BENJ. RICHARDSON'S CAREER

THE HISTORY OF ONE OF THE CITY'S QUAINTEST CHARACTERS.

Acquiring Millions Upon Humble Beginnings—What an Advertisement in The Sun Led to—The Unique Dwelling in Harlem.

A SUN reporter was passing through 125th street recently, when, on the north side of the street, between Fourth and Lexington avenues, he saw a three-story frame house which arrested his attention. There was nothing remarkable about the lower part of the house, but on the roof were two little additions looking like dormer windows, from each of which a wooden cannon protruded. "Fort Sumter" was written in large letters on one of the additions and "Fort Donaldson" on the other. "Lincoln Cottage" was painted on a board nailed to a tree in front of the house. A strip of black tin on the front door bore in gold letters the name of the inmate, "Captain Benjamin Richardson." The reporter gave a pull at the bell, and was ushered into the front room on the ground floor. It was a queer-looking place. The walls were covered with old prints, large oil portraits, rusty swords, stuffed monkeys and birds, a flag with George Washington's picture on it, and Indian relics. A table in the middle of the room was strewn with letters and old yellow newspapers. A hale-looking man, seemingly about sixty-eight, with a long, flowing beard, reaching almost to his knees, was propped up in a large bed in the back of the room, talking in a sonorous voice with a younger man about rents and real estate, mentioning large amounts of profit and loss with as much indifference as though they were but so many pennies. Another man was asleep on a sofa near the window. The reporter's request to see the premises was readily granted. The second floor he found converted into a rural grotto. A substantial structure of twigs and branches covered part of an extension. Growing plants, vases with creepers and smilax, bushes, statuary, stuffed animals, and gravel walks gave it the appearance of a garden in summer.

"That's where I sit during the hot season," said Capt. Richardson afterward. "I enjoy working in the garden when I'm not laid up with rheumatism. I'm pretty hale and hearty as a rule, and it isn't often I have to complain of sickness. You see, I've done a good deal o' gardening during my life for a living."

He stopped a moment to look over a couple of checks. As he was lying in bed he used a plain board bench that passed over his legs as a table. A large ball was on one corner of it and it was littered with checks, wallets, letters, and rent rolls. The reporter thought such evidences of wealth somewhat inconsistent with the humble pursuits of gardening, and asked a few questions which finally drew from Capt. Richardson the following remarkable story:

"I was born in 1813, in a thatched cottage close to Hippy's Mill, in Coleford, Somersetshire, England. I was about 6 years old when I was sent to Mr. Westfield's school, and I hadn't been there very long when I tried to blow up the school with gunpowder, just to see how Guy Fawkes intended to effect his plot against the Parliament House. When I was 10 years old my father got employment as foreman over the work of building rockeries, ponds, and other rural embellishments at Lady Fussell's place in Chantry, and we removed to Deadwoman, near Ivy. I was a sort of errand boy to my father, and carried beer and grub for the men. Lady Fussell saw me one day, and somehow or other took a fancy to me. She got Mr. Fussell to engage me to black his boots, groom his ponies, clean his fishing bait, and run messages. I saved up a little money, which I thought quite a fortune then, but I lent it to some one, and it was never returned. I had also done some farm work when quite small, picking potatoes and the like, and as soon as I tired of Chantry I went to Adam More's farm.

"One day when I was 18 years old I heard from my father that George Tucker, a brewer and a Methodist minister, had returned from foreign parts. I went to see him at once, and in spite of his dissuasions I soon made up my mind that America was the place for me to try my luck in. I learned from him that he had landed at Bristol in the Cambridge, and without saying anything to my family I set out for Bristol on foot. I found the ship, made arrangements for my passage, lived on dry bread so as not to spend an unnecessary penny, and walked back to Coleford. I had never seen a ship when I first saw the Cambridge. I expected to find a sort of Noah's ark. The new sights there made me all the more anxious to get away from home, and I tell you I went for the old man like a good one. I had tough work getting his consent, but he came round all right in the end. I packed my clothes in an old carpet bag, carried them to Bristol for me, and in a few days I was on my way to this country. While we were riding at anchor in the King's Roads our cabin boy ran away, and I took his place.

"I remember very well that when we got to New York, just as we were in dock, some one stepped up to the vessel's side and sang out that he was looking for a young Englishman to wait on the table. I asked the Captain of the Cambridge if I could take the job, and with his consent I engaged myself as waiter to Mrs. Winthrop, daughter of Peter G. Stuyvesant and wife of Mr. Fish, the mother of Hamilton Fish, who is about my age. Mrs. Winthrop used to employ me to carry messages to her brother and sister and friends, and to go down to the docks when the vessels landed to buy foreign birds and flowers and the like. She then lived in Stuyvesant street, not far from St. Mark's Church. I knew how to make myself pretty handy about the house, for when I was a boy my stepmother, who had a lot of children to tend, used to make me assist her at home in all sorts of ways. I had an inventive mind too, I used to read the newspapers in the evenings after work, and Mr. Winthrop was always glad to answer my questions about strange places and names. I remember that at that time the ground where Tompkins square now is was covered with water and boats used to ring the ebb we used to catch horse mackerel there.

