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EAST FRONT
SUNNYSIDE
THE HOME OF
WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE GATE

THE quaint historian, Diedrich Knickerbocker, says it was traditionary in his family, that when the worthy Master Hendrick Hudson first laid eyes upon the marvelous beauties of the great waters which now bear his honored name, astonishment and admiration wrung from his taciturn lips the remarkable exclamation, "See there!" That the susceptible navigator really did give expression to his unwonted emotions in these supreme terms, or at least "in words to that

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UP THE HUDSON, FROM ABOVE SUNNYSIDE.

effect," there is very little doubt; inasmuch as the echo thereof has never ceased to be heard among the hills, through all the two and a half centuries since gone by. Indeed, it has rung, and is ringing, more audibly and more eloquently every passing day; for enchanting as was the vision which dazzled the eyes of the drowsy skipper of the *Half-Moon*, when the prow of that adventurous craft was first turned toward the waters of the unknown river, yet from that hour to this, still has the wonder grown. The mountains yet stand in their ancient dignity and grandeur, the valleys and glades wear their old sweet smile, and the floods roll on in the same "simple, quiet, majestic, epic flow;" while about all there has gathered many an added grace.

Time has embellished the scene, until the silent river and the desert shore are now alike musical with the ceaseless hum of busy, happy life; and the rose blooms and breathes every where in the once trackless forests. Poetry and romance have bewitched it with the enchantment of song and story, and history with thrilling memories of great and gallant deeds; while at this day there is rapidly growing around it a newer and yet sweeter charm, in its close association with the actual life, the daily joys and sorrows of many of those gifted ones whose genius and works have endeared their names to our imaginations and hearts.

It is amidst these charmed scenes that our venerable ex-President Van Buren has exchanged the uneasy chair of state for the snug fireside seat in his peaceful retreat of Lindenwold. It was in a beautiful home, directly overlooking the Hudson, and commanding the grand panorama of the Catskills, that the lamented painter Cole lived, and labored, and died; and where these noble hills first bless the sight in the ascent of the river, are the broad lawns and slopes of Placentia, where that veteran pioneer in our literature, Paulding, is passing a kindly and genial age in elegant seclusion among kindred and friends. Not far below him is the pleasant abode of Morse, who has snatched the lightning to bear his name and fame through the world. Lossing, the amiable historian, is near by. Yet below, among the Highlands, a whole flock of singing birds have built their dainty nests. Here, in the village of Newburgh, lived the landscape gardener, Downing, to whose genius the river owes so much of its horticultural and architectural adornment. A little distance southward is his own favorite creation, the picturesque villa at Cedar Lawn, the residence of Headley. Poor Downing, who was an ardent lover of the Hudson, was gazing upon its moonlit charms with even more than his wonted delight, as he sat on the piazza here, on the very eve of the fatal day which gave him so early a grave beneath its waters. Between Cedar Lawn and Newburgh there is a charming retreat—once the home of the painter Durand—and in the immediate vicinage of the village, on the other side, Mr. H. K. Brown, the sculptor, is now setting up his household gods. His gifted brother of the chisel, Palmer, lives above at Albany. On his broad and elevated mountain terrace, guarded by the ever-watch-

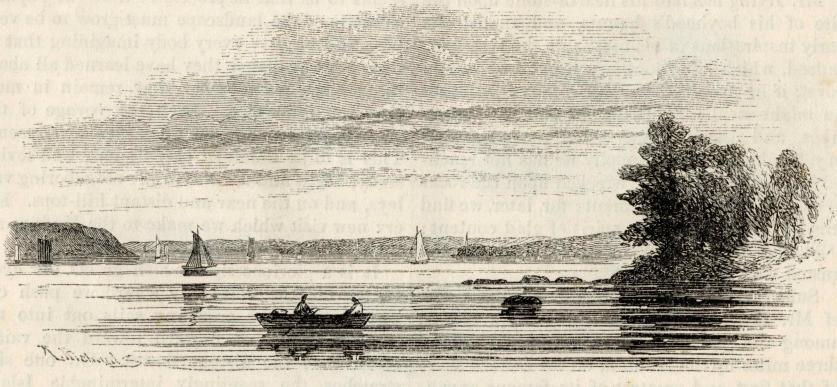


DOWN THE HUDSON, FROM ABOVE SUNNYSIDE.

ful Storm-king, and peering down, down upon crag and cascade, Willis holds intimate and loving companionship with Nature at Idlewild; while on the opposite shore, in the heart of the Highland group, is beautiful Undercliff, the abode of his friend Morris. The quiet studio of Weir stands upon the grand esplanade of West Point, and within the same evening shadow of the crumbling walls of old Fort Putnam is the island home of the fair sisters of the "Wide, Wide World." Hereabout, too, lives the polished scholar Gulian C. Verplanck. Yet further below, and looking far down upon the broad waters of the Tappan Sea, is Cedar-Hill Cottage, the savory *cusine* whence come the dainty viands of the *Knickerbocker* "Table;" while yet nearer to the city, Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowgrass live and recount the pleasant incidents of their simple lives. Lower yet, at Manhattanville, within the limits of the great city, but as yet unprofaned by its touch, is the revered resting-place of that devoted friend of the feathered world, Audubon.

Last, and perhaps the dearest to us of all these household names which come so gratefully to our remembrance, doubling the charms of the scene as we journey up the fair river, is that of Irving, who, of all our authors, here fittingly finds a home amidst the altars upon which he has devoutly offered up the love and worship of a long life, and upon which he has reverently placed many of the sweetest fruits of his genius.

The Hudson, he says, has ever been to him a river of delight; and here, after many wanderings, he has "set up his rest," thanking God that he was born upon its banks, and brought up in



POCANTICO POINT, FROM IRVINGTON.



THE PALISADES, FROM IRVINGTON.

that companionship with its glorious scenes, from which has come so much of what is best and most pleasant in his nature. It is, he says, in a manner his first and last love, and after all his seeming infidelities he has returned to it with a heart-felt preference over all the other rivers of the world.

Through a varied life passed in many climes, he has ever treasured the fondest and most enthusiastic remembrance of the scenes which brightened his dawning life, and which now shed a mellow radiance upon its decline; and eloquent expressions of this noble attachment are to be found every where throughout his works, though written afar off, now in one land, now in another.

Mr. Irving has laid his hearth-stone upon the site of his boyhood's haunts, and amidst the early inspirations of his muse; on the very spot, indeed, which long, long ago he said he should covet, if he ever wished "for a retreat, whither he might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remainder of a troubled life." Happily he has not reached his sighed-for haven, wrecked upon the rocks of trouble and disappointment; for, later, we find him writing thence in a spirit of glad content: "Though retired from the world, I am not disgusted with it."

Sunnyside, the apposite and familiar name of Mr. Irving's charming cottage, lies hidden among the jealous trees, some twenty-two or three miles up the Hudson, on the eastern shore of that first and greatest of its famous expansions, the Tappan Bay. It is a region scarcely less beautiful, though not so striking in its character as the more renowned Highlands. In historic story it is equally rich, and far more so in romantic association.

In an hour's ride, and at almost any hour, the railway will convey you from New York to the station at Irvington, a little walk below the Sunnyside Cottage; or to Tarrytown, the distance of an agreeable ride above. To see the setting of this sparkling little jewel of a home properly, though, you should make your approach by water, which is at all times, in the river travel, the most enjoyable way. One gets but a very inadequate glimpse of the beauties of the Hudson by the railroad route; indeed, it seems to us that in process of time the popular estimate of the landscape must grow to be very false and unjust; every body imagining that in their railway glance they have learned all about the subject, when really they remain in most profound ignorance. Even the voyage of the steamer fails to give one a fair idea of the scene. This is to be obtained only by long and loving study, afloat and ashore, in the neighboring valleys, and on the near and distant hill-tops. Every new visit which we make to the Hudson assures us that we have it yet to see.

