

## Artists' Corner.

THE LATE J. W. M. TURNER.

Joseph William Mallard Turner was born at the house of his father a hairdresser of lowly practice, in Maiden Lane Covent Garden, in the year 1775. He "enjoyed the advantages of an accurate rather than a liberal education," and his first studies were in architectural design. In 1793, Turner exhibited three pictures, one of which represented "The Pantheon the morning after the fire." In 1800, he was elected Associate the first step in Academical honours. A lapse of two years sufficed to him for appending the envied letters R. A. to his name. The "Tenth Plague of Egypt" and the "Fall of the Clyde" were amongst his subjects this year. The "Liber Studiorum," was commenced about 1807, or rather later, in imitation of Claude's *Liber Veritatis*, and was etched, it is understood by Turner's own hand. The title-page was engraved and altered half-a-dozen times, from his singular and even nervous attention to the most trifling details. But this volume was only the precursor of an immense series of drawings and sketches embracing the topography of this country in the River Scenery" and the "Southern Coast"—the scenery of the Alps, of Italy, and great part of Europe. These drawings are now widely diffused in England, and form the basis of several important collections such as those of Petworth, of Mr. Windus, Mr. Fawkes, and Mr. Munro. So great is the value of them that 120 guineas have not unfrequently been paid for a small sketch in water colours; and a sketch-book, containing chalk drawings of one of Turner's river tours on the Continent, has lately fetched the enormous sum of 600 guineas. The prices of his more finished oil paintings have ranged in the last few years from 700 to 1,200 or 1,300 guineas. The other products of his genius are sufficiently in the memory of the present generation,—from the "Wreck" in Lord Yarborough's collection, the "Italian Landscape," in the same gallery, the pendant to Lord Ellesmere's *Vanderwilde*, or Mr. Munro's "Venus and Adonis," in the Titianesque manner, to the more original productions of his later years, such as the "Rome," and "Venice," the "Golden Bough," the "Temeraire," and the "Tusculum." Mr. Turner seldom took much part in society, and only displayed in the closest intimacy the shrewdness of his observation and the playfulness of his wit. Everywhere he kept back much of what was in him, and while the keenest intelligence, mingled with a strong tinge of satire, animated his brisk countenance, it seemed to amuse him to be but half understood. His nearest social ties were those formed in the Royal Academy, of which he was by far the oldest member, and to whose interests he was most warmly attached. He filled at one time the chair of Professor of Perspective, but without conspicuous success. In the composition and execution of his works he was jealously sensitive of all interference or supervision. His personal habits were peculiar, and even penurious; but in all that related to his art he was generous to munificence. He was never married; he was not known to have any relations, and his wants were limited to the strictest simplicity. The only ornaments of his house in Queen Anne Street were the pictures by his own hand, which he had constantly refused to part with at any price, among which the "Rise and Fall of Carthage," and the "Crossing the Brook," rank among the choicest specimens of his finest manner.

The ruling quality says the *Spectator*, stamped by Turner on the long series of his works is con-

prehension. Brilliance and fervour of imagination, and breadth of observation, are indeed conspicuous; but these are only modes of that vivid penetration with which he entered into the secrets of nature. In many of his works there is an air almost of intuition. He sometimes mis-understood nature—constructed her in hyperbole and distortion; but he scarcely ever failed to catch a portion of her meaning.

## Varieties.

REPOSE is the poison of life, and repentance its cure.

TO FORGIVE and forget is something of a difficulty, but to forget and forgive is the easiest thing in the world.

LITTLE DISCRETES before marriage are great ones after it; as northerly winds which are warm in summer, blow keen and cold in winter.

WE LOVE much more warmly while cherishing the intention of giving pleasure, than an hour afterwards when we have given it.

A TRUE POET, a man in whose heart resides some effluence of wisdom; some love of the "Eternal Melodies," is the most precious gift that can be bestowed on a generation.

WEAKNESSES seem to be even more carefully and anxiously concealed than graver and more decided faults, for human nature is more ashamed of the first than of the last.

THE CURIOSITY of an honourable mind willingly rests there, where the love of truth does not urge it further onward, and the love of its neighbour bids it stop—in other words, it willingly stops at the point where the interests of the truth do not beckon it onward, and charity cries, Halt!

GAMBLING.—There is nothing that wears out a fine face like the vigils of the card-table, and those cutting passions which naturally attend them. Hollow eyes, haggard looks, and pale complexions, are the natural indications of a female gambler; her morning sleeps are not able to repay her midnight watchings.