"In 1831 I began to tire of my position at the Winthrops', and as I knew something about mason work, having at times assisted my father in constructing rural rockeries and the like in Chantry, I commenced on my own hook laying under Edward Black. My first job was in Bleecker street, right opposite the De Pau row. I was then courting Jane, the cook at Winthrop's, and I could look clear across the field to Winthrop's house and make signs to her. I married her the next year. There she's yonder," pointing to a large oil portrait of a comely young woman.

"Soon afterward I mashed my finger, and, as the Winthrops wanted me back, I returned. I stayed there about a year, and then I went as gardener to Hamilton Fish's, where I worked a short time. Then I felt like going to sea again; so I sailed as steward for a number of years in several vessels from American ports. The next business I tried my hand at was peddling tea, the idea being then new and my own. One Sunday I was walking with a friend in Bleecker street, joining the crowd which had gathered to see the Great Western come into port for the first time. My friend handed me a copy of THE SUN, and, glancing over it, I saw an advertisement stating that some one was wanted to carry tea. I went the next day to the place, but they had already engaged another. It struck me then that with some money I had saved up I might buy a few pounds of tea and peddle it around to some customers of my wife, who then took in washing. Folks seemed kind of set back at first at this new way of mixing and selling tea, but they took to it after a while, and soon my business increased so that I hired a little two-window room, corner of Ninth street and Third avenue, and started a tea store there. Everybody in those days was slow and old fogyish. The grocers, painters, farmers and mechanics were all of them old fogies, and I believe the reason I got along so fast was because I wasn't an old fogy.

"At first I used to carry the packages to my customers myself, but my business increased so that I had to get a horse and cart. I was cheated on the horse, and I'm mightily tickled that the fellow who cheated me was afterward sentenced for burglary, I think, to ten years in the State prison. Soon I had to take the whole building for my custom was constantly growing. I bought the building and still own it, unfortunately, my sense of smell gave out, and as this is quite necessary to a skillful tea taster, I gave up the business and started a hardware and dry goods store on Eighth avenue and Forty-third street, which I also still own. I made enough money to buy considerable property here, which was very cheap then, and from which I have made a great deal of money. I can remember the time when lots on what is now the most fashionable part of Fifth avenue sold for $20 a piece, and you got lots on Eighth avenue for $12.

"In 1849 I conceived the plan of establishing a branch of my business in California. One emigrant party had already gone by the overland route to San Francisco, and another of fifty men was just forming. Of this second party I took command, leading it by way of Mexico. We were fifty of us all told, armed to the teeth, for it was dangerous travelling through Mexico so soon after the war. The Mexicans were down on us and never spoke of us otherwise than as damned Americanos. I guess we were about four months altogether getting to San Francisco, and when we got there we found nothing but tents and a few rickety wooden taverns and stores. We pitched our tents in Happy Valley, now one of the principal business streets of San Francisco. I own the property where I pitched my tent, and a large bank building stands on it now.

"My idea was to run a vessel with provisions up to Sacramento, which was then about the same kind of a place as San Francisco, and supply the miners there. I bought a ship called the General Sutter, the only vessel on the Sacramento in the old General's day. I went into partnership with M. R. Roberts, whom I had known in New York, and whom I stumbled against in the auction room in San Francisco when the General Sutter was sold. Strange to say, many years afterward I again took him off his legs by coming suddenly on him in Paris."

"After I had plied trade in Sacramento a while, I started a store in Stockton, which was then the headquarters for the neighboring mining districts. I stayed in California until 1853, when one of my sons was shot, and I took his body back to New York. I always had a mania for real estate, and by the time I returned to New York I had bought a great deal of property in San Francisco, and was already worth about $100,000. To give you an idea of how large the percentage of my profits on my San Francisco property has been, I can tell you that I sold for $80,000 property for which I paid but $1,000. I didn't go back to California at once, but travelled first in England and the Continent, to get some idea how things looked over there. In 1854 I was in San Francisco again, where I remained until 1858. In 1856 I was on the Vigilance Committee, and when Casey and Carey were taken from jail, I carried despatches between Fort Gunnybags and the vigilants. By that time I was worth nearly a million. Then I became temporarily blind from rheumatism, and I went to Bath, England, for treatment. I remained abroad until 1868.