It is a glorious sight which greets our eyes, as, leaving the noisy city wharf, we push our way through the crowding sails out into the broad waters, and onward toward the vailed meeting of the distant shores. On one side stretches the seemingly interminable Island

City, and on the other lie the suburban villages and villas of New Jersey, now crowning rocky heights, and now nestling by the river's narrow marge, until we reach those grand columnal walls, the famous Palisades, happily contrasted, in all the journey of twenty miles to the Tappan Bay, by the village and cottage-dotted slopes of the opposite shore. The Palisade rocks form the speciality of the landscape in this part of the Hudson; and so, still, in all the views looking south from the vicinage of Mr. Irving's dwelling. They are admirably seen from the shore at Irvington, and again, over a richly cultivated intervale, from the hill terraces above. Both situations give equally attractive glimpses of the river, overlooking that topographical will-o'-the-wisp Point-no-Point, the villages of Irvington and Tarrytown, and the mystic precincts of Sleepy Hollow. Three miles away across the wide bay are the busy little towns of Nyack and Piermont, with their background of bold hills, led by the brave Tower Rock. Piermont is the river terminus of the great Erie Railway, and it was in the sanguine expectation of advantage as a lighter to the freights of this road that the opposite village of Irvington, once Dearman, was laid out. It came to pass, however, that the Erie highway found an outlet elsewhere, and Irvington remains to this day but little more than it was at first—a capital beginning. The neighboring village of Tarrytown has drawn off all its springs of local business, insomuch that it possesses only one small store, and not even an apology for a hotel.

Tarrytown, in the reckoning of this fast age, is an ancient burgh, mossed and lichened with old traditions and historic reminiscences. Mr. Irving tells us, in his "Legend of Sleepy Hollow," not, he says, to vouch for the truth, but to be precise and authentic, "that there is a story that in the olden time its name was given to it by the good housewives of the adjacent country from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days."

Tarrytown, and all the country round, was a region of stirring incident and interest in the days of the Revolution. Then it was scarcely less bustling, both river and shore, than now, when it has become the environs of a metropolis and the crowded highway of commerce. It lay between the territory of the enemy, who occupied the city and island of New York, and the patriot forces encamped under the Highlands at Peekskill, and was the ill-fated Africa into which both parties carried the war, under the marauding banners of the chivalric Skinners and Cow Boys, claiming to serve respectively under *carte blanche* American and British commissions; and with such zeal, says Mr. Irving, with his characteristic pleasantry, "as often to make blunders, and to confound the property of friend and foe, neither of them, in the heat and hurry of a foray, having time to ascertain the politics of a horse or cow which they were driving off into captivity; or when wringing the neck of a rooster, to trouble themselves whether he crowed for Congress or King George."

Here, in the quiet bay, lay the armed ships of the foe, stealthily watching for an opportunity to slip through the guarded pass of the Highlands, and thus gaining possession of the river, to open a communication with their forces in Canada. With what anxious hearts must not Washington and his brave men, from their threatened position above, have watched the moves of this deadly game—so nearly lost through Arnold's treacherous play. It was in this immediate vicinity, the very spot now marked by a monument in the heart of Tarrytown, that the possession of the river was secured to the patriots by the timely arrest of Andrè. This region was the theatre also of the closing scene of the sad drama thus opened. Here, just across the river at old Tappantown, hidden from view by the intercepting hills of Piermont, the unfortunate soldier was tried and executed. The house from which he was led to the gallows is still in good condition, and is now a wayside inn, under the name of the "Old Stone House of '76." We visited it last summer on the occasion of a ball given in commemoration



POINT-NO-POINT, FROM IRVINGTON.



RIVER VISTAS, FROM THE LAWN.

of the "capture." Of the troubles and trials of the people of this portion of the river when the enemy's ships anchored in their bays, and of other revolutionary incidents of the vicinage, Mr. Irving gives us detailed and graphic accounts in the second volume of his "Life of Washington."

In "Wolfert's Roost" our author narrates an ancient legend of the Tappan Sea, so pleasant in itself, and so marked with the quiet humor with which he tells such a story, that we are tempted to repeat it. "Even the Tappan Sea," he says, "in front (of Sunnyside), was said to be haunted. Often in the still twilight of a summer evening, when the sea would be as glass, and the opposite hills would throw their purple shadows half across it, a low sound would be heard as of a steady vigorous pull of oars, though not a craft was to be descried. Some might have supposed that a boat was rowed along unseen under the deep shadows of the opposite shores; but the ancient traditionists of the neighborhood knew better. Some said it was one of the whale-boats of the old water-guard, sunk by the British ships during the war, but now permitted to haunt its old cruising grounds; but the prevalent opinion connected it with the awful fate of Rambout Van Dam, of graceless memory. He was a roystering Dutchman of Spiting Devil, who, in times long past, had navigated his boat alone one Saturday the whole length of the Tappan Sea, to attend a quilting frolic at Kakiat, on the western shore. Here he had danced and drunk until midnight, when he entered his boat to return home. He was warned that he was on the verge of Sunday morning; but he pulled off nevertheless, swearing he would not land until he reached Spiting Devil if it took him a month of Sundays. He was never seen afterwards; but may be heard plying his oars, as above mentioned, being the Flying Dutchman of the Tappan Sea, doomed to ply between Kakiat and Spiting Devil until the day of judgment."

With this peep at the surroundings, let us now look for the cottage itself; for it must, like its occupant, be looked for, lying, as it does, like "modest violet in hedge-row hid," and venturing to peep out from its timid seclusion only, as Mr. Irving himself describes it, "with half-shut eyes." When once congratulated upon the absolutism of his jealously-vailed domain, "Yes," said he, in his pleasant way, and straining his eyes to take in the whole wide compass, to wit, the little tree-encircled farm, "yes, I'm monarch of *all* I survey!"

The most imposing view (though, as we have intimated, it is not the cue of Sunnyside to be imposing) is that of the east side, seen in our initial picture, and approached by a shady lane, through the simple but characteristic gateway beneath. This is the only carriage access. The nearest way to reach it from the station at Irvington is on the railroad track, up to the foot of the lawn upon which the cottage stands. Among our pictures is a view of this approach, also of the little glimpse of the south end or porch, which it once afforded and still would, if a few obscuring boughs were to be trimmed away. We have preserved, too, a sketch of the rustic stile and path which leads from the railroad up the bank, and opens upon that part of the lawn where we picked up our picture of the north and west side of the cottage, and the group of vistas up, down, and across the river.

It is a sweet scene of rural simplicity and comfort which is disclosed to us by either approach; as the open sunlit lawn, so affectionately embraced by its protecting trees and shrubbery, which, though permitting little peeps here and there from within, deny all vagrant observation from without. One can scarcely believe himself as thickly surrounded as he really is here by crowding cottage and castle, so entire is the repose and seclusion of the spot. Years ago, when Mr. Irving first took up his abode at Sunnyside, he was all alone by himself, yet now every inch of the adjacent country is gardened, and lawned, and villaed, to the extreme of modern taste and wealth; yet all so charmingly under the rose, that you always stumble upon the evidences unexpectedly, as you dreamingly pursue the thicket-covered and brook-voiced wood-paths. It is like the discovering of birds'-nests amidst forest leaves. Seen from the opposite shore of the river, the whole hillside is glittering with sun-tipped roof and tower, but like the Seven Cities of the Enchanted Island, it all vanishes as you approach.

