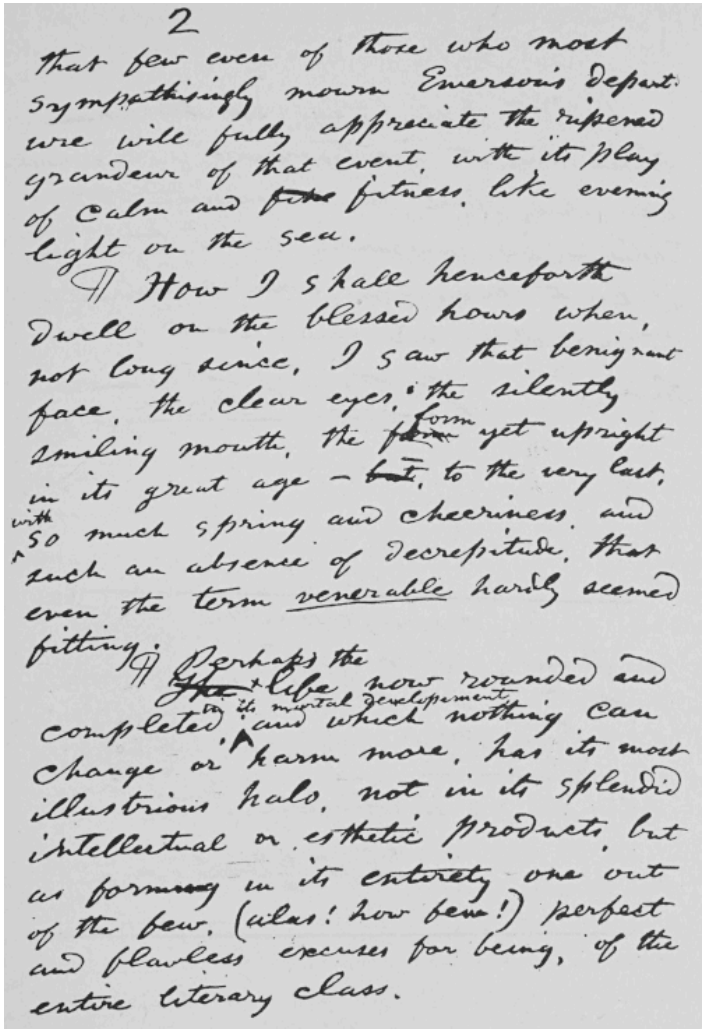
If you can send the proof, so I can get it Monday evening, I will return it so you can get it Tuesday morn — otherwise Mr Proof-Reader, please read carefully by copy, punctuation &c. & let it go

By Emerson's Grave.

We stand by Emerson's new-made grave without sadness — indeed a solemn joy and faith, almost hauteur — our soul's benison no ~~more~~ mere

"Warrior rest, thy task is done," for one beyond the warriors of the world lies surely symbolled here. A just man, poised on himself, all-loving, all-enclosing, and sane and clear as the sun. Nor does it seem so much Emerson himself we are here to honor — it is conscience, simplicity, culture, humanity's attributes at their best, yet applicable if need be to average affairs, and eligible to all.

So used are we to suppose a heroic death can only come out of battle or storm, or mighty personal contest or amid dramatic incidents or danger. (Have we not been taught so for ages by all the plays and poems?)

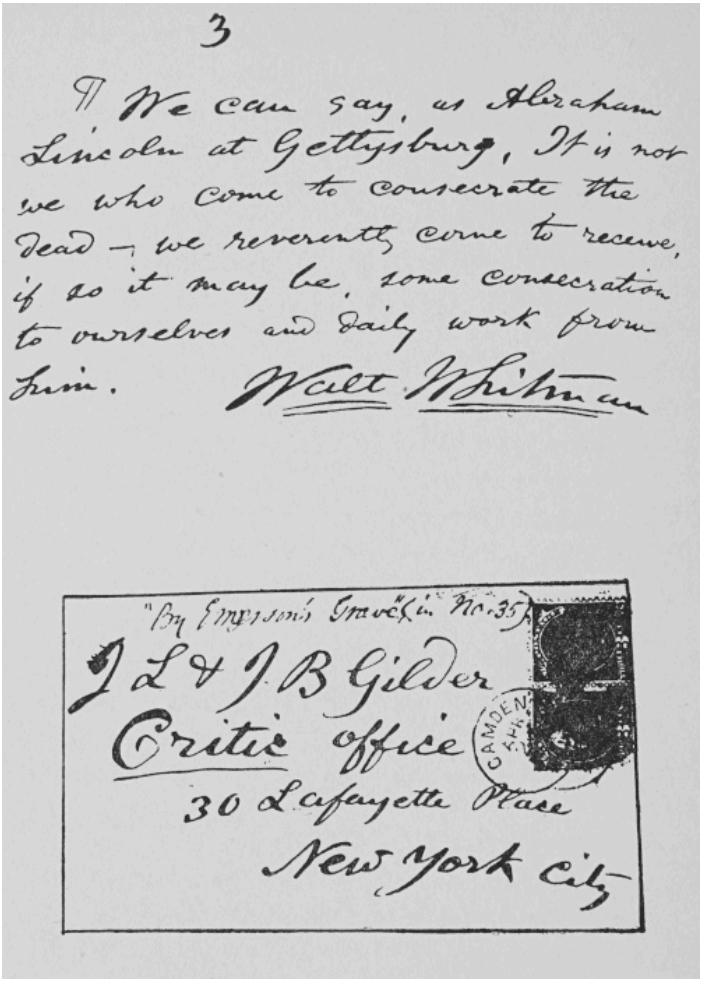


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that few even of those who most sympathisingly mourn Emerson's departure will fully appreciate the ripened grandeur of that event, with its play of calm and ~~fine~~ fitness, like evening light on the sea.

¶ How I shall henceforth dwell on the blessed hours when, not long since, I saw that benignant face, the clear eyes, the silently smiling mouth, the form yet upright in its great age — ~~but~~, to the very last, with so much spring and cheeriness, and such an absence of decrepitude, that even the term venerable hardly seemed fitting.

¶ Perhaps the ~~The~~ life, now rounded and completed in its mortal development, and which nothing can change or harm more, has its most illustrious halo, not in its splendid intellectual or esthetic products, but as forming in its entirety one out of the few, (alas! how few!) perfect and flawless excuses for being, of the entire literary class.


3

¶ We can say, as Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, It is not we who come to consecrate the dead — we reverently come to receive, if so it may be, some consecration to ourselves and daily work from him. Walt Whitman

"By Emerson's Grave" No. 35

J L & J B Gilder
Critic office
30 Lafayette Place
New York city

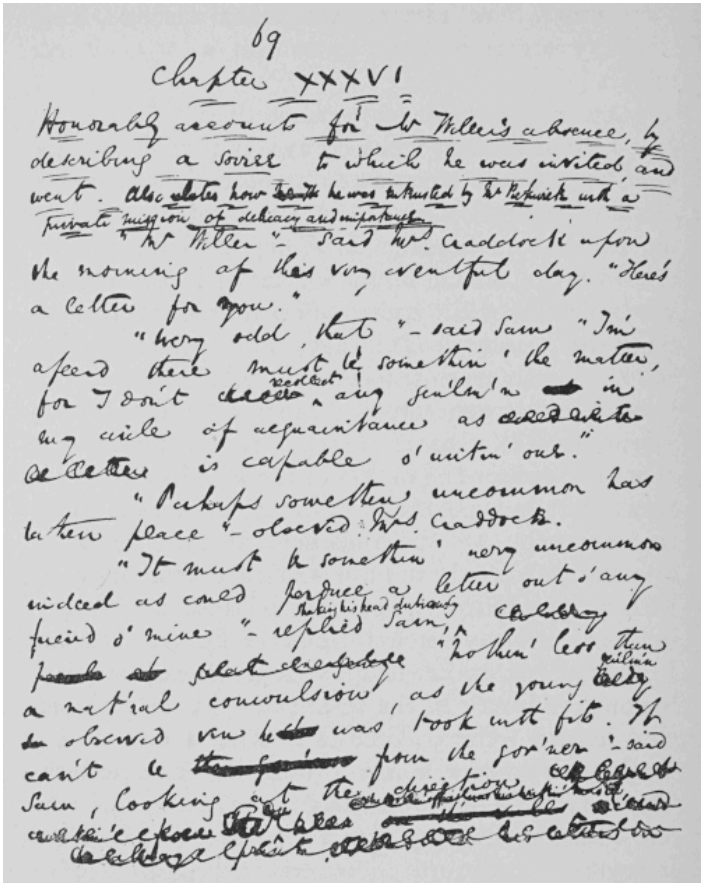
CAMDEN

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF WALT WHITMAN'S
"BY EMERSON'S GRAVE"

There is also some impalpable quality in a great man's handwriting which draws one to it; people who have never dreamed of collecting, who never heard of the collecting mania, will suddenly react to old letters and documents. They are mad to own them. Some human attraction exists in the written

word of other years quite different from the appeal made by printing. This appeal is primarily emotional, rather than intellectual. Especially is this true of autograph letters. They naturally hold a more personal message, in that they interpret the spirit and reflect the period of the writer, who in informal letters is off his guard, quite unlike the mood that an author brings to his work when he knows it may be published. I have known people to weep with delight at the sight of one of those charmingly familiar letters written by Bobbie Burns. Indeed, I once became rather dizzy with joy myself, when I bought the Harry B. Smith Library, which included that famous letter of Charles Dickens about the inception of *Pickwick*, which he writes to his publishers, Chapman and Hall. It is dated 1836, and was written one Thursday evening from Furnival's Inn, London. It says:—

> DEAR SIRS:—
>
> Pickwick is at length begun in all his might and glory. The first chapter will be ready tomorrow.
>
> I want to publish The Strange Gentleman. If you have no objection to doing it, I should be happy to let you have the refusal of it. I need not say that nobody else has seen or heard of it.
>
> Believe me (in Pickwickian haste)
>
> Faithfully yours,
>
> CHARLES DICKENS



69

Chapter XXXVI

Honorably accounts for Mr Miller's absence, by describing a soiree to which he was invited and went. Also states how Mr Pickwick was entrusted by Mr Pickwick with a private mission of delicacy and importance.

"Mr Miller" - said Mrs Craddock upon the morning of this very eventful day. "Here's a letter for you."

"Very odd, that" - said Sam "I'm afeerd there must be somethin' the matter, for I don't recollect any gentleman in my circle of acquaintance as could write a letter is capable o' writin' out."

"Perhaps something uncommon has taken place" - observed Mrs Craddock.

"It must be somethin' very uncommon indeed as could produce a letter out o' any friend o' mine" - replied Sam, "nothin' less than a natral convulsion, as the young lady observed when he was took with fits. It can't be from the gov'ner" - said Sam, looking at the direction

PAGE FROM MANUSCRIPT OF DICKENS'S "PICKWICK PAPERS"

This great letter is now in the collection of that famous man of affairs, fast becoming equally well known as a bibliophile, Mr. Owen D. Young.

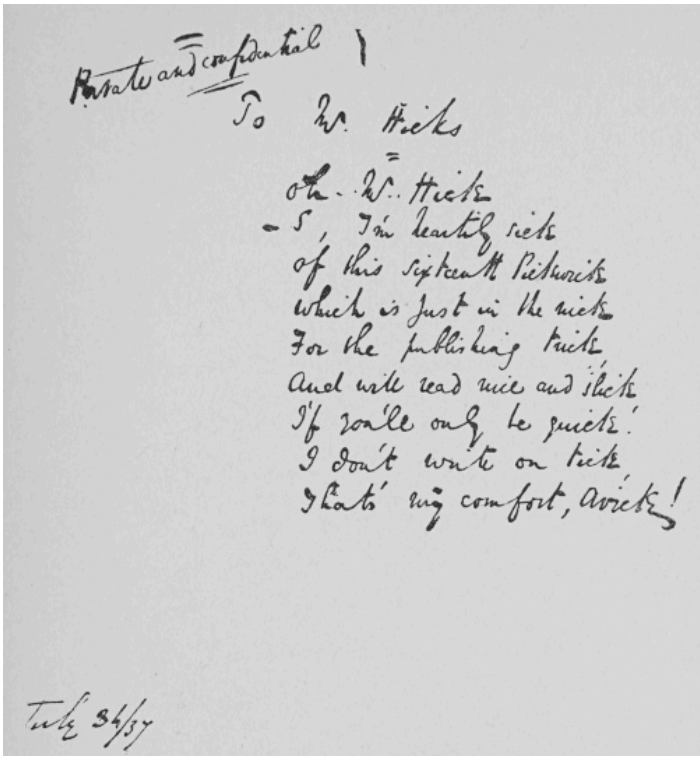
When I read Dickens's wonderful living message,—isn't there a tremendous thrill in those words: "Pickwick is at length begun in all his might and glory,"—I never dreamed I should one day own all that is left of the original manuscript of the master's greatest work, the *Pickwick Papers*. This, which

Dickens wrote when he was but twenty-four years old, is without doubt the most valuable modern manuscript in existence. An earlier owner, the late Mr. W. A. White, abstracted from it a single leaf and presented it most generously to the British Museum. What a gracious tribute this was from an American collector!

When so many of the great English treasures have come to this side of the water, how ingratiating was so splendid a gift! There the *Pickwick* page lies, in a glass show case, in the British Museum, and any day one may see Dickens's never-failing admirers crowding in front of it to read and thrill to the broadly penned words, now browned and a bit faded. How rapidly the words seem to fly across the pages of this manuscript! You can't but feel, as you read, that Dickens was almost divinely chosen to give to the world a fount of humor which in its very humanity will delight man, woman, and child throughout the years. All that is left of the manuscript is thirty-two leaves, which Dickens himself arranged into two chapters. When I read them I feel the closest union with Dickens the author; in these pages the period just before the coronation of Queen Victoria is made alive and vivid to us, bridging the world of yesterday to that of to-day.

The *Pickwick Papers* first appeared in serial form in 1836, issued monthly. I think he became weary writing them, although, heaven knows, there is nothing in the story which would give the reader the slightest inkling of this. But prefixed to my manuscript is a hitherto unpublished verse. Dickens marks it "Private and Confidential," and it is written for the benefit of one Mr. Hicks, as follows:—

Oh, Mr. Hick
——S, I'm heartily sick
Of this sixteenth Pickwick
Which is just in the nick
For the publishing trick,
And will read nice and slick,
If you'll only be quick.
I don't write on tick,
That's my comfort, avick!
July 26, '37



DICKENS'S RHYME TO MR. HICKS, PREFIXED TO THE MANUSCRIPT OF THE "PICKWICK PAPERS"

At the auction sale of the library of the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts in 1923, in London, I paid £3700 for the manuscript of Dickens's *The Haunted Man and the*

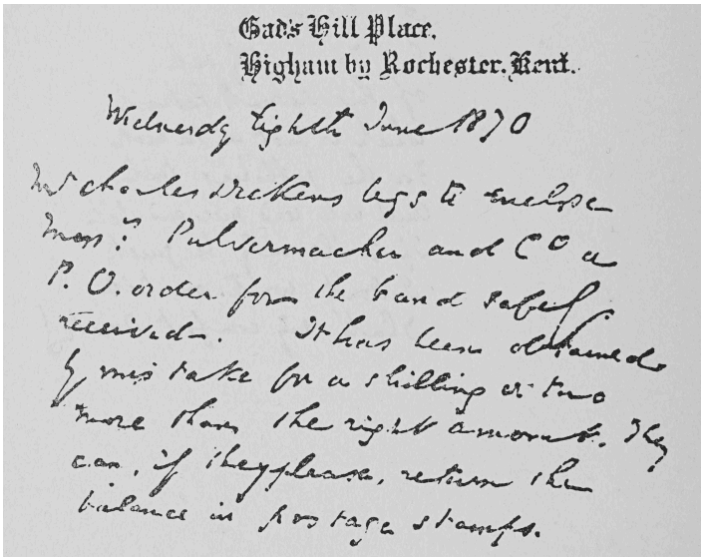
Ghost's Bargain. He had given it, the fifth and last of his series of Christmas books, to the baroness in 1850. Ten years after *Pickwick*, Dickens wrote this story, and the manuscript demonstrates what I have said earlier about the painstaking and less spontaneous work of an author as he grows older. The manuscript of *The Haunted Man* is filled with blottings, deletions, and corrections. It is now in the choice collection of Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer of New York.



OWEN D. YOUNG

I do not hesitate to prophesy that in time the works of Dickens will be the most valuable after Shakespeare. He is one of the few English authors whose appeal is universal. Even in translation his works are wonderful, and they have been translated into almost every language, keeping their peculiar

raciness, though they must sacrifice their English idiom. Dickens will be read always, by the man in the street as well as by the scholar.


Gad's Hill Place.
Higham by Rochester. Kent.

Wednesday Eighth June 1870

Mr Charles Dickens begs to enclose
Messrs Pulvermacher and Co's
P. O. order for the Band of Rabbits
received. It has been observed
by mistake for a shilling or two
more than the right amount. They
can, if they please, return the
balance in Postage Stamps.

LAST LETTER WRITTEN BY CHARLES DICKENS

Speaking of the generosity of Mr. White in presenting the *Pickwick* leaf to the British Museum recalls to my mind the magnificent gift of Mr. John Gribbel of the Glenriddel Burns manuscripts to Scotland. The great liberality displayed by this Philadelphian should do much to cement international relations. All the friends of Bobbie Burns in Scotland—and they are legion—gave up hope when these manuscripts were purchased by Mr. Gribbel, believing them lost to the homeland forever. You can imagine the thrill in every Scotchman's heart, from Sidney to Edinburgh, when the stirring news came, hot over the cable, that they were to be returned to their native land.



"THE DYING CLOWN": ORIGINAL DRAWING BY ROBERT SEYMOUR FOR DICKENS'S "PICKWICK PAPERS"

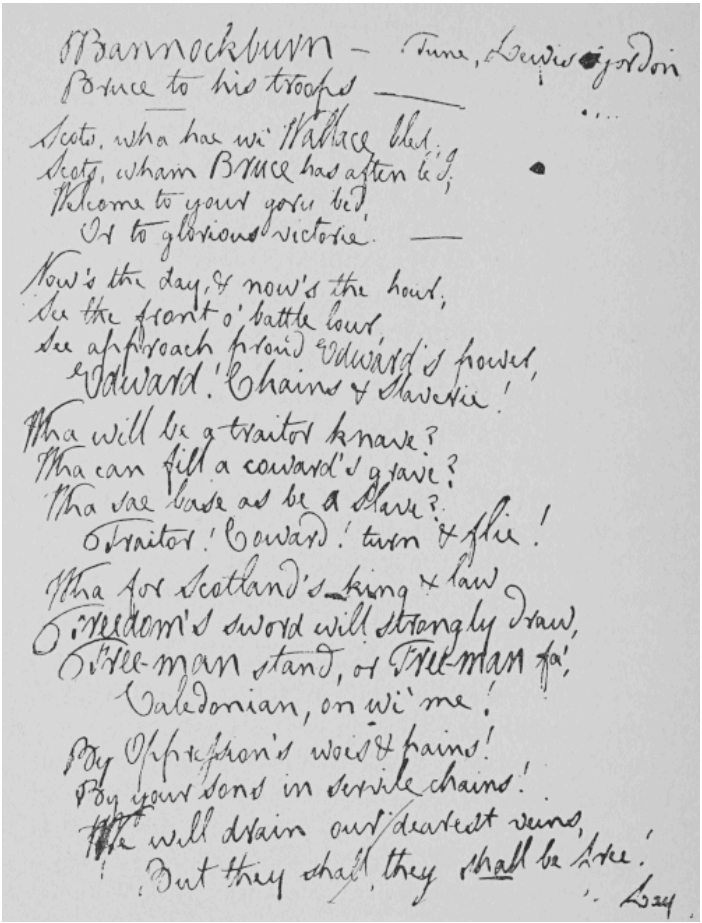
(*Seymour committed suicide after finishing this drawing*)

When Mr. Gribbel bought this collection in 1914, I was naturally disappointed that I did not secure the Glenriddel manuscripts myself. But I was as delighted as any bra' laddie directly descended from the celebrated ploughboy when I learned of Mr. Gribbel's gift.

However, there are always compensations in this game if you have the patience to wait. I recently

secured probably the greatest collection of Burns manuscripts, the one formerly belonging to that fine student and most charming of men, Mr. R. B. Adam, of Buffalo, New York. I had known of this collection all my life, but never dreamed that I should one day own it.

It includes the original manuscripts of the great poems of Burns that are enshrined in the souls of every lover of true poetry. Perhaps the foremost is the original draft of “Tam o’ Shanter,” written on twelve leaves, which Burns presented to Cardonnel Lawson in 1790. There is also the appealing “There Was a Lass and She Was Fair”; the beautiful poem, “The Last Time I Came O’er the Moor”; the exquisite lyric, “To a Woodlark”; and that lovely characteristic poem, “Wilt Thou Be My Dearie,” in which Burns himself especially delighted. Indeed, these original drafts truly give Burns “an immortal life in the hearts of young and old,” and when I read and reread in the poet’s own hand Burns’s “On Hearing a Thrush on a Morning’s Walk,” the magnificent “Address to Edinburgh,” and the sonorous “Lament of Mary, Queen of Scots,” I am thrilled to the marrow.


Bannockburn — Tune, Lewie Gordon
Bruce to his troops —

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has often led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victorie.

Now's the day, & now's the hour,
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power,
Edward! Chains & slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Traitor! Coward! turn & flee!

Wha for Scotland's king & law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or Free-man fa',
Caledonian, on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes & pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall, they shall be free!

Burns.

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF ROBERT BURNS'S POEM, "BANNOCKBURN"

It is difficult to describe the emotions aroused when I read the original of that stirring battle song, the address at Bannockburn of Robert Bruce to his troops, which begins, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled." This manuscript the poet presented to his sister-in-law, with the inscription, "To Mrs. G. Burns, from her brother, the author." Burns used to wander through Leglen Wood, supposed to be the haunt of

Wallace, and confessed having visited it "with as much devout enthusiasm as ever a pilgrim did the shrine of Loretto."

My collection contains poems of noble sublimity and heart-melting tenderness, such as the first poem known to have been written by Burns, and one of his most charming, entitled, "Once I Lov'd a Bonnie Lass." There are two, however, which make a terrific appeal to me. One is the poem in which he was inspired by the American Revolutionary War, beginning:—

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
  No lyre Eolian I awake,
'Tis Liberty's bold note I swell,
  Thy harp, Columbia, let me take.

The other is in some respects the favorite one of all lovers of Burns, the magnificent "For a' That and a' That." I keep this collection and the poet's priceless letters under lock and key in my vault in New York, lest the whole Scottish nation awaken one day, rise up, and demand them.

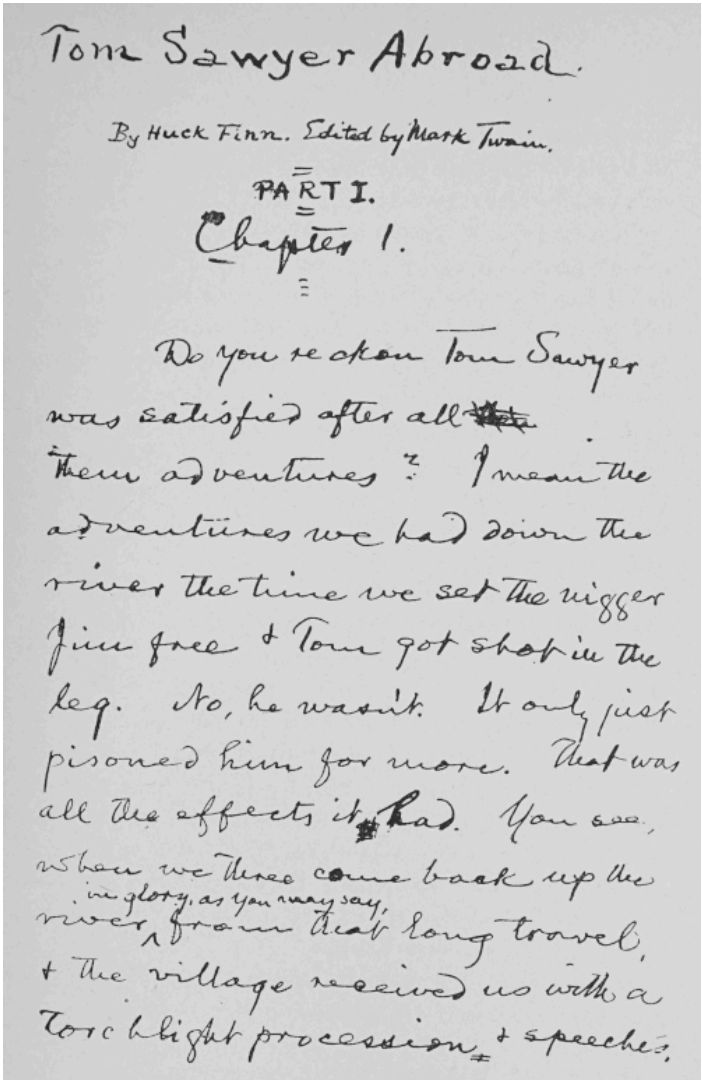
It is sad that Burns received very little money for his poems when he was alive. How surprised he must be, and with what irony must he observe, if his spirit walks this way, the great sums which have passed from one hand to another in the exciting exchange of his manuscripts.

Our own Mark Twain always wrote under the greatest pressure. Like many other artists, he was in constant need of money, but unlike them, he held to a remarkably consistent gait in his writing. His manuscripts are unusual, they show but few changes and corrections. His stories came as "trippingly on

the tongue" as his vital conversation, which was characteristically free and easy. I have the original manuscripts of *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, and *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*. The second was written by the author under the title of "Those Extraordinary Twins," and the last one was originally called "The Stranger's Tale." The few corrections made by Mark Twain do not seem especially happy ones to our modern eyes. In my opinion it would have been better if he had left alone the thoughts which God first gave him. There are whole scathing paragraphs in *A Connecticut Yankee* which were never published, but should be published.



VAULT AT 273 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK



Tom Sawyer Abroad.

By Huck Finn. Edited by Mark Twain.

PART I.

Chapter 1.

Do you reckon Tom Sawyer was satisfied after all them adventures? I mean the adventures we had down the river the time we set the nigger Jim free & Tom got shot in the leg. No, he wasn't. It only just pisoned him for more. That was all the effects it had. You see, when we three come back up the river, from that long travel, in glory, as you may say, & the village received us with a torchlight procession & speeches,

PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF MARK TWAIN'S "TOM SAWYER ABROAD"

Lovers of manuscripts all succumb to the magic beauty of those of Edgar Allan Poe. Most of them were written on long folio sheets in an exquisite and

unaffected hand. So perfect and so fine is the rise and fall of the pen that his writing seems an imitation of copperplate in its evenness. I had an amusing experience, many years ago, after I bought one of the three known autograph copies of Poe's poem, "Annabel Lee." A dealer in Boston wrote to me, asking if I could come there to view this most interesting Poe manuscript. I made the appointment, arriving on an early morning train. When I reached the dealer's shop he said he would not have the manuscript to show me until one o'clock. I decided to pass the time walking, to think out clearly just what I should pay him for it when the question of price came up.

As I wandered about the city I thought $1000 would be about right; I then imagined that this copy must be an especially beautiful one, and decided that $2000 was a fairer figure. But the more I considered it the more I coveted it, so I jumped to $3000, then $4000, and finally made $5000 my limit. When I returned to the shop he showed me a truly lovely autograph. I asked him what he wanted for it. He replied he would take $500, plus a ten per cent commission! It seemed preposterous to me, but I was so pleased I paid quickly, took the manuscript and returned to New York.

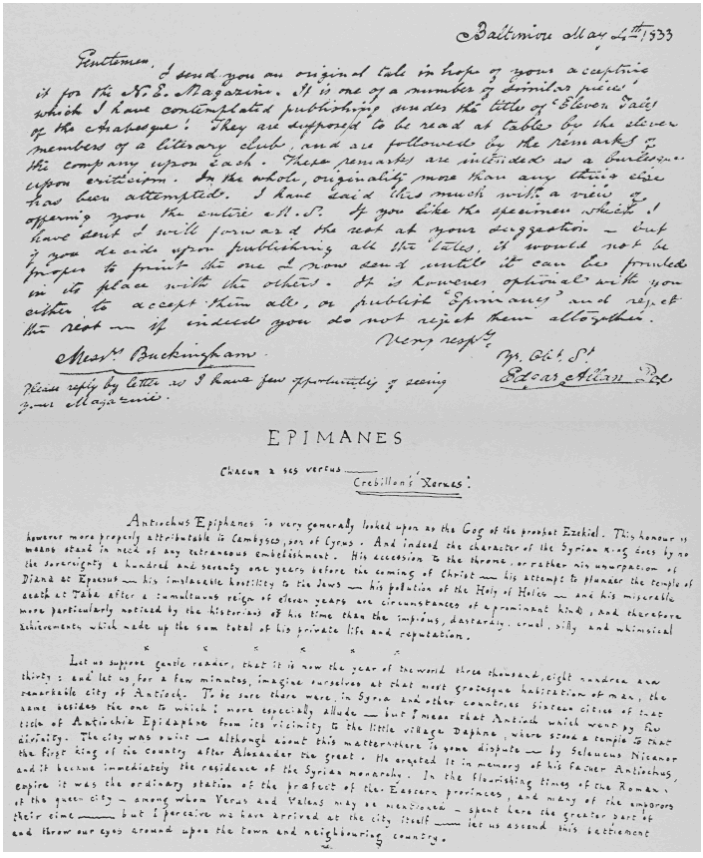
Some time later I went West with several very fine first editions. I also took the manuscript of "Annabel Lee." The train rushed through the night and I found it difficult to sleep. This time I considered what price I should ask for this manuscript, and the sum a customer would pay for it. When the train reached Harrisburg I thought $1000 would be a very nice price, giving me a profit of about one hundred per cent. At Pittsburgh, thinking of the beauty of the

poem, I ran my price up to $2000. Then I fell asleep. A jerky stop woke me at Fort Wayne, and immediately the Poe manuscript came to my mind. In the narrow confines of a Pullman berth I felt sure it was worth $3000. After all, what I had paid for it should be left out of the question, for it was a magnificent lyric, one of the finest productions of his genius. At last I reached Chicago, and up it went again, this time to $4000.