"My travels have been very extensive. Besides England and Germany, I've been through France, Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, Spain, Portugal, Malta, and the Ionian Islands. From there I went to Egypt, climbed the biggest Pyramid, crossed the Red Sea to Arabia and went through the desert to Palestine, bathing in the Dead Sea and in the Jordan. From there I went through Turkey, Austria, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, and back again to America. Since my return I have divided most of my time between New York and San Francisco. My real estate has increased in value; I am interested in many railroads and mines, and I'm told that I'm worth three or four millions, though I have lost about a million in railroad transactions within the last few years. I'm going to make it up again, though, pretty soon. I can't tell you the exact amount of my property, because I don't keep my accounts. My little grandchild Ella does that, and, if she were here, she could tell you. She's only 14 years old, but she writes a good hand, and she's bright as a button.

"I was a delegate from California to the Chicago Convention which first nominated Grant. There I met Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. I had a letter to her, and she did not know her so well that she used to let me take poor little Taddy Lincoln all around with me. She gave me several articles which belonged to her husband, among them the walking stick, pocket handkerchief, and white gloves you see on the wall yonder. You will also find a paper in her handwriting presenting them to me. I also own a carriage which belonged to George Washington, the only one in this country. He drove in it when he made his Presidential tour from Mount Vernon through the Southern States. It's in the Centennial building at Philadelphia now. If we have the World's Fair here, I'm going to drive from Philadelphia to the Fair and get some militia regiments to meet me.

"Morse, the inventor, was my partner in an Arizona mine. I have the type he used when showing Congress that he could telegraph from Washington to Baltimore, before he asked for $30,000 to perfect his invention. All these stuffed birds and odd things you see about the house I got on my travels. I have the roof spiked with cannon, and military names are painted on it, because I admire the heroes of our war for the Union."

When the reporter asked what he did for his rheumatism, he replied: "I just lie here till it goes away. I never let a doctor come near me." When asked if he used stimulants, he said that he drank rum and water with nearly every meal.

Friends of the hearty old Captain say he is thoroughly democratic and unaffected, and is always as frank and communicative on the occasion of this visit. He is proud of his humble origin. Besides his real estate in New York, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City, he owns large tracts of land in this State, Colorado, and California, an immense quarry near St. Louis, and controlling shares of the Union Pacific and other Western railroads. It is said that one of his pet projects is to some day open a free museum, and he contemplates endowing a large foundling asylum. He has just purchased a large house at King's Bridge, and contemplates moving there soon.

AFTER THE SHOW.

The Hon. John S. Wise's Hobby—Information About Dogs and Birds.

The dinner to which the Westminster Kennel Club and their guests sat down in the early hours of yesterday morning, in the Brunswick, at the termination of their fifth annual bench show of dogs, was very enjoyable. The drawing of corks drew forth much information as well as jollity.

The Hon. John S. Wise of Virginia, in reply to a toast proposed by Chairman H. Walter Webb, said, in substance, that mingling with sportsmen from all sections did away with many prejudices. Some of the happiest associations of his life had been with men who loved dogs. They had many fine dogs in Virginia, from the oldest strains down to the fleiders presented to him by his friend, Mr. Godeffroy, who sat opposite to him. He had competed with his dogs in the present show, but had failed to gain a prize. While patriotism was the greatest of virtues, it might be carried too far in breeding red, white, and blue in the flags of setters, as Mr. Godeffroy had succeeded in doing. But he had great hopes for those dogs. They were pets of himself, his family, and servants. The dogs could stand anything. He had known the servants to administer spoonfuls of powerful medicine, of which three drops was considered a dose, and the dogs would come out of the ordeal with brighter colors every time. Occasionally a man would ask him why he fooled so much time away with dogs. He would make no reply to such a man, for he knew him to be a rascal. Every man had a hobby, or ought to have one. He for one, he said, had his hobby with dogs. He was proud to see that a more catholic feeling was beginning to pervade in glorious old Virginia. If he had the power he would batter down the walls of prejudice around the State.

From remarks made by representatives of the West and others it would appear that our game birds are fast dying out, and that while we are improving the breed of field dogs there would soon be nothing for them to hunt.

Mr. John E. I. Granger had seen prairie chickens offered for two shillings a pair in Chicago during some seasons here. Wild duck and partridge at equally low figures. Five hundred thousand dollars' worth of American game birds were exported to Europe during 1880.