The cottage, with its crow-stepped gables and weathercocks overrun with honey-suckle and eglantine, with the rose-vine and the clinging ivy, is a wonderfully unique little edifice, totally unlike any thing else in our land, but always calling up our remembrances or our fancies of merrie rural England, with a hint here and there at its old Dutch leaven; in the quaint weathercocks, for instance, one of which actually veered, in good old days gone by, over the great Vander Heyden Palace in Albany, and another on the top of the Stadt House of New Amsterdam. A lady would be apt to call the Sunnyside cottage



NORTH AND WEST SIDE OF THE COTTAGE.



RAILWAY APPROACH TO SUNNYSIDE.

"the dearest, cosiest, cunningest, snuggest little nest in the world." Mr. Irving describes it as "a little old-fashioned stone mansion, all made up of gable-ends, and as full of angles and corners as an old cocked hat." "It is said, in fact," he continues, "to have been modeled after the cocked hat of Peter the Headstrong, as the Escurial was modeled after the gridiron of the blessed St. Lawrence."

A gentleman passing up the river before the trees had so entirely obliterated Sunnyside, was told by an intelligent cicerone that Mr. Irving had brought the pagodaish-looking tower, on the north end, from the ruins of the Alhambra. It is cruel, of course, to destroy poetic beliefs, but, to be conscientiously exact, we must, though it pains us, confess that there is reason to think it was conceived and executed by a Tarrytown carpenter, all unknown to fame.

As painters are given to using their wives for models, when available, so perhaps Sunnyside was made to "sit" for our author's pleasant picture of a home on the Hudson, in his story of "Mountjoy:" a home "full of nooks and crooks and chambers of all sorts and sizes; buried among willows, and elms, and cherry-trees, and surrounded with roses and hollyhocks; with honey-suckle and sweet-briar clambering about every window; a brood of hereditary pigeons sunning themselves upon the roof, with the nests of hereditary swallows and martins about the eaves and chimneys, and hereditary bees humming among the flowers." As in this romantic homestead, so in the dreamy atmosphere of Sunnyside, one might very easily invest all the scene, as did the imaginative Mountjoy, with an ideal character and sentiment; very naturally transform the humming-birds and the bees into tiny beings from fairy land, and see their dainty homes in the flower-cups, and long for Robin Goodfellow's power of transformation to be able to compress his form into utter littleness; to ride the bold dragon-fly, swing on the tall, bearded grass, follow the ant into his subterranean abode, or dive into the cavernous depths of the honey-suckle.

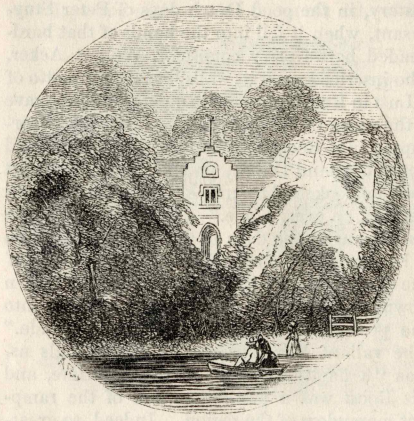
Before the intrusion of the railroad, which has profaned so much of the river shore, the quiet beach, with its little cove, into which a rural lane debouched, was one of the sweetest features of Sunnyside. This part of the domain is beautified by a sparkling spring, draped, like all the region round, as we shall see by-and-by, in the fairy web of romantic fable. "Geoffrey Crayon" tells us, in his patient researches into the early history of the neighborhood, that this storied spring was, according to some authorities, invested with rejuvenating powers by one of its aboriginal owners, who was a mighty chieftain and a most cunning medicine-man; while the old Dutch tradition says that it was smuggled over from Holland in a churn by Femmetie Van Blarcom, wife of Goosen Garret Van Blarcom. "She took it up," says the worthy Geoffrey, "by night, unknown to her husband, from beside their farm-house near Rotterdam; being sure she should find no water equal to it in the new country—and she was right!" You may at this day descend the gentle slope of the green lawn, step over the moss-grown wall, and pushing aside the protecting tendrils, yet imbibe the provident widow's Rotterdam nectar; but very likely, with a startling whew and whiz, there will rush past you engine and car, shak-

ing the hills around, and mortally terrifying all your growing fancies. The road passes so near to the cottage, though entirely hidden from view, as to drown the voices within. It must for a while have been a sore annoyance to the quiet-loving Prospero of Sunnyside. Happily he is a philosopher—and a good-humored one—as well as a dreaming romancer, and so has made the best of it, accepting the convenience of the thing as compensation for the poetry it has driven away. It serves him as the always needed moral of the skeleton at the feast, and calls him healthfully back to mortal mundane fact, when lawless fancy bears him too far away. In the best-tempered view of the matter, however, Poetry and Steam can not be made to harmonize. They will always give each other the cold shoulder.

The acres of Sunnyside, all told, are not many; and yet so varied is their surface, so richly wooded and flowered, and so full of elfish winding paths and grassy lanes, exploring hillsides and chasing merry brooks, that their numbers seem to be countless; a pleasant deception greatly aided by that agreeable community of feeling between Mr. Irving and his neighbors, which has so banished all dividing walls and fences, that while you think you are roaming over the grounds of one, you suddenly bring up among the flower-beds of another. Especially is this the case in respect to the beautiful seat of Mr. Moses H. Grinnell, nearest to Sunnyside on one hand, and the residence of Dr. M^c^Vickar on the other.

The woodland of Sunnyside is very happily varied, offering every variety of sylvan growth, beech, birch, willow, oak, locust, maple, elm, linden, pine, hemlock, and cedar; while on the the lawns are evergreen and flowering shrubs; and, trailing over the vagrant walls and fences, honey-suckle, rose, trumpet-flowers, and ivy. The latter plant, which is very abundant, is of the famous stock of Melrose Abbey. The garden, which is in keeping with its surroundings, is watched by a favorite retainer, for whom Mr. Irving has built a snug cottage, fronting the lawn in face of his own mansion. This little edifice is especially interesting, from its having been designed by Mr. Irving himself; his only venture, he once told us, as an architect. It brings to mind that only published example of his skill as a painter, the outline picture of the broad Stratford sexton in the "Sketch-Book," so boldly signed "Geoffrey Crayon, *del.*" He may have other conceptions in his portfolio, for he is an earnest lover of the pencil, which once disputed with the pen for the preference as the interpreter of his fancies. He came, indeed, long ago, very near being able to repeat the famous boast, "*Sono anch' pittore!*" This was during his first visit to Europe, when he fell in with Allston, as both were entering the earliest years of manhood. As they rambled together among the art-treasures of the Old World, the thought, he says, suddenly presented itself, "Why might not he remain there and turn painter?" He mentioned it to his friend, who caught at it with eagerness, and offered him all the assistance in his power, with enthusiastic predictions of success. "I promised myself," he says, "a world of enjoyment in the society of Allston, and other artists with whom he had made me acquainted, and pictured forth a scheme of life all tinted with the rainbow hues of youthful promise. My lot, however, was differently cast. Doubts and fears gradually cooled over my prospects; the rainbow tints faded away; I began to apprehend a sterile reality, so I gave up the transient but delightful prospect of remaining at Rome with Allston and turning painter." We can not regret this early disappointment when we think of the happy results of his devotion to the more successful rival art.

We have referred to the welcome presence at Sunnyside of the picturesque English-like lane. Among our pencil memoranda the reader will find two illustrations of this attractive feature, looking toward and from the little cove where lies the widow Femmetie's wizard spring. We have preserved, also, some passages in the merry



THE COTTAGE FROM THE RAILROAD.