My customer lived in a suburb, and by the time I had reached his home I knew I could not part with "Annabel Lee" for less than $5000! This was the price I had been willing myself to pay for it. After selling him some very attractive books I showed him the "Annabel Lee." His eyes glistened; he asked me the price. I bravely said, "Five thousand dollars." He jumped at it quickly, just as I had at the $500 in Boston several months before. I was awfully amused, and told him about my journey and the workings of my mind; about my original purchase of the manuscript and the sum I had given for it, and how the price had progressed geographically.

He burst out laughing, took hold of my arm, and said, "I suppose I have something to be grateful for, at that! Thank God, I don't live in San Francisco!"

What would this manuscript be worth to-day?



Baltimore May 4th 1833

Gentlemen, I send you an original tale in hope of your acceptance it for the N. E. Magazine. It is one of a number of similar pieces which I have contemplated publishing under the title of 'Eleven Tales of the Arabesque'. They are supposed to be read at table by the eleven members of a literary club, and are followed by the remarks of the company upon each. These remarks are intended as a burlesque upon criticism. In the whole, originality more than any thing else has been attempted. I have said this much with a view of opening you the entire M.S. If you like the specimen which I have sent I will forward the rest at your suggestion — but if you decide upon publishing all the tales, it would not be proper to print the one I now send unless it can be founded in its place with the others. It is however optional with you either to accept them all, or publish "Epimanes" and reject the rest — if indeed you do not reject them altogether.

Very respectfully
Yr. Obt. St.
Edgar A Poe

Messrs Buckingham
Please reply by Letter as I have few opportunities of seeing your Magazine.

EPIMANES

Chacun a ses vertus —
Crebillon's Xerxes.

Antiochus Epiphanes is very generally looked upon as the Gog of the prophet Ezekiel. This honour is however more properly attributable to Cambyses, son of Cyrus. And indeed the character of the Syrian will admit of no additional embellishment. His accession to the throne, or rather his usurpation of the sovereignty a hundred and seventy one years before the coming of Christ — his impiety at Diana at Ephesus — his implacable hostility to the Jews — his pollution of the Holy of Holies — and his miserable death at Tabæ after a tumultuous reign of eleven years are circumstances of a prominent kind, and therefore more particularly noticed by the historians of his time than the impious, dastardly, cruel, silly, and whimsical achievements which made up the sum total of his private life and reputation.

* * * * * *

Let us suppose gentle reader, that it is now the year of the world three thousand eight hundred and thirty: and let us, for a few minutes, imagine ourselves at that most grotesque habitation of man, the remarkable city of Antioch. To be sure there were, in Syria and other countries sixteen cities of that name besides the one to which I more especially allude — but I mean that Antioch which went by the appellation of Antiochia Epidaphne from its vicinity to the little village Daphne, where stood a temple to that divinity. The city was built — although about this matter authors is some dispute — by Seleucus Nicanor the first king of the country after Alexander the great. He erected it in memory of his father Antiochus, and it became immediately the residence of the Syrian monarchy. In the flourishing times of the Roman empire it was the ordinary station of the praefect of the Eastern provinces, and many of the emperors of the queen city — among whom Verus and Valens may be mentioned — spent here the greater part of their time — but I perceive we have arrived at the city itself — let us ascend this battlement and throw our eyes around upon the town and neighbouring country.

LETTER OF POE SUBMITTING “EPIMANES” TO THE “NEW ENGLAND
MAGAZINE,” WITH PART OF ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

Another, a unique manuscript which came into my possession, is the original of Poe’s “Epimanes.”

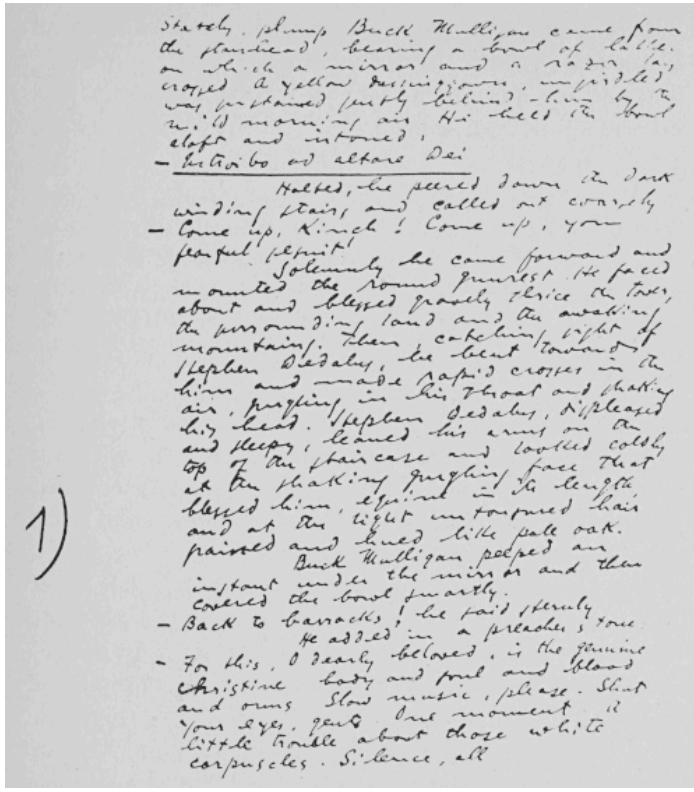
This precious draft is now happily in the library of a collector whose taste is exquisite and faultless. The author has prefixed to the story a letter to the editor of the *New England Magazine*. Poe writes in part:—

> I send you an original tale in hope of your accepting it for the N. E. Magazine. It is one of a number of

> similar pieces which I have contemplated publishing under the title “Eleven Tales of the Arabesque.” They are supposed to be read by the eleven members of a literary club, and are followed by the remarks of the company upon each.

This manuscript, too, is beautifully, clearly written, except that the letters are very small. It was not until some time after I bought it that I discovered one of the most tragic sentences I have ever read. Poe had folded over his manuscript several times. There are three tiny words inscribed in the lower left corner. One of the greatest masters of all time appeals to his editor, saying desperately, “I am poor.” These few pathetic words are enough to tear at the heartstrings of any collector.

A deadly malady which attacks all collectors at one stage or another is catalogitis. Here is a disease which will defy science as long as books and their ilk remain to be collected. In the beginning the symptoms are not grave. You will quietly open your mail one morning to find a pamphlet, perhaps from some local auctioneer, enumerating certain books he is offering for sale. From time to time other sales lists will be sent you, and one day when you have started to arrange your desk neatly you will be surprised that there are catalogues in nearly every drawer. You quickly decide to throw them out. But something, the most insidious germ of the disease, stays your hand. You have fallen a victim, merely in keeping them.


Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from
the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather
on which a mirror and a razor lay,
crossed. A yellow dressinggown, ungirdled,
was sustained gently behind him by the
mild morning air. He held the bowl
aloft and intoned:
— Introibo ad altare Dei.
Halted, he peered down the dark
winding stairs and called out coarsely:
— Come up, Kinch! Come up, you
fearful jesuit!
Solemnly he came forward and
mounted the round gunrest. He faced
about and blessed gravely thrice the tower,
the surrounding land and the awaking
mountains. Then, catching sight of
Stephen Dedalus, he bent towards him
and made rapid crosses in the
air, gurgling in his throat and shaking
his head. Stephen Dedalus, displeased
and sleepy, leaned his arms on the
top of the staircase and looked coldly
at the shaking gurgling face that
blessed him, equine in its length,
and at the light untonsured hair,
patched and hued like pale oak.
Buck Mulligan peeped an
instant under the mirror and then
covered the bowl smartly.
— Back to barracks! he said sternly.
He added in a preacher's voice:
— For this, O dearly beloved, is the genuine
Christine: body and soul and blood
and ouns. Slow music, please. Shut
your eyes, gents. One moment. A
little trouble about those white
corpuscles. Silence, all.

1)

PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF JOYCE'S "ULYSSES"

Then follows what Leigh Hunt, more than half a century ago, called "one of the loftiest pleasures of the imagination," hours spent with a pencil in hand and catalogues scattered about, as you read over, memorize, and check up the names of books and manuscripts you would like to buy if you could afford it—and sometimes do anyway. Catalogitis is never a waste of time. Collectors are rewarded sooner or later by an intensive study, especially of new catalogues hot from the bookseller. It is a great point of vantage to secure an advance copy, thus being in a position to forestall one's fellow collectors.

For years I have been desperately ill with catalogitis. Indeed, I am a hopeless case. I have reached a peculiar stage. I even order my overcoats made with an extra and unusually large pocket. A sort of literary marsupial, I carry my young—and old—catalogues in my pouch, never sure into what they may develop, as I bound from sale to sale.

I shall never forget the time when an English book dealer mailed me a catalogue which brought me luck immediately. Quite daft at the sight of it, I studied every item mentioned, then my eyes fell upon the description of a Benedict Arnold letter. According to the catalogue, this was the letter in which Arnold gave for the first time a truthful account of his treason, mentioning the £6000—less than $30,000—paid to him by the British. The letter was listed at only thirty pounds. I quickly cabled my brother Philip, who has a remarkable and unerring taste for fine things. He was in London at the time and was fortunate enough to secure it for me.

Arnold wrote rather complainingly to Lord North, the English prime minister, as follows:—

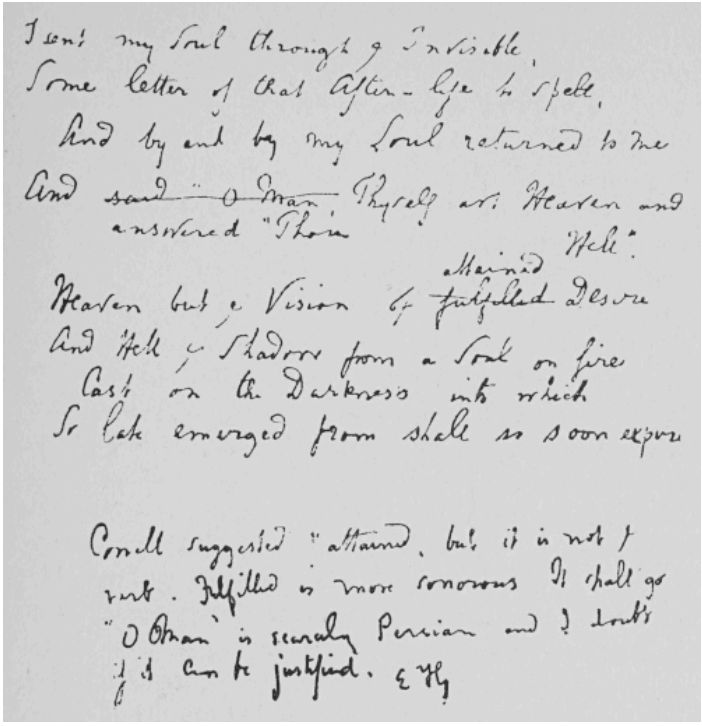
> Your Memoralist, Influenced by Sentiments of Loyalty to the King and Attachment to the British Constitution, has sacrificed a handsome property in America ... and at the most Eminent hazard of his Life, Co-operated with Sir Henry Clinton, Commander in Chief of the British Army in America, which will appear by his official letters to Lord Sackville. But his Intentions and measures being discovered before they would be brought to a happy issue, which bid fair to put a fortunate end to the War in America. He was obliged to fly, and very narrowly, but fortunately, escaped from the Americans, and having joined the British Army in New York, the Commander in Chief was pleased to confer upon him the Rank of Brigadier General,

> which was approved by the King.... And your Memoralist begs leave further to observe that in Consideration of his Corps and Services, he has received from Government only six thousand pounds sterling, one thousand pounds of which he has expended in raising his Regiment.
>
> Your Memoralist has not only sacrificed his fortune, but is deprived of Four Hundred and Fifty pounds sterling per Annum, which he was intitled to receive from Congress, as also a large tract of land, and by the decided part which he has taken, his Family have been Banished from America, and he has sacrificed his prospects for providing for them there, which were undoubtedly of equal if not of greater Importance to them than his Fortune, which with that of others has been given up by the late Administration for the desirable purpose of obtaining Peace.

The next day the London dealer received seventeen cabled offers for it. When Mr. Henry F. DePuy came into my library in New York soon after, I told him the story of the Benedict Arnold letter. One of the most generous of men, he asked me to place a price on it. I replied frankly that the price I paid for it was nothing short of ridiculous good fortune, that I believed if it were sold at auction in this country it would bring at least $1850. He offered to buy it from me at that figure, and we immediately closed the bargain. Three years later, when Mr. DePuy held his sale, I was pleased to see my judgment verified. The Benedict Arnold letter sold for $2850. It is now in the Huntington collection.

If you once make a find like this you become wedded to the reading of catalogues. The finest private collection of catalogues in the world is in Paris. It is the result of the tireless and exhaustive study of my friend Seymour de Ricci. He has gathered complete files of auction catalogues dating from the

seventeenth century, from France, Germany, and England. Every room of his large apartment on the Rue Boissière is filled from floor to ceiling. He has even compiled a catalogue of catalogues. This stupendous work comprises more than forty thousand items. Commercial pamphlets are generally thrown into the wastebasket, but I doubt if book catalogues are ever thrown away. True collectors guard them as zealously as they do their rarest literary finds. I like to look back at some of the catalogues I have issued, and note the marked increase of price since certain items have left my hands. How I would like to buy back many books and manuscripts at the prices I sold them for!



I sent my Soul through y Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell,
And by and by my Soul returned to me
And said "O Man, Thyself art Heaven and
answered "Thou
Hell".
Heaven but y Vision of attained fulfilled Desire
And Hell y Shadow from a Soul on fire
Cast on the Darkness into which
Ere Life emerged from shall so soon expire

Cowell suggested "attained, but it is not
right. Fulfilled is more sonorous It shall go
"O Man" is scarcely Persian and I doubt
if it can be justified. E FG

STANZAS FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF “THE RUBÁIYÁT

OF OMAR KHAYYÁM" BY EDWARD FITZGERALD

This purchase of the Benedict Arnold letter was the beginning of a mad chase for American documents and historical papers which has become more frantic with the roll of years. Although great papers dealing with the history of England have always interested me intensely, those of American interest are dearest to my heart. It is a great and exciting adventure to collect noble relics of our country's past. The chase is often more fascinating than the wildest exploits of the most experienced huntsman; sometimes the bag proves remarkable, far beyond one's hopes and expectations. When I first started to collect Americana it did not enjoy its present vogue. In the early days you could buy amazingly important historical papers for a mere song. Nowadays everyone is seeking things American, from old New England bedsteads to Pennsylvania whiskey flasks. The spell seems to be on the nation, and this craving for Americana is extending to every collector.

The greatest purchase I ever made was an original certified copy of the Declaration of Independence. It is the only official copy extant, with the exception of that famous instrument now deposited for safekeeping in the Library of Congress. It was in 1911, when I was attending an afternoon session of the remarkable sale of the Robert Hoe collection in New York. In the midst of the bidding an attendant entered the room saying I was wanted at the telephone. It was my brother calling from Philadelphia, and his voice sounded so excited that I feared he had ill news for me.

A cable had just come from Berlin, he said, offering us this certified copy of the Declaration of Independence. It was the one sent to Frederick the

Great, King of Prussia, in order that the independence of the American colonies should be recognized officially in that part of the world. It was signed by Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, Commissioners Plenipotentiary. Included in the lot was the only signed and attested copy of the original Articles of Confederation of the United States, the first provisional government of the colonies. I, too, was tremendously impressed, and my only question was: Were they authentic? In reply my brother told me they were to be sold by a direct descendant of Baron von Scolenberg, the minister of Frederick the Great, and that their authenticity was undisputed.

Although the price was high, we felt that we could not allow manuscripts of such tremendous national importance to escape us. Then my brother, with his usual business acumen, immediately cabled our agent to pay the money forthwith. Our excitement was intense until we received a reply confirming our purchase. Neither my brother nor I could sleep until the news was flashed over the wires the next morning. We did not realize the extent of our good fortune, however, until one of our competitors informed us he had sent a special messenger from London to Berlin to secure this great document. His disappointment was terrific when he learned that these precious papers had already been sold.

I do not think the price of $260,000 excessive for these great cornerstones of our country's history. Some day they will be beyond the computation of dollars. What adds a further glamour to this tale is that only a few days later someone came to our office and offered us the original letter arranging for the transfer of Independence Hall from the State of Pennsylvania to the City of Philadelphia. The transfer

of ground was for the historic building and the piece of land known as Independence Square, on which was erected the clock tower that then contained the most precious memento of our independence, the famous Liberty Bell. It gives the purchase price of this most hallowed building and ground at only $70,000.

When I think of the historic papers and documents, and the great literary manuscripts that have passed through my hands into those of our customers, I recall the words from Proverbs xx, 14, which is the motto of our house:—

“It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he hath gone his way, then he boasteth.”

VI

AMERICAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

A YOUNG man who recently came into my library in New York looked about at the high walls entirely lined with rare books, then sank into a chair. He was the very picture of dejection. For a moment he sat quietly staring into space, then said, with a melancholy sigh, "It's no use!"

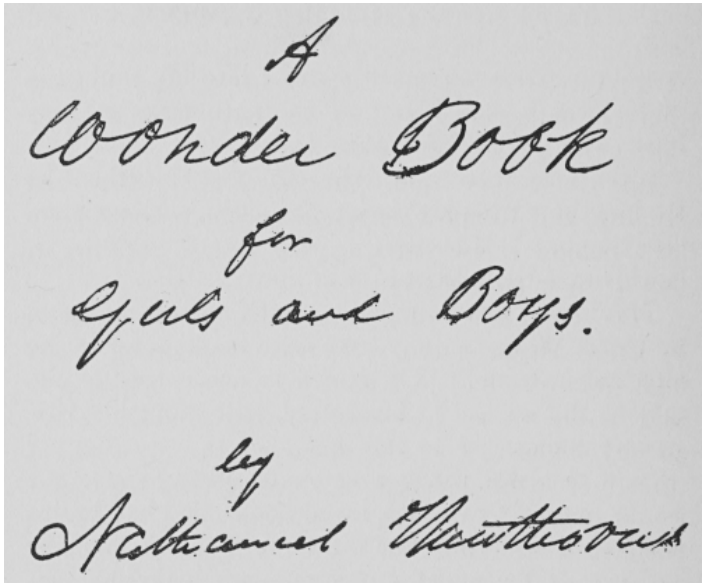
"What's the matter?" I inquired. "Bad news?"

"No!" He turned upon me with a quick blaze of temper. "How can anyone collect books after seeing all these rarities?" He waved in accusatory circles toward the walls. "I have very little money. Why, I can't even begin to collect!"

Now this was really a very nice young man. He was in his early twenties, loved books, and had brains too. Then what was the matter with him? Alas, he had very little money and very, very little imagination. He was minus the latter asset, the very foundation of successful book collecting. He allowed himself to be blinded by the high prices of a few old volumes. He either could not, or would not, visualize anything beyond that which he actually saw before him. He had no vision.

People do not always have to invest in high-priced books to form an interesting collection. Many unusual collections have been made through small but exceedingly careful and, of course, thoughtful

expenditure. Yet this is a fact very difficult to thump into the young collector's head. It has taken some men I know—men with slender purses—several years to realize this. Meanwhile they lose both time and bargains. But vision in book buying does not come so readily when you are first suffering from the febrile mania of collecting. Yet be not dismayed! Just because Gutenberg Bibles and Shakespeare folios jolt the auction rooms with their stupendous prices is no reason why you should ignore the works of a comparatively obscure writer who appeals to you, someone in whom you believe.



MANUSCRIPT TITLE PAGE OF HAWTHORNE'S
"WONDER BOOK"

Keep your eyes on his books, his manuscripts, his letters, when you are browsing in bookshops; ask yourself a few leading questions concerning his future and answer them honestly. Do you believe your author has an intrinsic value that is likely to

increase with the years? How scarce are these books or manuscripts or letters of his? Think back. If you have the real collecting instinct you have kept all your sales catalogues. Check them over.

Just remember that Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, and Joseph Conrad first editions could have been bought a few years ago for almost nothing, in fact at their published prices.

This reminds me of a remarkable prophecy made by Uncle Moses in 1895. He was complaining of the high prices he had just paid for several books. He said he didn't see how rare volumes could possibly go any higher. Then he amended this by naming three men in English letters whose works he thought would advance to almost unbelievable values—Shelley, Keats, and Poe. If only I had taken advantage of Uncle Moses' significant foresight and vision!

"When prices are high," Uncle Moses advised me, "don't forget that there are new fields for the collector. There's no need to grumble. You can always spend your money wisely on the things which are not so much in demand."

I realized, even then, that these were words of wisdom in the book game. Many times I have thought of his oft-repeated, laconic statement: "There are always books to fit every purse."

There are hundreds of types of books to collect: volumes as yet unnoticed in the auction room, which lie neglected year in, year out, upon the bookseller's shelf, and which are disregarded by the conventional collector. They are waiting for the man with imagination to discover them. And many of them will eventually come into their own. My uncle and

others of his day could not foresee the slavish manner in which some collectors would in later years pursue, with neither rhyme nor reason, every volume on any arbitrary list. Imagine buying books other than those of your own taste and inclination! It seems the veriest joke to have signposts on the way, indicating the books you should buy—just as though one or two men are able to choose fifty or even one hundred of the most outstanding books in English or any other literature. The difference of opinion is too great. To me such buying is about as thrilling as going to a doctor to have him dictate your diet.

"I have collected," said my uncle, as we talked together a few years before he died, "along a path untrodden in my day—early American children's books." He walked about his dusty old shop for a few moments, then selected a diminutive volume, the *Dying Sayings of Hannah Hill, Junior*, published in Philadelphia in 1717. "Now," he observed, "I will show you an example. I would have you know that this little book is damn rare." He always hated and made fun of the stereotyped expressions in booksellers' catalogues, such as "excessively rare," "extremely rare," "of utmost rarity," "very rare," and "rare." He said it reminded him of the man who had eggs to sell, offering them as newly laid eggs, fresh eggs, and eggs. Uncle Moses described his books more colorfully. First of all they were "infernally rare," then "damn, damn rare," followed by "damn rare," and finally "rare."

This and similar picturesque language fitted his rugged personality and endeared him to everyone. How much more interesting it would be if modern cataloguers used their imagination when describing the degree of rarity of an old book.

In his younger days Uncle Moses had had a most unusual opportunity to gather together many early books published expressly for children. When he succeeded to the business of the Philadelphia publishers, McCarthy and Davis, in 1851, the stock included a number of early American juveniles. You see, McCarthy and Davis were successors to Johnson and Warner, who succeeded the original firm established by Jacob Johnson in 1780. It was noted for its children's books, so you can imagine the varied juvenile curiosities my uncle inherited.

Even when my brothers and sisters and I were very small children, Uncle Moses remembered our birthdays and other anniversaries always with a pretty little book. Although we were all taught to care for and really honor our books from the time we could hold them in our hands, it was to my eldest sister, Rebecca, and to me that he gave the most valuable and entertaining volumes. I have kept every one of them; each bears his inscription in beautiful, finely printed letters, "From Uncle Mo."

My sister was early imbued with the book-hunting spirit, and I have often found her in some little secondhand store in Philadelphia quietly looking through piles of books in the hope of securing something quaint, something unusual and perhaps hitherto unknown. Her searches were not fruitless either.

These book-hunting expeditions were adventures for us. We thought it great fun to add to our little library so charming and tiny a pamphlet as, for instance, *The History of Ann Lively and her Bible*, which was sold in 1830 for one half cent, and issued in New York in a somewhat proselyting manner by the American Tract Society. It was a red-letter day in our lives if we

could find some curious example to flaunt before the amused face of Uncle Moses. But the occasion was rare, indeed, when we found a book which he did not already own.

It was many years ago that I took Uncle Moses' tip to start collecting early American children's books. Hence I am some leagues ahead of those who got a later start. Many collectors are only now beginning to rub their eyes and to wake up to the fascination which these tiny volumes offer to book lovers. Early American juveniles are unusually interesting for several reasons. To begin with, they give such naïve samples of the mental food our poor ancestors lived upon in the dim days of their childhood.

Take, for instance, a small volume published in 1738 by Samuel Phillips, called *History of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Epitomized; for the Use of Children in the South Parish at Andover*. The author says that "his great Lord and Master had commanded his Ministers to feed his Lambs as well as his Sheep." But what anæmic feeding! He sets before his particular lambs sixty pages of the most indigestible food ever concocted, consisting of questions on and answers to the most abstruse metaphysical, philosophical, and controversial subjects! Subjects which are no nearer solution to-day than when the Rev. Samuel Phillips propounded them for the benefit of his bewildered little lambs of Andover Parish one hundred and eighty-nine years ago!

You will find early American children's books difficult to obtain. There are but few left in good condition to-day, but it is great fun tracking them. In the first place, very few were published by our Colonial presses. Such venerable gentlemen as Cotton Mather and Governor Winthrop kept the

printers too busily occupied issuing theological works or acts of provincial assemblies; too seriously engaged with statutes, laws, almanacs, prayer books, catechisms, and sermons, to print many books for children. Lost in a theological web of their own weaving, the leaders of the day cared little about the intellectual amusement of their girls and boys.

But most of the young book fanciers, lucky enough to obtain the few books issued, mauled them about or destroyed them entirely. They are generally found with torn and missing leaves—these charming atrocities have made many copies quite worthless to the collector. I have been told that it is but normal for a bouncing bibliophile of twelve months to teethe on the hard board corners of, for instance, a copy of *Cinderella*. Indeed, a young child's attitude toward a book is not unlike that of a cannibal toward a missionary. Very young children—this is on record, if you doubt me—have been known to eat their books, literally devouring their contents.

When I was about seven years old another little boy of the same age came from a suburb of Philadelphia to spend the day with me. We quickly struck up a friendship. Although it was raining and we were forced to remain indoors, we played together quite happily. Everything went smoothly until late in the afternoon, when our inventive faculties began to give out. It was then, after we had taken apart most of my toys, that my little friend's eyes lighted upon my books. I watched him cross the room to the low shelf which held them so neatly, and I remained quiet even as he began to paw them over. But when I saw him take a pencil from his pocket to write crude letters of the alphabet along the margins, I flew at him like a wildcat. Only the immediate intervention

of our combined families saved him from annihilation. We have met many times since, and we always laugh at the story of my juvenile wrath.

He still insists, after forty years, that his was a perfectly normal action in a child. I believed in treating a book as something sacred, even at that age. The germ had evidently entered my system with my first vaccination!

In 1902 my uncle gave me his wonderful collection of children's books.

Among them was his "damn rare" pamphlet, *A Legacy for Children, being Some of the Last Expressions and Dying Sayings of Hannah Hill, Junr. Of the City of Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania, in America, Aged Eleven Years and near Three Months*, which was printed by Andrew Bradford, at the sign of the Bible, in Philadelphia, in 1717. Little Hannah took several days to die, and she insisted upon having the undivided attention of every member of her family. She gave them moral advice, told them what they should do and what they should not do after she had departed. "The Council which she gave, to her Dear and only Sister and Cousin Loyd Zachary, whom she dearly loved, was very grave and pithy...."