Mr. J. O. Donner thought American birds should be protected during severe winters. Birds of prey could be trapped and killed in a manner that might afford sport to the gunner. One plan they adopted successfully in Germany was to procure an owl, or any sort of night bird, and fasten it on the top of a high post or stump. By having a hollow space beneath the bird a contrivance might be made to poke a stick up occasionally to make it flap its wings and show signs of life. If there was a hawk or other bird of prey at a far greater distance than the human eye could reach, anywhere, in fact, within the radius of ten miles, the chirping of the owl would attract the destroyer would go for that elevated owl would cause the hidden hunter to smile and fire. Mr. Donner had brought down many a feathered pirate in this manner. It was a sure thing on crows.

Mr. S. T. Hammond of Springfield, Mass., had tested Mr. Donner's plan with a small owl. The result was that in a short time he peppered three crows.

THE LAST OF THE THEATRE COMIQUE.

Where a Song Made a Fortune—Target Companies Driven from the Streets.

The final performance in the Theatre Comique was given last evening, when "Mulligan's Silver Wedding" was acted by Harrigan & Hart's company. The building is to be torn down, to make a site for stores. It was originally a Jewish synagogue, and was first used for amusement purposes in 1862, by Wood's Minstrels. In 1865 it became Wood's Theatre, under the management of George Wood. The minstrel manager had been Henry Wood. Sensational dramas and burlesques were principally given, and the venture was short and disastrous. One of the stars of the single season was Charles M. Barras, who had at yet made a fortune as author of "The Black Crook." At the winding season of variety shows, when the name was changed to Wood's Theatre Comique, was also a financial failure. As the Thalia Theatre it ended in 1867 with the German drama, J. W. Lingard, the Bowery manager, tried variety and drama in it with bad results. The first touch of good luck came in 1868, when Lingard made a bit there with his sketches. Lingard became the manager, though the lessees were Sandy Spencer and Charles White. The entertainments consisted of farces, burlesques, songs, dances, and the Lingard sketches. Among those who performed these things were McKee Rankin, John T. Raymond, Joseph K. Emmet, and George C. Bourcicault. The prosperity did not last, and the second season closed disastrously soon after it began. Robert W. Butler was the next lessee. He gave a regular variety show, and made a great deal of money, but in 1871 he opened the Union Square Theatre, in conjunction with Sheridan Shook and Josh Hart. His successor at the Comique, made a fortune, which he also took up town, in 1875, and lost in the Eagle Theatre. Edward Harrigan and Tony Hart took possession in 1876, and have, it is said, cleared $200,000.

It is the opinion of theatrical experts that Harrigan & Hart's fortune was made by a single song. They were song and dance performers in variety shows previous to their venture in management, and had gained no more popularity than many others in the same line. The Irish song, "Mulligan Guard," became immensely popular during the interval since Josh Hart's retirement, and it seemed sure that the new firm of young men would fail. The leader of the orchestra was David Braham, the father-in-law of Harrigan. He composed the music of "The Mulligan Guard," and Harrigan wrote the words. The song was a tremendous hit, as given in character by Harrigan and Hart. It depicted the target company of the down-town wards with a mixture of fidelity and exaggeration that was irresistible, and for several years afterward very few target companies ventured out for fear of ridicule. The song made fame instantly for the Theatre Comique, and was next year expanded into a rough-and-ready play, "The Mulligan Guard Ball," which ran a whole season, and has had several successful sequels.

A Centenarian.

STAMFORD, N. Y., April 29.—Mrs. Peter Merriam of Harpersfield was 100 years old on the 17th of March, 1881. She has been a resident of Harpersfield seventy-four years, has four children living, the eldest being 78, has sixteen grandchildren, twenty-four great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Mrs. Merriam is still able to read, and her health is good.

THE LOVE OF RARE BOOKS.

THE PLEASURE AND POSSIBLE PROFIT IN BIBLIOMANIA.

How Mr. Brinley's Book Hunting Proved a Paying Investment—Rare Prices that Reward Research—Libraries in Safe Deposit Companies, Washtubs, and Hogsheads.