PATH FROM THE RAILWAY.



THE RIVER, FROM THE LANE.

brooklet which trips so gayly through the woods to meet the river at their rendezvous by the cove. They will be easily found, with other scenes of the same type. Our picture of the wood-path stile, though not a literal portrait, is a fair example of one of the most charming features of the landscape.

Separated from the lawn around the cottage by the belt of trees in which stands the gardener's dwelling, is another open area occupied by a pretty lakelet "expansion" of the brook—an echo of the great bay beyond. The painter gives unity, and harmony, and force to his picture by distributing throughout the work its leading sentiment or story and its prevailing color; so, in the artistic composition of Sunnyside, its chief feature, the great "Mediterranean" of the river, as Mr. Irving calls the Tappan Bay, with its fleet of white sails thick as the passing clouds, is repeated by the little "Mediterranean" of the brooklet and its fleet of snowy ducks.

Before we relieve the reader's impatience to join the happy circle in-doors, let us glance briefly at the past history of the Sunnyside cottage. In his own serio-comico description of his home, Mr. Irving speaks of it as being "one of the oldest edifices, for its size, in the whole country;" and as, "though of small dimensions, yet, like many small people of mighty spirit, valuing itself greatly upon its antiquity." Pleasant are his fanciful pictures of the spot, in the old fabulous age of Indian rule, when "the unsophisticated inhabitants lived by hunting and fishing, occasionally recreating themselves with a little tomahawking and scalping." And diverting, too, is his story of the second epoch in its history, in the good Dutch days of Peter Stuyvesant, when it fell into the hands of that hard-headed hero's privy counselor, Wolfert Acker, who inscribed upon its walls his favorite motto of "Lust in Rust" (pleasure in quiet), and thus gave it the name of "Wolfert's Rust," afterward corrupted into Roost "by the uneducated who did not understand Dutch; probably from its quaint cock-loft look, and from its having a weather-cock perched on every gable." The next lustrum in its life was in the days of the Revolution, when it became the homestead of the great family of the Van Tassels, by whose name it was known down to the time when Mr. Irving came into the possession, and baptized it "Sunnyside." The valiant Van Tassel, Mr. Irving tells us, was "a flagitious rebel" in the war-time, and his Roost was a pestiferous den of the rampant marauders of the region. Indeed, so greatly annoyed were the enemy by the machina-

tions therein concocted, that they made it a special mark of their vengeance, and thumped it into a more fearful effigy of a cocked hat than ever.

It was at the Roost that Diedrich Knickerbocker, according to Mr. Irving's grave story, found the invaluable state papers rescued by the thoughtful and patriotic Wolfert from the archives of the conquered city of New Amsterdam, upon which his marvelous History of the Dutch Dynasty was built; and here he pursued his erudite researches in the very room which is now our author's sanctum.

Katrina, the mischievous heroine of the Legend of Sleepy Hollow, and the idol of the rival swains Ichabod Crane and Brom Bones, was of the gallant family of the Van Tassels, and the Roost is supposed to be the very house where was given that famous quilting frolic, in returning from which the ill-fated Ichabod was so relentlessly pursued by the rollicking Brom Bones, under the awful guise of the Headless Horseman. Here, in the little garden, grew, no doubt, the veritable pumpkin which so materially assisted in this tragic scene! The present aspect of the old church toward which Ichabod flew for sanctuary on the night of that fearful ride, is seen in one of our pictures.

The Roost wore its old Dutch aspect (of which there is a faithful drawing extant) when Mr. Irving purchased the domain. The alterations which he has since made were begun in 1835, and completed in the autumn of the following year, at which time he took possession.

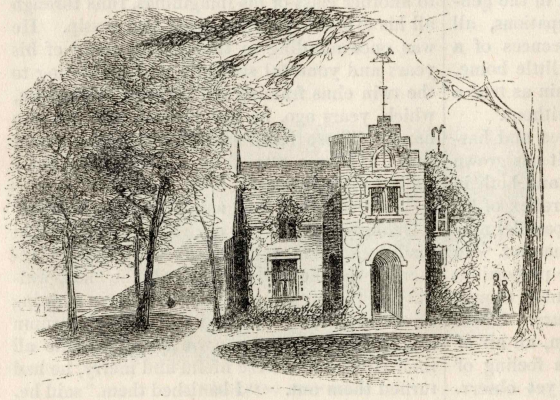
The air of graceful simplicity and cozy comfort which so strongly marks the exterior of the Sunnyside cottage, is felt quite as vividly within doors. It is cut up into just such odd, snug little apartments and boudoirs as the rambling, low-walled, peak-roofed, and gable-ended outside promises. The state entrance is by the porch at the south end; the household exit is from the drawing-room, across the piazza, to the lawn on the east or river front. It is on this side of the cottage that the family chat or read the news of the great world, away, on summer days and nights. On the north side of the



THE PORCH.

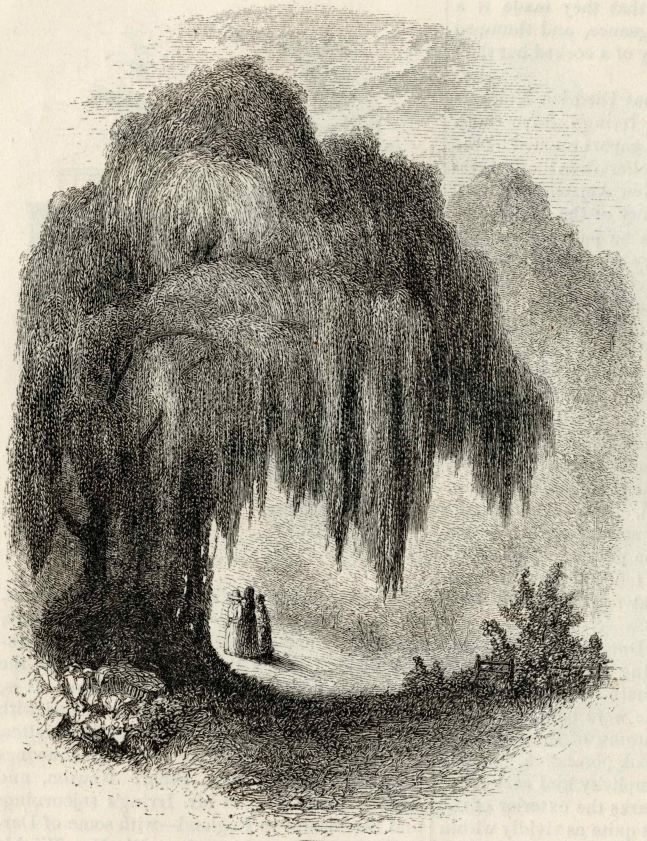
drawing-room there is a delightful little recess, forming a boudoir some six or eight feet square, the whole front of which is occupied by a window looking across the lawn, and through the up-river vista chronicled in our portfolio. It is, in summer, neatly matted and furnished with little stands of books, and flowers, and statuettes, and the low-toned walls are hung with drawings and sketches by Leslie, Stuart Newton, and others—mementoes of Mr. Irving's sojournings and friendships in England—with some of Darley's admirable etchings from Rip Van Winkle and the Legend of Sleepy Hollow. It is a little nook which you would set down at once as under special female guardianship. Perhaps it is the veritable chamber haunted by the sleepless ghost of the young lady who, the tradition says, "died somewhere in the Roost of love and green apples."

The graceful simplicity which marks the appointments of this Lilliputian sanctum is seen through all the furniture and adornments of the mansion. The spirit throughout is that of refinement without affectation, elegance without display, comfort without waste.