To-day I have nearly eight hundred volumes, which date from 1682 to 1840. They reveal with amazing fidelity the change in juvenile reading matter, the change, too, in the outward character of the American child. They depict the slow but determined growth from the child of Puritan New England to that of our own day. It is a delightful change from *Virtuous William the Obedient Prentice*, and *Patty Primrose*, to *Tom Sawyer*, *Huck Finn*, *Penrod*, and *Winnie-the-pooh*. If Robert Louis Stevenson had had the temerity to publish *Treasure Island* in the good

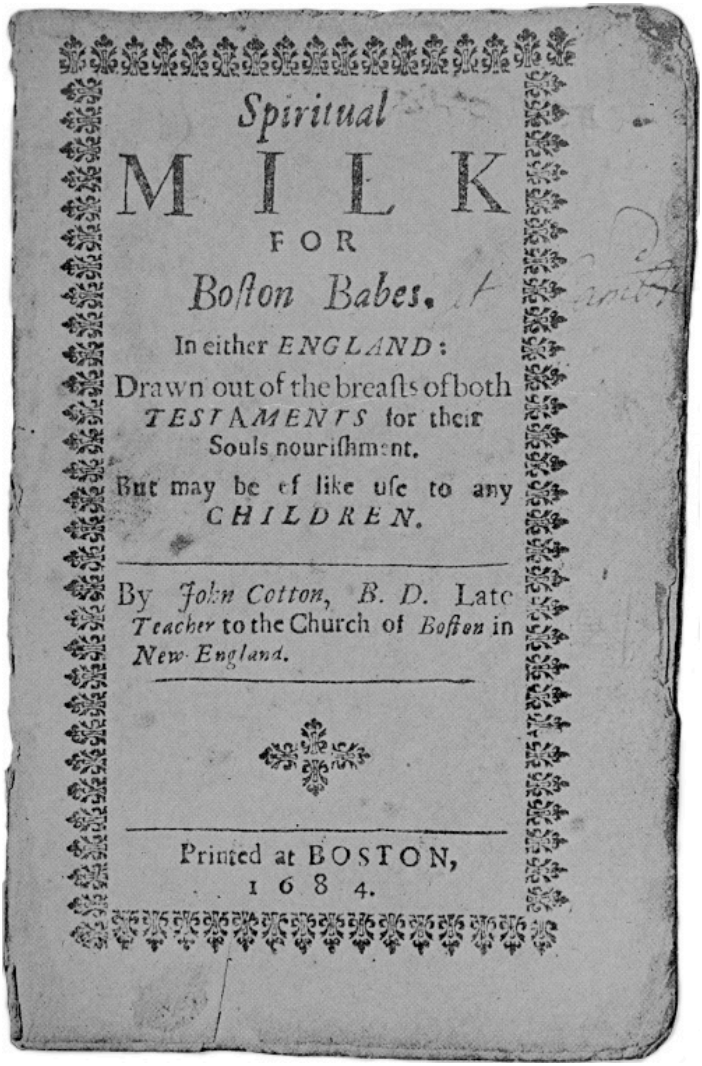
old days of Governor Winthrop he would have been a fit subject for the common hangman! I do not mean to imply that the New England boy of the seventeenth century was the goody-goody thing which his parents tried to make him. If he was choked with the Bible and threatened with the catechism and the prayer book, if the creed and Bunyan were ruthlessly thrust down his innocent young throat, he nevertheless could think of Captain Kidd, Sir Henry Morgan, the Indians, and the whole machinery of the boyhood imagination. Free thought was permitted him because there was no way to suppress it.

The little Puritans! My heart aches for them when I read an example such as *The Rule of the New-Creature. To be Practiced every day in all the Particulars of which are Ten*. This is the earliest book in my collection. It was published in Boston for Mary Avery, who sold books near the Blue Anchor, 1682. Imagine the weary little child who had to listen throughout a long Sunday afternoon to the contents of a book which started off in this manner:—

"Be sensible of thy Original Corruption daily, how it inclines thee to evil, and indisposeth thee to good; groan under it, and bewail it as Paul did.... Also take special notice of your actual sins, or daily infirmities, in Thought, Word, Deed. Endeavor to make your peace with God for them before you go to bed."

There is, too, one of the most famous of all juveniles, the equally inspiriting and nourishing *Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes. In either England: Drawn out of the breasts of both Testaments for their Souls nourishment. But may be of like use to any Children. Printed at Boston, 1684*. My copy is the only one known of this date. John Cotton, the great and influential Puritan

minister, had written this many years before, and it was first published in England in 1646, to settle a growing dissension among the Puritans, who could not decide which catechism of the many then in use was best for their children. This volume grew very popular and from it the little ones learned to die with much grace, and, therefore, eternal glory. Yet it was found very difficult to teach the young of New England the proper way to die; of all knowledge it is the most difficult to impart, as there are no really good textbooks.



Spiritual
MILK
FOR
Boston Babes.

In either *ENGLAND*:
Drawn out of the breasts of both
TESTAMENTS for their
Souls nourishment.
But may be of like use to any
CHILDREN.

By *John Cotton, B. D.* Late
Teacher to the Church of *Boston* in
New-England.

Printed at BOSTON,
1684.

TITLE PAGE OF “SPIRITUAL MILK FOR BOSTON BABES”

Spiritual
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By *John Cotton*, *B. D.* Late
Teacher to the Church of *Boston* in
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Printed at BOSTON,
1684.

The ecstasy over the departure of a pure young child is one of the most remarkable manifestations of the Puritan spirit. No book shows this more clearly than the Rev. James Janeway's *A Token for Children, being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyous Deaths of several Young Children*. This book passed through edition after edition in England and her colonies, and was the certain means of saving many children from hell and damnation. My copy is the only one extant from Benjamin Franklin's press, and is dated 1749. Janeway states in his Preface, which is addressed "to all Parents, School Masters and School Mistresses or any who have any Hand in the Education of Children:—

"Remember the Devil is at work hard, wicked Ones are industrious, and corrupt Nature is a rugged, knotty Piece to hew. But be not discouraged."

The author then goes on to relate the wicked bringing into this world of little children, and dwells lovingly and tenderly upon their wise and glorious deaths at the age of six or seven or even ten years. An early death in purity and virtue was a thing to be coveted and desired, and Janeway requests in his

Preface that the teacher should impress upon the little ones the advisability of imitating the early demise of these sweet children whose short and devout lives are narrated by him. Cotton Mather, who wrote a continuation of Janeway, and described the brilliant, joyous, matchless deaths of New England children—Janeway described the demise of the children of Old England—died at the age of sixty-five years, thus prudently neglecting to follow the example of his beautiful and obedient pupils who passed away, in all holiness, at the hoary age of six. We shall select a passage from the celebrated little book, which bears this title:—

A Token for the Children of New England, or some Examples of Children, in whom the Fear of God was remarkably budding before they died; in several parts of New England. Preserved and Published for the Encouragement of Piety in other children.

The selected passage is as follows:—

> Elizabeth Butcher, Daughter of Alvin and Elizabeth Butcher, of Boston, was born July 14th, 1709. When she was about Two Years and half Old; as she lay in the Cradle she would ask her self that Question, What is my corrupt Nature? and would make answer again to herself, It is empty of Grace, bent unto Sin, and only to Sin, and that continually. She took great delight in learning her Catechism, and would not willingly go to Bed without saying some Part of it.
>
> She being a weakly Child, her Mother carried her into the Country for Health; And when she was about Three Years old, and at Meeting, she would set with her Eyes fix'd on the Minister, to the Admiration of all that Sat about her, who said that grown up People might learn and take Example of her. She took great Delight in reading, and was ready and willing to receive Instruction.
>
> She was not contented with the bare reading of God's

> Word, but would frequently ask the meaning of it. And when she was at her work, she would often ask where such and such Places in Scripture were, and would mention the Words that she might be directed to find them.
>
> It was her Practice to carry her Catechism or some other good Book to Bed with her, and in the Morning she would be sitting up in her Bed reading before any of the Family were awake.

Such goodness could not last, and on the thirteenth of June, 1718, poor little Elizabeth departed this life, "being eight years and just eleven months old."

It is related of another child, Daniel Bradley, the son of Nathan and Hester Bradley of Guilford, Connecticut, that when the said child was about three years old, "he had one Night an Impression of the Fears of Death, which put him into Crying; his Mother told him, if he died he would go to Heaven; unto which he replied, He knew not how he would like that Place, where he would be acquainted with no body!"

It is curious how you run unexpectedly upon things which you have long desired. I always wanted a copy of George Fox's *Instructions for Right Spelling*, printed by Reinier Jansen, in Philadelphia, in 1702. One day I stopped at Travers's Bookshop in Trenton, New Jersey. Now Clayton L. Travers is a true bookman; he knows the business thoroughly. In fact he was an old crony of my uncle. I said to him that I had been looking several years for Fox's book. When I told him the title, he thought for a moment, then disappeared to the back of the shop. Two minutes later he returned with a little volume which was in an old sheep binding, the title page decorated with an elaborate woodcut border. I opened it and read the great Friend's simple description of a comma:—

"Comma," wrote George Fox, "is a little stop or breathing; as Behold O Lord." Please note that he placed no comma after Behold! The discovery of Fox's old spelling book was a delight to me, but what made it still more pleasant was Travers's generosity in letting me have it for about one quarter its worth. Collector's luck!

"They be darned small, but the flavor am delicious," said an old Southerner to me of the quail in his part of the country. The same can also be applied to these children's books. I suppose many people will wonder why I, an old bachelor, prefer them? I can only answer with another question. Why is it that old bachelors also write the best children's stories? There is no answer. But, thank heaven, I am not alone in my crime. Another confirmed bachelor, a dear friend of mine, is quite as enthusiastic on this youthful theme. Dr. Wilberforce Eames, of New York, one of the greatest students of books this country ever had, abets me; especially when he casually informs me of the probable whereabouts of some rarity that I have been seeking for years.

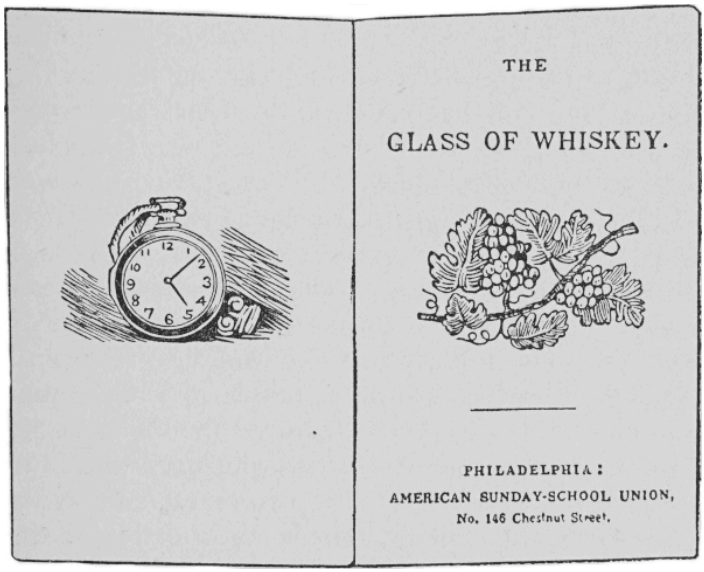


WILBERFORCE EAMES

Another bookman, my genial colleague, Mr. Lathrop C. Harper, also of New York, and a great specialist in Americana, has been as much interested in these little books as I myself. Instead of selling them to me, Mr. Harper gives me all the tiny juveniles that he can find. He has just presented to me a little book

published in Boston in 1714, which contains embedded in a waste of theological discussion for infants, the following priceless gem:—

"O Children of New England, Poor Hearts; You are going to Hell indeed: But will it not be a dreadful thing to go to Hell from New England?"


THE

GLASS OF WHISKEY.

PHILADELPHIA:
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
No. 146 Chestnut Street.

TITLE OF "THE GLASS OF WHISKEY"

THE
GLASS OF WHISKEY.

PHILADELPHIA:
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
No. 146 Chestnut Street.

Mr. Eames, with generosity equaling Mr. Harper's, has filled many of the crevices of my collection with the most interesting gifts. I can't say that I altogether approve of the generous impulses of these two gentlemen—except when it applies to myself! It is very bad for the book business. If bookmen were

encouraged to go about giving away their precious finds, what would we poor booksellers do?

This reminds me of the long chase I had for *Heavenly Spirits for Youthful Minds* some time ago. A customer in Yonkers wrote to me saying he had this very rare book, supposed to have been issued by an old Kentucky press in 1800. I was very keen to see it, so I motored to his home at my first opportunity. When I arrived he pointed toward the shelves at one end of his library. I saw with delight and envy the long-sought volume, but when I took hold of it I was chilled. It felt decidedly clammy. Then, as my friend burst out laughing, I realized it was a porcelain jug made in the exact shape of a book! The joke was on me.

My disappointment was not too great, however, as the *Heavenly Spirits* was filled with mundane ones—Old Crow whiskey. I accepted it as gracefully as I could, but I no longer use this imitation volume for whiskey—I want something larger. Nor would I want to fill it from the *Glass of Whiskey*, a tract published for youthful minds in Philadelphia in 1830. This tiny yellow-covered pamphlet is but two inches square. The artist who drew the illustrations indicated, with his picture of a bunch of grapes beneath the title, that he knew little or nothing of the inspirational sources of whiskey. Perhaps his innocence secured him the job. Small boys freely imbibing, and the resultant fruits thereof, are neatly portrayed. With what fascination and horror little children must have read:—

> There is a bottle. It has something in it which is called Whiskey. Little reader, I hope you will never taste any as long as you live. It is a poison. So is brandy, so is rum, so is gin, and many other drinks. They are called strong drink. They are so strong that

> they knock people down and kill them. They are sometimes called ardent spirits, that is burning spirits. They burn up those who drink them.

The appropriate ending must have sent many a tot in search of a pencil to sign the pledge: "O, how shall I keep from being a drunkard? I will tell you. *Never drink a drop of anything that makes people drunk.*"

I made my first find in children's books when I was but a child myself. A playmate of mine had an aunt who lived on Broad Street in Philadelphia. We passed her house daily, on the way to and from school. Sometimes we were invited to stop for lunch. One day I happened to notice a pile of small books on her sitting-room table. She said she kept them there to amuse the younger children of her family. Although she knew I came from bookish people, she seemed surprised that I, a boy of twelve, should be interested in old volumes. As I could hardly put them down, she was evidently impressed; she offered them to me. You may well believe that I took them and rushed out of the house, lest she change her mind. When I reached home and my uncle saw what I had been lucky enough to receive, he exclaimed at their rarity. My treasure trove comprised three wonderful little volumes. They were *Black Giles*, *The Cries of Philadelphia*, and a rare edition of *Babes in the Wood*.

For thirty years I tried to obtain Benjamin Franklin's *The Story of a Whistle*. "*Le grand* Franklin," as they called him abroad, wrote and published this fascinating story in 1779, when he had his press at Passy, just outside of Paris. He had printed it in French and in English, on opposite pages, in a charming pamphlet which he presented to his friends. He used the little Passy press mainly to run off official documents and other matters connected

with his mission as the American Minister to the Court of France. In 1923, I bought one of the two copies that have survived, at an auction sale in London. It had been briefly catalogued—lucky for me!—as A printed sheet in French and English, “On Paying too much for a Whistle.” Although I would have gladly paid £1000 for it, it was knocked down to me for less than one tenth of this sum.

When discussing printing in this country, it is impossible not to refer to Benjamin Franklin. He originated almost everything original in America. His projects are more talked about to-day than when he lived. Franklin, as a child in Boston, had had a taste of the dull literary offering of the Pilgrim Fathers. The *New England Primer* was then the best seller. When he became a printer he published edition after edition of it. Although Franklin himself records the sale of 37,100 of these primers, there is but one copy known to exist to-day. Mr. William S. Mason, of Evanston, Illinois, is the owner of this unique copy. Surely, in some New England attic there must be another. The collector can but hope! I have the only one known printed by his successor, David Hall—shall I ever obtain one from Benjamin’s own press?

In 1749 Franklin wrote and published *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania*. This work greatly interests me and all those who claim the University of Pennsylvania as their Alma Mater. It was soon after Franklin issued this that he and twenty-three other citizens of Philadelphia banded together as an association which soon completed plans to establish an academy for young men. It opened in 1751. So this little book is a part of the actual foundation of the University of Pennsylvania. When he was an old man, eighty-two, to be exact,

Franklin was still keenly interested in new books for children. He had already given his favorite grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, a fine printing press with types, and set him up as a printer. Under the guidance of his celebrated grandfather, young Bache printed *Lessons for Children from Two to Five Years Old*.

The older man was so delighted with his efforts that he decided, with a business acumen not diminished with the years, to market the books for him. Believing Boston to be a good commercial outlet, he wrote, on November 26, 1788, to his nephew Jonathan Williams:—

> LOVING COUSIN:—
>
> I have lately set up one of my grandchildren, Benja. F. Bache, as a Printer here, and he has printed some very pretty little books for children. By the sloop Friendship, Capt. Stutson, I have sent a Box address'd to you, containing 150 of each volume, in Sheets, which I request you would, according to your wonted goodness, put in a way of being dispos'd of for the Benefit of my dear Sister. They are sold here, bound in marbled Paper at 1 s. a volume; but I should suppose it best, if it may be done, to Sell the whole to some Stationer, at once, unbound as they are; in which case, I imagine that half a Dollar a Quire may be thought a reasonable price, allowing usual Credit if necessary.
>
> My love to your Family, and Believe me ever,
>
> Your affectionate Uncle
>
> B. FRANKLIN.

The original of this letter is in the collection of Miss Rosalie V. Halsey.

Competitors and collectors have often complained that I have frequently purchased at auction rare books that they especially desired and that I did not

give them a chance. Quite true! But I have often tasted the same bitter medicine myself. I recall, very vividly, a certain day in May 1913, when the Crane sale was being held in New York and there was a tiny *Royal Primer* included among the items, which I felt belonged to my collection of children's books. Printed in Philadelphia in 1753 by James Chattin, this *Royal Primer* was the only one of its kind in existence. In the good old days when George D. Smith was czar of the auction rooms, all other dealers and collectors were under a terrific strain the moment he appeared. We knew it was almost hopeless to bid against him.

At that time Mr. Smith represented Mr. Henry E. Huntington. He entered the auction room armed with as many unlimited bids as a porcupine has quills. Mr. Smith seemed to take a peculiar delight in running up bids on the little juvenile books I craved. And I had set my heart on the *Royal Primer* from the moment it was shown to the audience—a beautiful copy in its original sheep cover. I was prepared to pay as high as $200 for it, but as I watched Smith, the very shadow and auction voice of Mr. Huntington himself, I had serious doubts of obtaining it. The bidding started at ten dollars. Imagine my emotion when it rose rapidly to $1000! I felt a complete bankrupt. It was no small task to bid against this octopus of the game, and when the *Royal Primer* was finally mine at the absurdly high sum of $1225 I arose quickly and went out for air.

The contents of the primers are generally the same. They begin with a rhymed alphabet with illustrations, words, and syllables for spelling lessons. Many of the earliest ones contain verses which were supposed to have been written by the English martyr,

John Rogers, just before his execution, for the benefit of his "nine small children, and one at the breast." Mrs. Rogers and the children are depicted calmly watching the head of the family at the stake as he is about to go up in flames. Their little faces are like so many cranberries.

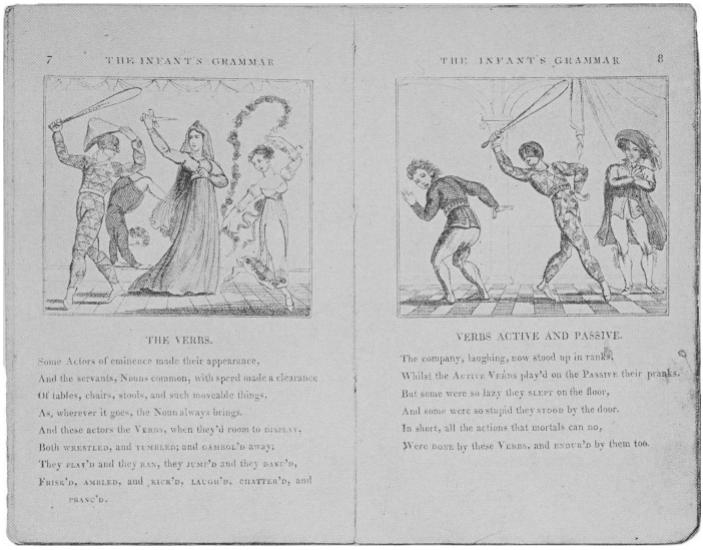
Later primers are equally amusing, sometimes with frontispieces of George III, and others have dubious likenesses of Our President. Not even the mother of George Washington could have recognized her boy's features in these crude pictures. But the primers were very popular, and the Puritans continued to issue them. The *Beauties of the Primer* was followed by the *Primer Improved* and the *Progressive Primer*, a more elaborate departure, which boasts colored illustrations.

It was during the early part of the eighteenth century that the Puritan taste began to broaden a bit. In addition to the early primers and catechisms, children were encouraged to read the Holy Bible in verse and semireligious books which had come into fashion. A friend—Mr. Thomas E. Streeter, of New York, a most discriminating collector—found in a volume of pamphlets, *Some Excellent Verses for the Education of Youth*, to which is added *Verses for Little Children, by a Friend*, Boston, printed by Bartholomew Green, 1708. It was the only copy extant, having miraculously escaped the rough usage of tiny hands. I despaired of obtaining it, when one day Mr. Streeter generously sent it to me with his compliments. Here is a sample of the Biblical verse as it was written to impress the small reader. Imagine the youth of New England, born with all the lively desires of a modern child, spending a Sunday afternoon memorizing such rhythms as:—

Though I am Young, yet I may Die,
And hasten to Eternity.

Another melancholy book of poetry for children was printed in 1740 in New Haven by T. Green. My copy is the only one known to-day. Its pleasant beginning must have charmed the small reader; thus: “Children, you must die in a short time. You will soon go to a Heaven of Joy or a burning Hell.” There are seven poems in each. The author cannot resist depicting a lugubrious future. Imagine your own child memorizing this sample, called “The Play”:—

Now from School I haste away,
And joyful rush along to play;
Eager I for my marbles call,
The whistling top or bouncing Ball.
The changing marbles to me show,
How mutable all things below.
My fate and theirs may be the same
Dasht in an instant from the Game.
The Hoop, swift rattling on the Chase,
Shows me how quick Life runs its Race.
My hoop and I like turnings have.
So fast Death drives me to my Grave.



TWO PAGES FROM "THE INFANT'S GRAMMAR"

THE VERBS.

Some Actors of eminence made their appearance,
And the servants, Nouns common, with speed made a clearance
Of tables, chairs, stools, and such moveable things,
As, wherever it goes, the Noun always brings.
And these actors the Verbs, when they'd room to DISPLAY,
Both WRESTLED and TUMBLED; and GAMBOL'D away;
They PLAY'D and they RAN, they JUMP'D and they DANC'D,
FRISK'D, AMBLED, and KICK'D, LAUGH'D, CHATTER'D and PRANC'D.

VERBS ACTIVE AND PASSIVE.

The company, laughing, now stood up in ranks,
Whilst the Active Verbs play'd on the Passive their pranks.
But some were so lazy they SLEPT on the floor,
And some were so stupid they STOOD by the door.
In short, all the actions that mortals can DO,
Were DONE by these Verbs, and ENDUR'D by them too.

Among all the books I have seen that were published

at this period in the Colonies, I have found but one which might be taken seriously if issued to-day. It treats upon an international problem, good behavior, which, alas, is the bugaboo of children the world over. Personally I have always felt that it is the most terrible and obnoxious of all the moralities—but then, I'm only an old bachelor! *The School of Good Manners Composed for the Help of Parents in teaching their Children how to carry it in their places during their Minority* was brought out in Boston, reprinted and sold by T. and J. Fleet at the Heart and Crown, in Cornhill, 1772. It begins with "Twenty mixt Precepts," such as "Honour the Magistrates," and tells little children plainly what and what not to do. Under a heading of "Behaviour at the Table," it admonishes: "Spit not, cough not, nor blow thy nose at the table, if it may be avoided." "Behaviour When in Company" is a little less stringent, perhaps, than one might expect. It reads: "Spit not in the room, but in the corner." Further: "Let thy countenance be moderately cheerful, neither laughing nor frowning." "For Behaviour at School" one must "Bawl not aloud in making complaints," and "Jog not the table or desk on which another writes."

It is not probable that these righteously exemplary books could be all things to all children. What a welcome change the *Prodigal Daughter* must have been! Isaiah Thomas, of Worcester, printed her history in 1771, in Boston, before he became famous as the publisher of simpler children's books such as *Goody Two Shoes*. In many of these early books the title page relates practically the entire story in scenario form. A case in point is the *Prodigal Daughter, or a strange and wonderful relation, shewing how a gentleman of vast estates in Bristol, had a proud*

and disobedient Daughter, who, because her parents would not support her in all her extravagance, bargained with the Devil to poison them. How an Angel informed her Parents of her design. How she lay in a trance four days; and when she was put in the grave, she came to life again. Quite a happy ending for an eighteenth-century prodigal!

The gradual change which took place in juvenile literature was brought about partly by the captivating whimsicalities of Oliver Goldsmith. The finest collection of Goldsmith's books is in the beautiful library of my dear friend, William M. Elkins, but I have a few of Goldsmith's juveniles that even he has been unable to obtain. Goldsmith's delightful books for children, which his publisher, John Newbery, had bound in gilt paper and adorned with woodcuts, were sent over here from his far-famed shop at the corner of Saint Paul's Churchyard in London. When they were reprinted in staid New England, they were a startling innovation to the book trade. Then old ballads began to return to the market, each with some striking change also. Contrast the stern outpourings of the learned Cotton Mather with Doctor Goldsmith's "Elegy on that Glory of her Sex, Mrs. Mary Blaize":—

Good people, all, with one accord
  Lament for Madame Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
  From those who spoke her praise....

She strove the neighborhood to please
  With manners wondrous winning;
And never followed wicked ways—
  Unless when she was sinning!...

The *Royal Battledoor*, the *Mother Goose Melodies*, *A*

Pretty Book for Children, and some of the best verse ever written for juveniles then came into being. "Bah, Bah, Black Sheep," "Pease-Porridge Hot," "Little Tommy Tucker"—have they since been improved upon? I doubt it.

BAH, BAH, BLACK SHEEP

Bah, bah, black sheep, have you any wool?
Yes, sir; yes, sir, I have three bags full.
One for my master, one for his dame,
But none for the little boy who cries in the lane.

PEASE-PORRIDGE HOT

Pease-porridge hot,
Pease-porridge cold,
Pease-porridge in the pot,
Nine days old.
Can you spell that with four letters?
Yes, I can: T-H-A-T.

LITTLE TOMMY TUCKER

Little Tommy Tucker
Sings for his supper;
What song will he sing?
White bread and butter.
How will he cut it
Without e'er a knife?
How will he be married
Without e'er a wife?

I was spending a week-end last summer with some friends who have a large library consisting chiefly of the classical English authors. I had been out one afternoon, and as I returned to the house, was met halfway by my hostess. She had a distraught look, and before I could inquire what had happened, she

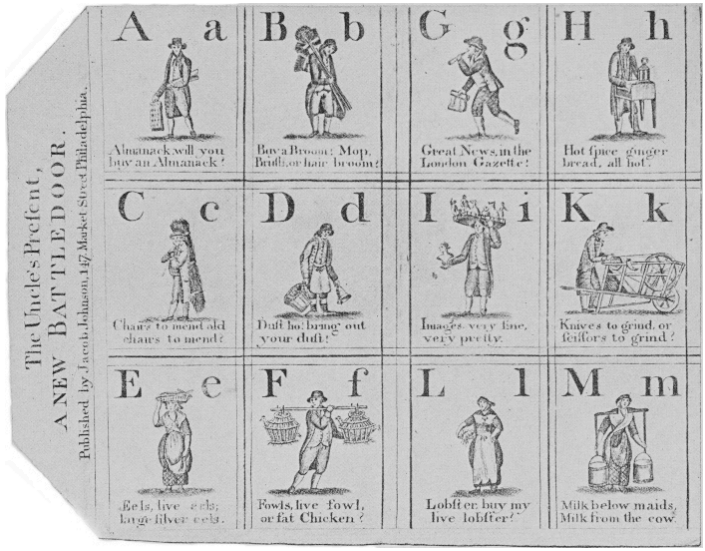
said, “I am frightfully upset! What do you think I found Tommy doing just now in the library? Reading that nasty old book, Fielding’s *Tom Jones*!”

Her son Tommy was twelve years old. “What have you done about it?” I asked, trying to suppress a smile.

“I took it from him and put it in the stove!”

She refused to believe me when I told her that *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Pamela* were read aloud in the evening to all members of the family in Puritan New England, and Miss Rosalie V. Halsey relates that when certain passages became too affecting, the more sensitive listeners retired to their rooms to weep! Sometime later I showed her my copy of *Tom Jones*, abridged especially for youthful reading, with its crude little woodcut facing the title page, and this explanatory verse beneath:—

> This print describes a good man’s heart
> Who meant to take the orphan’s part,
> And may distress forever find
> A friend like him to be so kind.



TITLE PAGE OF "THE UNCLE'S PRESENT"

The Uncle's Present,
A NEW BATTLEDOOR.
Published by Jacob Johnson, 147 Market Street Philadelphia.

The moral of *Tom Jones*, as translated for its youthful readers, seems to boil down to this: If you are a good child you will never annoy your neighbors! Fancy Henry Fielding's amusement when *Tom Jones* appeared abridged for children! What a marvelous leap this was from the dry-as-dust New England primers and Protestant Tutors, from austere catechisms to—*Tom Jones*!

Printers early discovered that books for children should be made in proportion to their little clients—small. Miniature volumes have always held a great fascination for children of all ages. Their very neatness and compactness make them seem the more precious and desirable. Perhaps it was with a view to making Bible stories valued more highly by their small readers that they were printed in tiny volumes

called Thumb Bibles. These adorable wee volumes, illustrated with crude woodcuts, are extremely rare. Not long ago a lady came to my Philadelphia office with an old-fashioned hand bag—the silk gathered sort, roomy if not beautiful. I noticed that it stuck out in little points, and wondered what on earth she could have brought in it. My curiosity was more than gratified when she emptied it upon my desk—some twenty Thumb Bibles! When I asked her what she wanted for these little charmers she shook her head and said that anything I cared to offer would be acceptable. I suggested $300. She looked at me aghast.

