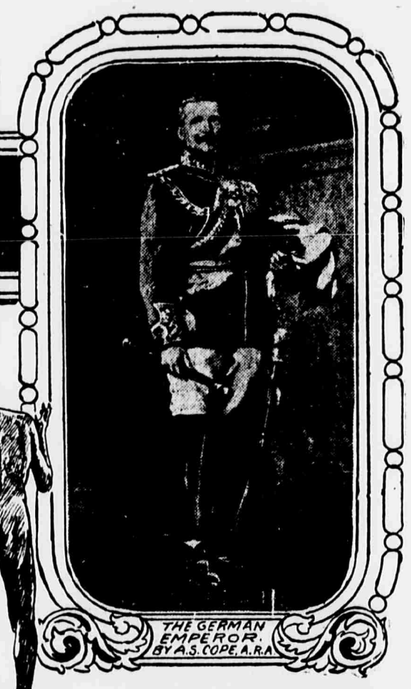
NOTABLE PICTURES AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY IN LONDON

Sargent's Painting of the Marlboroughs---The Picture That Caused a Sensation Among Bridge Players---New Paintings of King Edward and the Kaiser---Row Over a Rejected Work of Art

KING EDWARD VII. BY HAROLD SPEED PAINTED FOR THE CITY OF BELFAST

SARGENT'S PORTRAIT GROUP OF THE MARLBOROUGH FAMILY

THE BRIDGE SENSATION. "THE CHEAT." BY THE HON. J. COLLIER



THE GERMAN EMPEROR. BY A.S. COPE, A.R.A.

MRS. CECIL SEBAG MONTEFIORE AND CHILDREN. BY J.J. SHANNON, A.R.A.

THE REJECTED "LYCIDAS" BY HAVARD THOMAS

LONDON, May 19.—This year there is more talk about the works rejected by the Royal Academy than about those actually shown. Among the rejections was a statue called "Lycidas," modeled in wax on a core of wood and colored to represent old bronze.

Technically, it is excellent work; it was executed by Havard Thomas, a man who takes his art very seriously. He is an Englishman who lives at Capri and has devoted many years to the study of Greek statuary, and from time to time he comes to London to show what he has been doing.

When this statue of "Lycidas" was refused by the academic committee, certain academicians, of whom Sir William Richmond was one, advised Havard Thomas to send this work, which represented two or three years of thought and labor, to the summer exhibition of the New Gallery, Regent street. And there "Lycidas" received the place of honor.

"Lycidas" is extravagantly praised by the critics and boomed by the press. The one thing that nobody understands is why it is called "Lycidas," and many ingenious theories have been advanced to account for its name.

The Academy says nothing, and the sculptor says nothing, so it seems well to mention the circumstance that when "Lycidas" made his appearance before the academic committee he was not called "Lycidas," but "Narcissus." A statue must have a name, seemingly, but what it represents, if a real work of art, is not a name, but an idea. Ideas are difficult to name, and "Lycidas" is more appropriate than "Smith."

Somehow, the Royal Academy has never been allowed to lead the peaceful, businesslike existence which its corporate soul aspires to and deserves. In some soft part of its complacency there always sticks a thorn, if not a stake.

Soon after its foundation in 1768 it happened that a member named Gainsborough insisted on painting portraits of pretty women when he ought to have been attending to the corporate interests. Naturally the council proposed that the name of Mr. Gainsborough be removed from the list of members.

But other members objected strenuously. They even talked about it in public, and for the council and the businesslike majority there was a lot of trouble.

Time and again there has been trouble, external and internal, through some such rational procedure, whether of the council, the selection committee, the hanging committee or other functionaries. There was trouble about a man named Whistler, and more about others called Albert Moore and Burne-Jones.

In 1886, when the work of a person named Rodin was rejected, there was a fuss. Rodin received his notice of rejection, decorated with the royal arms, of course—all the royal tradesmen have the right to use them—and, being ignorant of English, he thought it an invitation for Varnishing Day. A friend told him otherwise, and told other people, too.

In 1897 the work of Harpignies could not be rejected without giving rise to absurd and violent remarks. Last year there was Boldini, and now Havard Thomas and others, among them an American portrait painter of repute.