CHARITY.—Open thy hand to the poor according to thy ability. Meddle not with other men's occasions but where thou mayst do good, and hast a calling to it. And if it be in thy power to hurt thine enemy let it pass; do him good if thou canst, and boast not of it; he that sees thee in private will openly reward thee. Lastly let thy heart be kept always in awe of this want of charity, by continually remembering that thou hast of thy Saviour no other form of prayer to desire forgiveness for thyself than that wherein thou covenantest to forgive others. All the other petitions we present to God absolutely; only this is conditional, that He forgive us as we forgive others. Our Saviour hath taught us no other way to desire it; and in Matthew, the 18th chapter, he shows that God will no otherwise grant it.

ETERNITY.—What is this life but a circulation of little mean actions? We lie down and rise again, dress and undress, feed and wax hungry, work or play, and are weary, and then lie down again, and the circle returns. We spend the day in trifles, and when night comes we throw ourselves into the bed of folly, amongst dreams, and broken thought, and wild imaginations. Our reason lies asleep by us, and we are for the time as arrant brutes as those that sleep in the stalls, or in the field. Are not the capacities of man higher than these? and ought not his ambition and expectation to be greater? Let us be adventurer for another world. It is at least a fair and noble chance; and there is nothing in this worth our thoughts or our passions. If we should be

disappointed, we are still no worse than the rest of our fellow-mortals; and, if we should succeed in our expectations we are eternally happy.

GRACEFUL ELEGANT.—Grace is in a great measure a natural gift; elegance implies cultivation, or something of a more artificial character. A rustic uneducated girl may be graceful but an elegant woman must be accomplished and well-trained. It is the same with things as with persons; we talk of a graceful tree, but an elegant house or other building. Animals may be graceful, but they cannot be elegant. The movements of a kitten, or a young fawn, are full of grace; but to call their elegant animals would be absurd. Lastly, 'elegant' may be applied to mental qualifications, which 'graceful' never can. Elegance must always imply something that is made or invented by man. An imitation of nature is not so; therefore we do not speak of an 'elegant picture,' though we do of an elegant pattern for a gown, an elegant piece of work. The general rule is, that elegance is the characteristic of art, and grace of nature.—Archbishop Whately's *Selection of Synonyms*.

## Biographical Calendar.

	A. D.	
June 6	1633	Theyenot, born.
	1710	Louise Lavalere, born.
	1799	Patrick Henry, died.
	1804	Georges Cadoudal, executed.
	1832	Jeremy Bentham, died.
" 7	1320	Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, died, (J. 9, by some authorities.)
	1761	John Rennie, born.
" 8	1330	Edward, the Black Prince, born.
	1625	J. D. Cassini, born.
	1743	Count Cagliostro, born.
	1800	Thomas Paine, died.
	1815	General Jackson, died.
" 9	1850	James Smith, of Deanston, died.
" 10	1698	Prince James Ed. Stuart, (the first Pretender,) born.
" 11	1665	Sir Kenelm Digby, born.
	1672	Peter the Great, Czar of Russia, born.
	1737	George I., died.
	1793	Dr. William Robertson, died.
" 12	1731	James, Duke of Berwick, killed.

William Robertson, D. D., a celebrated historian, was born in 1721, at Bothwick, where his father was minister. Having completed his theological studies at Edinburgh, he obtained a licence to preach, and in 1743 was presented to the living of Gladsmuir, in East Lothian. He soon became distinguished by his eloquence and good taste as a preacher, but it was not till 1759, that, by his "History of Scotland," he acquired a place among British classical writers. The distinction and patronage acquired by this work, which reached a fourteenth edition before his death, appeared in his successive preferments. He became chaplain of Stirling Castle in 1759, King's chaplain in 1761, principal of the University of Edinburgh in 1763, and historiographer royal of Scotland in 1764. At the head of a flourishing seat of education, he was minutely attentive to all his duties; and co-operated with the greatest liberality, in all the important improvements which have raised Edinburgh to its present celebrity. Yet notwithstanding his numerous pursuits and official avocations, he found time to employ himself in his celebrated "History of Charles V.," which, in 1777, was followed by the "History of America." His last publication was "An Historical Disquisition concerning the knowledge which the Ancients had of India." He died June 11th, 1793. As an historian Dr. Robertson is admired for luminous and skillful arrangement, graphic description, and a singularly perspicuous style.