"Why," she said, "I would have been willing to take twenty-five!"

Children began to assert themselves, beginning with the last quarter of the eighteenth century. They became individuals rather than so much parental property. Thomas Bradford must have realized this when, in 1775, he placed such juvenile delights upon the market as *The Scotch Rogue*, *Moll Flanders*, *Lives of Highwaymen*, *Lives of Pirates*, *The Buccaneers of America*, and *The Lives of the Twelve Cæsars*.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century shockers began to appear. Lurid tales of dastardly deeds were read by children who hitherto knew life through such stories as *The Prize for Youthful Obedience*, *The Search After Happiness*, *Little Truths*, and other edifying concoctions. The colorful experiences of *Motherless Mary, A Young and Friendless Orphan who was eventually Decoyed to London*, appearing from the presses of a New York house in 1828, interpreted life in a new if less safe way. John Paul Jones's *Life* was issued with a terrifying frontispiece and in a dress to attract small boys with an admiration and envy for

buccaneers and their fierce and bloody lives. Even Noah Webster, that staid dictionarist, wrote *The Pirates, A Tale for Youth.*

The interest in American history began at the close of the Revolution. The scenes of all the juvenile histories were formerly laid in foreign countries. The American Colonies now had their own history, and some of the rarest, and perhaps the most attractive to the student, are those dealing with this subject. *The History of America abridged for the use of Children of all Denominations, adorned with cuts*, Philadelphia, Wrigley and Berriman, 1795, is engaging and wonderful. The little illustrations are marvelous examples of the illustrator's skill. On account of the expense, the publisher duplicated the portraits, and one cut served for several worthies. Thus Christopher Columbus, General Montgomery, and His Excellency Richard Howel, Governor of New Jersey, were depicted exactly alike, the American eighteenth-century military costume looking picturesque and fearful on Columbus.

The *New York Cries*, printed and sold by Mahlon Day in 1826, is particularly entertaining. According to the introduction of this little book: "New York island is 15 miles long, and from one to two miles broad. It is laid out in spacious streets and avenues, with large squares and market places. The circuit of the city is about eight miles, and the number of buildings which it contains is estimated at 30,000, and the inhabitants at about 172,000."

I cannot resist quoting the cry of Sand, as it is a reflection of the time when New Yorkers used sand on their floors, instead of costly Oriental rugs:—

> Sand! Here's your nice white Sand!

Sand, O! white Sand, O!
Buy Sand for your floor;
For so cleanly it looks
When strew'd at your door.

This sand is brought from the seashore in vessels, principally from Rockaway Beach, Long Island. It is loaded into carts, and carried about the streets of New York, and sold for about 12½ cents per bushel. Almost every little girl or boy knows that it is put on newly scrubbed floors, to preserve them clean and pleasant.

But since people have become rich, and swayed by the vain fashions of the world, by carpeting the floors of their houses, there does not appear to be so much use for Sand as in the days of our worthy ancestors.

Peter Piper's Practical Principles of Plain and Perfect Pronunciation was published in Philadelphia by W. Johnson in 1836. Issued nearly a century ago, it is still enshrined in our hearts. Although there were many editions issued in America, few have survived the tooth of time and the voracity of these youthful readers. The Philadelphia edition had perfect pictures properly painted, and it is one of the most charming morsels ever devised "to please the palates of Pretty, Prattling Playfellows." Two quotations are given in order to bring us all back to the time long ago when Peter Piper meant so much to us.

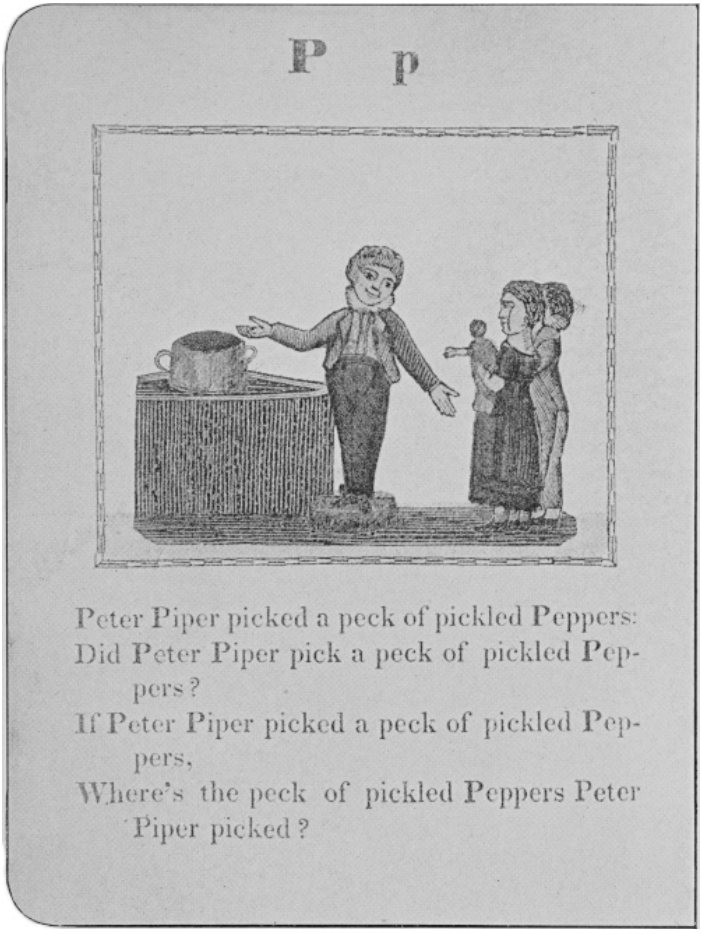
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers;
Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers?
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

Villiam Veedon vip's his Vig and Vaistcoat;

Did Villiam Veedon vipe his Vig and Vaistcoat?
If Villiam Veedon vip'd his Vig and Vaistcoat,
Vhere are the Vig and Vaistcoat Villiam Veedon
vip'd?

The publisher's excuse of presenting Peter Piper to the public is worthy of the book itself:—

He Prays parents to Purchase this Playful Performance, Partly to Pay him for his Patience and Pains; Partly to Provide for the Printers and Publishers; but Principally to Prevent the Pernicious Prevalence of Perverse Pronunciation.



PAGE FROM "PETER PIPER'S PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF PLAIN AND PERFECT PRONUNCIATION"

P p

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled Peppers;
Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled Peppers?
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled Peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled Peppers Peter Piper picked?

The book will always remain attractive to us, but when we think of the youthful minds it has mixed,

the jaws it has dislocated, the tongues it has tied, we can only remark that we love it for its faults!

When I look into these old editions, these picturesque little volumes, which reveal so charmingly the quickening change from the days of the Pilgrim Fathers, I am surprised that some enterprising publisher does not reissue them to-day. Such stories as *Pug's Visit to Mr. Punch*, *Who Killed Cock Robin*, *The History of Little Fannie*, *Little Eliza and Little Henry*, as well as the droll *Old Dame Trudge and Her Parrot*, would go as well now as one hundred years ago. I think they would make a fortune for someone—although I do not guarantee it!

Two specially made miniature bookcases house my whole collection of children's books. On either side of a large sixteenth-century Spanish bookcase they hang against the wall, and visitors to my Philadelphia home take delight in looking at their quaint illustrations and the still quainter text. But alas, my library is now like a nursery without children. The whole family—eight hundred—have traveled to New York and are on exhibition in the New York Public Library, where they may be seen by all who are interested.

VII

OLD BIBLES

WHAT is the greatest discovery in the history of books? This is the question with which I am constantly bombarded. In letters from all parts of the world the embryonic bookman, the novice collector, the casual lover of books, the intelligent, the stupid —they make this their leading question. And although I have never been accused of unseemly virtue, I rejoice that the answer is exactly as it should be: the first printed Bible.

The momentous recognition of the now famed Gutenberg Bible occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century. Book collecting was already beginning to discard its sombre, conservative guise as an occupation of the religious in monasteries, or as a pastime of the old and very rich. Now this discovery came like a flaming meteor against the literary sky.

So many astounding finds have been made in out-of-the-way places, it is somewhat surprising that this first and greatest printed work should have been identified in the very heart of Paris. In a preceding article I have related the remarkable manner in which several other rare books turned up. There was the copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* which made its way from obscurity in the barber shop of a small English town to international fame in a London auction room. And another valuable book, Shakespeare's

Venus and Adonis, hid unsuspected for years in the lumber room of an English estate before it was brought to light; and a similar copy, equally rare, was used as an archer's target at Shrewsbury before its value was accidentally recognized. What irony, then, that this, the greatest book of all time, the Gutenberg Bible, should have rested in the very centre of a literary stronghold perhaps centuries before its unique preëminence was detected!

Thousands of eyes during that time had gazed uncomprehendingly upon this marvel of the printer's art in the celebrated library of Cardinal Mazarin in Paris. How often it was read by strangely undiscerning eyes, eyes of students, eyes of connoisseurs, looked upon by true lovers of the antique! They saw nothing in it but a Bible—one more early Bible. Such men as Descartes, Voiture, and Corneille doubtless turned its pages many times. Certainly it must have been something of a curiosity, even in those days. But what scant imaginations they had! The very idea chills me!

It will forever remain a mystery, that Gutenberg Bible in Paris. How did it get there from Germany? Who brought it? How did it happen to be in the Mazarin Library? Did some serious-minded book agent of old France, if there were any then, bargain quietly with the scarlet-robed Cardinal, or was the road to its destination one of intrigue, of dishonor, and finally violence? Alas, that we book lovers will never know! A little pilfering here and there was never known to upset Mazarin, if the book he coveted was worthy of it.

Often I have wondered, when visiting his musty library, what the ancient walls behind the shelves could tell were they suddenly given the power of

speech. As the old proverb runs, “Walls have ears.” Nor is it difficult in that majestic palace to watch through half-closed eyes, veiled, of course, by your imagination, the proud old churchman as he pridefully surveys his magnificent books. Perhaps you can see him lingering before the provocative loveliness of gleaming parchment and morocco covers; observe him as he tenderly removes from its resting place some diabolical work of Machiavelli; or he may pace elegantly between the ancient lecterns and reading posts to bend in silent tribute before the disquieting beauty of some massive old missal. I have easily pictured not only His Eminence but many assistants as well, searching among the ancient tomes; sandaled monks, learned scholars and librarians, poets and courtiers, they have all passed me in that renowned library, unconscious of my presence. And how the chains still jangle which for centuries have held captive certain small and attractive volumes on shelf and table. Some sophisticated doubters may sigh as they read these lines, thinking: “Poor Rosenbach, what the vineyards of France must have done to him!”

After I purchased the Melk copy of the Gutenberg Bible last year, I learned, from the hordes of visitors who came to see it and through the letters of congratulation and inquiry with which I was flooded, that most people thought this the only copy in existence. As a matter of fact, about forty-three copies have been discovered thus far, ten of which are now in public and private libraries in this country. Perhaps there are others in hiding; there is always that glorious chance. But the very fact that there were these other copies, scattered in various libraries in the old centres of Europe, copies which were there, doubtless, from the time Gutenberg

accomplished his stupendous work, makes the more remarkable the first disclosure of this Bible, nearly three centuries after its publication.

Think of the many wise graybeards who spent their lives searching for knowledge in the vast libraries of Vienna, of Berlin, of Göttingen, of Prague, and at Oxford and Cambridge, those centuries ago; men who saw and read these volumes and yet did not question their strange peculiarity. For although the Gutenberg Bible gives the effect of a fastidiously written manuscript, it is not only the earliest but actually the most beautiful work of printing the world has ever known. It was the first work to come from any press using movable types. Whether these were cut from wood or moulded in lead can never be conclusively proved. This is immaterial, however, except to the student of typography. The type itself is a large Gothic one, and the ink, now nearly five centuries old, is to-day as black and glossy as the hair of a Japanese beauty. The majestic Gothic lettering was the prevailing one used in Germany for ecclesiastical works at that time, and therefore it was but natural to use it as a model. The pages of the Gutenberg Bible are perfectly spaced in double columns.

The great work was published in two states; some copies were printed on paper, others on vellum. The feel of the paper always fascinates me, so firm it is, so beautiful in appearance. It seems alive, yet there is something definitely final about it. It is as though the paper of the Gutenberg Bible had proudly indicated from its inception that nothing finer, nothing more perfect ever could be made. Nor is the vellum of any other old book of finer texture than that which Gutenberg, the master printer, used. The

rarest vellum is from the thinnest, the most velvety part of the inner skin of the sheep. This Gutenberg was careful to select, and his Bibles printed on vellum are much more valuable to-day than those printed on paper.

It thrills the lover of books when he observes the superb taste Johann Gutenberg showed in the year 1455. A decade later, printers, his pupils, began to be patronized by princes of Church and State. It was they who ordered the most beautiful books, made especially for their private gratification. But there is no record of Gutenberg having any such incentive as wealth or approbation. He must have followed some compelling desire of his own which led to the creation of the perfect book.

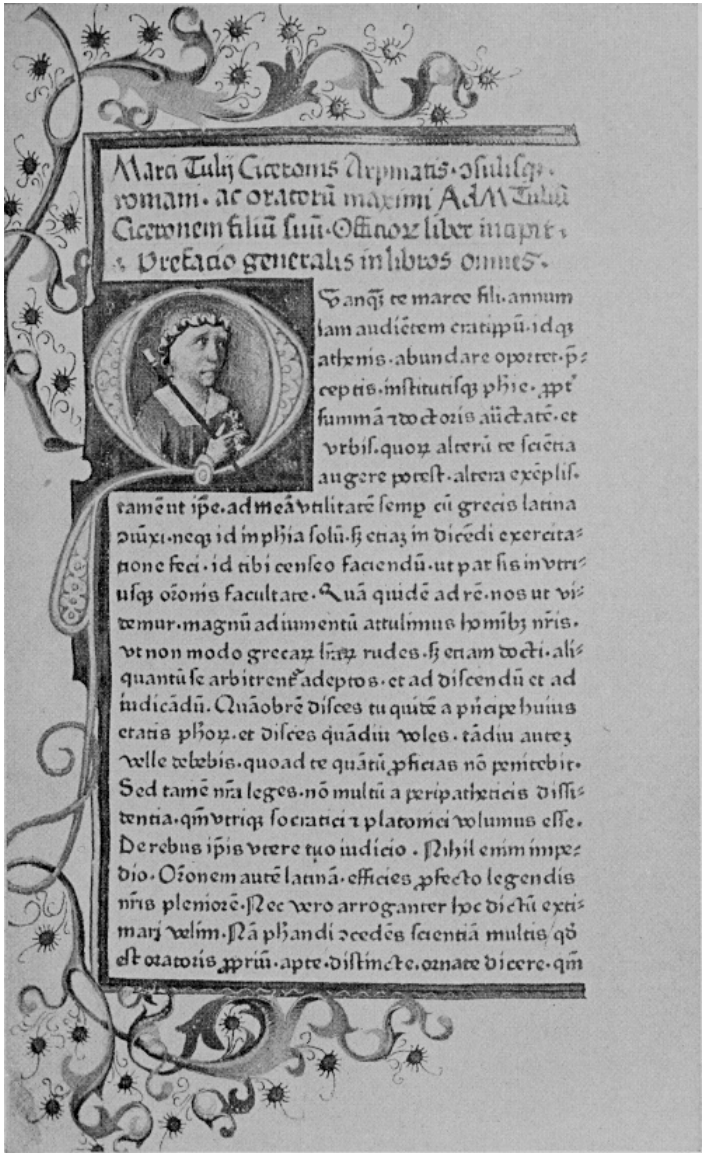
It was about 1750 that Guillaume-François de Bure, a young Frenchman, proved himself a veritable prodigy among discoverers. At that time he employed every moment he could spare, working in the Mazarin Library, which, since the death of its founder, had fortunately been in the hands of intelligent and appreciative men. It happened that De Bure one day stumbled upon two old volumes he could not recall having seen before. He glanced at them as he passed, and was so taken by their unusual beauty that he resolved to return to study them as soon as possible. Almost the first thing De Bure observed was that there were forty-two lines on the page. He had seen, in those magnificent ecclesiastical surroundings, many wonderful Bibles. In a state of hopeful excitement he looked for and finally located another copy of the glorious book similar to the one in the Mazarin Library, in the Electoral Library in Mainz. This is the copy which is now in the French National Library. De Bure read the inscription in an

ancient hand at the end of each volume, several lines stating that the books had been rubricated and bound in the year of our Lord 1456. With these slender facts as a basis, he set about further to establish the authenticity of the greatest bibliographical discovery of all time.

There were two issues of the Gutenberg (or, as it was originally called, the Mazarin,) Bible. The first contains forty, forty-one, and forty-two lines to the column. But this, as a rule, is at the beginning of the book, where it is apparent that Gutenberg was experimenting; he was trying to evolve to his own satisfaction the form of what has since been acclaimed the greatest monument of the printer's art. To obtain the very first issue of the Gutenberg Bible —that is an achievement! Of all books in the world it is the most important to possess in its elemental state, for it was in this condition that it first saw the light of day. It is true that there is nothing nobler, nothing finer, nothing more beautiful than the Gutenberg Bible in its last completed phase, but to me the embryonic stage of the first printed book is the most important. Only the first "gathering," as we say technically, comprises the first printed book.

I believe Gutenberg began printing his Bible a little before 1450, and devoted the first three or four years to perfecting the movable types. But I doubt if it could have been much earlier than 1455 when he finally completed the first copy. In all probability he was assisted by his friend, Johann Fust, who supplied the money with which Gutenberg bought materials for a press and types. Aided, too, by Fust's son-in-law, Peter Schöffer, they brought eternal fame to the name of their already famous city, Mainz. Later many apprentices from Gutenberg's and Fust's atelier

went southward to France, Italy, and Spain, where they established the first presses in the great cities of Paris, Rome, Florence, and Seville. These specimens of early printing are known to the specialists as incunabula, or books representing the cradle of printing. The term has been extended so as to include all works printed before 1500.



FIRST PAGE OF CICERO, "DE OFFICIIS," PRINTED ON VELLUM, MAINZ, 1465, WITH MINIATURE OF CICERO

Some authorities have questioned the claim of

Gutenberg as the inventor of printing. Coster of Haarlem has been put forth as the real discoverer. There are fragments of early printing with Gothic types that students of typography have dubbed Costeriana. I cannot enter here into a discussion of this controversy. Perhaps both sides are right. At any rate, I have read reams and reams on the subject and have become sadder if not wiser at each perusal. Mademoiselle Pellechet, a celebrated bibliophile of the nineteenth century, studied the question deeply. In the end, as bibliography is a science in which women have distinguished themselves, a woman will probably say the last word! Perhaps the best person to give an opinion on the subject to-day is Miss Belle da Costa Greene, the learned director of the Pierpont Morgan Library.

When I visited England two or three years ago I was invited to Windsor Castle to see the beautiful library belonging to King George. The librarian, the Honorable John Fortescue, the authority on the history of the English Army, showed me many magnificent volumes and manuscripts. Among them was that glorious rarity known to the initiated as the 1457 Psalter, printed on vellum by Fust and Schöffer. There are in the royal library many works of great historical importance, and I listened with delight to his fascinating stories relating to them.

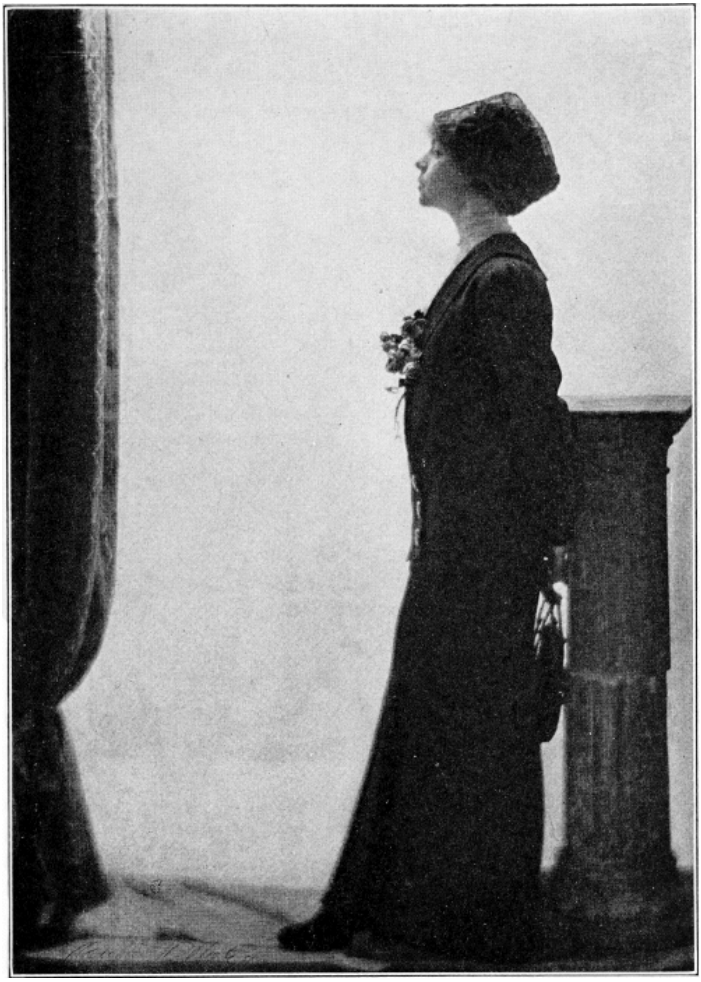
Often during the afternoon I stood before the windows of the library to look out upon the vista of green lawns, the winding Thames, and Eton College a few miles in the distance. I thought of Thomas Gray and others who had known so intimately the country about me, of famous men whose names were connected with famous books, and a sudden desire came over me—a desire to see and pay homage to

the most beautiful book in the world. By the time I was ready to leave the Castle I had decided to motor over to Eton.

When I arrived I immediately went to the library attendant and asked him to let me see the Gutenberg Bible. This copy in the library of Eton College is to my mind the most noble specimen of all. It is in its contemporary binding of old leather decorated with the original metal clasps and bosses, and it bears the name of the binder, Johann Fogel, who goes down in history as the binder of the first printed book.

At the very time of my visit to Eton the newspapers in England were running editorial comment about several purchases I had just made privately and at auction sales. They complained I was taking away the greatest monuments of literature from their shores. The old attendant at Eton, noting my enthusiasm as I turned the pages of this beautiful Bible, said to me, in a tone tickled with pride, “Wouldn’t that Doctor Rosenbach like to carry off this Gutenberg Bible too?”

Gutenberg’s Bible was set up from the Latin manuscript version designated by scholars as the Vulgate. Previous to its issue most manuscript Bibles were written either in Greek or Hebrew. Now, for the first time, it appeared available to all who could read, translated into Latin, the “vulgar” or common language of the Church.



BELLE DA COSTA GREENE

During the past few years I have purchased four copies of the Gutenberg Bible. The first, at the Hoe sale in 1912, was an edition printed on paper, and with Alfred Quaritch I later sold it to the late P. A. B. Widener, of Philadelphia. It is now in the collection of his son, Mr. Joseph Widener. The second copy, in a superb binding by Fogel, and now in the greatest

private collection of Bibles in this country, came from the library of the late James W. Ellsworth, of Chicago. It was in a strange manner that I bought this copy. I was halfway across the Atlantic. Before sailing I had been treating for its purchase, along with the rest of his splendid library. I completed the transaction by wireless. It was thus that the fifteenth century and the twentieth met in mid-ocean! To buy a Gutenberg Bible by radio—it seemed almost sacrilegious.

And this recalls another story. I met for the first time aboard one of the great liners a distinguished collector, a man of great taste and judgment. He said to me in the smoking room, fifteen hundred miles out of New York, “Have you a set of the four folios of Shakespeare?”

“Yes,” I replied, “a fine one, the Trowbridge set; at least, I have if it has not been sold.”

He asked me to verify it by wireless, which I did, and on receipt of the message he purchased it in mid-Atlantic. No man that ever lived had the prophetic foresight of Shakespeare; yet even he could not have pictured such a thing. And the price? That is still another story.

I purchased another Gutenberg Bible, printed on paper, at the Carysfort sale in London, four years ago, and paid £9500—a little less than $50,000—for it. To-day it rests, with other great examples of printing and literature, in the library of Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer, in New York City.

The Melk copy, which I bought at the Anderson Galleries last year, was as exciting an acquisition as I have ever made. Of course there were many collectors and dealers besides myself who yearned to

own it. The price I paid for it—$106,000—was like the first shot of the Revolution, heard around the world. Mrs. E. S. Harkness bought this copy from me and most graciously bestowed it upon the Library of Yale University, in memory of Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness. It is certainly one of the greatest gifts ever made to a university in this country. So many copies have passed into public institutions during the past few years, it is unlikely that many more perfect ones can come into the market. What will its price be in the future? One could as well stem the tides as to block its steady and irresistible march. It is only a matter of time. To-day it sells for more than $100,000; more than $1,000,000 will some day be a reasonable price for it.

Although much stress has been laid upon the value and rarity of the Gutenberg forty-two-line Bible, and it is generally thought to be the most valuable in the world, I believe the thirty-six-line Bible (known as the Pfister, or Bamberg, Bible) is infinitely rarer. It also was the work of a Mainz printing press, and was probably made under Gutenberg's supervision, after he had finished the one which now bears his name. In the old days it was thought to have been printed before the Gutenberg Bible, but scholars have proved by long study that mistakes are made which could only have been the result of using Gutenberg's for copy, instead of one of the written texts. There are only fourteen copies of this thirty-six-line Bible known; four are in England, seven in Germany, one is in Belgium, one in France, and another in Austria. Yet in all this broad land there is not one copy. But I rejoice in having a single leaf of it, which, I assure you, I prize greatly.

Probably the most beautiful Bible after the

Gutenberg is in two volumes, forming what is known as the 1462 Bible. It is the first one that is dated, and was issued at Mainz, printed by Fust and Schöffer, August 14, 1462. The copies on vellum seem to be more numerous than those on paper. I bought the last copy, belonging to the Earl of Carysfort, for £4800. It is not only the first dated Bible but the earliest example of a book formally divided into two volumes. But it is not considered a rare edition of the Bible in any sense of the word, as more than sixty copies are known. In fact, we had two copies of it at one time in our New York vault, both of which were illuminated with grotesque birds and beasts, probably by the same artist. It is odd that, although there are few collections of incunabula in South America, there are two copies of this Bible in the National Library at Rio de Janeiro.

Probably the greatest sport of all is the collecting of Bibles in manuscript. It takes a king's ransom to-day to secure a really fine one. I do not mean the ordinary late-fifteenth-century ones, which are quite common, but those executed from the ninth to the twelfth century, especially when they are illustrated. Of course, the earliest codices, the very foundation stones of the history of the Bible, such as the Codex Vaticanus in Rome, the Alexandrinus in the British Museum, and the Sinaiticus at Leningrad, are safely beyond the purse of the richest collector. The Pierpont Morgan Library contains the finest collection of illuminated Bibles in America. The vault at 33 East Thirty-sixth Street, New York, is an achievement almost unequaled in the history of collecting. It is like a view of Paradise. The latest acquisition by Mr. J. P. Morgan of some of the Holkham manuscripts from the library of the Earl of Leicester is a notable triumph in the history of great

libraries.

Some years ago I was talking with Mr. Henry E. Huntington in his old library at 2 East Fifty-seventh Street, New York. I said most humbly, although with proper pride, “How would you like to own the original Conqueror Bible of the architect of the Tower of London?”

“There ain’t no sich animile,” quoted Mr. Huntington.

I thereupon produced from a cavernous Gladstone bag two large folio volumes, elegantly bound in blue morocco. “This is it,” I said. The Bible was written in the eleventh century for Gundulph, 1024-1108, Bishop of Rochester, who came over with William the Conqueror and later became the designer of the Tower of London. On the first leaf of each volume the bishop had written an elaborate curse, excommunicating anyone who should destroy, mutilate, or carry it off. When I showed Mr. Huntington these fatal words, he said to me, with a twinkle in his eye, “You old rogue, this applies to you, too, you know. I will take the Bible, but without the curse!”



LEAF FROM AN ENGLISH BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPT OF THE NINTH CENTURY

I recall one day several years ago when I visited the library of the late Sir Thomas Phillipps, at Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham. His grandson, Mr. T. FitzRoy Fenwick, and I were looking over the precious volumes, and we talked of Sir Thomas's ardent love of manuscripts. For more than fifty years he had been the world's greatest gatherer of

everything written by the hand of man. His knowledge was equal to his love, and he succeeded in forming an unrivaled library of manuscripts, which included some of the greatest specimens in existence. He did not confine himself to Continental examples alone, but was the first great collector of manuscripts relating to America. Sir Thomas Phillipps was the patron not only of Lord Kingsborough, whose researches on Mexico are well known, but of George Catlin, who depicted so graphically the life of the American Indian. Mr. Fenwick, who inherited from his grandfather his appreciation and love of fine things, and who possesses an almost unequaled knowledge of old manuscripts, asked me if I had ever seen a manuscript containing Anglo-Saxon writing. I said that I had not, and he thereupon produced the Four Gospels, an English manuscript written in West Anglia in the time of King Alfred, A.D. 850-900, which contained splendid full-page illustrations of an unusual type. There upon the margins were characters in Anglo-Saxon, written long before the Conqueror came to the shores of Britain.