Largely for such reasons it has become the fashion to abuse the Royal Academy. Now no scribbler is too small, too young, too ignorant or insecure to hoot. From all that one hears the academy might be in a terrible plight; but any one with an atom of common sense should recognize that this is far from being the case.

Why should the Royal Academy of Arts, a British business institution, accept inordinately skilful work? In painted superficies and sculptured mass the present exhibition, the one hundred and thirty-seventh, really differs very little from its recent predecessors.

If it must be admitted that as compared with 1,842 exhibits last year there is now a shortage of ten, it should also be recognized that this year some of the pictures are exceptionally large and some of the statues unusually heavy. Quantitatively the Royal Academy is all right.

Dynamically considered, the amount of energy devoted to the production of these 1,832 art phenomena is much as usual. If diverted into a practical channel, in some dread future hour of Britain's economic need, it would probably suffice to turn a small mill slowly for five years.

And there is no reason to suppose that this exhibition will be visited by fewer than the customary 300,000 seekers after culture, price one shilling, nor that fewer than usual will purchase the catalogue, price another shilling. Here at least some twenty thousand of pounds sterling, just while you wait.

What business man would not be proud if by taking so little thought he could produce so much money? What, then, is the matter with the Royal Academy of Arts?

There is one danger, but it is not as yet very imminent. There are signs which show that many people are beginning to take an intelligent interest in art, as distinguished from the business of picture making, and, to a less extent, from the collecting of pictures solely for the sake of the painter's autograph

Instead of asking who painted a picture they begin to ask themselves whether they really like it. At Christie's they see works by academicians selling for twenty or thirty pounds, works which cost hundreds only a few years ago. They begin to understand why it is, and there are now a few press critics who are willing and able to teach them

Herein lies the danger for the Royal Academy and for many picture dealers. Already one well known firm of dealers in poor pictures can hardly sell to anybody but Americans. Columbus is the patron saint of European dealers in poor pictures, old or new.

Of course there is good work at the Royal Academy, but the proportion is small, and if the works by outsiders were removed there would not be many things left that one cared to see. Of the outsiders' works generally it may be said that there is a distinct technical improvement.

They seem to have profited by the many exhibitions of foreign work which have been held in London of late years. They paint much better than they did, and especially is this true of women.

But the academicians remain pretty much where they were. A few progress, some maintain their level, such as it is; and others are but ghosts of their former selves. There is academic work that is positively comic in its ineptitude, but it does not seem needful to mention the names of those who show it, for they are old men, and once they did better.

Sargent has evidently got too much to do. He shows six portraits, five new and one old. The latter is the half length of Léon Delafosse, the musician—a beautiful portrait, and one with which it would be difficult to find fault.

A good and a dignified portrait, too, is that of Manuel Garcia, presented on his hundredth birthday. He does not look a hundred in the portrait, nor in actual life, but he does appear a good deal older than Sargent's delineation. And the artist's summary notation of the socket of the eye, seen in profile, takes no account of the eye itself. This gives a sightless look to the face and interferes with one's enjoyment of a finely conceived and finely painted portrait.

One second more of Sargent's time would probably have sufficed. But one second of Sargent's time means something—at present rates, and averaged over the year, probably about half a cent.

Many more seconds would have been needed to make the full length of the Countess of Warwick satisfactory. On the other hand, the dash and bravura of "A Vele Gonfie" ("With Swelling Sails") is very successful. It is the portrait of a handsome brunette who has donned the mantle and sword of a cavalier. Miss Wertheimer was the original.

There is, further, a three-quarter length of Lady Helen Vincent, in black and rose, appearing somewhat hard and cut out about the shoulders and seen against a dark red curtain that one knows; and then the large group of the Marlborough family, depicted on a canvas measuring about 12 feet in height by 8 in width.

The scene is at Blenheim Palace, a kind of alcove, with a column at either side, a step in the immediate foreground, and another step a little further away. Overhead is a bust of the first Duke, the great Duke of Marlborough, flanked by trophies of Ramillies and Blenheim, standards embroidered with golden fleurs de lis.

Charles Spencer-Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, stands at the left of the picture, arrayed in a blue velvet mantle, which appears almost black—the robes, collar and other insignia of the Order of the Garter. He looks bored, and the conception is somewhat like a Van Dyck.

Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough, stands to the right middle of the picture, her head high above that of the Duke, and high above her own shoulders, and her eyebrows high above her eyes. A most aspiring and sprightly head it is that shoots up, like a flower on its stalk, from the low evening gown of black brocade and rose, trimmed with fur about the neck.

To the lips Sargent has lent the carmine of a flower—madder-carmine, perhaps, a most expensive pigment, suitable for Duchesses. And then there are the two boys, both in Van Dyck costumes.

John, Marquis of Blandford, in yellow, stands between his father and mother. Her left hand, beautifully painted, is on the boy's left shoulder.

The younger boy, Lord Ivor Spencer-Churchill, stands at the right of the picture, holding a Blenheim spaniel and gathering about him the train of his mother's gown. He is dressed in blue, and another Blenheim spaniel completes the dramatis personæ.

To carry out a great portrait group of this kind is a task of immense difficulty, and Sargent seems to have succeeded at least as well as any modern painter—even as well as Sir Joshua Reynolds in his group of the Marlborough family, with which this one will join company. But that does not rank as one of Sir Joshua's finest works

Abbey is not exhibiting at the Academy this year. He is occupied with his decorative works for Harrisburg, which are too large to show at this exhibition.

Frank Cadogan Cowper, who worked in Abbey's studio for six months after having been trained at one of the London art schools, has met with success. His academy picture, entitled "St. Agnes in Prison Receiving from Heaven the Shining White Garment," has been purchased for the nation under the terms of the Chartrey bequest. It is a good picture, and in style comparable to that of some Pre-Raphaelites.

J. J. Shannon exhibits the portrait picture of a little girl, entitled "Blue-bow," and portraits of Lady Dickson-Paynder and her daughter Joan, Mrs. Cecil Sebag Montefiore and children, and Norah, daughter of Eliot Long, Esq. On the whole they are hardly as successful as others he has shown.

One might suppose him desirous of emulating the dash of Sargent; but as the dash appears chiefly in the backgrounds, where it is not so difficult to make something of a splash, these backgrounds acquire an undue prominence. It is perhaps not necessary to say that Shannon's work is always interesting, dash or no dash.

Luke Fildes's portrait of Queen Alexandra occupies the place of honor in the chief gallery—the State portrait, to match the one of King Edward executed by the same artist a couple of years ago. What was said in THE SUN of that portrait is also true of this.

It is rather formal and lifeless; the accessories are of more importance than the face and form, the personality. Luke Fildes is an accomplished painter, but Abbey managed such things better in his coronation picture.

There are several good portraits in the exhibition. Perhaps those best worthy of mention are a large equestrian portrait group by the late Charles Furse, A. R. A.; "The Painter's Family," by George Harcourt, and an equestrian portrait of a boy, by George W. Lambert, a very promising painter. The work last named hangs next to the Marlborough family group, which is a rather severe test of excellence.

And Orchardson's only exhibit is a portrait of Howard Colls, a work of much refinement. Then Frank Dicksee's "Lady Hillingdon" should not be omitted, as being another good portrait by an academician. King Edward and the German Emperor have also been painted rather well.

Alma Tadema shows one of the largest pictures he ever painted, commissioned by Sir John Aird at what may well be one of the highest prices paid to a living artist for a single example of his own work. The figure was said to be £10,000, but now it is stated to be £14,000. For a Tadema measuring 6 feet by 4 the latter amount seems more likely. He has sold quite small things for upward of £5,000.

The subject is the finding of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, and the picture contains no white marble and no bulrushes. It is archeological after the manner of Georg Ebers, the German novelist, who dedicated one of his books to Alma Tadema.

Egyptologists scoff at them, and the public loves them—and the public will love this swarthy little Moses in his plaited cradle of papyrus, decked with lotus garlands; and the haughty daughter of the Pharaohs in her litter, borne by slaves, along a terrace by the Nile; and the Israelitish captives in the middle distance, making bricks and watched by Ethiopian taskmasters of formidable size; and the pyramids in the distance; and the blue-pink sky of Egypt, &c.

Another picture possessing considerable powers of public attraction is "The Cheat," by the Hon. John Collier, who is the brother of Lord Monkswell. Four persons, two men and two women, are at a card table, playing bridge of course.

One woman has risen to her feet and her face wears a very fine sneer, directed at the other woman, who frowns darkly and dramatically. One man looks judicial and the other seems to wish he wasn't there. All are in evening dress.