The Brinley sale of books attests that while bibliomania is classed among the weaknesses of man it may prove most satisfactory to his legatees. It is estimated that Mr. Brinley's books have yielded about fifty per cent. upon his investment, and it is doubtful whether the same amount of money could have been better invested in stocks, bonds, or business. Over $110,000 has been realized from the books sold thus far in the three sales, and another catalogue of unsold books is being made. Bibliomania possesses a large number of men in this city and in different parts of the country, and not much is known of its internal history here because its nature is to be secretive and silent. It is an old passion in England, where it burned with a lambent flame until the sale of the Roxburghe library, at which a few enthusiastic noblemen astonished the world by bidding as high as $12,000 for a copy of the Venice edition (1474) of Boccaccio's "Decameron." This rekindled the fire, which has burned steadily ever since on both sides of the Atlantic. Although English book collectors were at work while our forefathers were engaged in the serious task of reducing this continent to civilization, the advantage gained over us in the point of libraries has been so narrowed of late years that the British criticism upon the paucity and poverty of American libraries has lost all of its force, and now it is possible to point to a number of private libraries in this country which excel in their special features any public or private library in Europe, and also to a much greater diffusion of private collections, wherein a student may at least partially investigate any subject requiring ordinary research. While in England bibliomaniacs are chiefly noblemen, men of independent fortune, and retired merchants of literary tastes, in America men of all walks of life, enjoying the benefits of the greater diffusion of wealth and æsthetic culture, pursue the pleasure of book hunting. There was one noteworthy London book hunter, Thomas Britton, a small coal man, who, after trudging through the streets of that city all day long, selling coal, revelled at night amid the curious antiquities and the old books which he collected, or entertained few select guests at a private musical entertainment, but New York bibliomaniacs know of an equally noteworthy man, an aged ship carpenter called Father Woodsides, who had the soul-absorbing passion to relieve his life of toil, and who made in his time a collection of everything that could in any way throw light upon the history and character of George Washington. His honest, beaming face was seen at every auction where rare scraps of Washingtoniana were to be sold, and when he made a bid he stood trembling lest some more powerful bidder should outbid the next moment snatch the prize from him.

Zest is added to the book hunter's occupation by the chance of discovering prizes. A Wall street lawyer recently picked up a rare volume of a law book upon a book stall for $6.50, and, carrying it home under his cloak, sold it for $100. A duplicate of the Eliot Indian Bible, which sold last week for $900 at the Brinley sale, was picked up by Henry C. Murphy in London for $5. A tiny copy of the first edition of "Venus and Adonis," for which Mr. A. W. Griswold attended the sale of Mr. Brinley, was picked up among the cobwebs of a Dublin bookstore for a shilling.

When the fingers of a bibliomaniac turn up a black-letter rarity in an old bookstore, the bystander may hear an ominous chuckle—a sure symptom of the disease. It is not often nowadays that a bibliopole is caught napping, but if he is, all of a sportsman's arts are needed to angle that volume with the least possible bait. Says Jonathan Oldenbuck in the "Antiquary:"

How often have I stood haggling on a halfpenny bit for a ready acquaintance in the dealer's first price he should feel no suspect this to be upon the market. How have I trembled lest some passing stranger should chop in between me and the prize, and regarded each student of divinity that stopped to turn over the books at the stall as a rival amateur or a prowling bookseller in disguise! How have I watched the sly customer who gave the consideration and pocketed the article, affecting a cold indifference, while the hand is trembling with pleasure! Then to dazzle the eyes of our vendition and to divert his attention, how have I displayed a little black smokes been about the size of a pipe! Moreover their superior and exhaustive knowledge and dexterity, these, my young friend, are the white moments of life, that repay the toil and pain and sickness which attend our profession, above all others, so entirely demands.

There are much rivalry and jealousy among noteworthy book collectors, growing out of the common strife to possess that not possessed by any one else. There are legends of Dutch devotees of tulip collecting, who paid thousands of dollars for a single tulip root, for the gratification of crushing it under the heel, while it is related of a dead English collector that he used to purchase scarce prints at enormous prices in order to destroy them, and thereby render the remaining impressions more scarce and valuable. Among the original American collectors in New York have few kind words to say to each other, especially when the one spoken of is the hunter in the same field as the one speaking, bibliomania is as yet unknown here; but, as Dibdin was wont to warm his convivial guests with a glass of sherry and tell them a story from which had been printed the impression of the Bibliographical Decameron, that the subscribers to his costly volumes might know that they would remain in the aristocracy of book owners, there are those in this city who so envy their fellows. Once, while in a state approximately bibliopathic, and the world of letters has no comfort from their collection until there is a funeral, a catalogue, and an auction. The yacht owner may sail up the Sound with a party of friends, Robert Bonner may drive our trotters great behind one of his fine horses, Belmont may open his private gallery of paintings, Stephen English may keep the doors of his Brooklyn home ajar for Sunday visitors to admire his engravings, but a Turk is not less jealous of an inspection of his antique vase or his barbaric rug than one of the New York book collectors of the handling of their rarities. A few will give "evenings" to trusted friends to feast their eyes, but then the books must go back under lock and key.

Some book owners keep their rarities in the Boston or safe deposit companies. A liberal and cultivated gentleman of New York has exhibited a new hue to his character when he was questioned about a certain rare book. After some hesitation and embarrassment, he confessed that he probably was the meanest man in the world about his books. To such an extent in this trait he confessed, that some books he conceal by every art possible their bibliomania, for fear their possessions may be invaded by the dreaded book borrower. A Broadway banker keeps his rare books in his safe, and reads them after business hours. Another spends the noon hour in a little closet in a safe deposit company conning, probably, some Elzevir classic, while his next door neighbor is cutting off coupons.