Nothing, however, surprises me at Thirlestaine House. One day Mr. Fenwick showed me the Liesborn Gospels, a superb manuscript made in the ninth century for King Widekind, the only successful opponent of Charlemagne. It was in its old binding of carved wood, and is one of the few very early manuscripts in existence giving the name of the scribe who wrote it.

He also showed to me the famous French Historiated Bible of the fourteenth century, in two magnificent volumes, which contained almost a hundred illustrations, quite in the modern manner, more like

William Blake than an artist of old Touraine. I now have these three precious Biblical manuscripts, and I doubt whether there is a nobler assemblage in existence.

To my mind the most inspiringly beautiful and important early Hebrew manuscript of the Bible is that in the remarkable collection of Mr. David Sassoon, of London. It should be reproduced in facsimile so that all students here and abroad might study not only its unique text but its glorious illustrations as well.

One of the great discoveries in the history of these early Bibles occurred right here at our place in New York, seven years ago. Mr. Sydney C. Cockerell, the great student of manuscripts, called upon me, and I showed him six pictures from the Bible and said that they were by a Spanish artist of the thirteenth century.

He looked at them for a moment and said, “No, they’re English!” I could scarcely believe him, although no one knows more about manuscripts than he. “Let me take them to my hotel and study them. I think they are the work of the earliest known English illuminator, W. de Brailes.”



CARVED AND POLYCHROMED WOODEN BINDING OF THE LIESBORN GOSPELS (IX CENTURY)

He took them with him. If they were English they would be immensely valuable—worth far more than I, old Captain Kidd, asked for them. You bet I awaited anxiously his return.

Finally he showed up one day, and said, “The only trouble with you, Doctor Rosenbach, is that you do not use the eyes God gave you.” Lo and behold, he pointed to the halo on one of the saints, and there in neat characters were the magic words: “W. de Brail(es) me f(e)cit.” It was one of the greatest attributions ever made by a scholar, and they were,

now beyond even the shadow of a doubt, the work of the very artist he had named. According to Mr. Eric G. Millar: “There has never been a more triumphant vindication of connoisseurship.” These six drawings are now in England in the collection of Mr. A. Chester Beatty, who has one of the choicest libraries of Oriental and European manuscripts. Every year when I go to England I renew, through the kind offices of Mr. Beatty, my acquaintance with the spirit of that doughty old illuminator, W. de Brailes.

Very few forgers have had the courage to try their hands at duplicating Biblical manuscripts. I have always been amazed at the enormous amount of self-confidence a man by the name of Shapira must have had when he offered the British Museum several important-looking manuscript scrolls. They contained the text of the Pentateuch, and were, he claimed, from the very hands of Moses! Of course, every expert and noted scholar who happened to be in London at the time went to see these scrolls, which were placed on exhibition at the Museum. They were scrutinized carefully, admired as works of curiosity, but no one believed for a moment that they were genuine. Any Semitic scholar knows perfectly well that writing for literary purposes was unknown at the time of Moses. Yet even though Shapira had used an alphabet belonging to a much later period in history, his handiwork was decidedly interesting. Finally he was informed that his offerings were considered a fraud. He left England bitterly disappointed and went to Belgium. Not long after he arrived there the continental newspapers announced that Shapira had committed suicide. Even then, when certain of his victims read the lines, they wrote to the papers protesting that the man could not be dead, and openly accused him of fabrication even in

connection with his own demise. Such is fame!

The most interesting experiments in the history of pictorial art were the attempts to produce picture books for the use of the middle and lower classes of Europe in the fifteenth century, most of whom could not read. The few specimens of the Block Books, as they are called, extant to-day, indicate they were made up of single leaves printed on one side of the paper only. These blocks were all cut by hand from a slab of hardwood, such as that of the pear or apple tree. When the impressions were finally made, the pages were pasted back to back and bound in rough parchment. It is believed by some authorities that the earliest Block Books date from 1440, although others were undoubtedly printed fifteen to thirty years later.



LEAF FROM BLOCK BOOK, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The *Biblia Pauperum*, or the Bible for the Poor, is one of the most interesting examples among the block books. It is composed almost entirely of crude illustrations with doses of text or short explanations and sayings of the Prophets above and below the pictures, much in the manner of the tabloids of our own time. No attempt was made to reproduce the whole Bible or even a complete chapter. It was the

portions familiarly known to the people which were set down. Thus the story of St. John—"Apocalypsis S. Joannis"—was one of the favorite subjects, as was Solomon's "Song of Songs."

Block books are, of course, among the most desirable and the most difficult to obtain of all the treasures of the bibliophile. Even a single sheet torn from a block book is valuable. I recall vividly, when in England many years ago, my first visit to an old library which contained four perfect block books, all in magnificent condition. The margins were uncut and, in fact, they appeared to be exactly the same as when they left the hands of the unknown printer in the fifteenth century. Year after year I returned to this library especially to see them. Imagine my satisfaction and joy when I was finally rewarded by the owner, who had decided to part with them.

There are only three great collections of block books in this country. One may be seen at the New York Public Library; another, also in New York, in the library founded by the late J. Pierpont Morgan; and the third in the Huntington Library in California.

The very first type-printed book with illustrations was a Latin edition of the *Biblia Pauperum*, printed by Albrecht Pfister, of Bamberg, in 1461. There are only two copies known: one in the John Rylands Memorial Library at Manchester, England; the other in the French National Library at Paris.

Savonarola, the Billy Sunday of his day, was quick to see the appeal of block books. He had his own sermons printed and illustrated with woodblock-printed pictures, which he distributed among his followers. It was he who drew the masses to religion at the time when Florentine art was almost at its

peak. He converted Botticelli, caused him to destroy all the sensuous secular pictures he painted previous to his conversion, but happily made up for his loss by inspiring him to paint religious subjects. What would I not give to possess the charred remains of the Bible to which Savonarola clung when he died!

There is perhaps a greater lack of knowledge concerning old Bibles than of any other subject pertaining to books. To make matters worse, most people believe they have accumulated many worthwhile facts when all they pick up is some chance misinformation. At least thirty per cent of the 30,000 letters I receive annually are about Bibles or other religious works, which, according to my correspondents, “have always been in the family.” The largest number of letters come from Germany. But among people of all nationalities the hoary idea still prevails that age adds value to a Bible. Some people who are not interested in any book, old or otherwise, become excited the moment they find a Bible more than fifty years old. Clasping it to the family bosom, they often rush to my library, either in New York or Philadelphia, buoyed up by an inflated notion of their treasure’s value, believing they have sighted a rainbow with a pot of real gold at the end.

Almost everyone in the world owns or has owned a Bible. It is the one work which has been translated into every language; it is the world’s best seller, and because of this, edition after edition has appeared in every country. No one knows how many millions of pounds the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have received to date in the revenue which has always flowed into their coffers as a perquisite on printed Bibles. The Bible rests beside one’s bed to-day in hotel rooms throughout the country. The

Gideons' Bible is the only volume the stealing of which is considered a virtue instead of a crime! The Bible is a book which has touched the hearts of us all at one time or another. When it does not appeal as a religious work its fascination is felt in the inexhaustible fund of stories and anecdotes which have never been matched by the contents of any secular book ever written. Such tales as those of Joseph and his brethren, David and Goliath, Solomon and the two mothers, will never be excelled.

A very old Bible is valuable because of its age only if it was printed between the time of the Gutenberg edition, 1455, and the year 1476. Although there were hundreds of editions of the Bible issued in Europe before 1500, only a small portion of them may be considered very valuable to-day. After 1476 Bibles must show certain characteristics to make them sufficiently desirable to the collector's roving eye. It goes almost without saying that all first editions are worth something.

The first Bible printed in Italy, in France, or in Spain —these are all of great value and rarity as well. The first Bible printed in one of the secular languages, in the old days known as the vulgar tongues, for instance, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Icelandic, Swedish, Slavonic, Bohemian, or Basque, these, too, are valuable. Others are the first printed Bible of Strasburg, issued by Mentelin before 1460; another printed by Eggestyn in 1466; the celebrated R Bible, probably published by Adolf Rusch in 1467 at Strasburg; the Great Bible, a most beautiful specimen of printing, by Sweynheym and Pannartz, 1471; and the Great French Bible, made, oddly enough, in Paris five years later by three Germans: Gering, Kranz, and Friburger. Hebrew being the original language of the

Old Testament Scriptures, it is only natural that the first printed in the Hebrew language—Soncino 1488—should be one of the cornerstones of any collection of Bibles.

One of the most glorious productions of the Bible is the Jenson edition, printed in Venice in 1479. I have a superb copy on vellum, with a special page of dedication to Pope Sixtus IV. All Bibles with dedications to or from noted persons immediately become significant in the estimation of the book lover.

Sometime after the printing of the Vulgate version, certain editors, shrewd enough to discern the public mind, offered a Bible complete with three versions. In the centre of the page they printed the Vulgate, while on one side a Hebrew text was printed, and on the other, a Greek.

But it is to the first English printer, William Caxton, that the honor should go for the first printed appearance of any part of the Scriptures in English. Caxton came from Kent, and in his youth went to Bruges and Cologne to learn the trade of printer. He was the first to introduce printing into England and the first to print any works in English. He was a scholar of parts, as well as a printer with fine taste, and himself translated into English many of the works which he later published. In 1483 he issued the *Golden Legend*, which includes lives of Adam, Abraham, Moses, and other characters of the Old and New Testaments. Thus it contains nearly all of the Pentateuch and portions of the Gospels. If this were generally known and appreciated, I feel certain the *Golden Legend* would approach a price more nearly like that of the Gutenberg Bible. But as the book game is one of magic and alchemy, this may happen

unexpectedly any time.

Among the fourteen or fifteen Caxtons in my New York vault, I am happy to say I have a beautiful copy which contains, unmutilated, the account of the murder of Thomas A. Becket, as a friend of mine once wrote it, which has been entirely deleted from most copies.

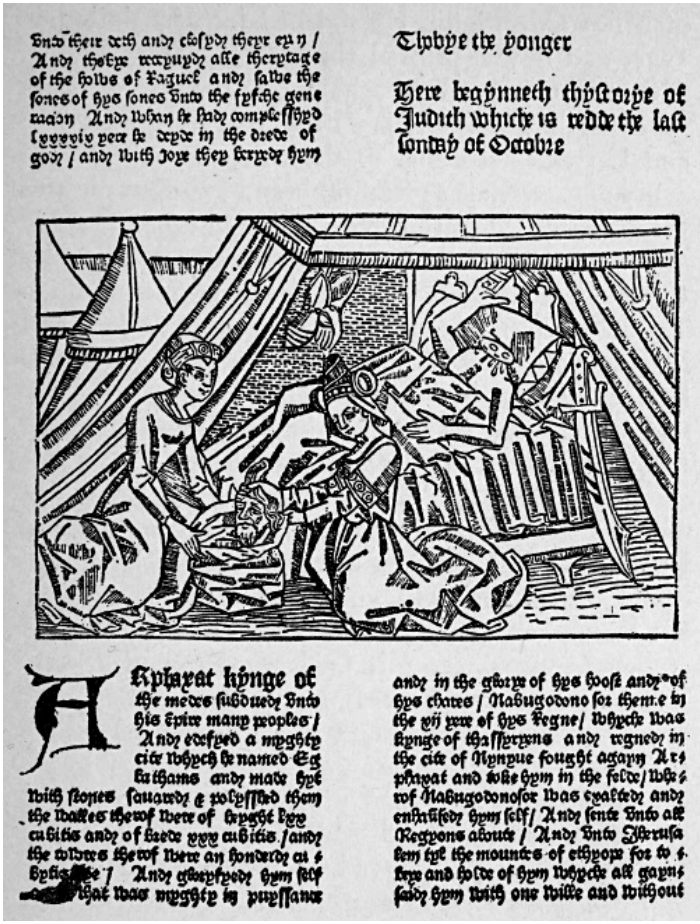


SPECIAL DEDICATION PAGE TO SIXTUS IV, OF JENSON'S BIBLE, VENICE, 1479

BIBLIA
SACRA
CUM PROLOCIS

S. HIERONIMI

PRESBYTERI



WOODCUT, “JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES,” FROM CAXTON’S “GOLDEN LEGEND,” 1483

Of course almost everyone knows that the first complete Bible in the English language was the work of Miles Coverdale. He finished his translation in

1535, and it was printed that same year at Zurich. Although as a work of scholarship it may not rank particularly high,—it is “translated out of Douche and Latyn,” according to the title,—you will find many of Coverdale’s memorable and sonorous phrases preserved in the authorized version in use to-day.

Ten years previous to the appearance of Miles Coverdale’s work, a contemporary of his, William Tyndale, had made a valiant effort to translate and have printed certain portions of the Bible. Perhaps he was inspired by some spiritual force within himself; at any rate he believed he could best serve his fellow countrymen by translating the New Testament into their language. His ambition grew when one day in heated dispute with an eminent churchman of England he was appalled at that worthy’s ignorance of the Scriptures. His vow, made then and there, has triumphantly echoed in the ears of all theological students ever since. “If God spare my life,” said Tyndale, “ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth his plough to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.”

But Tyndale’s radical project naturally needed strong financial and political backing. He went to London, where he believed he had a powerful ally in his friend, Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall. In this he soon found he was mistaken; nor could he find any patron with a sympathetic ear and a sympathetic purse as well. This circumstance was not strange, however, because it was just about this time that the powerful Cardinal Wolsey began to lay plans to prevent the “invasion of England by the Word of God.” Discouraged, Tyndale decided there was little hope of accomplishing his work in his own land, and made

up his mind to try his luck abroad, even though it meant exile.

In Hamburg, Tyndale completed his translation of the New Testament into English from the original Greek. He went on to Cologne, where he hoped to find a printer. It is believed that work on the book was then really started, but that the Senate of Cologne grew suddenly enraged and shocked at the thought of so profane a business going on within its gates. An order was issued to Peter Quentel, the printer, to prohibit its continuance, but before it could be carried out Tyndale had fled in panic to Worms. He took with him his beloved translation, and perhaps certain pages of the printed work as well. In Worms, Luther was then at the very height of his popularity. This must have been a relief to Tyndale, to find himself in a place where he would have to undergo no further religious persecution. And so the New Testament was printed for the first time in English in a little German city.

Tyndale's followers doubtless smuggled it into the home country, because almost immediately this New Testament began to appear in England. It filled the clergy with fury, and Bishop Tunstall, Tyndale's former friend, even went so far as to have it burned publicly at St. Paul's Cross in London. It was destroyed in other places as well, before gatherings of ignorant, superstitious, and infuriated people. Indeed, the public burning by the churchmen of Tyndale's New Testament became a popular if serious pastime. And the destruction of Tyndale's precious books was a prophetic prelude to his own martyrdom at the stake a few years later.

All the earliest English Bibles are extraordinarily rare and worth almost any amount. It is strange to speak

of money in connection with the greatest spiritual work of all time, but as Bibles are the cornerstones of any outstanding collection it follows that they must be bought at a price.

Only a fragment exists of the first edition of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, from the press of Peter Quentel in Cologne, in 1525. The second edition, printed also on the Continent, by Peter Schöffer at Worms, probably late in 1525, is almost equally rare, as only two imperfect copies survive. I would cheerfully give more than $50,000 for a copy of the first appearance in print of this portion of the English Scriptures. Perhaps some book scout will eventually unearth another. Of the Tyndale Pentateuch, probably printed at Malborow by Hans Lufft in 1530, only three perfect copies have resisted the sharp usages of time. The finest of these is in the Pierpont Morgan Library.

As to the first complete Bible in the English language, translated by Coverdale and printed in 1535, not a single absolutely perfect copy exists. There are two or three almost perfect examples in England, none so good in America. There are, however, copies of this book, more or less defective, in libraries in this country, such as in the collections of Pierpont Morgan and Henry E. Huntington, the New York Public Library, the Free Library of Philadelphia, Carl H. Pforzheimer, and A. Edward Newton. This great volume is not of excessive rarity, but of excessive importance. I would risk my chances in this world and the next to obtain a perfect copy.

Of the so-called Great Bible, seven editions were issued within two years, 1539-41. They are all valuable, but not nearly so much so as the earlier English Bibles. Splendid examples of printing, they

are much in demand by collectors, especially when perfect.

One of the great monuments of our civilization, the first edition of the Authorized Version, printed in London by Robert Barker in 1611, is in every respect one of the finest things a collector can ever hope to acquire. The influence of this Book upon the world has been simply enormous. There were two editions in 1611, known as the He and She Bible, the He (quite naturally!) being the earlier and more in demand. No stones, fair ladies! The distinction comes from a variant reading in the Book of Ruth, iii, 15. In the first version it reads “He went into the citie,” in the second, the later printing, “She went into the citie.” This change of a single letter makes all the difference in the world to the collector, and he has to pay for it. The first issue is worth several thousands more than the second. This is a rare and momentous thing, a perfect He bringing more than a perfect She! It can only occur in the case of the Bible. I am quite sure that in this even clergymen will agree with me.

The price of the first edition of the Authorized, or King James, Bible, has not been large in the past. The Huth copy sold at auction in 1911 for only £164, or about $820, but the future, I feel sure, will tell another story. Indeed, I think the time when the collector will give $8000 or $10,000 for a really fine copy is hovering dangerously near. It is truly a volume so dear and precious to everyone that it must soon take its place among the stars.

I remember one day when I was visiting the late J. P. Morgan many years ago. We sat and talked in his office in the old building at the corner of Wall and Broad streets, which in those ancient days bore the sign, Drexel, Morgan, and Company. Of course, we

vied with each other in a genial way, relating stories of our quests in discovering rare books, of purchases we had made at what we considered the proper prices then, and in general confiding to each other those tales of adventure so dear to the heart of the bookman. We talked about old Bibles, especially those which had belonged to celebrated people. Of these Mr. Morgan already had a remarkable collection. His nephew, Mr. Junius Spencer Morgan, had from the first been a great help to his uncle, with his genuine flair for really fine books and works of art generally, and his uncle often took his advice. The elder Mr. Morgan was a man of great imagination, who enjoyed book collecting as much as anyone I have ever known. Suddenly, during our conversation, his face clouded, and he turned to me and said in a regretful tone, “Doctor, there is one Bible I have missed. The last time I was in London, Quaritch told me about it. He sold it, he said, on his first trip to this country in 1890. It is the great He issue of 1611, and is enriched with the annotations of the translators of the King James version. The explanations of the Holy Text were probably made for the use of Prince Henry. What would I give to have it!”

Now I knew of this Bible, but hadn’t the faintest idea at the moment where it was or who owned it. It had been extended to five volumes and bore on the binding the feathers of the young Prince of Wales. But when I secured the library of Clarence S. Bement, one year later, there it was. What luck! Mr. Morgan, it is unnecessary to state, bought it immediately.

Among the hundreds of Bibles offered to me each year there is one type which blooms eternal. It is the bullet-hole Bible: the Bible which saved grandpa’s

life in the Civil War, or the Revolution—as you will. For a time I was shown such a succession of these that my very dreams were haunted by them. Many a night my rest would be broken when whole armies charged me, each soldier wearing a protecting copy of the Holy Scriptures over his heart.

Some people have fondly believed that a tale of sentiment, plus a dash of bravery, mixed with their own simulated reverence, would bring value to the family Bible. The bullet-hole Bible has become such an old story that every time I hear a shot I think it is someone aiming at the old family Scriptures in the back yard.

But this is nothing to the Genevan, or Breeches, Bible, the commonest of all. It is so named because of the seventh verse in the third chapter of Genesis: —

> Then the eyes of them bothe were opened & they knewe that they were naked; and they sewed figtre leaves together, and made themselves breeches.

The first edition was printed at Geneva in 1560 and copies in good condition are scarce and valuable. In fact, they are really worth more than the price they sell for to-day. It was for years the household Bible of the English race. Although translated by the English exiles at Geneva during Queen Mary's reign, it was dedicated "To the Moste Vertuous and Noble Quene Elisabet, Quene of England, France, and Ireland."

At least two hundred editions of the Bible and New Testament were issued before 1630, consequently for centuries it was in almost every home. The later editions of this Bible have therefore become the *bête noir* of every bookseller. They turn up everywhere, their proud possessors asking fortunes for copies

hardly worth the value of old paper. The copies published after 1600 are the worst offenders. It is a pity, for the peace of mind of the booksellers, that they were not all destroyed in the Great Fire of London. They still exist to torment the souls of bookmen, and although the language of the Genevan Bible has always been considered good, homely English, the language of the biblio-fiend, when he receives one on approval, with charges collect, is certainly more vigorous and expressive.

Not long ago a woman came to my Philadelphia library with a Breeches Bible. True, it was rather ancient, authentically dated 1629. From the moment I met her I realized she suffered from suppressed emotions of some sort. Although I am accustomed to prospective sellers with queer symptoms, I was rather alarmed. Her hands shook violently, she was deadly white one moment and a flaming pink the next. When I inquired what she wanted for her Bible she replied in quick, nervous tones, “Fifty thousand dollars!” Now I am always amazed at these grand ideas of value evinced by the layman. I hope I do not always show my surprise. Indeed, some people accuse me of having a poker face. This Bible was certainly worth no more than twenty dollars. But before I apprised her of the distressing news, which I always hate to impart, I was cautious enough to call in one of my assistants to aid me should she collapse on my hands.

It is to the eternal credit of bookmen that the sense of humor has been the ruling passion with them all. They all see the joyous, the fantastic, the capricious side. They are never *sérieux*, never unduly bowed down with the gravity of their calling. Although they are ardent, nay, passionate lovers, they always

remain gay and debonair. The history of old Bibles bears eloquent witness on this point. Why do Bug Bibles, Vinegar Bibles, Wicked Bibles, tickle the fantasy of collectors? For instance, Matthew's Bible of 1551 contains the reading in Psalm xci, 5: "So that thou shalt not nede to be afraid for any bugges by nighte, nor for the arrow that flyeth by day." Or think how the Christian world would have been disrupted if it had followed the Commandments of the 1631 Bible, which leaves out entirely the "not" in the Seventh. This terrible, wicked book reads: "Thou shalt commit adultery." Only four copies escaped the public executioner, and the poor printer was fined £300 by Archbishop Laud.

Baskett's Oxford Bible of 1717 is a mine of magnificent errors, the most amusing being that of "the parable of the vinegar," instead of "vineyard."

There are three tremendously important American Bibles: the Eliot Indian Bible, the Saur, and the Aitken Bible. John Eliot, Apostle to the Indians, translated the Bible into their language and had it printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1661-63. Thus the first Bible issued on this continent was, appropriately, in the tongue of its natives. And the second was in German, the first in a European language printed in America, from the press of Christopher Saur, at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1743. The third, at last in English, was printed in 1782 by R. Aitken "at Pope's Head, three doors above the Coffee House, in Market Street," Philadelphia. The great demand for early Americana will surely raise these three treasures to heights at present undreamed of in the bookman's philosophy.

VIII

WHY AMERICA BUYS ENGLAND'S BOOKS

DURING my frequent visits to England I have often been asked why Americans are so persistent, even voracious, in acquiring the great literary treasures of Great Britain. I have been accused in its public prints of being the greatest offender. I have been likened unto the ogre of ancient times. Perhaps it is pertinent, therefore, to know the reason why Americans are so anxious to obtain, at almost any price, not only the choicest English books and manuscripts, but the outstanding contemporary documents that chronicle so faithfully and so inexorably the political and literary history of England.

According to some of the English newspapers that bewail the loss to England of her great monuments of the past, it is a new thing, this interest in things English on the part of the American public. On the contrary, it has been going on, increasing in volume, it is true, from about the year 1840. Before the Civil War those two farsighted collectors, John Carter Brown of Providence, Rhode Island, and James Lenox of New York, were scouring England for volumes relating to the early history of this country, and incidentally gobbling up such rarities as the first folio of Shakespeare. They were ably assisted in their raids by an American who had taken up his residence in London, Henry Stevens of Vermont, the Green

Mountain Boy, who, among the string of titles after his name, included the cryptic letters, BLK BLD, ATHM CLB, meaning “Blackballed by the Athenæum Club!”

It is extremely gratifying to note the extraordinary love of books persisting in one American family for almost a century. In England the Huths and many others have shown the tendency, the collector’s instinct passed on from father to son for many generations. In this country it is rare. The remarkable exception, however, is evidenced by the Browns of Providence. The great library founded by John Carter Brown, with its glittering array of superb volumes—among the finest in the world—bears eloquent testimony to a continual devotion to books and learning. The family of the original founder has never for a moment flagged in its interest, and the volumes added to the collection since its establishment bear silent witness, unequaled in America, of a loving regard for books.

In 1847, James Lenox brought to this country from England the first Gutenberg Bible. The earliest first folio of Shakespeare in America was purchased in London about 1836. Since then they have flowed to us in a constant and ever widening stream, until to-day there are far more of them in the United States than in the British Empire.

England need not complain, however, or consider it such a serious loss, as some of her statesmen do. She has within her narrow boundaries superb volumes that America can never hope to possess. The British Museum and the great libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, to say nothing of the wonderful Spencer collection, now in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, are treasure houses that luckily can

never be despoiled. They will be able to resist the American invader and they will remain always at the service of students and scholars. It is not generally known that the libraries of England have left no stone unturned to increase their already stupendous hoards. The British Museum has added constantly to its collections and to-day it is a greater library, in many respects, than the Bibliothèque Nationale, which long held the leadership. I think it is actually the largest and most important library in the world.

Under the able direction of Mr. Alfred W. Pollard, formerly Keeper of Printed Books, the British Museum acquired many books and manuscripts of great intrinsic value, and it is to the extraordinary genius of this man that the British public owes much. Not only is he a bibliographer of remarkable ability, but, when in charge of the books, he developed the rare faculty of finding the very volumes that would complete a certain series; he was, therefore, ever on the alert to secure for the Museum the things that were most needed. And this in the face of American competition! As to the latter, it is worthy of note that the late J. P. Morgan, and his son as well, in forming their memorable collection, whenever possible never bid against the Museum. If the authorities particularly desired a certain manuscript that belonged of right to the Museum, the Morgans gracefully refrained from bidding.

In fact, Englishmen have always taken a greater pride in their national library than Americans in theirs. Ever since its foundation, the British Museum has received important bequests from collectors, such as the superb gifts of George III and the Honorable Thomas Grenville. Recently when it was found that there was in the Museum no first folio

containing the portrait of Shakespeare in its first state, several patriotic and discerning Englishmen secured it for the Nation.

True, a few citizens have made noteworthy gifts to our national library in Washington, but in the main it has been sadly neglected. Americans have given wisely and well to their own local foundations, but the Congressional Library, which should be the pride of every American, has never received the encouragement it deserves. Dr. Herbert Putnam, the gifted Librarian of Congress, is making every effort to remedy this glaring defect in our national armor. The Right Honorable Ramsay MacDonald told me, during his recent visit to Philadelphia, that an organized effort was being made by friends of the British Museum to secure the invaluable things that the Museum required. Why not form a society of friends of the Library of Congress, in order to purchase for it, while we have still the opportunity, the many volumes of Americana and the precious holograph documents that bear directly upon our country's history?


A new Enterlued for
iii
Chyldren to playe named Jacke Jugeler, both
wytte, very playsent and merye, Neuer
before Imprented.

The Players names.
Mayster. Bougrace. A galant
Dame coye. A Gentelwoman
Jacke Jugler. the vyce.
Jenkin careaway A Lackey.
Ales trype and go A mayd.

Jak iugler
M. bougrace
Dame coye.

“JACK JUGGLER,” 1555—THE ONLY COPY KNOWN

It is a curious thing that rare books and the precious things of the collector follow the flow of gold. When the United States became the great creditor nation, taking the place of England, at least for the time being, it was but natural that the various objects of art and interest should gravitate to this side. During

the last twenty years rare books and literary documents have left the shores of Albion at an alarming rate (for England). Most of them are now in the private and public libraries of the United States. I should hate to state how much I assisted in this magic exodus.

England was the great offender in this same sort of thing a century ago. It is the old threadbare saying, which must have first been uttered by Methuselah, that history repeats itself. In the eighteenth century, Italy, France, and Spain were complaining of the raids made on their artistic resources by Englishmen, as England is complaining of us to-day. The extraordinary increase in gold in England during the Napoleonic Wars was responsible for this. It was the era when the great collectors, Richard Heber, Earl Spencer, the Duke of Roxburghe, the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Devonshire, Sir Mark Sykes, and Robert Stayner Holford were making the Grand Tour and buying in the great emporiums in Rome and in Florence, in Paris and Madrid, their choicest objects. It is true that the Grand Tour has been the fashion in England ever since the days of Chaucer and that great libraries were formed in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, but it was during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that the greatest collections were made. In those days Sir Richard Wallace could purchase the finest Watteau in Paris at the price of an etching to-day. The best eighteenth-century paintings, drawings, bibelots, furniture, so dear to the heart of Frenchmen, were transferred from the Rue St. Honoré to Carlton House Terrace, or to grace the drawing-rooms of the elegant country homes of Great Britain.

