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London Haunts of Oliver Goldsmith.

(By Fred Myron Colby)

The most interesting figure one could have seen in London during the latter half of the eighteenth century was that of Oliver Goldsmith, poet, novelist, dramatist, whose warm Irish heart made him hosts of friends while living, and whose genial temper and unmistakable genius have won him the admiration of the world since.

Of the London of those days little remains intact, but there are a few sites that might still be recognizable to the "Literary Club" if any of them could return. Let us take a walk down Fleet Street and those busy thoroughfares about the Temple and peep into the poorer lanes and courts branching off therefrom, pass in and out of the Devil and Mitre taverns, toil up the steep flights of steps to the garret lodgings of the author, and pause for reflection where his body rests in the Temple Church.

Goldsmith settled in London before he was thirty years old, and with scarcely any interruption, he spent the remainder of his days there. He went there poor, unknown, wearing threadbare clothing, and with but few friends in the world. He died seventeen years later, the best known man of letters of his day, comfortably well to do, with an income that might have made him affluent, and numbering among his friends the most prominent wits, gentlemen, scholars, and authors of England. His first lodging was a garret in a miserable court, from which he had to climb from the brink of Fleet ditch by a dizzy ladder of flagstones, called Breakneck Steps. The court and the ascent have long since disappeared, but old Londoners still remember both. Washington Irving, in his "Tales of a Traveller," gives a racy description of it as it appeared in his day.

As soon as he was in easier circumstances, somewhere about 1760, Goldsmith emerged from this dismal abode in Green Arbour Court and took respectable apartments in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. The building still stands, a tall, prisonlike structure, looking out upon the narrow court over whose stone pavements "Noll" and his friends must have often walked with their high-heeled, buckled shoes. There was the smell of burnt coffee and stale bread in the house; and we could imagine a red-cheeked, tight-bodied girl cooking a supper within, just as her prototype might have done for the genial author and his associates in those old days of the eighteenth century.

On the 31st of May, 1761, in this house, Doctor Johnson, as a guest at a literary supper given by Goldsmith, met the latter for the first time. Who would not like to have been one of that party? It was the most select, socially and intellectually, of anything in Europe, for there were Reynolds in art, Burke in oratory, the great Leviathan himself, and "Goldy," and half a dozen other famous gentlemen.

Near this very court, and not three blocks away from Goldsmith's lodgings, stands one of the most historic structures of its kind in London, still maintaining its ancient character and peculiarities. This is "Ye Old Cheshire Cheese," a common resort for men of arts and letters during the eighteenth century. Bolingbroke, Pope, Congreve, and old Robert Herrick, of the generation preceding Goldsmith's, were all frequenters of the "Cheshire Cheese," and it is claimed that "Will" Shakespeare was not an unusual visitor. But as the old inn was not built until 1667, we must discard that pretty story.

The house is one of the heavy-timbered buildings of the Stuart time, with huge doors and wide, deep-set small-paned windows. In the left-hand room—the very one where Johnson took his seat at the table on the right, with Goldsmith on one side and Boswell on the other—are the wooden settees, the open-bricked fireplace, the grates and the "hobs," which were familiar to that famous coterie. Many a rare cup of coffee was imbibed as his associates sat around the blazing wood-fire in the wide fireplace.

One can see, in imagination, the great men coming into that humble room, one after another, like the figures in the procession upon an ancient frieze. There was Goldsmith himself, dressed foppishly in a suit of scarlet velvet that looked wondrously ungraceful on his lank, awkward figure; the large, uncouth form of Johnson, with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loosely upon him, scarcely anything being in place; Hogarth, the painter, a stout, active bustling little man of sixty, in a sky-blue coat; Beauclerk and Laneton, two fine stylish young men, dressed in elegant suits of black velvet; the florid-faced handsome, dignified Joshua Reynolds, the genial Garrick, and Burke, full of his talk of Parliament; and the government of George III.; all those have lounged in that old, dingy room and sipped their solacing drinks in the blaze of the firelight in the chimney. Think of being in with four such admirable talkers as Johnson, Burke, Beauclerk and Garrick, and of being on terms of intimacy with the four! Not a little of Goldsmith's inspiration must have sprung direct from his associations with his learned and accomplished friends.

The residence of Doctor Johnson, still known by its tablet over the door, is through the old arch and in the next court to that of the "Cheshire Cheese." To the old red brick building in Gough Square, Goldsmith must many times have wended his steps during the sunny afternoons of those latter years, and it must have been interesting to see these two sit down to sup at the table of poor Mrs. Williams, Johnson's half blind pensioner. Sometimes we could have seen the large, shuffling figure of the lexicographer, his wig awry, his large, heavy shoes unbuckled, his clothes hanging every way about his person, carrying his big cane in his hand, come down the steps and set off arm-in-arm with Goldsmith, the latter's sturdy little figure arrayed in a scarlet roquelaure buttoned to the chin, purple silk small clothes, a professional wig, and a three-cornered hat, either to visit the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, one of the much-frequented literary gossiping places of the day, or to drink tea with Mrs. Thrale at her own town house, in Grosvenor Square.