THE SOUTH END OF THE COTTAGE.

This winsome and delicate frame is in delightful keeping with the picture of social and domestic life within it; for, though a bachelor, Mr. Irving has not, as, in his sweet story of "The Wife," he tells us a single man is too apt to do, "run to waste and self-neglect; to fancy himself lonely and abandoned, and his heart to fall to ruin, like some deserted mansion, for want of an inhabitant." On the contrary, he has, happily,



VIEW IN THE LANE, EASTWARD.

made himself "monarch of a little world of love" in the "domestic endearments of the kindred he has gathered under his roof, and the reverent affection of the friends who share his generous hospitality."

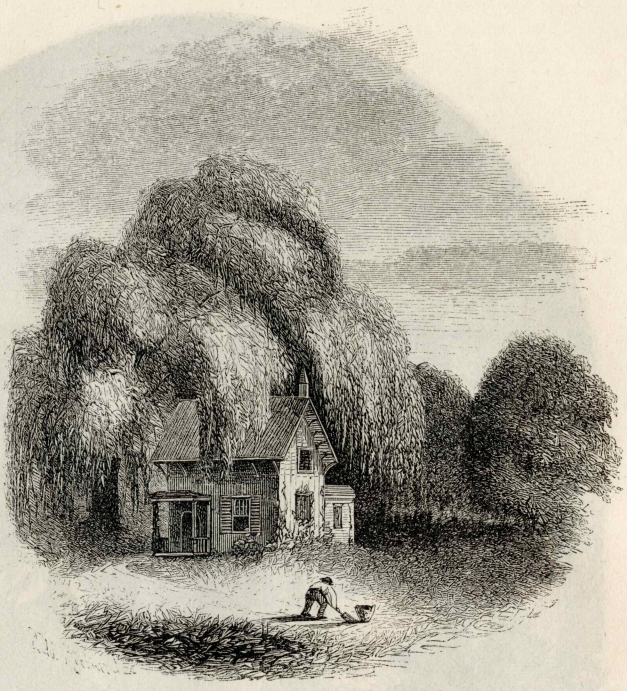
In the society of his nieces, who have long been to him as daughters, and of their father, his elder and only surviving brother; in the companionship of tried friends, and in the genial pleasures of his literary occupations, all sweetened by the grateful reminiscences of a long and eminently useful life, his little home, let us hope, is to his own heart within as true a "Sunnyside" as it is to the world without.

We have yet to instance beauties and harmonies in our charming picture. It has grown up out of our author's own heart, and both in unity and in detail it is a striking reflex of his character, and even, fanciful as the parallel may seem to be, of his physique and manner. In its very modest yet well-balanced proportions we see his figure of healthful manliness, though scarcely reaching to the middle stature. There is, too, about the odd little mansion, an air of quiet, true dignity, mingled with a feeling of sly mischievousness; unconscious, yet observant; dreaming, yet wide-awake; silent, yet full of thought, which always reminds us of certain peculiarities in his movement and bearing, and of an expression coming from his habit of inclining his head always a little to one side. There is about the cottage, as about himself, an air of reserve, without coldness, which, while cordially inviting approach, creates instinctively and willingly a respectful deference. The sweet, sunny sentiment of his home is ever seen in his genial smile, and his kindly and benevolent nature in its aspect of cheerfulness and benignity; while its odd twists, and turns, and unexpected vagaries speak of the quaint and whimsical, yet refined and delicate humors of his character.

Of Mr. Irving's fragrant penchant for dream-land, to which we owe his exquisite fairy tales of poetic superstition, romance, and chivalry, there is an early and amusingly extravagant hint of recognition in Disraeli's story of "Vivian Grey," where "Geoffrey Crayon" is rallied upon a mood so obliviously *distrait* as to be utterly unconscious of being transferred by his waggish friends from one party of pleasure to the revels of another. His humor, cheerful, gently enjoyable, and lasting, rather than bold, uproarious, and transient, giving the especial charm to another class of his imaginings, runs through all his every-day conversation and gossip. He was once alluding to the passing away of his years and youthful strength, when, pointing to the twin elms framing the up-river lawn scene, which, years ago, he had planted with his own hand, "Those trees," said he to us, with a quaint smile, "I once carried on my shoulder; but I could not do it now!"

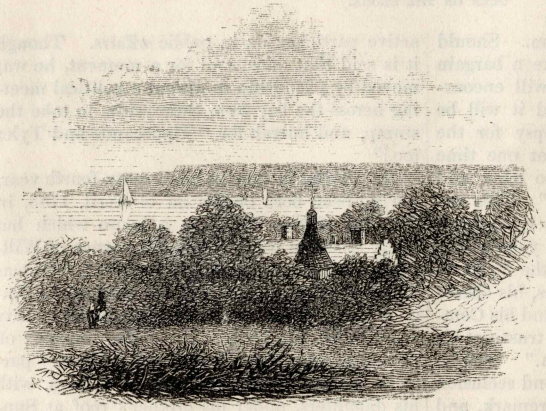
We recognized the genial, "golden-hearted" "Geoffrey Crayon" of our old stolen midnight readings, when, talking of his trees, he remarked that he once entertained the black-walnut and the butternut, but as they were whining misanthropes, who cowardly shed their autumn leaves and put on long wintry faces while all their companions were lifeful and merry, he had turned them out. "I banished them," said he, "as incorrigible *croakers*."

Of the goodness and loving-kindness of his heart we once heard a gentle anecdote, which we hope it will not be improper to repeat. Speaking of the growing deafness of his favorite brother, who has long been a member of his family circle at Sunnyside, "Alas!" said he, "he can not now hear half I say to him; but, thank God, we can yet *see* each other!"



THE GARDENER'S COTTAGE.

In his professional and private life Mr. Irving has ever been much swayed by a constitutional waywardness of character, now indolent and dreaming, now impulsive and active. "I have wandered," he says, in his character of "Geoffrey Crayon," "through different countries, and witnessed many of the shifting scenes of life. I can not say that I have studied them with the eye of a philosopher, but rather with the sauntering gaze with which humble lovers of the picturesque stroll from the window of one print-shop to another; caught sometimes by the delineations of beauty, sometimes by the distortions of caricature, and sometimes by the loveliness of landscape." In his preface to the last revised edition of the "Sketch-Book" there are some confessions of this humor in a correspondence, referring to the publication of that work, between himself and his friend Sir Walter Scott. He is in London, long years ago, asking Scott's counsel, which he intimates is especially desirable to him, since reverses of fortune have made the successful employment of his pen all-important. Scott, in reply, and acting upon his hint at necessities, generously proposes to him the office, in his gift, of editor of a new weekly periodical then about to be established in Edinburgh, with emoluments to the amount of five hundred pounds sterling per annum, and the prospect of further advantages. Mr. Irving, in declining this tempting gift, says: "I feel myself peculiarly unfitted for the situation offered to me, not merely by my political opinions, but by the very constitution and habits of my mind. My whole course of life has been desultory, and I am unfitted for any periodically recurring task, or any stipulated labor of body or mind. I have no command of my talents, such as they are, and have to watch the varyings of my mind as I would those of a weather-cock. Practice and training may bring me more into rule; but at present I am as useless for regular service as one of my own country Indians or a Don Cossack. I must, therefore, keep on pretty much as I have begun—writing when I can, not when I would. I shall occasionally shift my residence, and write whatever is suggested by objects before me, or whatever rises in my imagination; and hope to write better and more copiously by-and-by. I am playing the egotist; but I know no better way of answering your proposal than by showing what a very



OVERLOOKING SUNNYSIDE.