Notwithstanding the selfishness of the occupation, its vice of jealousy and its votary is great, it is said that women have an inveterate antipathy to rare books. A female bibliomaniac is almost unknown in Nassau street. A "real pretty" book of poems, in blue and gold, exquisitely bound, may capture a woman's dollars, to ornament a parlor table, but a rare, black, musty volume, gnawed by a bookworm, is no attraction in her eyes. A well-known lawyer, whose purse is not long, when discovered by a friend walking the streets one Sunday, said that he did not want to go home because he was in disfavor with his wife, having the day before purchased three hundred dollars' worth of old books. Then he repeated:

Five hundred times, at least, I've said—
My wife assures me—I would never
Buy more old books. Yet lists are made,
And shelves are lumbered more than ever;
All that our wives could only see
In these old books, which seem to be
By them, alas, detested.

There is at present a rage for books relating to the early history and antiquities of America, classified as Americana. These are the most expensive rarities next to the early English classics, and year by year the prices are expected to increase. Obadiah Rich, who as United States Consul at Madrid facilitated the studies in Spanish history of Irving, Prescott, and Ticknor, and in 1828 established himself in London as an American bibliopole, is the father of the Americana passion. Irving, who dubbed him "Honest Rich," pronounced him one of the most indefatigable bibliographers in Europe. The late Mr. Lenox, founder of the Lenox Library, is said to have expended $30,000 on a collection of De Bry's Voyages, which were at his death incomplete. Mr. Henry C. Murphy, who has one case of books which he values at over $30,000, has been searching for twenty-five years in the book marts of the world for one or two of the twenty-five parts which make a complete set. Joe Bry, the father of American collectors, past and present, includes the names of Almon W. Griswold, S. L. M. Barlow, William Menzies, J. Carson Brevoort, John F. McCoy, John Carter Brown of Providence, J. Hammond Trumbull of Hartford, Dr. Thomas Addis Emmett, Thomas W. Field, Dr. Charles B. Tiffany, and Charles Kalbfleisch. The late Dr. Bethune had the finest collection of Waltonians ever collected in America. His successor is Mr. Robert Hoe, Jr. The American library collected by Peter Force of Washington was purchased by Congress for $100,000; and the library which Mr. John Rice of Chicago collected in less than six years sold for $42,000. Mr. Griswold had, among his trophies, in addition to the first edition of "Venus and Adonis," already mentioned, for which he paid $1,000, the "Polychronicon" of Master Ranlph Higden, printed by Caxton, for which he paid $6,500. Mr. John F. McCoy of Brooklyn had many rare books, the binding of some of them costing $100, which he kept in bank vaults. Mr. Frederickson, who in his younger days was a printer, collected many rare and beautiful specimens of typography, which entered into what some years ago was deemed the finest collection of Pickering, Chiswick, and Lee-Priory books in America. His bibliomania also extended to books belonging to famous authors, of which he had copies once owned by Lord Byron and Charles Lamb. As De Quincey, disdaining to have books upon shelves, deposited them in the family washtubs, so Mr. Frederickson had an excellent library stowed away in hogsheads. Mr. Jay Gould has a valuable library which he bought in a lump. He is a good customer for a rare book that strikes his fancy, but he never hunts books. Mr. Joseph Drexel, the retired banker, has the most complete musical library in America. S. V. White, the Wall street broker, has an astronomical library of much value, which he uses with the observations through his telescope in his observatory on Columbia Heights. George William Curtis is a bibliophile, but is not classed among the bibliomaniacs. Mr. William M. Evarts is a shrewd buyer of rare law books. William E. Burton, the celebrated comedian, judiciously invested a fortune in books. Mr. Augustin Daly has a noteworthy library of plays, and Mr. A. M. Palmer has a library rich in works upon the stage. John Allan, the Nestor of book hunters in America, was one of the most enthusiastic bibliomaniacs ever known in this city. His was a familiar figure at William Gowans's famous old book stall, where Dr. Francis, always garrulous; Verplanck, the scholar; Duyckinck, the polished gentleman; Peter Hastie of Croton Aqueduct fame; Lossing, the historian; Putnam, the author-publisher; Dr. Anderson, the father of wood engraving in America, and many more equally celebrated men gathered. Mr. Gowans, whose passion made him the anti-type of Old Mortality among the tombstones, was more than a bibliopole. "His mania," said Dr. Thomson, "was to bring into the light of modern life what time and ignorance were fast in conspiracy to waste away." Mr. Gowans was so eccentric and sensitive in temperament that when he named a price for a book he would in a moment, by a mere look of hesitation on the part of the customer, be changed into a determination not to sell, to him, at least, at any price whatever. An epitaph upon the tombstone of an old book hunter in England is recalled by reminiscences of his life and death. It is:

Here lies the body of a bibliophile,
Worm-eaten copy of mortality;
He lived his life in search of a title
To see the Book of Immortality.