Another resort of Goldsmith's was a large, roomy mansion, No. 47, Leicester Square. The rooms are still spacious; the staircase massive oak, the windows wide and grand; but the mirth, splendour, and dignity of the old house have departed. From 1760 to 1792 this elegant residence was the home of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the greatest painter of his age and a fast friend of Goldsmith's. The author often took dinner under the hospitable roof, and he and Johnson and all of that circle usually attended the painter's evening soirees. Goldsmith did not shine in company; but when the party broke up we can fancy the three inseparables, Goldsmith, Johnson and Boswell, coming out together, crossing Leicester Square, where link boys were running with torches or waiting to be hired, where sedan chairs were jostling each other, where coaches were lumbering by, as the fashionable world returned from "Ranelagh" or Vauxhall Gardens, or from some ball at Kensington or Hampton Court; then Goldsmith's good-humored nonsense answered Boswell's bold sallies and Johnson's learned expositions. Goldsmith passed the last of his

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days at No. 2 Brick Court, Middle Temple in the same building where Blackstone wrote his "Commentaries," a dull, faded old building, looking as solitary as a prison. Once a week on Monday night he went to meet his club at the "Turk's Head," in Gerald street, Soho Square, an association numbering thirteen literary and cultivated gentlemen, of which Johnson and Goldsmith were the lions. Sometimes the author and several "Jolly Pigeon" friends would enjoy what they called a "shoemaker's holiday." The party would breakfast in his chambers and then set out on foot, making extensive rambles by footpaths and green lanes to Blackheath, Chelsea, Highgate, or some other pleasant resort a few miles out of London. They would take dinner at some rural tavern, stroll back to town and sup at the Temple Exchange Coffee House, or at the Globe Tavern, in Fleet Street. Goldsmith died in his room at the Temple, April 4, 1774, aged only forty-six years. "Is your mind at ease?" asked a medical attendant, as he lay dying. "No, it is not," answered the man who had described so many sad and serious things in life. These were the last recorded words of Oliver Goldsmith.—From an English paper.

THE "BIG BROTHER" MOVEMENT

One of the most interesting endeavors to counteract the evils of juvenile delinquency is the "Big Brother" movement, which had its genesis in the city of New York some nine years ago. Mr. Ernest Coulter was clerk of the Juvenile Court. He recognized the good which it accomplished, but he also saw that many of the poor little chaps who came under its jurisdiction looked upon its agencies and its officers as merely "professional," so that in spite of their best endeavors their influence sometimes apparently lacked the warm human element. Mr. Coulter conceived the idea of becoming "chums" with a boy who had been released on probation, but who was in danger of being drawn back among his old associates. He visited this boy's home in a purely unofficial manner, let the lad know that he could return the visits as often as he felt inclined, brought him to a show now and then, got him a job, and in a general manner acted toward him as a "big brother" should. The "expulsive power of a new affection" had its usual effect. The little fellow became a loyal friend to the man, and today he is a worthy young citizen.

For a while Mr. Coulter never considered this incident in his own experience as having any general application. At last, when speaking at a meeting of the Men's Club, of the Central Presbyterian Church, on the problem presented in the person of the neglected city boy, he told of a little fellow in the same position as the boy whom he had helped, and asked if some one would volunteer to be a "big brother" to him. The men whom he addressed were busy men, but to his surprise practically every one of them—there were about forty—volunteered to help the boy in the manner indicated. Mr. Coulter introduced one of them to the boy, and taking the names of the others, provided each with a "little brother" as the occasion presented itself.

Since this incident occurred the movement has taken root in about forty cities in the United States, Australia and Canada. So wonderfully has the work grown that last year there were no less than six hundred and ninety-five business and professional men in the city of New York each actively "big brotthering" one or more boys, in fact no less than 2,888 boys found chums among the New York "big brothers" in that year.

The men who help are, as a rule, just the busiest men in the various cities. Bank presidents, merchants and manufacturers, lawyers, surgeons and physicians, such men form much the largest proportion of the "Big Brothers." Some of the boys helped are delinquent, others are lads who have never got into trouble, but who might easily do so. Each is given the individual assistance which he needs. Of course, the demands of real friendship are exacting, and this is especially so when one friend is a poor, ignorant and neglected boy, and the other a business man. But the exacting are gallantly met, and the statistics which show that ninety-seven percent of the juvenile delinquents who have been "brotthered," never come again before the courts are evidence that the work is more than worth while.—Daily Telegraph.

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THE PRINCE RUPERT SOLD. Long Time in Bay Service, Will Plough Waters of the West Indies (Digby Courier.)

The steamer Prince Rupert, for some years in the Bay of Fundy service between St. John and Digby, has been sold to West Indies interests. H. C. Grout, of the C. P. R., has received a telegram from D. McNeill, vice-president of the C. P. R., confirming the sale.

A representative of the purchasing company, Mr. Whigan, of Cuba, has been in St. John looking the steamer over, and he recommended that the purchase be made. The deal was put through Friday in Montreal, and it was said in the telegram received by Mr. Grout that the transaction called for immediate delivery.

The Prince Rupert has rendered excellent service during the time she has been on the route, but has given away to the up-to-date and speedier steamer "St. George." The headquarters of the company making the purchase are at San Diego, and it is the intention to have her engage in local service in the West Indies. The C. P. R. have completed arrangements as regards the taking of the steamers on the bay routes now, and, as we reported last week, in addition to the St. George the steamer "Yarmouth" is flying the company's flag. A. McGregor, who has his headquarters at Yarmouth, will in future direct the affairs of the company in connection with the Fundy service from St. John. He will take up his location in the city at once.

Running up and down stairs, sweeping and bending over making beds will not make a woman healthy or beautiful. She must get out of doors, walk a mile or two every day and take Chamberlain's Tablets to improve her digestion and regulate her bowels. For sale by all dealers.

At a religious service in Scotland the late Lord Kelvin noticed a youngster accompanying his grandparents and sitting wise as a young owl through the sermon. At the close of service Lord Kelvin congratulated the grandfather upon the excellence of the lad's behaviour. "Och, aye," returned the veteran. "Duncan's well threatened afore he gangs in."

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