In all but art the picture is quite up to date—and it is by no means badly painted. In a rather heavy manner the Hon. John Collier paints pretty well.

That is just a selection, and much that is well worth mentioning is necessarily omitted. Now it can only be added that among the water colors a drawing which at once catches the eye is that of Charles W. Eaton of the New York Water Color Club, entitled "Among the Pines."

In the two rooms devoted to sculpture there is an excellent bronze bust by Andrea Lucchesi, named "L'Eremita." Alfred Gilbert, R. A., one of the finest sculptors the academy ever possessed, does not exhibit this year, and fifteen other academicians and associates are not represented. Five of these are missed.

Now the Pretty Girl Acquires a Lisp

This in Place of Practising the English Broad A—The Trick Quite Fetching When Done Properly.

A pretty girl sat between two young men in a Fifth avenue stage. Opposite sat the girl's mamma. The young men were insisting, the young woman was hesitating.

"I really caun't thay," she laughed. "Athk mamma."

Said mamma: "Have you not forgotten that engagement with Annie?"

"Why, to be thure!" Then to the young men. "I promithed thithter to go with her to thwimming thchool thith awfternoon."

Just then the stage stopped and two middleaged women got out.

"What a pity," remarked one, "that such a pretty girl should have an impediment in her speech."

"Impediment!" repeated the other. "Why, that is the fashionable lisp. My niece told me about it the other day after I overheard her informing a young man that she had had 'thuch a gay time latht th athon.'

"'My dear,' I asked in some alarm, "what in the world is the matter with your speech?' thinking perhaps she had broken off a tooth or burned her tongue or something like that.

"'Why, auntie, nothing is the matter,' she answered, blushing a little. 'It is the fashion, you know, to lisp a little. All the girls are doing it.'

"That very same day I called on a friend, whose daughter was married in Easter week, and to my astonishment I noticed a slight lisp, so slight that it was hard to locate or define it, running all through her talk. I was so fascinated and interested in trying to make out how she did it that I kept her talking all the time, staring meanwhile at her mouth.

"I had about come to the conclusion that occasionally she gave a little twist to the end of her tongue, sending it against her lower teeth, when she broke off suddenly with:

"'Why do you thtare at me tho to-day? One would think I wath a picture or a bit of thculpture.'

"'I'm so interested in what you are saying,' I replied, hastily pulling myself together.

"Not for worlds would I have told her the real reason for my absorption, for I found out long ago that most people who set out to follow a new fashion or practise an affectation don't particularly enjoy being taxed with the fact.

"I noticed in my friend's case that she managed her lisp much more fetchingly than my niece. It was not so childish, so broad; it was shaded more delicately, and, even if serving no other purpose, it certainly attracted attention to a very pretty mouth.

"That afternoon I started out to make a round of calls and before night I ran across many cases of the lisp, and since then I never enter a restaurant or a shop or even a public conveyance, like that Fifth avenue stage, without being reminded of the new fashion."

A woman who is active socially, who has two growing daughters to keep her up to date and who has traveled much, gives this explanation of the lisp:

"It is the outcome, I think, of a desire to counteract or soften the epidemic of broad English pronunciation which has prevailed in the highest fashionable New York circles for the last few years," she said. "Not long ago an Englishman said to me that when the New York girl went in for English pronunciation and inflection she could out-English the English. And she can.

"At one time a good deal of fun was poked at the American twang and at the apparent inability of even the best educated to give the broad a. I remember when stopping in London, many years ago, that a party of English friends were quite gay on one occasion over my pronunciation of the words 'gas' and 'past'—and how I struggled for months and years to pronounce those words English fashion.

"I finally succeeded, but even now I always feel that using the broad a is an affectation on my part. In those days the educated Boston woman was looked up to with considerable envy solely on account of her round, smooth pronunciation, so nearly like that of the English born; but nowadays the Boston woman is nowhere when compared with the New York woman of fashion who makes frequent trips abroad and finishes her daughters in Europe.

"The a's of the American girl finished abroad are broader and more resonant than anything ever before heard; her inflections are more pronounced and her imitation of English mannerisms away beyond anything a New Englander could ever hope to achieve.