GLEN ON THE BROOK.

good-for-nothing kind of being I am. Should Mr. Constable feel inclined to make a bargain for the wares I have on hand, he will encourage me to further enterprise; and it will be something like trading with a gipsy for the fruits of his prowlings, who may at one time have nothing but a wooden bowl to offer, and at another time a silver tankard." This vagrancy of mind he seems to have conquered, at least for brave intervals, in later years; otherwise we should not now possess the fruits of those sustained and laborious efforts, his classic "Columbus," and his "Columbus and his Companions," and his latest, though we trust not his last work, the "Life of Washington." Still he is the same retiring lover of quiet and seclusion as of yore, shrinking from popular remark, and cherishing an especial distaste for all or any active participation in public affairs. Though it is said that once, and for a moment, he was moved by friendship to attend a political meeting across the bay from Sunnyside, to take the stump, and hurrah for "Tippecanoe and Tyler too!"

Mr. Irving is now in his seventy-fourth year, having been born on the 3d of April, 1783, in the city of New York, in a house which but lately stood on what is now the corner of William and Fulton streets. His father, who was a native of Scotland, and his mother, an English lady, had settled in America some twenty years before his birth. He is the youngest of five sons, who were all addicted to literary pursuits, excepting the one who now lives, with his daughters, under his brother's roof at Sunnyside.

William Irving, the eldest of the brothers, was a writer in the famous Salmagundi papers, to which he contributed most of the poetical pieces, the letters and verses "from the Mill of Pindar Cockloft." He was a member of Congress from 1813 to 1819, and died in 1821. "He was," say the Messrs. Duyckinck, in their admirable "Cyclopædia of American Literature," "a merchant at New York, with the character of a man of wit and refinement, who had added to a naturally genial temperament the extensive resources of observation, and a fresh experience of the world, gathered in his border life."

Peter Irving, the second brother, studied and graduated in medicine, but never practiced. He established and edited the *Morning Chronicle* newspaper; wrote a stirring tale of piratical adventure called "Giovanni Sfogarro," and assisted his brother in the conception of the comic "Knickerbocker History." He died in 1838.

Ebenezer Irving was once a merchant, but has long since retired from the cares of business, and is now one of the family at Sunnyside. His son, Theodore Irving, the author of "The Conquest of Florida," was formerly Professor of History and Belles Lettres in Geneva College, and afterward at the New York Free Academy. He is now an Episcopal clergyman in Western New York.

John T. Irving, the fourth brother, practiced the profession of the law so successfully that he rose to the bench, and presided over the Court of Common Pleas in New York for seventeen years. He died in 1838. His son, John Treat Irving, is well known as the "Quod" correspondent of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, in the columns of which were first published his successful novels, "The Attorney," and "Harry Harson, or the Benevolent Bachelor." He has written also a series of spirited "Indian Sketches"—reminiscences of an expedition to the Pawnee tribes.



THE BROOK, FROM THE LANE.

The intimation which this glance at the literary tastes of his brothers gives us of the atmosphere in which Mr. Irving's boyhood was passed will readily explain the early manifestation of his love of books; and the classic character of the volumes which then happily fell into his hands, reveals the secret of that pure, simple, old-fashioned art which, from his earliest efforts, has ever marked his style. His literary *début* was made in 1804, in a series of essays upon the manners, amusements, and fashions of the town and the time, under the signature of "Jonathan Oldstyle." They were contributed to his brother's paper, the *Morning Chronicle*, and were afterward issued, though without his approval, in pamphlet form.

His career had thus scarcely begun when his health failed, and, apprehensive of a pulmonary complaint, he thought it necessary to remove to the south of Europe. During two years' rambles amidst the natural beauties and the attractive associations of many lands—France, Italy, Sicily, Switzerland, Flanders, and Holland—he formed that attachment to the Old World which at another time led him from home through the long lapse of seventeen years, and again for an interval of four years. In these residences abroad he amassed the valuable material from which has grown so much of his literary labor—the Pictures and Tales of English Rural Life, in the "Sketch-Book" and "Bracebridge Hall;" the Memories of Abbotsford and of Newstead Abbey, in the "Crayon Miscellany;" the "Tales of a Traveler;" and the volumes relating to Columbus and to his Companions, to Granada and the Alhambra. Through these works are scattered, however, many of his choicest American themes; proving that, though far from, he was not unmindful of his native home.

Before going abroad he began the study of the law, which he resumed on his return to New York in 1806. He was the same year admitted to the bar, but with no sequence, as he never practiced the profession. We soon again find him in the literary ranks, contributing, with his brother William Irving, and his friend James K. Paulding, to the "Salmagundi," a semi-monthly journal of "whimwhams and opinions," humorous and satirical. In this work, which was continued during one year, the follies and fancies of the day were attacked with such amusing and effective skill that it was eagerly looked for at the time,

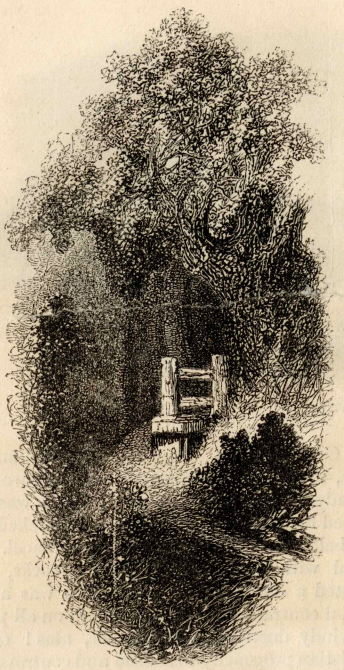


THE "LITTLE MEDITERRANEAN."

and is referred to with interest now. It was the most popular and successful American production of the day, and in its rich and racy humor gave clear promise of the genius afterward developed by its authors.

Mr. Irving's next appearance was two years later, in 1809, with that most unique and surprising volume in our literature, Diedrich Knickerbocker's "History of New York, from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty;" which at once elevated the author to the first rank among native writers. It opens with such profound Dogberry gravity that no wonder the unsophisticated reader, not forewarned, took it seriously at its word until its irresistible drollery grew too rampant to be longer masked. A story is told of a solemn judge who smuggled a copy of the work into court, and actually collapsed over it while upon the bench. In his preface to the revised edition of the work, the author explains all the circumstances under which it was written; how it was his first intention simply to parody a pretentious Guide-Book to the City, and "to burlesque the pedantic lore displayed in certain American works; how, as his material extended, he found that he should have enough to do, if he confined himself, as he did, to the period of the Dutch ascendency only; and how, in his droll pictures of our phlegmatic fathers, he was only in fun, and meant no offense to the general." When he found, he says, "how few of his fellow-citizens were aware that New York had ever been called New Amsterdam, or had ever heard of the names of its early Dutch governors, or cared a straw about their ancient Dutch progenitors," the matter broke upon him "as the poetic age of the city; poetic from its very obscurity; and open, like the early and obscure days of ancient Rome, to all the embellishments of heroic fiction." And so well has he availed himself of the "doubt and fable" of his theme, that he has created pictures and scenes which will forever remain pleasurably associated with all the local recollections of the Gothamites. So happily did he hit the popular fancy, that "Diedrich Knickerbocker" has almost become the tutelary saint of his native city; the people, generally, are Knickerbockers; they eat Knickerbocker ices and Knickerbocker oysters, travel in Knickerbocker coaches and Knickerbocker steamboats, read Knickerbocker magazines, pray in Knickerbocker halls, and, by-and-by, will, no doubt, go to Knickerbocker graves, in hope of a Knickerbocker heaven. The "good-humor and good fellowship" which the History inspires is made to sweeten many healthful pills of needed satire and sage instruction; for there are, and always will be, the world over, many dreaming Oloffes, and doubting Walters, and testy Williams, and headstrong Peters.