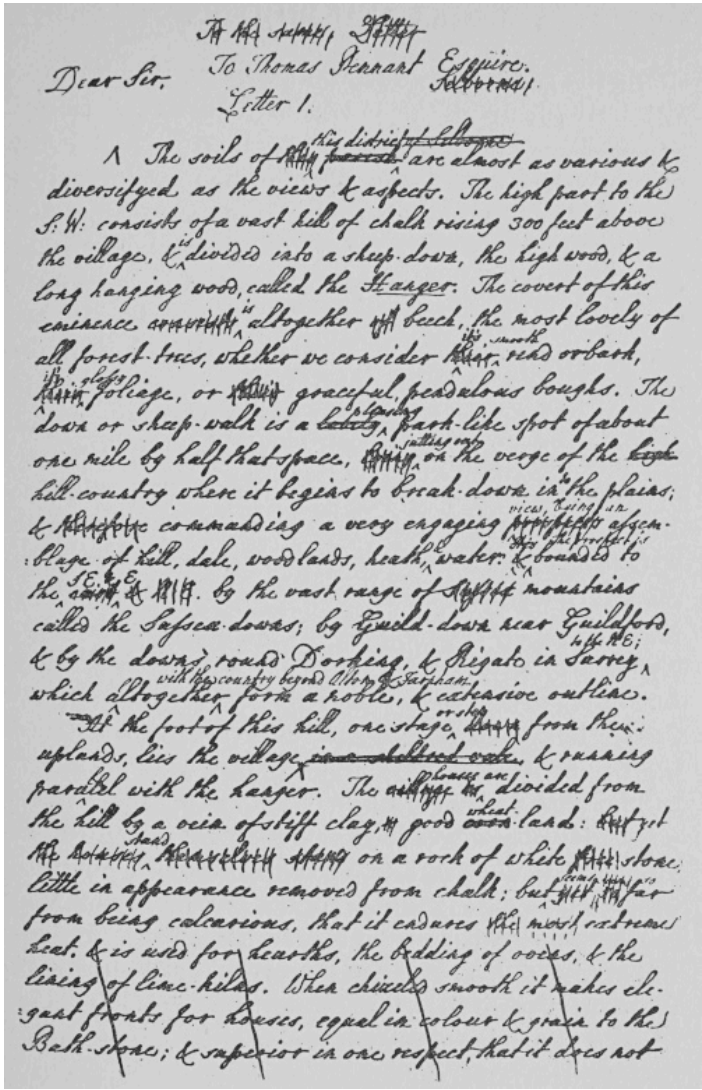
The wheel of time, however, turns.

It is really unfortunate for England that she is compelled now to give up some of her possessions. No nation has a finer appreciation of great works of the imagination. She receives payment for them, it is true, but money is a thing that can be had; it passes in cycles from one nation to another; a rare book or a manuscript, if it once goes into a public institution, can never be regained. Whether England, to protect her historical and literary relics, should make laws, as Italy has done, is no concern of mine. In her wisdom she probably knows the most expedient procedure. It is an economic as well as cultural question, and of economics I am glad to say I know absolutely nothing. There are, however, masters of the subject in Great Britain; they will probably solve this difficult problem.

The wisest among the collectors in England do not look upon this exchange as a total loss to England. I shall never forget my last conversation with the late Sir George Holford in Dorchester House, London, after I had purchased some of his dearest possessions. He said, “The world is growing smaller —Englishmen are great travelers; they can see these very books some day in an American institution far more readily than in the private collections in England. I know, myself, how difficult it is to throw open private homes to students. You recall as well as I do that the finest library of English poetry was never at the beck and call of students. I am glad that most of it has gone to America where it will be accessible to scholars of all nations.” Broadminded men, like that erudite scholar, Lord Crawford, know that these books will have tender and loving care in America, and that they will be an inspiration to our

students.

We Americans have the enthusiasm of youth. Perhaps the traditional Englishman has been so accustomed to seeing about him the finest things of art and literature that in the course of years he becomes a trifle bored. Perhaps we shall also, in the fullness of time, experience this, but at present we are eager to fill the great libraries and edifices in America with the rarest and most precious books. In the East, and in the West as well, there are enormous library buildings of the finest architectural types. Alas, they have not the books to fill them. The Free Library of Philadelphia has spent nearly seven million dollars on a superb edifice. It will be necessary to fill this building with suitable volumes. The growth of American universities, unparalleled in all time, calls for the apparatus of the student. They must have the tools of their trade—books. It is no wonder that there are not enough to go round. The demand is greater than the supply. Consequently prices will go steadily upward, and it is well to secure them while we may.



To Thomas Pennant Esquire.

Dear Sir.

Letter 1.

The soils of this district are almost as various & diversified as the views & aspects. The high part to the S.W. consists of a vast hill of chalk rising 300 feet above the village, & divided into a sheep-down, the high wood, & a long hanging wood, called the Hanger. The covert of this eminence is altogether Beech, the most lovely of all forest-trees, whether we consider their smooth rind, light foliage, or graceful, pendulous boughs. The down or sheep-walk is a kind of park-like spot of about one mile by half that space, lying on the verge of the high hill-country where it begins to break down in the plains; & commanding a very engaging view in which appear village of Hill, dale, woodlands, heath, water: & bounded to the S.E. & E. by the vast range of mountains called the Sussex downs; by Guild-down near Guildford, & by the downs round Dorking, & Reigate in Surrey; with the country beyond Alton & Farnham; which altogether form a noble, & extensive outline.

At the foot of this hill, one stage from the uplands, lies the village, & running parallel with the Hanger. The houses are divided from the hill by a vein of stiff clay, not good for wheat land: but yet the soil on a rock of white stone, little in appearance removed from chalk; but far from being calcarious, that it endures the most extreme heat & is used for hearths, the bedding of ovens, & the lining of lime-kilns. When chiselled smooth it makes elegant fronts for houses, equal in colour & grain to the Bath-stone; & superior in one respect, that it does not

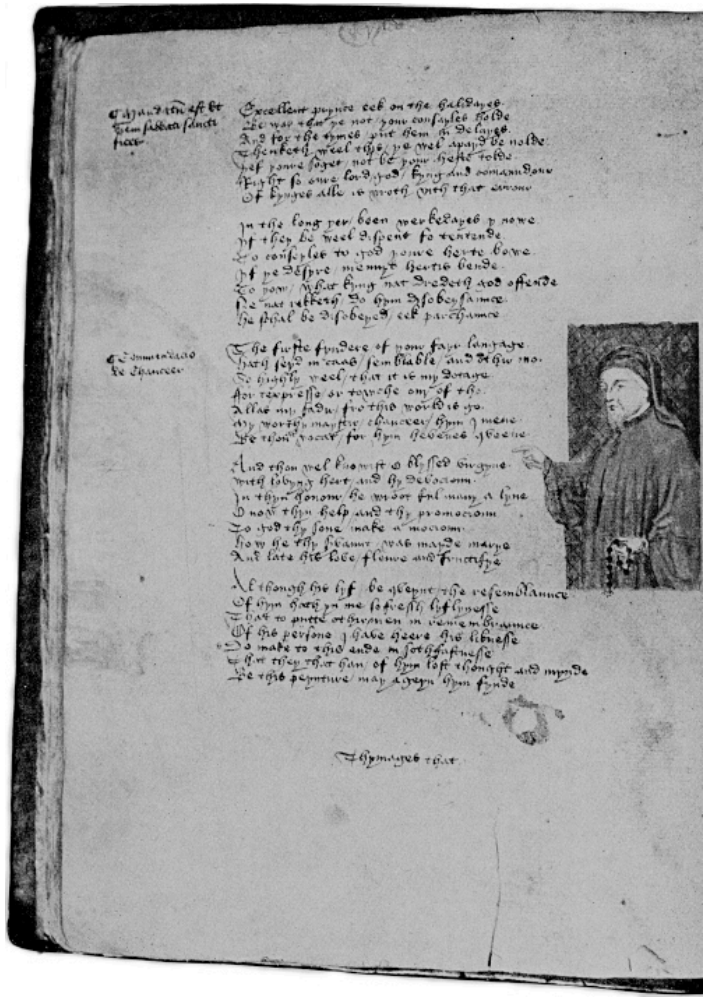
PAGE OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF WHITE'S "NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE"

It seems a pity that some Americans give such enormous sums for library buildings and spend literally nothing upon the volumes themselves.

Books, not edifices, make libraries. A friend of mine only fifteen years ago spent four million dollars on a superb library building; some are already complaining that it is no longer up-to-date! Buildings pass; they soon become obsolete. Books alone are everlasting. “Men may come and men may go, but books go on forever!” The late Mr. Huntington used to say: “The ownership of a fine library is the surest and swiftest way to immortality!”

I have to-day in my New York vault a collection of early English manuscripts unequaled in any library on this side of the Atlantic. It includes four manuscripts of Chaucer, two of Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*, several of Lydgate’s *Fall of Princes*, and the famous manuscript of Occleve’s *Poems* with a contemporary portrait of Chaucer. It will be impossible ever to secure another assemblage like it, for it does not exist. They will be appreciated after the last building has tottered on its foundation.

The past fifty years has produced in this country a group of book collectors equal to any that has appeared in England or on the Continent, men well in advance of their time, like the greatest book lover of them all, Richard Heber. I always envied this bibliomaniac his two possessions; as Sir Walter Scott so neatly puts it, “Heber the magnificent, whose library and cellar are so superior to all others in the world!” Would that Americans could be as successful gathering old vintages as old books! In this, England has it all over us.



PAGE FROM A FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT OF THOMAS OCCLEVE'S "POEMS," SHOWING A PORTRAIT OF CHAUCER

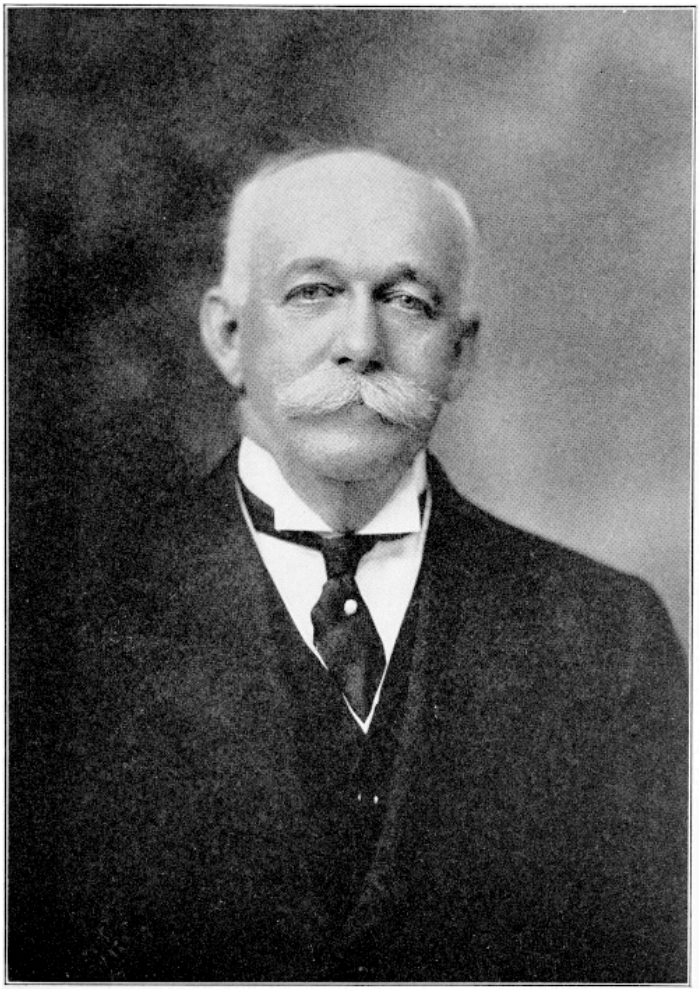
It is melancholy to record that in the last few months three of our most distinguished collectors have passed away, each one of them possessing in full measure the most extraordinary vision. I refer first to

Mr. Edward E. Ayer of Chicago, who was one of the pioneers in making a serious collection of books relating to the American Indian, which he presented, before his death, to the Newberry Library in Chicago. The late Mr. William A. White of Brooklyn (of beloved memory) was among the earliest of our collectors to gather the choice and alluring volumes of the great Elizabethans. His judgment was excellent and he had a vivid understanding of this golden period, equaled by few scholars. He did not hesitate to lend his finest volumes to any student who showed an intelligent interest in English literature.

I cannot speak at length of Mr. Henry E. Huntington. I feel his loss too poignantly at the present time. He was, without doubt, the greatest collector of books the world has ever known. Without possessing a profound knowledge of literature or of history, his flair for fine books was remarkable. His taste was sure, impeccable. The library at San Gabriel, California, which houses his wonderful collections, will be the Mecca of students for all time. No gift to a nation or to a state can ever equal his. America does not appreciate it to-day, but, as time spins its web, and the world becomes better acquainted with the Huntington treasures, this fact will be adequately recognized.

I do not mean to imply that American collectors are forming great libraries and art galleries solely for patriotic reasons, or for the good of their generation. It is perhaps after all a secondary consideration with them. Certainly it is not the first. Neither is their motive the encouragement of scholarship or of the arts. It is something more human. The bump of acquisitiveness is strongly developed in our collectors, and perhaps I know this as well as

anyone. They like to exhibit their treasures as other mortals do, to show them to their envious friends with a twinkle in their eyes and a certain amount of deviltry. American amateurs, who have built railroads and great suspension bridges, who have been financial giants and captains of industry, must surely possess the red blood that made them thus. Of course they like to flaunt a folio of Ben Jonson or a Keats's *Poems* (with a presentation inscription!) before the eyes of other collectors. In these ecstatic moments they do not care a whit for the Nation or for the people. But with the passing of years, with the gradual oozing of the enthusiasm and candor of youth, they think of the ultimate disposal of their books. It is then, and then only, that the people of America come into their own.



HENRY E. HUNTINGTON

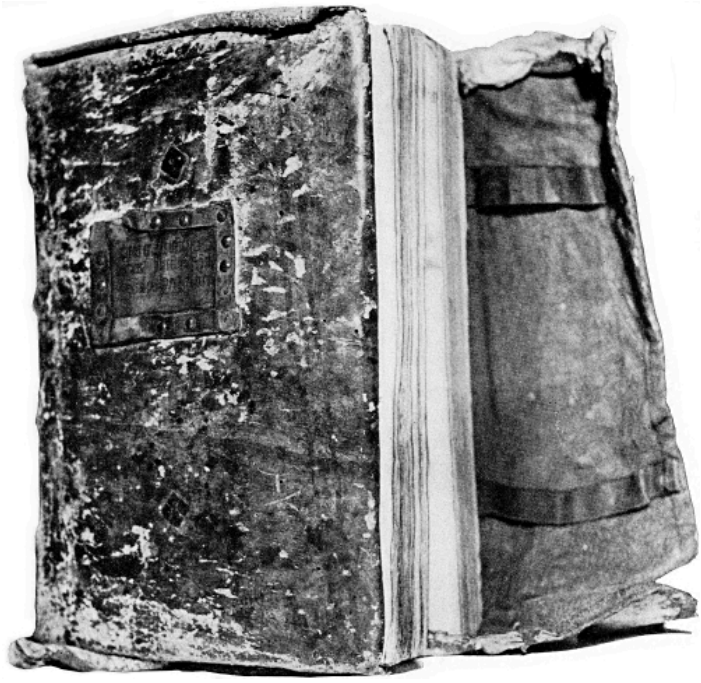
It is a wonderful and magnificent thing that the gathering of books in this country is in the hands of leaders of her industries, the so-called business kings, and not in the hands of college professors and great scholars. The latter, generally, in forming a collection make a sad mess of it. The instinct of the collector, the *heluo librorum* of Cicero, is entirely

different from that of the scholar. They are two distinct and separate faculties: the acquisition of knowledge and the gathering of books. Men to be successful in either must have an entirely different cosmos. Both are indispensable. It is paradoxical, but true, that not a single great library in the world has been formed by a great scholar.

Every year our collectors pitch their tents on the fair and hospitable shores of Great Britain, where they exchange their useless gold for ancient and modern English books. The pleasant bookshops all over England, Ireland, and Scotland welcome the American visitors, who take home with them such ingratiating little volumes as Herrick's *Hesperides* and Lovelace's *Lucasta*. The supply of such charming volumes has become well-nigh exhausted. Nowhere can this migration be more clearly seen than in the *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1475-1640* issued by The Bibliographical Society. This monumental work has been compiled by A. W. Pollard, G. R. Redgrave, and a host of the ablest English scholars. A glance at its pages reveals the fact that there are many important books of English dramatic poetry of which no copy now remains in England. Take, for instance, the second edition of *Hamlet*, published in London, in 1604. It is really the first edition containing the true text, as the first, of 1603, was a pirated one, with inferior readings. Twenty-five years ago three copies, all that exist, were in important private libraries in England. To-day all three are in America—in the Huntington Library, in the Elizabethan Club at Yale University, and in the private collection of Mr. H. C. Folger of New York. The check-list shows that of many of the most exquisite volumes of poetry and romance not a single copy remains in the great

country that saw its birth. On the other hand, there are thousands of books remaining in the British Museum, at the Universities and Colleges, at Lambeth, at Edinburgh, in the Patent Office, at Peterborough, at Winchester, of which not a single example exists in any library in the United States.

The situation, for England's scholars, has certain compensations. The books are really accessible in this country. Following the procedure of the members of the old Roxburghe Club, beautiful reprints have been made by American collectors of various great rarities and distributed to the libraries of Great Britain. Heywood's *King Edward the Fourth*, 1599, which exists in a single copy in the library of Mr. C. W. Clark, has now been made in facsimile by the courtesy of the owner and issued for the use of students. Wager's unique Interlude, *Enough is as good as a Feast* (about 1565), has also been reprinted. It was in Lord Mostyn's library for many, many years, quite out of the reach of most scholars. I trust no one will infer from this that the great English collectors bury their things and are niggardly in offering their books and manuscripts to the learned. On the contrary, the Duke of Devonshire, Sir R. L. Harmsworth, and Mr. Thomas J. Wise have always opened their doors to worthy scholars.

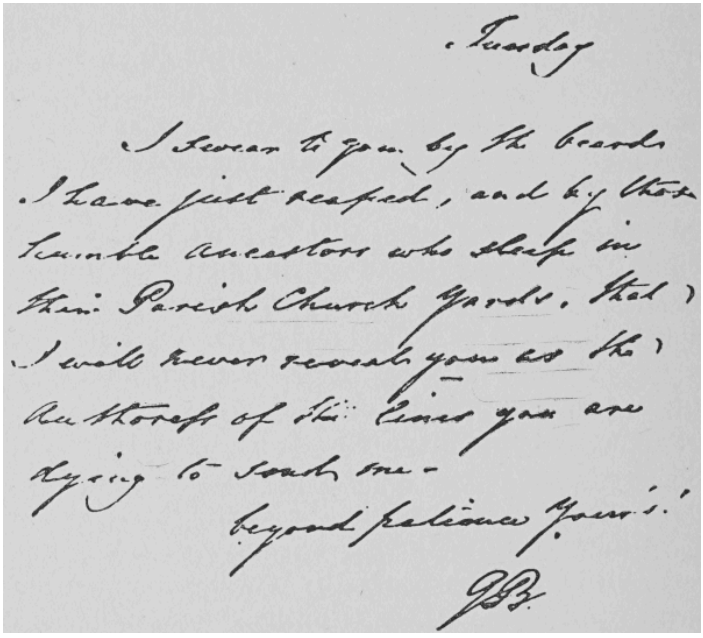


A CHAUCER MANUSCRIPT IN ORIGINAL BINDING

It is a great mistake for England to think that America is willing to pay mad prices for every English book. When bidding around the board at Sotheby's the trade have often smiled when they dropped a "hot one" on me. I shall never forget when I bought a book for £640 in the Britwell sale and someone kindly remarked, "Why, Richard Heber gave two shillings for that very copy in 1826." Needless to say it made not the slightest difference to me what he paid for it, I only knew that I was getting a great book and that no price was too high for it. Books of intrinsic worth, that exist in one or two copies, cannot be measured in terms of shillings and pence, or dollars and cents. Occasionally, however, when bidding, for moral (or immoral!) effect, I have

dropped a common rarity on my competitors, and they have paid twice what I thought the book was worth. And I might have been mistaken at that! It's all in the game. It is also a great mistake to think that when a book is knocked down to an English bookseller it will remain within the British Isles. There is nothing more fallacious than that. At least fifty per cent of the purchases of British dealers eventually wend their way to this country.

Once I had a serious qualm when relieving Great Britain of her cherished belongings. That was when I purchased privately the Battle Abbey Cartularies, the original documents of those valiant men who came over with William the Conqueror. There were hundreds of deeds and legal documents dating from the Battle of Hastings in 1066, bound in ninety-nine volumes. They were the very foundation of English history. It was with a feeling of genuine regret that I saw them leave England forever. I hope in their home in the New World they will have the tender attention and respect they received in their former abode in the west of England.


Tuesday

I swear to you, by the bearded
I have just respected, and by those
humble ancestors who sleep in
their Parish Church yonder, that I
will never reveal you as the
Authoress of this Letter you are
trying to teach me -
beyond patience Yours!
GB

LETTER SIGNED WITH INITIALS OF GEORGE (BEAU) BRUMMELL

The muniment rooms in the great houses still retain valuable documents of all kinds. A search through the many volumes and calendars of papers issued by the English Historical Manuscripts Commission will reveal the wealth of material still remaining in Great Britain. I remember only last year looking with envious eyes upon the muniment chamber of a noble family. There were ancient papers, rolls, parchments of all kinds, bound volumes of letters, from floor to ceiling, some of which had been in the same family for over eight hundred years. What a treasure-trove for a student of the social and political history of Great Britain! In looking quite casually over the lot I found a paper bearing the signature of John Milton; another of Thomas Killigrew; a whole stack of Samuel Pepys! My mouth began to water. I even

thought if I looked more thoroughly I might find one of William Shakespeare—who knows? Professor Wallace found several in the Public Record Office in London. The famous *impresa* is in the Duke of Rutland's collection at Belvoir Castle. Why not find one hidden away among these old musty records? It was, however, with a sense of relief that I heard the noble owner say to me: "You cannot carry these off, Doctor Rosenbach. Thank God, they are entailed, even my children's children, if they fall on evil days, will be unable to dispose of them." Down in my inmost soul I was delighted. Although I could never possess them, it warmed the cockles of my heart to hear the words that blasted my hopes forever. However, there are compensations. I was invited to visit the house any time I came to England, and to examine at my leisure these entrancing documents. My student days rushed back to me. How I should have been rejoiced, in the old days, when I was making original investigations into the beginnings of the English Drama under the guidance of my beloved teacher, Dr. Felix E. Schelling, to study these papers, with a chance of finding something that would add, if only a trifle, to our knowledge of the subject. I felt a renegade. I had deserted the halls of learning for the bookshop; I had given up my fellowship to enter a business that would, perhaps, put money in my purse.

I did not, when at college, appreciate what a high adventure the business was to prove, the excitement and anxiety of the chase, and that I had a better chance, a far greater opportunity, to unearth unpublished documents, and uncover original source-material, than ever I could have as an instructor in English in some university. After twenty-five years I am still of this opinion; although I

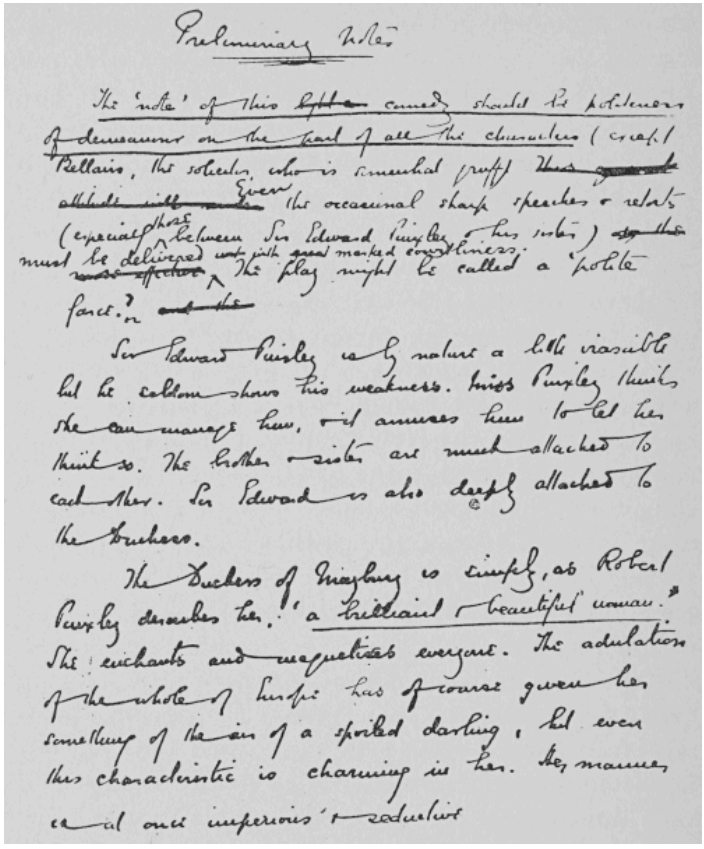
sneakingly hanker for the time when I can quietly return to my early love, and carefully survey, without a thought of their commercial value, the many interesting things that have fallen to my collector's bag. Perhaps I have been of some help to other students, who can investigate at their leisure the great mass of material that I have been the instrument of placing in their hands.



THE ENGLISH LIBRARY IN DR. ROSENBACH'S HOME

The study of English letters in the universities of this country is also responsible for the persistent demand for everything relating to the language and literature of Great Britain. Theses on almost every subject are being turned out regularly by candidates for the Ph.D. degree. I would do almost anything rather than be compelled to read most of them. I plead guilty, however, to having written one myself, long before I dreamed of entering the more diverting sport of book hunting. The quality of some of the work done by our scholars is extremely high, almost astounding, like Dr. Hotson's bombshell describing accurately, for

the first time, the death of Kit Marlowe. All the professors in the colleges and all the students in the seminars (how I hate this word!) are urging the university authorities to supply them with books. And there is only one place to buy them—England. It is no wonder, therefore, that we are probably getting ourselves thoroughly disliked on the other side by carrying off, like so many lusty buccaneers, the sacred treasuries of English thought. Admiral Drake, the "dragon" of Lope de Vega, on his West Indian voyage looted the pearls and emeralds of the New Empire, taking them back to England to show to the Mighty Queen Elizabeth. *Our* pirates are almost as ambitious. We go after far more precious things, things that outwear time and are not dependent on taste or fashion. The demand for England's books will not lessen; it will increase with every decade. There are some English collectors, like Sir R. L. Harmsworth, who are trying gallantly to stem the tide. Others are steeling themselves to heroic efforts to check the onrush, but mere man cannot conquer an economic situation of such dimensions. It will be impossible to check the welling flood unless the Government comes to the rescue.



Preliminary Notes

The 'note' of this comedy should be politeness of demeanour on the part of all the characters (except Bellairs, the solicitor, who is somewhat gruff) even the occasional sharp speeches or retorts (especially those between Sir Edward Pursley & his sister) must be delivered with good marked courtliness. The play might be called a 'polite farce'?

Sir Edward Pursley is by nature a little irascible but he seldom shows his weakness. Miss Pursley thinks she can manage him, & amuses him to let her think so. The brother & sister are much attached to each other. Sir Edward is also deeply attached to the Duchess.

The Duchess of Mayberry is simply, as Robert Pursley describes her, "a brilliant & beautiful woman." She enchants and magnetises everyone. The adulation of the whole of her life has of course given her something of the air of a spoiled darling, but even this characteristic is charming in her. Her manner is at once imperious & seductive

MANUSCRIPT OF ARNOLD BENNETT'S UNPUBLISHED PLAY

As I have said before, the most sagacious among Englishmen do not consider the matter a very serious one. They look with equanimity upon the situation. They really admire the pluck and spirit of our collectors, for the English are sportsmen of the first order. Recently I was speaking to one of them about the Pierpont Morgan Library. He said how marvelous it was that such a great collection should be given to the public during the owner's lifetime. He knew of no gift to England of like magnitude. I reminded him

of the splendid Althorp collection of Lord Spencer, given in 1892 by Mrs. John Rylands to Manchester, which equals anything in this country. We, however, have just begun. New collectors and new libraries abound. New foundations, with large sums for the purchase of books, are springing into being. And yet some of the English (not the wisest) say that the United States is a country where the dollars count most. A libel, of course. In fact, some of our amateurs are almost prodigal, nay, quixotic in their use of money. I know one who gave up a lucrative business in order to devote himself to the purchase of old books. Bravo! Would that there were more like him, not alone in this country, but in England as well.

Following the financial centre, the book mart has gradually shifted to New York. In a few years it will be impossible to purchase the finest English books in London. I have only recently sold to a well-known English collector some volumes purchased at the Britwell sale, not two years ago. I can foresee the day when Englishmen, with the taste and ability to buy, will be browsing in shops in Philadelphia, in New Orleans, in Minneapolis, in San Francisco, and taking their lucky finds back with them to their old home.