Mr. William Thurston Horn, a Wall street lawyer, is the possessor of many rare books, and there are many others, doubtless overlooked in a cursory glance at the paths trodden by bibliomaniacs, who are gratified in their good fortune in being able to forget the cares of the day by revelling at night in tomes fragrant with the musty odor of antiquity. It is no longer true, as Jean Joseph Rive says, that a bibliomane is an indiscriminate accumulator who blunders faster than he buys—crack-brained and heavy. More intelligence, prudence, and judgment control the bibliomaniacs of to-day, but the affection takes many forms, and does not cover all of the passions seizing those who hunt books. There is the bibliognoste, who is knowing in the title pages, colophons, editions, dates, presses where issued, and all the minutiæ of books; the bibliographer, who is the describer of books; the bibliophile, who reads books for his own pleasure; the bibliotaph, who keeps his books in a vault or under lock and key; the bibliologue, who discourses about books; the bibliotoxe, who poisons books; the bibliolyte (of whom the privately illustrated maniacs form a type), who destroys books; and the bibliopée, who is the composer of books. In fact, the bibliomane of to-day, who would deserve all the titles applicable to different phases of his passion, must be able to say almost with the old Roman purists that his pursuit embraces the knowledge of things human and divine.

DASHING OVER THE FALLS.

The Death of a Man who Seemed to have Inherited a Love for Reckless Driving.

MILFORD, Pa., April 30.—Six miles from this village, on the Port Jervis road, is a group of farm buildings known as Rosetown. Thirty years or so ago Frederick A. Rose, a farmer, bought a portion of the river flat at that place and settled there with his family. He was a very eccentric man.

Frederick A. Rose's great pride was in spirited horses. But, while exacting as to the horses, he was not particular as to the wagons and harness he used. A wagon could not be too much dilapidated, and he never equipped a horse or team with harness that was not patched and mended in many parts by means of twine, rope, or any material that would hold a fractured piece together. Besides the habitually insecure nature of his wagons and harness and the high spirits of his horses, he had an occasional fondness for intoxicants that he indulged when on his drives, which increased the danger attending his recreation. It was one of his boasts that when a horse became so tame that it did not want to run away at the sight or sound of railroad cars he did not care to drive it any longer. He was the victim of an almost weekly run-away accident, caused by the breaking of his patched-up harness or the giving way of some portion of his dilapidated wagons. He was frequently picked up with broken bones, and he many times narrowly escaped death. He lived to be 80 years old, and between his 70th year and his death he had left his shoulder dislocated, the side of his head crushed in, and an arm and several ribs broken, besides suffering other injuries, all caused by runaway "accidents." He never remained in the surgeon's care long enough for the injuries to properly heal, and he became so much more of a shambling wreck that he could only with the aid of crutches. He could frequently be seen ploughing in his fields, with a team of blooded young horses, the lines wound about his body, while he supported himself by a plough handle on one side and a crutch on the other. Once, while ploughing with a team of young horses, the horses ran away, dragging him entirely around the field by the reins before he broke loose.

One day last week Benjamin H. Rose drove to this village to take advice regarding some legal matters. Just behind one of the farm houses Belmont may open his private gallery of paintings, Stephen English may keep the doors of his Brooklyn home ajar for Sunday visitors to admire his engravings, but a Turk is not less jealous of an inspection of his antique vase or his barbaric rug than one of the New York book collectors of the handling of their rarities. A few will give "evenings" to trusted friends to feast their eyes, but then the books must go back under lock and key.

Some book owners keep their rarities in the Boston or safe deposit companies. A liberal and cultivated gentleman of New York has exhibited a new hue to his character when he was questioned about a certain rare book. After some hesitation and embarrassment, he confessed that he probably was the meanest man in the world about his books. To such an extent in this trait he confessed, that some books he conceal by every art possible their bibliomania, for fear their possessions may be invaded by the dreaded book borrower. A Broadway banker keeps his rare books in his safe, and reads them after business hours. Another spends the noon hour in a little closet in a safe deposit company conning, probably, some Elzevir classic, while his next door neighbor is cutting off coupons.