The Knickerbocker completed, we find the current of our author's literary life subsiding for a while, with here and there only a sparkling bubble; among them a Biographical Sketch of Campbell, written at the solicitation of the poet's brother—who was then residing in New York—to help the sale of an American edition of "O'Connor's Child," just received from Lon-

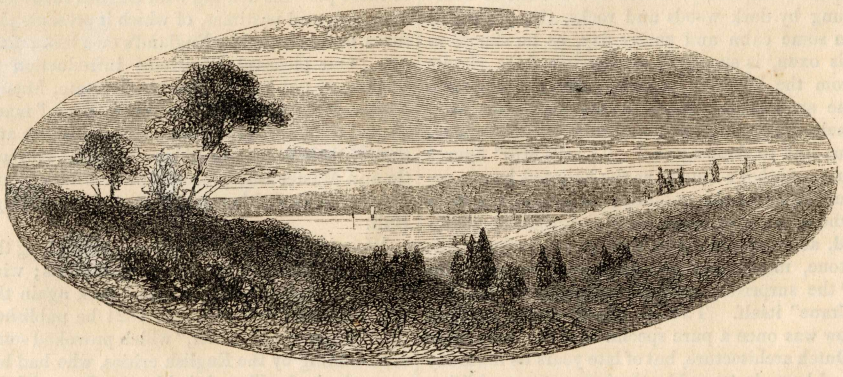


STILE IN THE WOODS.

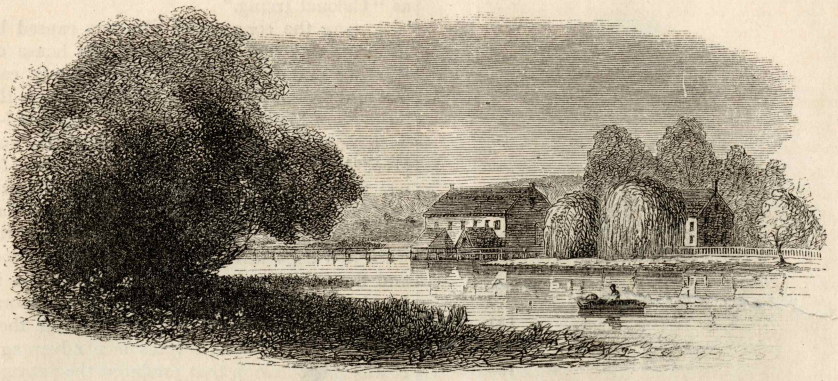
don. This paper led afterward to a pleasant acquaintance between the American and the English author.

In this interval of repose Mr. Irving entered into commercial life, as a silent partner of two of his brothers; but the second war with Great Britain soon following, he became infected with the popular enthusiasm, and assumed the editorship of the *Analectic Magazine*, in Philadelphia, for which he wrote a series of succinct and elegant biographies of the American Naval Captains. His patriotic feelings not finding sufficient vent through the quiet channel of the pen, he seized the sword, and donned the epaulet, in the character of aid-de-camp and military secretary to Governor Tompkins, of New York, and, for a while, was honorably known as "Colonel Irving."

Among the commercial disasters caused by the war, was the destruction of the house of "Irving and Brothers," which suddenly cast our author—who had gone to England on the business of his firm when peace was restored—once more upon his literary resources. He now prepared to bring out his "Sketch-Book," for which he had gathered already so much material in his experience and observation of English life and manners. Some portions of the work had been already published in America, and the apprehension of a piratical edition in London, where they had attracted very favorable notice, accelerated his measures for their issue by himself, and for his own advantage. It was this occasion that produced the passages of correspondence with Scott to which we have previously referred. Not finding such a publisher as he desired, he determined to print at his own cost and risk; but afterward, through the mediation of Sir Walter, Mr. Murray was induced to take hold of it; which he did with so much success that he gave the author two hundred pounds in addition to a like sum which he had already paid for the copyright. This charming budget of tales—the most read, perhaps, of all Mr. Irving's works—gives us every example of those excellences of theme, thought, treatment, and style which have made his fame. It touches all chords of feeling, from the most *riant* humor to the tenderest pathos. It is not to be wondered at that it instantly made its way both at home and abroad, containing, as it does, among its gems, those masterly expressions of gentle emotion, the "Wife" and the "Broken Heart," and the immortal legends of "Rip Van Winkle and "Sleepy Hollow." His peaceful little valley, made forever famous as the scene of the last-mentioned fancy, is one of the most attractive features of the landscape about the author's home. Apart from its romantic associations, it is a most interesting spot; one in which the visitor might easily dream dreams for himself, if they were not already served to his hand. In our explorations of its quiet lawns and glens we were surprised to note the



THE HUDSON, FROM SLEEPY HOLLOW.



"PHILIPSENS' CASTLE."

literalness with which Mr. Irving had sketched its features. In the close portraiture we could scarce persuade ourself that the lank Ichabod and his mischievous urchins, the malicious Brom Bones and the blooming Katrina, were only phantasies of the brain; for there, before our very eyes, lay the brook and the bridge over which old Gunpowder bore his terrified master on that eventful night when he was so relentlessly pursued by the ghostly Hessian; and yonder, on the hill, stood the old church toward which he fled for sanctuary. There, too, was the homestead, or "castle," of the once mighty family of the Philipsens, its ancient walls and chimneys reflected in the bright waters of the Pocantico; and hidden away in one of the most secluded haunts of the same lovely stream, far up in the mysterious valley, we heard the clank of the wheel of "Carl's Mill."

Besides the descriptions of the Hollow which are given in the legend, we find in the opening chapter of "Wolfert's Roost" much poetic history. There, Mr. Irving tells us how the region won its somnolent name from a charm laid by a rival chieftain upon its ancient people—a charm so potent, that they sleep among the rocks and recesses to this day, with their bows and arrows beside them. "Often," he says, "in secluded parts of the valley, where the stream is overhung by dark woods and rocks, the plowman, on some calm and sunny day, as he shouts to his oxen, is surprised at hearing faint shouts from the hillsides in reply; being, it is said, the spell-bound warriors, who half start from their rocky couches, and grasp their weapons, but sink to sleep again." "Carl's Mill" figures in our author's fancies as the haunted house, occupied by an old, goblinish-looking negro, from whom, he says, Diedrich Knickerbocker gleaned, as he chatted with him on the broken millstone, many valuable facts, and among them "the surprising though true story of Ichabod Crane" itself. The old church of Sleepy Hollow was once a pure specimen of the good, solid Dutch architecture, but of late years its harmony had been destroyed by the incongruous addition of a Greek portico. In speaking of this ancient relic, in the droll chapters from which we have already quoted, Mr. Irving says that it was once graced by two weather-cocks, "one perched over the belfry and the other over the chancel. As usual with ecclesiastical weather-cocks, each pointed a different way, and there was a perpetual contradiction between them on all points of windy doctrine; emblematic, alas! of the Christian propensity to schism and controversy." "The drowsy influence, too, of Sleepy Hollow," he adds, "was apt to breathe into the sacred edifice; and now and then an elder might be seen with his handkerchief over his face to keep off the flies, and apparently listening to the dominie, but really sunk into a summer slumber, lulled by the sultry notes of the locusts from the neighboring trees."