IX

THE COLLECTOR'S BEST BET

"I DON'T give a tinker's dam about the money value!" We were working, my uncle Moses and I, in his crowded bookshop on the second floor of the ancient red brick building on Commerce Street in old Philadelphia. Uncle Moses sat on top of a ladder before some shelves, arranging his volumes, while I endeavored to find an important document in his paper-stuffed desk. An old colored man, a messenger, had just staggered up the stairs to deliver an enormous package. It proved to be, as usual, a lot of crusty old books, and the last straw for me. I looked despairingly at my uncle. Where were these to find room? Each corner of the place, the chairs, tables, and his desk, was already filled; and the shelves, of course, were laden. I sighed. Why was Uncle Moses forever buying, buying, buying, and never—hardly ever—selling? And what was all this newly arrived lot worth? It didn't look like much to me. It was then that he caught the trend of my thought and boomed at me from the other end of the room. I was, you must remember, only sixteen at the time, and had yet to learn that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

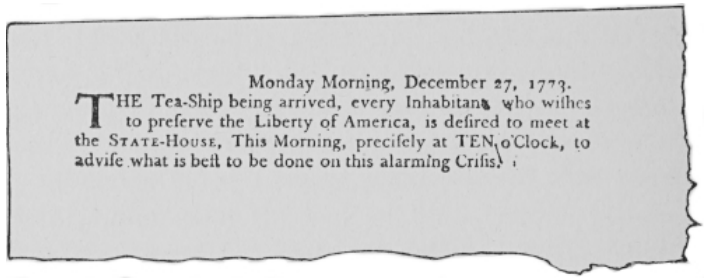
Uncle Moses quickly came down from his ladder and gloated proudly over the newly arrived pile of books. Then he fairly beamed as he turned to me. "My boy," he exclaimed, "'Americana!' That's the stuff to collect!" He picked up a volume, opened to the

yellowed title page, and read aloud: “Here is a *Discovery of the Barmudas, otherwise called the Isle of Devils*. It is the work of Silvester Jourdain, 1610. Americana! Even Shakespeare knew the fascination of it. It was this little book which in part inspired him to write *The Tempest*!” He turned to light his old meerschaum pipe, and as he did so, his battered, picturesque top-hat, which had stood crowded between a row of books and the wall, fell to the floor. I felt a savage glow of delight at this mishap. But Uncle Moses ignored it. He was on a favorite subject, and he had his most appreciative audience: me. Although I had not been born with a caul over my face, he felt I had second sight—for books. And he delighted to catch my imagination as a fair wind takes a sail, filling it now this way, now that. It was something of a relaxation for him.

“Heaps of people,” he continued, “can’t seem to get it into their heads that there is just as much drama in the history of our own country as in any of the Old World empires. Hasn’t my friend Prescott made the conquerors of Mexico and Peru live before our eyes? Talk about William the Conqueror! What is the matter with Columbus, Cortés, and Pizarro?” I was thrilled now—thrilled to the marrow when he talked like that. And with gratification he watched me as I stood there transfixed.

“Think of the capture of the last Inca! Why, it is far more exciting than the Battle of Agincourt. It outweighs even Shakespeare’s graphic description in *King Henry V*.” He stopped for a moment, his penetrating dark eyes sparkling with excitement. “But it is not only the battles, the political intrigues,” he went on, “the early history of our great industries is just as important. For instance, the old forty-

niners' records of the first discovery of gold in California, the beginning of the steel mills, the first railroad prospectuses, all this country's gigantic domestic activities! My boy, I envy you the years ahead in which you will discover for yourself the color, the romance, the mystery of your country's history!"



Monday Morning, December 27, 1773.
THE Tea-Ship being arrived, every Inhabitant who wishes to preserve the Liberty of America, is desired to meet at the STATE-HOUSE, This Morning, precisely at TEN o'Clock, to advise what is best to be done on this alarming Crisis.

TEA-SHIP BROADSIDE

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Time has proved to me that my uncle prophesied well when he said that Americana would have a unique and splendid place in the book world. And although his prophecies were made many years ago, it is not too late to-day to start collecting Americana. But, of course, to-morrow it may be. They get scarcer every day; they will never be any cheaper; and of one thing you may be sure: the value of Americana will increase with the rising fortunes of America.

So many of the books and documents on which history is based have been absorbed by public libraries and by historical societies that the available source material itself has dwindled. In the old days, when such friends of Moses Polock as James Lenox, Doctor Brinley, old Menzies, John Carter Brown,

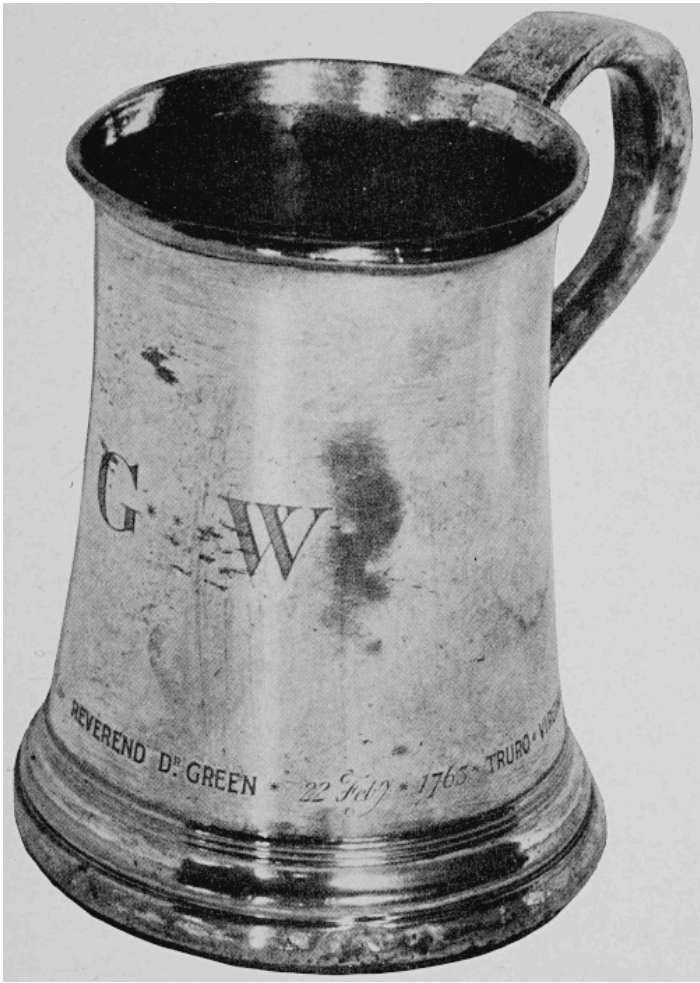
Brayton Ives, Henry C. Murphy, James Carson Brevoort, and countless others were enslaved by an inordinate passion for books, they did not have to go far afield to find the things that delighted their souls. The most precious relics were to be found almost at their doorsteps. If they were in Philadelphia, it was to the bookstalls along Second Street they went; in New York, to the drowsy old shops of lower Broadway. In these and other places serious-minded young collectors—can't you see them in their stovepipe hats, their high, tight collars, and enormous black satin cravats?—searched in leisurely mood through the untouched treasure-hoards of Americana. Indeed, those were the days when you could pick up Smith's *History of Virginia* for fifty dollars almost as easily as you can secure to-day the latest novel of a popular writer.

But, budding collectors, do not despair. Who knows but there are nuggets hidden this very minute, at your hand? Hidden only because you do not realize their potential value. Things which are considered valueless to-day may soar high in favor in the near future. You know that our grandfathers, not to mention their sisters and their cousins and their aunts, could have bought the autograph letters of such historical figures as Lincoln, Grant, Lee, and Jefferson Davis for a few dollars during the years that immediately followed the Civil War. And it was not until twenty years later that collectors began to gather together everything they could find concerning Lincoln, for it was not until then that he became a figure permanently great in the thoughts of the people. His merest pen scratch took on a definite value, which has increased steadily since then.

The World War has now been over for nearly nine

years. Mementos of the conflict which are to-day tolerated merely for their sentimental value will be highly esteemed twenty years from now. They will be coveted objects, not only in the eyes of the collector, but to the perhaps more discerning ones of the historian as well.

The way of the transgressor is not much harder than that of the enthusiastic biblio-fiend. The only difference is that the latter is sure of his eventual reward. Not a day passes that some man or woman does not appear in my library, either in Philadelphia or in New York, to offer me some curious and interesting book, tract, or letter relating to the history of this country. Very often I have to pay heavily for certain desirable documents. But, like my uncle Moses, I don't give a tinker's dam about the money value. I hope I am a cheerful giver when, as a result of my purchase, I discover material hitherto unknown to the historians of our country.



TANKARD PRESENTED TO GEORGE WASHINGTON ON HIS THIRTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY BY THE REV. DR. GREEN, FEBRUARY 22, 1763, AT TRURO, VIRGINIA

When my brother Philip was in Spain last year he spent several weeks touring through the picturesque towns and villages of Granada. Can you imagine his surprise and joy, when one day he stopped at an ancient monastery and bought a bundle of old papers

which contained a most valuable and interesting document—the original manuscript signed by the Emperor Charles V, wherein Hernando Cortés, Adelantado of the Indies, was appointed Knight of the Order of Santiago. As this order was an honor considered at that time the most distinguished and aristocratic in all Castile, it naturally showed Cortés in a light hitherto unnoted by historians. To-day this magnificent document is in the collection of my dear friend, Mr. H. V. Jones, in Minneapolis. Mr. Jones in a surprisingly short time has formed one of the finest libraries of books relating to this country.

From the very day that Christopher Columbus discussed his great project with Queen Isabella, the stream of American history has at all times flowed tumultuously, and never without color and romance.

When Columbus returned to Spain from the New World, he stopped on February 14, 1493, at Santa Maria, one of the islands of the Azores, probably to take water. Four days before this he had encountered the most terrific storm of his great voyage, and was convinced that he, his men, and his vessels must perish. Now Columbus realized in his heart that he was going back to Spain with news of a discovery second in importance to no other. And when it seemed that his ship might sink at any moment, he set to work to make a record of his mighty adventure, hoping that by some will of the Fates it would not be lost to posterity. So, on February fourteenth, he carefully prepared as complete an account of his marvelous voyage as was possible under the circumstances. He wrote the details of his journey on a stout piece of parchment, wrapped it carefully in a piece of waterproof cloth, then placed it in an iron-bound barrel and threw it into the

raging ocean. But the Fates were kinder to Columbus than to this account made in a time of stress.

Certainly this, the first record of America, written by the brave hand of Columbus, would be the most precious relic in all the chronicles of our country. Alas, that it never has been found! And if I thought there were one chance in a million of finding it I would take my power boat, the First Folio, and cruise in the neighborhood of the Azores forever!

It is also curious that another letter, which Columbus wrote the day after he arrived at Santa Maria to his friend Luis de Santangel, has never been found. Nor has another and more concise account of his experiences, which he wrote in an exultant vein to the *Reyes Catolicos*, Ferdinand and Isabella, immediately upon landing in Lisbon, ever seen the light of day.

Every school child is taught the date of Columbus's arrival at Palos, March 15, 1493. On that very same day he dispatched two letters to the Court, then sitting at Barcelona. Another, much briefer and more to the point, he sent to another friend, Gabriel Sanchez, then the royal treasurer.

About one month after Columbus returned to Spain, a second letter which he indited to Luis de Santangel was printed on two leaves, folio size. Evidently these were sent out in all directions and must have been in great demand. You can well realize that the excitement created by the publication of his stupendous discovery was tremendous. And yet it is very strange that but one copy of the entire edition has survived. These two leaves are the actual cornerstone of American history. They are worth not only their weight in radium many times over, but, to the book lover, his very chances of Paradise! They

are now, I am proud to state, not in some musty old castle of Spain, but in the Lenox Foundation, a part of the New York Public Library, in the heart of New York City. There, if you show the appropriate desire, you may see it any day. Some authorities think this letter was printed by Rosenbach, one of the earliest Spanish printers, and probably one of my forbears. The old fool! Why didn't he save at least one copy for his descendants?

Of the second edition of this letter, with the Fates still pursuing, there is likewise but one remaining copy. To-day it reposes in a very safe place, the Ambrosian Library in Milan. The present Pope, Pius XI, who should be the patron saint of all modern book collectors, was first the assistant in this library, and finally the librarian. In bygone years his knowledge of books and his infectious enthusiasm inspired many a bookman. How it must have delighted him to have this great letter of Columbus in his care!

Edition after edition of the first Columbus letter soon appeared. The news was so astounding that all who could read wanted to see for themselves the discoverer's own description of this amazing new land. Four editions appeared in Rome, two in Basle, three in Paris, and one in Antwerp. These were all published in Latin or Italian. Florence printed the news four separate times; strange to relate, the first edition in German did not appear until 1497. But the Germans enhanced their edition with one of the most amusing woodcuts I have ever seen. It is a picture of the King of Spain and Columbus, who seem to be explaining their great achievement (doubtless as an offering) to Jesus Christ. There were six copies of it known until recently, three of which are in this

country: one in the Lenox Library, one in the John Carter Brown collection at Providence, Rhode Island, and one in the safekeeping of the Huntington Library. But only last year, when I visited an old library in the west of England, the private collection of a friend of mine, I had a curious experience.

It was at that hour which is neither day nor night, and the dressing gong for dinner had sounded. I put my hand out in the half light to steady myself after "tea," and touched—not the *fille de chambre*, as Sterne relates in his *Sentimental Journey*, but the edges of something projecting from a shelf of an old bookcase. I had the strange feeling of an omen about to be realized, one of those peculiar premonitions women are always boasting of. I loosened the books on either side, drew out the object, and went soberly to the nearest window, to find that I had not one but two copies of this German Columbus letter! That was enough to stagger anyone. One is now in the collection of that great lover and connoisseur of books, Mr. Grenville Kane, of Tuxedo Park, New York, who is now the *doyen* of American collectors; the other is cherished by my old friend Mr. H. V. Jones.

The story of this country unfolds itself like some gorgeous panorama as you look through the books which chronicle the stirring times of the early adventurers. Who wouldn't choose to hear tales from actual eyewitnesses, rather than read them rehashed in a fusty history book? The principal performers in the great historical dramas have themselves told us stories of daring, of bravery, of great disasters and victories. Such men were Amerigo Vespucci; Waldseemüller, the famous geographer, whose *Cosmographiæ Introductio*, published at St. Dié in

1507, was the first book which gave the name, America, to the New World; Peter Martyr, the first historian of the Indies, who described the voyages of his friends and contemporaries, Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Magellan, Cabot, and Vespucci. Martyr's *Decades of the New World* should quicken the pulse of every lover of American history, for it contains most of the knowledge we have of the very earliest "inventions," as they were called.

Elsewhere I have told of my purchase of the Ellsworth copy of the Gutenberg Bible. Included in the lot with it was one of the earliest charts showing the east coast of America. It dates around 1501-02. I was present at the sale of this famous map, known as the King-Hamy chart, when it brought $17,600, and was one of the unhappy underbidders thereon. I thought it was lost to me and my heirs forevermore. However, when the Ellsworth collection was sold, I radioed my bid from mid-Atlantic and secured it.

Early portolano charts, as these first navigators' maps are called, are extremely interesting. They indicate, step by step, the latest discoveries as they were made. You can see for yourself, if you follow the development from the first faint coast lines on the earliest charts to the recognizable later outlines, the wonderful progress made by various explorers in less than a century. Every year new ports, new bays, new islands, new harbors of refuge are seen. The first mariners in the waters of the New Islands, as they were called, sent their original and very rough working charts, made from the actual observations of pilots, to the great cartographers in Spain and Italy. Those men were really artists. Baptista Agnesi was one of the most famous of the chart makers. He and his colleagues all produced beautiful, illuminated

atlases containing elaborately decorated maps, gorgeously bound, which they sold to the great princes and merchants of the day. The maps were much in demand as table books for the libraries of wealthy men.

But there are very few of the first drafts of the early maps left. The rolls of parchment which originated in the rough pilot house of an early sailing vessel were often damaged by ocean spray and rats' teeth; under such conditions they could last but a short while. Probably not five, altogether, survive. Yet lately I have had the unexampled good fortune to obtain two actual pilots' charts; the first one was used on the voyage of Cortés, the other must have accompanied Pizarro on his magnificent conquest of Peru. The former shows but the barest outline of the coasts of the two Americas; the second, only fifteen years later, presents a much more detailed diagram of the shores, indicating the advance in geographical knowledge during this brief period.

Probably the two finest and most highly finished examples of the map-maker's art are two table books: the Spitzer chart in the John Carter Brown Library at Providence and the famous Jacques Cartier atlas in the collection of the late Henry E. Huntington. Another magnificent collection of portolano charts is in the library of the Hispanic Society in New York City, formed by the great student and collector, Mr. Archer M. Huntington.

Now the young book enthusiast, if he has a limited amount of money, must not feel out of the running when he sees that many of the rarer examples of Americana are beyond his means. Indeed, the discriminating collector seeks not only the great and costly pieces, such as Richard Hakluyt's *Divers*

Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America, 1582 (complete with both maps); Thomas Hariot's *Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, 1588; Francis Drake's *West Indian Voyage*, 1589; or that wonderful collection, the most elaborate ever compiled about America, known as De Bry's *Voyages*. Of course, everyone would like to secure these descriptions of the early discoveries. Such fascinating accounts as those bequeathed to posterity by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, the first real historian of the Spanish conquest, and his successor, Cieza de Leon—these will always be coveted, it goes without saying.

It is the little things, however, that I think most appealing.

For instance, within the past few months I found and purchased the first tailor bill in the New World. It was the original invoice sent to Hernando de Soto in 1536, several years before he made his momentous discovery of the Mississippi River. The bill was dated from Lima, the City of the Kings, which had only been founded in 1535. There were forty items listed: bolts of the finest black velvets and satins, yards and yards of scarlet taffeta for linings. Can you see the great *conquistador* flashing his way through some primeval jungle, clad like the king's courtier that he was, even in the wilderness? But to me the most startling thing about this bill of $1400 for one month's raiment is that it was—receipted! How the tailors on Fifth Avenue would gloat over this relic of their earliest predecessor! Perhaps some way will be found to make a facsimile of the first receipted weapon of their trade. It should be hung in every tailoring establishment along the Avenue as a gentle reminder to tardy patrons. Although the clothes and the tailor who made them, as well as the customer

who wore them, have all long since evaporated, Juan Ruiz, the tailor's name, will live. It is forever connected with the distinguished name of Hernando de Soto, the discoverer of the Mississippi.

Virginia in the early days included practically all the English possessions in America. Consequently New England was part of Virginia. The first books relating to this English colony in the New World are all of abounding interest. The history of settlements such as these, of fierce and frequent fights with Indians, or the gentler tale of Raleigh and his pipe of tobacco, reads like a dime novel. Of course all these descriptions are entrancingly rare and the acquisition of any one of them will make a dent in the most astute pocketbook. As a rule, these tracts were ephemeral publications not unlike much of the pamphlet literature that is issued to-day. They were small quarto volumes, sometimes comprising only eight or ten leaves. After they were read they doubtless were cast into the seventeenth-century equivalent of the waste-paper basket, and that is why so few are in existence to-day. The cherished survivors have been preserved because they were bound together in volumes at the time they were issued.

Recently, in the library of an old London house, I came across one of these precious collections containing twenty-three of the rarest pamphlets relating to America. Bound therein were such collectors' darlings as Brereton's *Brief and true Relation of the Discovery of the Northern Part of Virginia*, 1602; James Rosier's *A True Relation of the most prosperous Voyage made this present year 1605 in the Discovery of the Land of Virginia*, published in London in 1605. And embedded in the centre of the

volume, like a choice nugget, was the first work of the redoubtable Captain John Smith, entitled *A True Relation of such Occurrences and Accidents of Noate as hath hapned in Virginia*, London, 1608.

"Have you any other books or pamphlets relating to America?" I asked the distinguished owner after I had purchased this volume, which was worth many thousands of pounds. He thought for so long before answering that I was afraid he had nothing. When I had almost given up hope, he said suddenly, "Would you be interested in a presentation copy of Captain Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia*, 1624?"

"What are you trying to do? Pull my leg?"

"No, really," he replied. "Here it is." He walked the length of the great room to an enormous bookcase with glass doors, and tenderly extracted a tall slim book. The arms of England were impressed in gold upon the covers. To say I was astounded is to express it mildly. And there, covering the whole flyleaf in front of the beautifully engraved title page, was the only known specimen of handwriting of the celebrated "Governour and Admirall of New England," as Captain Smith was dubbed thereon. Since this dedication is entirely unknown, I give it here to be printed for the first time:—

TO THE WORSHIPFULL THE MASTER WARDENS & SOCIETIE OF THE CORDWAYNERS OF YE CITTIE OF LONDON.

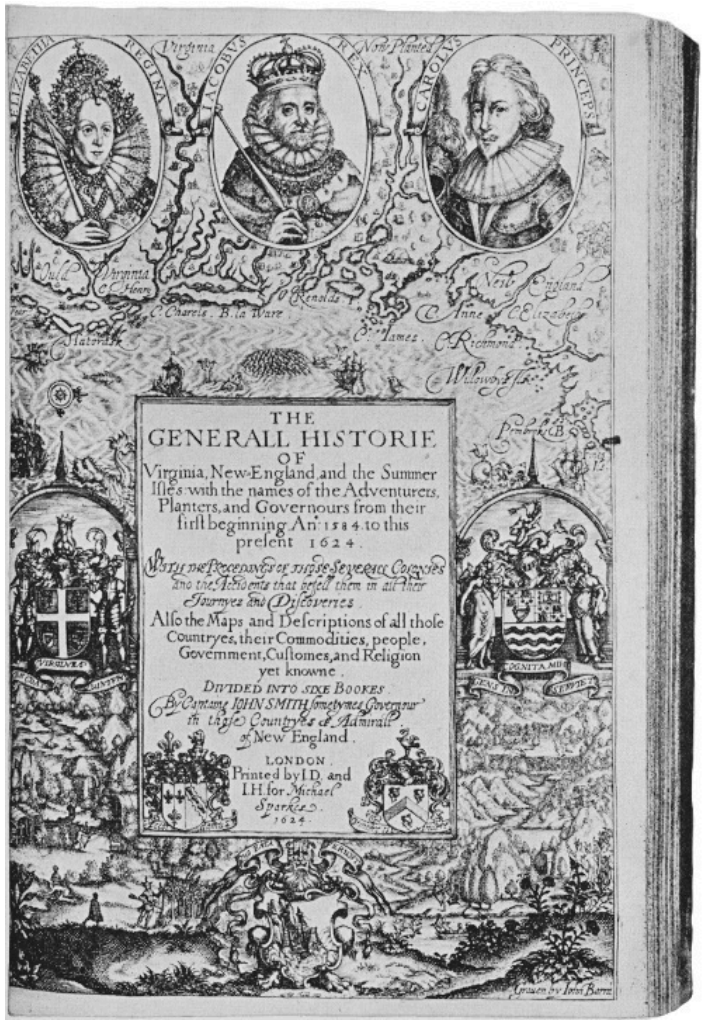
WORTHIE GENTLEMEN:—

Not only in regard of your Courtesie & Love, Butt also of ye Continuall Use I have had of your Labours, & the hope you may make some use of mine, I salute you with this cronologicall discourse, whereof you may understand with what infinite Difficulties &

Dangers these Plantations first began, with their yearlie proceedings, & the plaine description & Condition of those Countries; How many of your Companie have bin Adventurers, whose Names are omitted or not nominated in the Alphabett I know not, therefore I intreate you better to informe me, that I may hereafter imprint you amongst the Rest, Butt of this I am sure for want of shooes among the Oyster Bankes wee tore our hatts & Clothes & those being worne, wee tied Barkes of trees about our ffeete to keepe them from being Cutt by the shelles amongst which wee must goe or starve, yett how many thousand of shooes hath bin transported to these plantations, how many Soldiers, Marriners & Saylers have bin & are likely to be encreased thereby, what vent your Commodities have had & still have, & how many shipps & men of all ffaculties have bin & are yearelie imployed I leave to your owne Judgments, & yett by reason of ill manadging, the Returnes have neither answered the generall Expectation, nor my desire; the Causes thereof you may read at large in this Booke for your better satisfaction, & I pray you take it not in ill part that I present the same to you in this manuscript Epistle soe Late, for both it & I myself have bin soe overtired by attendances that this Work of mine doth seeme to be Superannuated before it's Birth, notwithstanding Lett me intreat you to give it Lodging in your Hall Freelie to be perused for ever, in memorie of your Noblenesse towards mee, & my Love to God, my Countrie, your Societie, & those Plantations, Ever resting

Your's to use

JOHN SMITH



ENGRAVED TITLE OF CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH'S "HISTORY OF VIRGINIA, 1624"

THE
GENERALL HISTORIE
OF
Virginia, New-England, and the Summer
Isles with the names of the Adventurers,
Planters, and Governours from their

first beginning An. 1584 to this
present 1624.

With the Procedings of those Severall Colonies
and the Accidents that befell them in all their
Journyes and Discoveries.

Also the Maps and Descriptions of all those
Countryes, their Commodities, people,
Government, Customes, and Religion
yet knowne.

Divided into sixe Bookes
By Captaine JOHN SMITH sometymes Governour'
in those Countryes & Admirall
of New England.

LONDON
Printed by I.D. and
I.H. for *Michael*
Sparkes.
1624.

Smith's *Virginia* is in many respects the standard example of English Americana. The narrative is trippingly told, and if Captain Smith exaggerates and invents, so much the better! He is the prime storyteller among historians. Were he alive to-day he would probably prove himself the greatest scenario writer of all time, especially if he wrote colorful thrillers filled with action such as the Pocahontas episode. Here it is in part:—

> The Queene of Appomatuck was appointed to bring him [Smith] water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, instead of a Towell to dry them; having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan; then as many as could layd hand on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the Kings

> dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper....

I myself like best his touching note about the first white child born in British America:—

> And the 18th [August, 1587] Ellinor the Governours daughter, and wife to Ananias Dare, was delivered of a daughter in Roanoak; which, being the first Christian there borne, was called Virginia.

The early history of the settlement of New England according to its present bounds is perhaps more austere than the narrative of Ponce de Leon in Florida or the exploits of Jacques Cartier in New France. Nevertheless, the story contains many soul-stirring incidents. It is as chock-full of romantic relations as the *Thousand and One Nights*. No one realized this more clearly and beautifully than Nathaniel Hawthorne. A dear friend of mine and one of the most discriminating and earnest collectors in this country, whose judgment in any matter of taste is final, owns the Hawthorne family copy of *William Hubbard's Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England*, printed in Boston by John Foster, 1677. It is in its original sheep binding. This book had been the cherished property of the Hawthorne family of Salem for two hundred and fifty years. The name of the first emigrant founder of the family is at the top of the title page: "William Hawthorne, Senior, his booke, 1677." It is he who is described in the introduction to *The Scarlet Letter* as "grave, bearded, sable-cloaked ... with his Bible and his sword...."

The second owner, his son, and not less famous as the notorious witch judge of Salem, placed his autograph at the bottom of the title page: "John

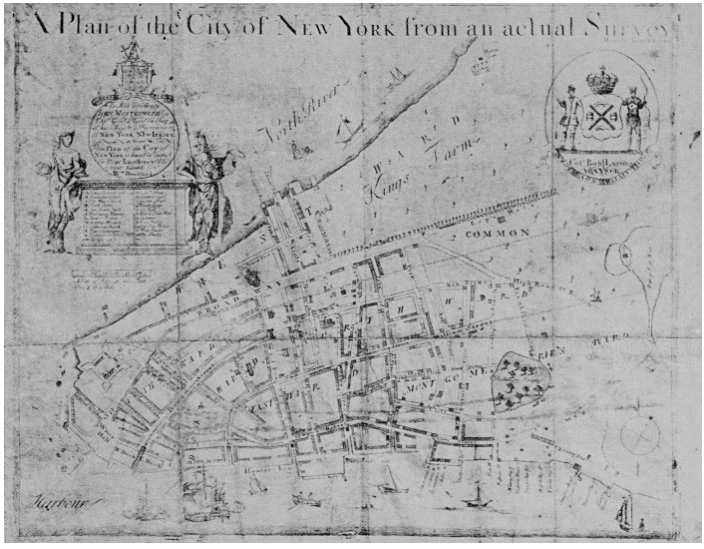
Hathorne his booke." The book next descended to his son, who wrote on the flyleaf: "Joseph Hathorne His Book 1739-40." And so it went from father to son for many more generations, finally becoming the possession of Nathaniel Hawthorne. After his name, in which he reinserted the original *w*, he wrote, "given him by his Kinswoman, Miss Susan Ingersoll, 1838." Few old books of intrinsic value have a record of ownership as direct and interesting as this. From Major William Hawthorne, the founder of the family, who led more than one expedition against the Indians, to Nathaniel Hawthorne, the gentlest of men, is indeed a far cry.

New England is fortunate in possessing two interesting and authentic manuscript narratives of its earliest history. Governor Winthrop's Journal or *Historie of New England* is one, and William Bradford's *Historie of Plimouth Plantation* the other. Both, although written in a somewhat formal manner, contain the most realistic description of life in the colonies. Probably the two most important printed books of this period are George Mourt's *A Relation or Journal of the Beginning and Proceedings of the English Plantation settled at Plimouth in New England*, London, 1622, and the first published history of Massachusetts, William Wood's *New England's Prospect*, London, 1634.