Notwithstanding the selfishness of the occupation, its vice of jealousy and its votary is great, it is said that women have an inveterate antipathy to rare books. A female bibliomaniac is almost unknown in Nassau street. A "real pretty" book of poems, in blue and gold, exquisitely bound, may capture a woman's dollars, to ornament a parlor table, but a rare, black, musty volume, gnawed by a bookworm, is no attraction in her eyes. A well-known lawyer, whose purse is not long, when discovered by a friend walking the streets one Sunday, said that he did not want to go home because he was in disfavor with his wife, having the day before purchased three hundred dollars' worth of old books. Then he repeated:

Five hundred times, at least, I've said—
My wife assures me—I would never
Buy more old books. Yet lists are made,
And shelves are lumbered more than ever;
All that our wives could only see
In these old books, which seem to be
By them, alas, detested.

There is at present a rage for books relating to the early history and antiquities of America, classified as Americana. These are the most expensive rarities next to the early English classics, and year by year the prices are expected to increase. Obadiah Rich, who as United States Consul at Madrid facilitated the studies in Spanish history of Irving, Prescott, and Ticknor, and in 1828 established himself in London as an American bibliopole, is the father of the Americana passion. Irving, who dubbed him "Honest Rich," pronounced him one of the most indefatigable bibliographers in Europe. The late Mr. Lenox, founder of the Lenox Library, is said to have expended $30,000 on a collection of De Bry's Voyages, which were at his death incomplete. Mr. Henry C. Murphy, who has one case of books which he values at over $30,000, has been searching for twenty-five years in the book marts of the world for one or two of the twenty-five parts which make a complete set. Joe Bry, the father of American collectors, past and present, includes the names of Almon W. Griswold, S. L. M. Barlow, William Menzies, J. Carson Brevoort, John F. McCoy, John Carter Brown of Providence, J. Hammond Trumbull of Hartford, Dr. Thomas Addis Emmett, Thomas W. Field, Dr. Charles B. Tiffany, and Charles Kalbfleisch. The late Dr. Bethune had the finest collection of Waltonians ever collected in America. His successor is Mr. Robert Hoe, Jr. The American library collected by Peter Force of Washington was purchased by Congress for $100,000; and the library which Mr. John Rice of Chicago collected in less than six years sold for $42,000. Mr. Griswold had, among his trophies, in addition to the first edition of "Venus and Adonis," already mentioned, for which he paid $1,000, the "Polychronicon" of Master Ranlph Higden, printed by Caxton, for which he paid $6,500. Mr. John F. McCoy of Brooklyn had many rare books, the binding of some of them costing $100, which he kept in bank vaults. Mr. Frederickson, who in his younger days was a printer, collected many rare and beautiful specimens of typography, which entered into what some years ago was deemed the finest collection of Pickering, Chiswick, and Lee-Priory books in America. His bibliomania also extended to books belonging to famous authors, of which he had copies once owned by Lord Byron and Charles Lamb. As De Quincey, disdaining to have books upon shelves, deposited them in the family washtubs, so Mr. Frederickson had an excellent library stowed away in hogsheads. Mr. Jay Gould has a valuable library which he bought in a lump. He is a good customer for a rare book that strikes his fancy, but he never hunts books. Mr. Joseph Drexel, the retired banker, has the most complete musical library in America. S. V. White, the Wall street broker, has an astronomical library of much value, which he uses with the observations through his telescope in his observatory on Columbia Heights. George William Curtis is a bibliophile, but is not classed among the bibliomaniacs. Mr. William M. Evarts is a shrewd buyer of rare law books. William E. Burton, the celebrated comedian, judiciously invested a fortune in books. Mr. Augustin Daly has a noteworthy library of plays, and Mr. A. M. Palmer has a library rich in works upon the stage. John Allan, the Nestor of book hunters in America, was one of the most enthusiastic bibliomaniacs ever known in this city. His was a familiar figure at William Gowans's famous old book stall, where Dr. Francis, always garrulous; Verplanck, the scholar; Duyckinck, the polished gentleman; Peter Hastie of Croton Aqueduct fame; Lossing, the historian; Putnam, the author-publisher; Dr. Anderson, the father of wood engraving in America, and many more equally celebrated men gathered. Mr. Gowans, whose passion made him the anti-type of Old Mortality among the tombstones, was more than a bibliopole. "His mania," said Dr. Thomson, "was to bring into the light of modern life what time and ignorance were fast in conspiracy to waste away." Mr. Gowans was so eccentric and sensitive in temperament that when he named a price for a book he would in a moment, by a mere look of hesitation on the part of the customer, be changed into a determination not to sell, to him, at least, at any price whatever. An epitaph upon the tombstone of an old book hunter in England is recalled by reminiscences of his life and death. It is:

Here lies the body of a bibliophile,
Worm-eaten copy of mortality;
He lived his life in search of a title
To see the Book of Immortality.

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