"She has learned to pronounce 'been' with such an overdone English emphasis that the fianc of one girl I know complained to her that he didn't see why she should always be talking about beans when there were no beans in sight. Needless to say, he is not an Englishman.

"A not altogether friendly critic once said that when an American woman undertook to do anything out of the ordinary she generally managed to overdo it, and I am not sure but he was right. At any rate, I think the American woman of fashion has gone so far in her imitation of English speech and mannerisms that she has lost, or is losing, her individuality and her reputation for originality, and therefore losing a good deal of her charm in the eyes of foreigners.

"An imitation English woman can never be an English woman, neither is she a genuine American. I have never heard that the Boston woman was a wild success in London even in the days when she approached more nearly than other Americans in speech, at least, to the English standard.

"But to go back to the lisp. No one can tell exactly from whence it came nor why, nor how long it will stay. It is certain, however, that the prettiest and smartest women are practising it and with great success.

"I know women who use it only on occasions when they want to make an impression. For instance it goes better with a tea gown or a dinner dress than with a shopping costume or a morning gown, and I never heard a woman take the trouble to lisp to her butcher or her servants. On the box seat of a coach or in an opera box it is another matter though.

"There can be no two opinions about it. A lisp is fetching and men like it. They think it is feminine and the woman who can practice a lisp without overdoing it will find it more seductive every time than the most advanced elocutionary stunts.

"Did you ever know a woman who stuttered slightly that was not attractive to men? The same is true of the lisp.

"I have been noticing that all women do not practice the lisp in exactly the same way. Some make a specialty of certain words, others cultivate pet expressions which lend themselves readily to a lisp and practise them with telling effect. 'Satisfied' is a pet word with my niece and 'absolutely' enters into almost every other sentence of the conversation of a friend of hers. As pronounced by those girls the words are really quite taking."

Changed Styles of Begging on the City's Streets

A panhandling plant so old fashioned in its workings that it might have existed twenty years ago came the other day to the attention of the police. In a hotel on the lower East Side there lives a venerable swindler who during his long lifetime has devoted to the invention of schemes for not working an intelligence that might easily have won for him honest prosperity.

His graft now is a revival of old time panhandling, of which he is a master. He employs four assistants—when they are not too much incapacitated to work—and sends them out to beg. He will never accept one of the bunch who has been drinking, for sympathy is his lay. Before they go out in search of charity they are carefully bandaged up to give probability to the story that they have just been discharged from a hospital. Yards of linen are used by this faker in sending his men out. He was a hospital orderly at some stage of his iniquitous career and knows how to make a bandage.

But such old time methods of panhandling have all but disappeared, and the mendicancy department of the Charity Organization Society rarely has t contend with such cases. It is significant of the present ways of beating a living out of the world that there is only one crust thrower now listed as a regular in that business. The original crust thrower is now serving a term for vagrancy which has nearly five months to run. He was arrested on Fourth avenue by Officer Walsh of the society's police aids, who used to be known as the Beau Brummel of the Broadway squad until defective eyesight compelled him to desert his post in the heart of the Tenderloin and take to plain clothes. The ordinary swindler of the day, like Wilhelm Troebner, alias Baron Manteuffel, would look with contempt on such spectacular bungling as picking up crusts in the street and ravenously eating them.

The new law of six months for vagrancy has divided the street panhandlers into two sharp classes. They are either men of experience and a certain education, like Troebner and Capt. Crawford, the begging letter writer, or the street hobo.

The men from the police force who are in citizen's clothes on behalf of the Charity Organization Society are the particular terror of these street beggars. When one of them is seen on the streets in search of panhandlers, the word is carried over immediately to the Dead House on the east side of Third avenue to the effect that Walsh or Barry is on the hunt in a certain neighborhood.

There is not a panhandler that hears the warning who would not rather go without a drink than run the risk of bracing a strange man and getting six months for it. Sometimes the hardened street bracers who are not so fortunate as to recognize the faces of the policemen get six months after they have been out of the workhouse only a few days.

Most of these street panhandlers are classified in the police records as John Yeggmen, which means that none of them will hesitate to turn a trick in the burglary line if it comes in their way. Most of them profess to be incapacitated by some imaginary injury, but they will rob a country post office or store till if the chance offers itself.