The first work published in English about New York is entitled *The Second Part of the Tragedy of Amboyna*, 1653. It is really a controversial pamphlet in which the early Dutch colonists were accused of trying to induce the Indians to murder the English settlers who had come down from New England. But the first true history of New York was Daniel Denton's *A Brief Description of New York First Called New Netherlands*,

1670. In those days it was the fashion to malign the Dutch, and families such as the De Peysters and the Van Rensselaers were not so prominent socially as their descendants are to-day.

The first account of Pennsylvania was written by none other than William Penn himself, and published in London in 1681. Although Penn had never seen this country at the time, he wrote a most glowing account of it, proving that the press-agent bacillus was even then alive. This wonderful Quaker wanted colonists to develop the grant which was given him in settlement of the Crown's debt to his father. It is no wonder that in a virulent tract the better classes of England showed their distaste for his business activities, which they considered unbecoming to his religion and his position. That naughty little pamphlet is entitled *William Penn's Conversion from a Gentleman to a Quaker*!



FIRST MAP OF NEW YORK CITY ENGRAVED IN AMERICA, PRINTED BY

WILLIAM BRADFORD, 1731
(click image to enlarge)

A Plan of the City of New York from an actual Survey

One could dwell for an indefinite time upon books and tracts dealing with the fascinating events of early life in the colonies. Every leaflet printed in this country from the time the first press was established in Cambridge in 1640 until the year 1700 is of value; after that date they must relate to historical events or prominent personages to prove their worth. Every early newspaper printed in America, every broadsheet, every autograph letter or manuscript containing real meat for the historian, is of value.

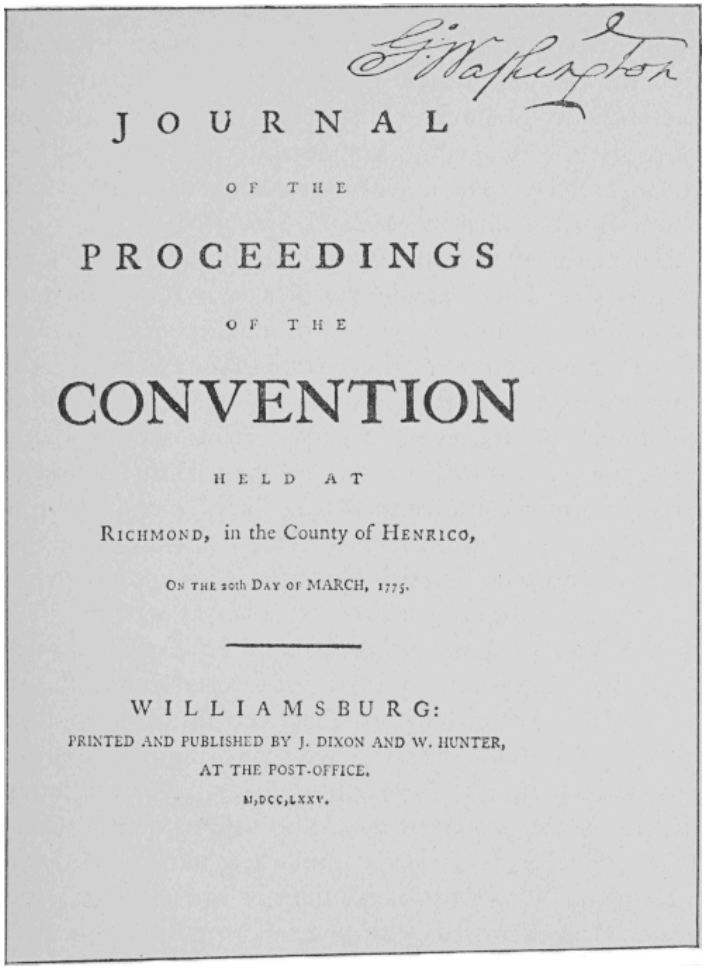
Many youthful collectors approach those older ones who have been through the mill, asking for tips. In the beginning they all believe there is some secret which may be learned by diligent questioners. Well, here is a secret, but it is an open one. If the young biblio-fiend will search in the older towns of the thirteen original colonies, he is bound in time to turn up unknown treasures! I only wish I had the time to do some quiet delving myself.

Do not forget that all material relating to the history of the West is just as important as that of the Eastern states, often more picturesque, and perhaps even more romantic. Take, for instance, the first book published in San Francisco in 1848-49. It will in time be just as valuable as the first book printed in Philadelphia in 1685. The three thousand miles between the two cities, one on the Atlantic Coast, the other on the Pacific, show the tide of settlement of our country. It was only seventy-five years ago that the first guidebooks were published in Eastern cities, showing ways to travel to the Far West, giving tables of distances and other information for the emigrant.

They were the road maps of the stalwart pioneers who packed wife, children, and chattels into a covered wagon and took the shortest route to that part of the uninhabited plains which they hoped would be their El Dorado.

All these are important stones in the foundation of history. There are books printed within the past twenty-five years which contain important source material concerning the particular parts of the country they describe. Some of these books bring very high prices even to-day. What would Zenas Leonard have thought had he known that his simple little narrative, published at Clearfield, Pennsylvania, in 1839, would in less than ninety years be battled for in the auction rooms? This tale of his adventures of five years' trapping for furs and trading with Indians in the Rocky Mountains is sought to-day as a most desirable addition to a library of Americana. I saw a copy sell at auction not long ago for $1700.

Although the printed books relating to America are fascinating and instructive, autographs make the incidents they describe alive and vivid for us. Every true collector is strongly moved when he sees the autograph of a great personage in his country's history. And, after all, the printed word must have a certain coldness and formality. Indeed, it is perhaps a part of its beauty. But words written down by the actor himself as he helps to complete the drama are personal things which unfailingly appeal to the imagination.


G. Washington

JOURNAL

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

CONVENTION

HELD AT

RICHMOND, in the County of HENRICO,

ON THE 20th DAY OF MARCH, 1775.

WILLIAMSBURG:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. DIXON AND W. HUNTER,

AT THE POST-OFFICE.

M,DCC,LXXV.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S COPY OF "PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION"

JOURNAL

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

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HELD AT

Richmond, in the County of Henrico,

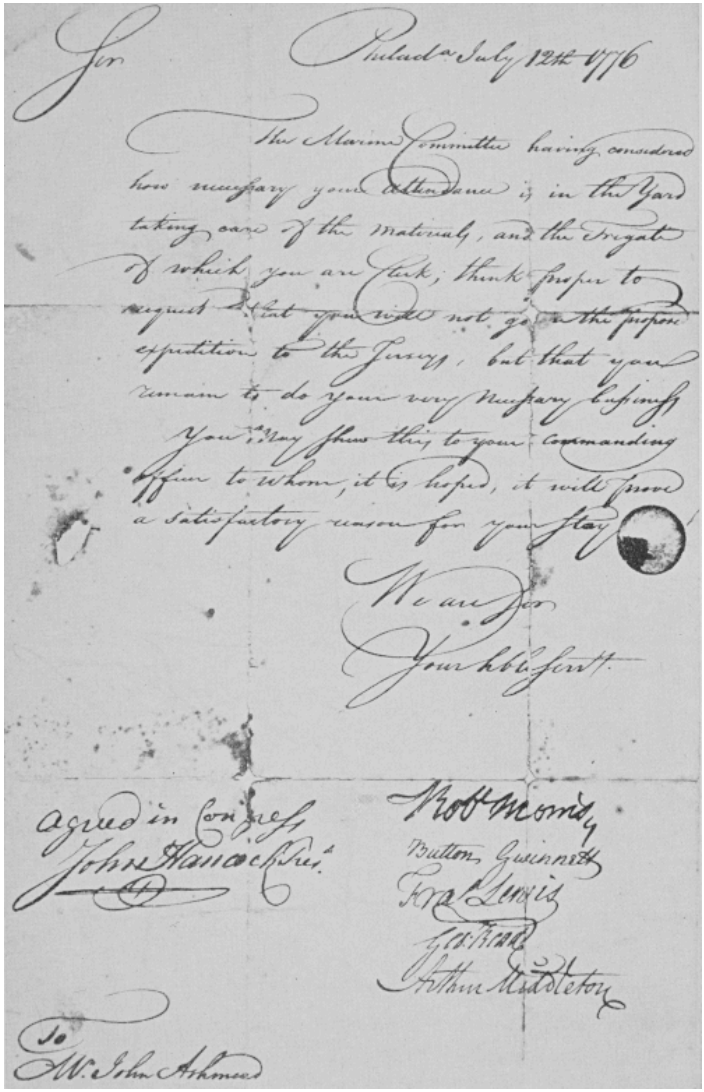
On the 20th Day of MARCH, 1775.

WILLIAMSBURG:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. DIXON AND W. HUNTER,
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M, DCC, LXXV.

No wonder collectors everywhere are doing their utmost to uncover from the débris of a past age autograph letters relating to the Revolution, and particularly to the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence. The highest auction price of any autograph was paid on March sixteenth of this year for a Button Gwinnett signature. When the auctioneer of the Anderson Galleries in New York City knocked it down to me for $51,000, I was tickled to death. It was the only 1776 Button Gwinnett letter about national affairs that had ever been sold. This particular autograph is now the most famous one in the world, and at the price paid figures about $3600 a letter. It is a strange commentary on the vagaries of fame that you can buy a signature of Napoleon for ten dollars a letter. During the last six months quotations on Button Gwinnett Preferred have jumped sixty-five per cent.

A shocking tale is told of the rapid rise of American autograph material. A friend of mine decided to sell at auction his magnificent collection of letters of signers, famous generals, Presidents of the United States, and other historical characters. He had bought them not many years ago. When the evening

of the sale arrived Mr. G—— was there with his wife. He carried a catalogue marked with the cost of each item. The first number in the sale, which cost him $45, brought $250; the next, for which he had paid $80, fetched $800, and so on, until about fifteen items were sold.



Sir Philad.a July 12th 1776

The Marine Committee having considered how necessary your attendance is in the Yard taking care of the Materials, and the Frigat of which you are Clerk, think proper to request that you will not go on the proposd expedition to the Jerseys, but that you remain to do your very necessary business

You'll May shew this to your Commanding Officer to whom it is hoped, it will prove a Satisfactory reason for your stay

We are Sir

Your hble Servt.

agreed in Congress
John Hancock Presi.

Robt Morris
Button Gwinnett
Lyn Lewis
Geo. Read
Arthur Middleton

To
Mr. John Adams

LETTER SIGNED BY BUTTON GWINNETT, BOUGHT FOR $51,000

His wife, who was watching his catalogue over his shoulder, and who could hardly contain herself any longer, exclaimed, “My, Doctor R is going strong to-

night. Why, that letter which just sold for $1650 you bought from him only a little while ago for $360. I feel like laughing out loud."

"If you do," her husband threatened, "I'll take you by the hair, drag you outside, and strangle you!" At this his wife was quiescent for a few minutes. The prices were still mounting. She then wrote on a card which she passed to Mr. G——: "I can smile, can't I?"

"That goes for smiling, too," replied her husband.

About five years ago I was especially interested in all material relating to Paul Revere and his celebrated ride. In the midst of my researches a gentleman called upon me one day and showed me a series of volumes which contained most important papers relating to the Revolutionary period. On looking through them I was amazed to run across the following outstanding document, which is dated Cambridge, April 29, 1775, ten days after Revere's famous exploit. It is as follows:—

> This may certify that the bearer Mr. Paul Revere is a messenger to the Committee of Safety and that all dispatch and assistance be given him in all instances that the business of the Collony may be facilitated.
>
> JOS. WARREN, CHAIRN

Poor General Warren, who signed Revere's commission as messenger, was killed a few weeks later at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Although I freely admit that this letter belongs in the archives of New England, you may be sure I keep it well within my reach. I don't care to have those doughty New England historians, such as Dr. Charles L. Nichols, Clarence S. Brigham, George Parker Winship, and Lawrence C. Wroth, come pouncing down as a mighty host and demand it of me.

It is surprising how things fall the collector's way in series. As I have related in a previous article, I have the only certified copy of the Declaration of Independence that is outside the public archives. But I always hankered after a letter written by a signer who was an eyewitness on that July Fourth, one hundred and fifty years ago—a letter telling about the actual signing of the Declaration of Independence. For twenty-two long years I searched for it, and was delightfully shocked one day to read in an auction catalogue a description of the following letter by Cæsar Rodney, the signer from Delaware, to his brother, Thomas Rodney, dated Philadelphia, July 4, 1776. You may be sure I gobbled up this letter.

Rodney wrote:—

> I arrived in Congress tho detained by thunder and rain time enough to give my voice in the matter of Independence. It is now determined by the thirteen United Colonies without even one desenting Colony. We have now got through with the whole of the Declaration and ordered it to be printed so that you will soon have the pleasure of seeing it. Hand bills of it will be printed and sent to the armies, cities, county towns, etc.—to be published or rather proclaimed in form....

I have always been peculiarly interested in anything which related to the origin and history of the American flag, and I have always wanted, with my infernal and almost feminine curiosity, to find out when it was first raised. I had found references at various times to its appearance sometime during the second year of the Revolution, but could not discover the exact date in any of the items of Americana which I had collected. One day about nine years ago I was reading a manuscript, *Journal of the most*

Material Occurrences proceeding the Siege of Fort Schuyler, by William Colbreath. As I turned the leaves of the manuscript my attention was arrested by the following:—

> Augt 3d [1777] Early this morning a Continental Flagg made by the Officers of Col. Gansevoorts Regiment was hoisted and a Cannon Levelled at the Enemies Camp was fired on the Occasion....

This is the only authoritative account known of the first raising of the American battle flag, and it was on this day that the British troops saw for the first time the new standard of America.

Some years ago I received a seductive appeal from a Boston collector. He had purchased some wonderful books which, though they filled his shelves, depleted his purse. And yet he could still write, “Dear Doctor: Please tempt me!” How often do I wish the sirens would tempt me, especially if the little charmers were in the form of autograph letters and manuscripts relating to Lincoln and his time. Believe me, I’ll never be too old to be caught by their allure.

Of all periods in American history, none is more inspiring and dramatic than that of the Civil War. It is one of the most kaleidoscopic times in all history, with three men of outstanding character in it, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee. Any scrap of material relating to them is bound to increase in value. Lincoln letters to-day are rarer than Washington’s, and nearly all of his great pieces are written in his own hand.

Of course, collectors prefer what are known as A. L. S. (autograph letter signed) instead of the L. S., or letter merely signed by Lincoln, that is, not in his handwriting but written by an official clerk. Thank God, those were the days before the typewriter, and

every letter contains an intimate appeal which the machine can never give.

That puts me in mind of a good one.

About three months ago a lady came to see me in New York and asked to be shown some Lincoln letters. I used the cataloguer's phrase and spoke of holographs, fair copies, A. L. S., and the usual rigmarole of the collector. I then exhibited before her interested eyes a letter of Lincoln's which I treasured, because it is perhaps the only one in which Lincoln swore. It was addressed to John T. Stuart, his law partner, dated Vandalia, Illinois, February 14, 1839, and he refers to a man named Ewing as follows:—

> Ewing won't do anything. He is not worth a damn.
>
> Your friend,
>
> A. LINCOLN

The lady exclaimed, "I know what you mean by A. L. S. I did not understand you at first. You mean Abraham Lincoln swore!"

Americana really is the collector's best bet. I can never be too grateful to Uncle Moses for his advice to me. I have kept zealously almost every piece relating to the Civil War, and I think that I have succeeded in the past thirty years in gathering the finest collection relating to it, except the national collection in Washington. I have such remarkable Lincoln documents as his first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, entirely in his autograph, written six months before it was finally put into operation on January 1, 1863; his famous Baltimore address, in which he gives his celebrated definition of liberty; the original manuscript of his speech about the formation of the Republican Party; and many other

pieces of the greatest historical significance, which can never come a collector's way again.

I cannot resist giving Lincoln's speech on the party of which he was the most illustrious leader:—

> Upon those men who are, in sentiment, opposed to the spread and nationalization of slavery, rests the task of preventing it. The Republican Organization is the embodiment of that sentiment; though as yet, it by no means embraces all the individuals holding that sentiment. The party is newly formed, and in forming, old party ties had to be broken, and the attractions of party pride, and influential leaders, were wholly wanting. In spite of all differences, prejudices, and animosities, its members were drawn together by a paramount common danger. They formed and maneuvered in the face of the disciplined enemy, and in the teeth of all his persistent misrepresentations. Of course, they fell far short of gathering in all of their own. And yet, a year ago, they stood up, an army over thirteen hundred thousand strong. That army is, today, the best hope of the nation, and of the world. Their work is before them, and from which they may not guiltlessly turn away.

I have spoken of the unfurling of the first American battle flag. The following is Lincoln's beautiful acknowledgment of a flag sent him by some ladies of a patriotic society:—

> EXECUTIVE MANSION
>
> *Aug. 10, 1863*
>
> Permit me to return my grateful acknowledgements to the fair manufacturer and generous donors of the beautiful present which accompanies their note of the 20th July. If anything could enhance to me the value of this representation of our national ensign, so elegantly executed and so gracefully bestowed, it would be the consideration that its price has been devoted to the comfort and restoration of those

> heroic men who have suffered and bled in our flag's defense. We never should, and I am sure, never shall be niggard of gratitude and benefaction to the soldiers who have endured toil, privations and wounds, that the nation may live.
>
> Yours very truly,
> A. LINCOLN

I do not want to be accused of waving too often our emblem. But I must give in full two letters relating to the Confederate flag. They are not particularly valuable in a money sense, but I do not think any amount would tempt me to sell them. They are the kind that cannot fail to melt the heart of an old bachelor with a fondness for children. The first is addressed by General Leroy P. Walker, Secretary of War in the Confederate Cabinet, to General Beauregard, from Richmond, Virginia, September 14, 1861, and says:—

> MY DEAR GENERAL:
>
> The enclosed note from my little daughter was written by her without suggestion or alterations in any way, and the design for a flag is entirely her own conception. She has insisted so strongly on sending it to you that I did not feel at liberty to refuse her. I consent the more readily because I am sure you will appreciate it in the spirit in which it is sent.
>
> She signs herself with the usual vanity of her sex, "daughter of the Secretary of War", and this gives me the opportunity to say that my official connection with the Army is about to terminate, having tendered my resignation to the President a few days since.
>
> What I have done in this office has been honestly done, and when the history of this war is written I feel that the laggard justice of popular approval will be bestowed.
>
> I am etc.,
>
> Most truly,

yr friend L. P. WALKER

And here is the second letter:—

GENERAL BEAUREGARD:—

I send you a design entirely my own for a Confederate flag. I have never been satisfied with the Confederate flag, because it is too much like that of the United States. I am a little girl nine years old and though I have never seen you I feel as though I knew you

Your admirer
MATILDA POPE WALKER
Daughter of the Secretary of War
Richmond, Virginia. *Sept. 14.*

I feel that I must return for a moment to Lincoln. Although I have letters of the greatest historical import not only from the martyr President himself but from nearly all his generals and members of his cabinet, I prefer the notebook of Surgeon C. S. Taft, who was at Lincoln's bedside at the time of his death. You can hear in it not only the last tragic heartbeats of one of the truly great characters of all time, but the knell of a soul-stirring epoch. The meagre words that follow, extracted from the notebook, are to me more moving than all the fine writing in the world:—

The wound ceased to bleed or discharge about 5.30 A.M. and from that time the breathing was stertorous but gradually increased in frequency and decreased in strength up to the last breath, which was drawn at 21 minutes and 55 seconds after 7; the heart did not cease to beat until 22′ 10″ past 7; my hand was upon the President's heart and my eye upon the watch of the Surgeon General who was standing by my side.

The finest character after Lincoln in the whole Civil War was undoubtedly that great gentleman and descendant of gentlemen, Robert E. Lee. From my

schooldays I had read of his life of nobility and sorrow. The letter in which he resigned his commission, addressed to General Winfield Scott, who commanded the American Army, has always been to me the highest example of patriotism and the soldier's ideal credo. The words, "save in defence of my native State, I never desire again to draw my sword," have been indelibly impressed upon every mind. I know of no letter that I would sooner possess than this, but it was thirty years before I could finally call it my own. I give it here without further comment:—

ARLINGTON, WASHINGTON CITY P. O.
20th April, 1861

LIEUT. GEN. WINFIELD SCOTT,

COM. ARMY

GENERAL:—Since my interview with you on the 18th inst., I have felt that I ought no longer to retain my commission in the army. I therefore tender my resignation which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once, but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from the service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life, all the ability I possessed. During the whole of that time, more than thirty years, I have experienced nothing but kindness from my superiors, the most cordial friendship from my companions. To no one General have I been so much indebted as to yourself for uniform kindness and consideration, and it had always been my urgent desire to merit your approbation. I shall carry with me to the grave the most grateful recollections of your kind consideration, and your name and fame will always be dear to me. Save in the defence of my native State, I never desire again to draw my sword. Be pleased to accept my most earnest wishes for the continuance of your happiness and prosperity, and believe me most truly yours,

ROBERT E. LEE

Four years elapsed. The war was over. General Lee had surrendered. The following letter, which I hold, to his old friend, General Beauregard, is one of the finest letters ever written by the hand of man.

LEXINGTON, VA.
3rd *Oct.* '65

MY DEAR GEN.:—

I am glad to see no indication in your letter of an intention to leave the country. I think the South requires the aid of her sons now, more than at any period of her history. As you ask my purpose, I will state that I have no thought of abandoning her, unless compelled to do so.

"After the surrender of the Southern Armies in April, the revolution in the opinions & feelings of the people, seemed so complete, & the return of the Southern States into the union of all the States, so inevitable; that it became in my opinion, the duty of every citizen, the Contest being virtually ended, to cease opposition, & place himself in a position to serve the country. I therefore upon the promulgation of the proclamation of Pres. Johnson, which indicated apparently his policy in restoring peace, determine to comply with its requirements; & on the 13 of June, applied to be embraced within its provisions. I have not heard the result of my application, but since then have been elected to the Presidency of Washington College, & have entered upon the duties of the office, in the hope of being of some benefit to the noble youth of our country.

"I need not tell you, that true patriotism requires of men sometimes, to act exactly contrary at one period, to that which it does at another; & that the motive which impels them, viz, the desire to do right, is precisely the same. The circumstances which govern their actions undergo change, and their conduct must conform to the new order of things. History is full of illustrations of this. Washington

himself is an example, at one time he fought against the French, under Braddock, in the service of the King of Great Britain; at another he fought with the French at Yorktown, under the orders of the Continental Congress of America, against him. He has not been branded by the world with reproach for this, but his course has been applauded.

With sentiments of great esteem

I am most truly yours

R. E. LEE

To me, Ulysses S. Grant has always been a gigantic figure. He is probably the greatest general this country has ever produced. Nowhere are his simplicity and greatness better shown than in his letters. For some reason they are not yet appreciated at their proper worth, but the time will come when their extraordinary merits will be recognized. They are written in a direct style, free of all elaboration, not unlike Lincoln's, but without his peculiar felicity of phrase. They are the words of a soldier, not a statesman. Two of the letters which I have are, it seems to me, without parallel for conciseness and beauty. The first, written at the beginning of the war, is to his father:—

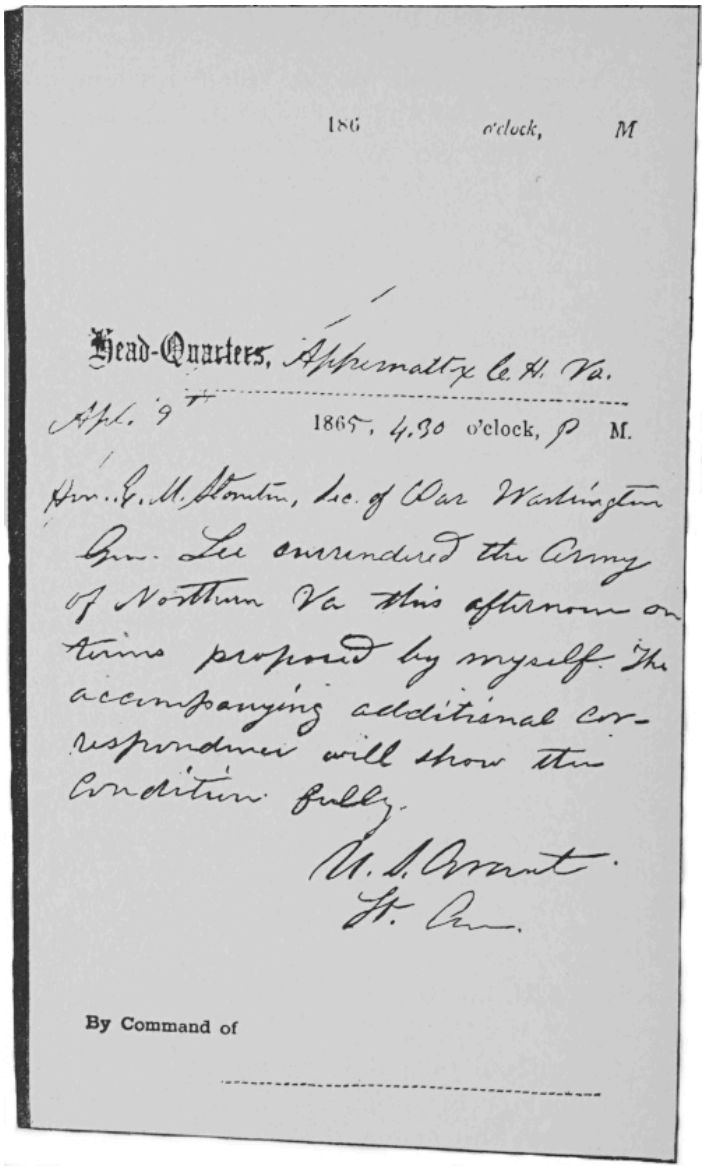
May 30th, 1861
GALENA, ILLINOIS

DEAR FATHER:—

I have now been home near a week, but return to Springfield today. I have tendered my services to the government and go today to make myself useful, if possible, from this until our national difficulties are ended. During the six days I have been at home, I have felt all the time as if a duty was being neglected that was paramount to any other duty I ever owed. I have every reason to be well satisfied with myself for the services already rendered but to stop now would not do.

Yours truly,

U. S. GRANT



186 o'clock, M

Head-Quarters, Appomattox C. H. Va.

Apl. 9th 1865, 4.30 o'clock, P M.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Sec. of War Washington

Gen. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Va this afternoon on terms proposed by myself. The accompanying additional correspondence will show the conditions fully.

U. S. Grant.
Lt. Gen.

By Command of

GRANT'S TELEGRAM TO STANTON ANNOUNCING THE

SURRENDER OF LEE

The second, at the war's end, is probably the finest single document in private hands to-day, as it is the original official telegram which ended the greatest conflict in American history. Why I was allowed to get this is one of the mysteries of collecting. It should not be in the hands of any one person, but ought to be in the safekeeping of the Government. It was written in obvious haste, in his own hand, at the moment General Lee surrendered, on a page in the notebook of Grant's orderly, General Badeau.

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
April 9th, 1865. 4.50 o'clock P. M.

HON. E. M. STANTON, SEC. OF WAR, WASHINGTON

Gen. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Va. this afternoon on terms proposed by myself. The accompanying additional correspondence will show the condition fully.

U. S. GRANT, LT. GEN.

The demand for things American is not a passing fancy. It will increase in the same way as a stone gathers moss. The prices now paid for early American furniture, pottery, glass, and pictures are but an indication of a movement yet in its infancy. Even collectors in England, such as that eminent enthusiast, Sir R. Leicester Harmsworth, Bart., are gathering objects of interest relating to this country. It is only meet and proper that Americans themselves should tenderly cherish the primal, honest, unpretentious things to which this country owes its greatness.

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Variations in spelling and hyphenation are retained.

Perceived typographical errors have been changed.

The index entry of p156 for Marlowe, Christopher, has been corrected to p146.

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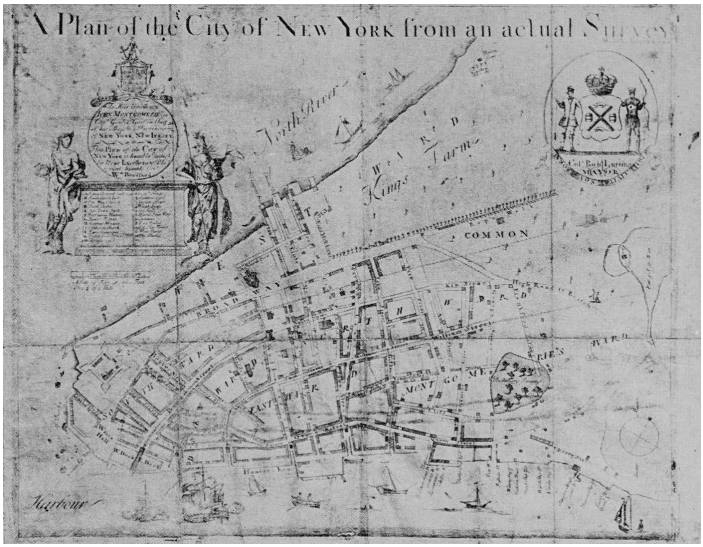
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