But lest we too catch "the witching" influence of the air, which Mr. Irving assures us still affects all who enter the wizard valley, we will hasten to make our way out, and resume the record of our author's literary achievements, which our long digression has so irrelevantly interrupted.

Mr. Irving's next volumes, written in Paris, were those of "Bracebridge Hall." This work is a continuation of the "Sketch-Book," especially of those portions dealing with English rustic life, manners, and pastimes, of which it presents pictures never rivaled by England's own best painters. Our pleasant Christmas introduction to the hearty old Squire and his factotum, Master Simon, in the pages of the "Sketch-Book," made us glad to improve their genial acquaintance and that of their worthy neighbors, General Harbottle and Master Ready Money Jack Tibbetts, under the frank and hospitable roof of Bracebridge Hall.

We next find Mr. Irving wandering along the Rhine, and among the German capitals; wintering in Dresden in 1822, and back again the following year to Paris. In 1824 he published the "Tales of a Traveler," which provoked some fault-finding by the English critics, who had become tired of calling Aristides the Just. These

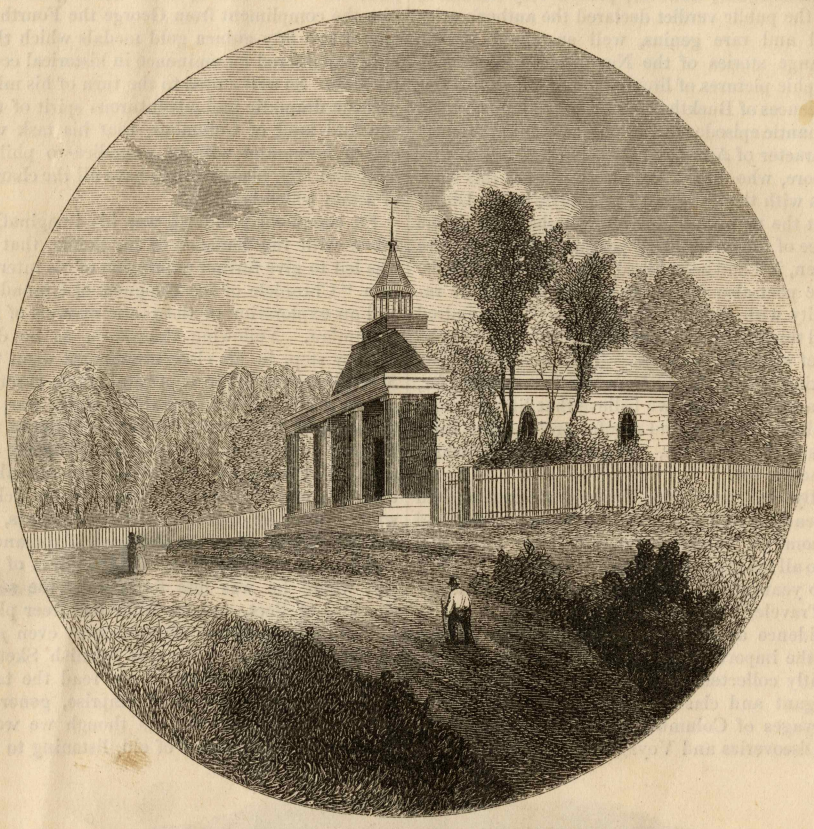
envious shafts, however, proved very harmless, for the public verdict declared the author's original and rare genius, well sustained in the strange stories of the Nervous Gentleman, in graphic pictures of literary life found in the Experiences of Buckthorne and his Friends, in the romantic episodes in Italian life, and in the novel character of American tradition and adventure. Moore, who during the preparation of this work was with the author in Paris, says, in his Diary, that the publisher, Murray, purchased it at the price of fifteen hundred pounds, and would have given, if it had been asked, two thousand pounds. The poet also expresses his surprise at the rapidity with which it was written—one hundred and thirty printed pages having been made in the brief space of ten days. This must have been during one of Mr. Irving's happiest moods; for, as a general thing, we believe that literary composition is a slow and careful process with him. His is the laborious, though unseen art, which conceals art.

By this time Mr. Irving's reputation had spread far and wide, and his works, which had become in universal demand, were translated into all the languages of the Continent. In 1826, two years after the appearance of the "Tales of a Traveler," he went to Spain, and took up his residence at Madrid. Here, availing himself of the important series of documents then recently collected by Navarrete, he prepared his elegant and classic "History of the Life and Voyages of Columbus," and afterward of the "Discoveries and Voyages of Columbus's Companions." The first of these works gained for him the compliment from George the Fourth of one of two fifty-guinea gold medals which that king had offered for eminence in historical composition. So well suited to the turn of his mind was the dramatic and adventurous spirit of the age and land of Columbus, that his task was one of love; and without prejudice to philosophy and fact, his narratives have all the charms of a tale which is told.

So completely, indeed, was his imagination taken with the romance of his theme, that he was led to give further expression of his interest in a "Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada," and an exploration of the poetic marvels of the Alhambra. Following Columbus, as he did, step by step, in his close attendance upon the Spanish monarchs, in court and camp, through all the changing scenes of the Moorish war, up to the final catastrophe before the walls of the Moslem capital, he had, like him, become almost an eye-witness of the scenes he was called upon to narrate. Thus, in the "Chronicle," while truthfully detailing historical events, he has yet draped all in the airy garb of romance; and from the "Alhambra," that fountain of poesy, where he was less fettered by the sober shackles of Fact, and his fancy had freer play, he has drawn wells of winsome story even *plus Arabe qu'en Arabie*. In this Spanish Sketch-Book, as it has been called, we read the tales of dauntless chivalry, bold emprise, generous valor, and devoted love, as though we were, like the poetic Moslems of old, listening to the



DISTANT VIEW OF THE OLD CHURCH IN SLEEPY HOLLOW.



NEAR VIEW OF THE OLD CHURCH IN SLEEPY HOLLOW.

mingled speech of mystic bard and falling fountain.

In 1829 Mr. Irving was awakened from his dreams in the ruined halls of the Alhambra, where he had passed three happy months, by a call to the post of Secretary of Legation to the American embassy in London. This unsolicited office he filled until the Minister, Mr. M'Lane, returned home, when he was left for a while as *Chargé d'Affaires*. In his diplomatic character he officiated at the coronation of William the Fourth, and he received from that monarch and the royal family, as well as from various distinguished personages of the court, many marks of high esteem.

At this time, too, the English University at Oxford conferred upon him, in compliment to his genius, the honorary degree of LL.D. This distinction he received in person, and amidst the cordial acclamations of the students and graduates, and of a brilliant and learned assemblage.

In 1832 he returned home from his second residence in Europe, which had lasted seventeen years. The fame which he had acquired in this long interval won him the heartiest reception from his countrymen. The public enthusiasm was indeed so great, that, had it so pleased him, his tour through his native land, which soon followed, might have been one continued and most sincere ovation. From this display, however, he naturally shrunk, declining all invitations save one to a public dinner in his own city of New York.

From the journeys in the United States which Mr. Irving made soon after his return home, and especially from his rambles over the prairies and wildernesses of the Far West, have grown his "Tour on the Prairies," embodied in the revised and uniform edition of his works recently published by Putnam; in the "Crayon Miscellany," his "Adventures of Captain Bonneville," and the "Astoria" narrative. In these works, all marked by the author's habitual elegance and grace of style, we have striking pictures of the wild trapper-life and adventure of our Rocky Mountain and Pacific regions.

In 1837 and 1840 Mr. Irving contributed, at intervals, to the columns of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*. Among these papers are, "The Early Experiences of Ralph Ringwood," and "Mountjoy; a Passage in the Life of a Castle-builder," which, with other stray waifs from the