Some of these men have imaginative nicknames. Thus "Nixey Winger Kid" is a fanciful if somewhat heartless description of a youth of eighteen who has no arms. "Human Dog" is the name applied by his colleagues in mendicancy to a paralyzed beggar who goes around on all fours, and "Mississippi Wheels" is the title of a negro who is similarly afflicted and travels around on a piece of board to which are attached four small wheels. He is able to make as much as fifteen miles an hour on this little vehicle, so expert has he become in manipulating it. "Bridgeport Peg" has but one leg and is attempting to aid nature with a wooden substitute. "Lancashire Dope" is the name in business of an English impostor who takes morphine, and among the noble army of panhandlers there are many who are designated by topographical titles. Thus every red haired man is almost invariably described as "Red" with some local designation, as "Manitoba" or "New Jersey," to distinguish him.

AN ENDLESS CHAIN OF WEDDINGS

For 170 Years Successive Marriages Have Kept It Up in a Small German Town—Can This Record Be Beaten?

FRANKFORT, Germany, May 18.—A friend and former fellow student who is now minister of the Lutheran Church in B., a small town in the Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, drew my attention to a series of marriages—a "matrimonial chain," as he calls it—that extends unbroken over a span of just 170 years.

He gave me permission to copy this chain from the church records. Here it is:

Oct. 18, 1735—Johannes Heide, farmer and blacksmith, aged 23 years, was married to Josephine Mussig, aged 19.

"Even if Josephine is somewhat of a shrew," is the dominie's marginal note, "their wedded life is tolerably happy."

Josephine, who had borne her husband four sons and three daughters, died in 1775, and on Jan. 12, 1776, Johannes—"much to the chagrin of his children," writes the parson—married again, this time Maria Stubel, aged 25.

Their married bliss lasted but two years, for on Sept. 23, 1778, Johannes Heide departed this life.

On March 17, 1788, the young widow threw off her weeds and married Carl Ehlers, a printer, and they remained together, "tolerably happy," seventeen years, when Maria went to the unknown hereafter.

Single bliss was not the thing for Carl Ehlers, for we see his name again in the records Jan. 23, 1799: "Married to Julie Hoch." The dominie was evidently no friend of Julie, for he writes:

"So she caught a man at last, the red-headed hussy; if he but knew that she cares only for his acres; poor Carl!"

And later, under date of March 27, 1799, he writes:

"So the red Vixen has run away from Carl; I must go and congratulate him."

And again in November of the same year:

"So she did get the coveted acres; oh, for her false swearing! But Carl says no price is too high to pay for getting rid of her."

On June 14, 1801, we see Carl Ehlers again among the newly wedded—as her death is not recorded he must have been divorced from Julie—this time to Ruth Stark, aged 35, and a year later the birth of a son, Carl Hermann Ehlers, is recorded. The parson writes:

"Carl and his family are the happiest people in the Duchy."

On Nov. 30, 1824, Carl Ehlers departed this life and on Oct. 26, 1826, Ruth Ehlers, now 60 years of age, married Stephan Liebert, thirty years her junior, because the farm required a young master.

On Aug. 13, 1841, Ruth followed her dear first, and on Nov. 24, 1842, Stephan wedded Marie Schulte, aged 21. In 1867 they celebrated their silver wedding, but one month later, Dec. 24, 1867, he "laid him down and died."

On June 20, 1869, Marie Liebert weds Conrad Schmelz, who was of her age, and, strange enough, with him, too, she could celebrate her silver wedding and, stranger still, exactly one month later, July 29, 1894, she died.

Conrad Schmelz, now 75 years old, once more steps before the altar and marries Luise Heide, 26 years old.

On Aug. 30, 1896, Conrad closes his eyes, and Jan. 17, 1899, his widow is married to the Rev. Dr. Johannes Heide, the minister to whom I am indebted for this strange record.

Both the Rev. Dr. Johannes Heide and his good wife, Luise, are direct descendants of the original Johannes Heide, who was married to Josephine Mussig, 170 years ago.

Squirrel as a Planter.

From the Raleigh News and Observer.

C. B. Edwards has offered the gardener at the Capitol a number of Japan walnut slips. He has a Japan walnut tree in his yard, and this was visited by a squirrel from the Capitol grounds.

The squirrel ate most of the walnuts, but buried a number close to the rose bushes in Mr. Edwards's yard. These produced the slips that Mr. Edwards now proposes to give away.