



George Morland.

(1763-1804).

In a very old country-house, recently dismantled, but which, until then, contained, perhaps, more paintings than any other house in Western Ontario, there hung a mellow old picture, representing a group of gipsies resting for a passing hour beneath the shade of some fine old trees. Something about the picture arrested the attention. There was a "difference" about it, a difference in the posing of the figures, in the heaviness of the shadows, in the striking distribution of the high-lights, that marked it as the work of no ordinary artist, hence the writer of this, who pored over it many a time, was not surprised to find that it was a genuine "Morland."

And now a few words in regard to the life of the artist himself—"poor Morland," brilliant, erring, unfortunate.

Born in the Haymarket, London, on the 26th of June, 1763, he came of a race of painters, some of whom, as Cunningham notes, "became bankrupt in the profession." His grandfather was an artist of some ability, his father also, the latter being especially noted in his day for his pictures of "laundry maids," a fashion among the important ladies of the time being to be painted as though engaged at some domestic work. Mrs. Morland, too, could paint, and is believed to have been the "Maria Morland" who exhibited twice at the Royal Academy during 1785-86, hence it is little wonder that the lad, George, should even begin his march through life with a brush in his hand.

At four years of age he drew a picture of a coach and horses and two footmen, which was long kept by his father and shown as a proof of the lad's wonderful precocity. At five and six he did work "worthy of ranking him among the common race of students," work which, when shown to the Society of Artists, elicited expressions of wonder and admiration on every hand. A prodigy had indeed arisen, one who was to develop into a genius who should far outshine the great majority of his contemporaries, including his immediate progenitor.

Young Morland was destined, however, because of his very talent, to spend what must have seemed to him an age of wretched slavery before he was at last enabled to break away and enter upon the course of free choice, of free action necessary to everyone's development and best work, most of all, perhaps, to that of the artist.

He had been, to come at once to the point, "unfortunate in his choice of a father." The elder Morland appears to have been a man of unusual narrowness and unreasonableness. He did not understand child-nature in the least; he was over-strict at one time, foolishly indulgent at others, and he was ridiculously impressed with the authority which, in his opinion, a parent should have over his offspring. Worse than all he was possessed of an unfortunate facility for being chronically "hard-up," and, so far at least as young George was concerned, rather unscrupulous in his methods of obtaining money, for, finding that he could easily sell the little lad's drawings, he eagerly seized upon the opportunity for a steady source of income.

Henceforth, as may be imagined, the life of the unfortunate child was not all sunshine and roses. Day after day, so Cunningham tells us, he was shut up in a garret to keep him at work, then praised and indulged as a reward. At twilight he was allowed to go out to play, but, as the years went on, he was given no instruction at the art schools, his father fearing "that he would be contaminated there."

Naturally, under such restriction, both

health and morals suffered. As he grew older it became a joke to outwit his father, and, it is said, he used frequently to lower drawings from his garret window to boys, who sold them, the money being spent, as soon as young Morland could join the crowd, on wild carousals which would have made the hair of the Puritanic father stand up in horror had he known of them.

So the years passed on until the lad was fourteen years of age, at which time he was induced to agree to an apprenticeship with his father for seven years.

During the portion of this time which he spent at home his earnings appear to have kept the family together, and a little more liberty was, of necessity now, permitted to him, but he still kept away from the galleries, being obsessed, as a biographer tells us, with a "strange repugnance for educated society."

Before long Romney offered to take him into his studio for three years, at a salary of £300 a year. The offer was, however, refused, for the young artist had formed a fine plan for starting in life on his own account, which he did, accordingly, when seventeen years of age. No more restriction for him! He would taste life, and, unfortunately for himself, his tastes and inclinations, perhaps the sheer reaction from the over-strict discipline of his home, led him all too soon into sad enough quandaries.

Hassell's description of his personal appearance at this time is interesting: "He was now in the very extreme of foppish puppyism," says he, "his head, when ornamented according to his own taste, resembled a snowball, after the model of Tippy Bob of dramatic memory,

the engraver) to share his distresses. Extravagant in every way, he was soon in the mire of financial embarrassment, a fact of which the wily buyers were ready enough to take advantage, for many a canvas did they obtain from him for five guineas which sold speedily enough for twenty. So easily sold was his work, indeed, that some of the most unscrupulous of them employed copyists to copy his pictures, and sold the copies as originals. To hold him to themselves, moreover, they used frequently to resort to the device of lending him money. He was always delightedly ready to accept the loans, and quite as ready, when sober, to repay them many times over, as it proved, with his beautiful canvases. He worked very rapidly, seldom changing or erasing, and, notwithstanding his dissipation, left at his death no fewer than four thousand paintings.

He was particularly fond of painting peasant life, usually with fine rural landscapes as background, and he delighted, often, in painting animals, of which he was very fond. At one time, it is recorded, he was the owner of eight saddle horses, which he kept at the White Lion Inn, and, often enough he was badly "done" in horse-deals, giving fine pictures for very poor horses. To the artist, however, any old horse serves well as a model, so perhaps he was well enough satisfied. "He even extended his affection to asses," says Cunningham, and wherever he lived there was likely to be a menagerie of asses, dogs, squirrels and guinea-pigs.

As Morland grew older his early pride of dress vanished, and his debts increased until they became a nightmare. Dick

Hoping to keep out of sight, he constantly moved his lodgings from place to place, dragging his poor wife with him, and living with such evident wish for secrecy that he excited suspicion wherever he went. Once, in Hackney, he was suspected of being a counterfeiter, but escaped and never stopped until he had hidden himself in London. The directors of the bank which had instituted the inquiry, however, managed to find him, and presented him with £40 in reparation for their mistake.

Though thus practically hunted from place to place, Morland was never the hang-dog victim of melancholia that one might well imagine him to have been. Even at his lowest "he could jest and revel, indulge the wildest whims, and luxuriate in oddities and caprices." He was always on the best of terms with the hostlers and stable-boys wherever he went, knew them and their horses, and could crack jokes with the merriest of them. Aye, and among them, too, he found inspiration. His masterpiece, added to the National Collection in London in 1877, marvellous in its fine distribution of lights and shade, represents the interior of a stable. Nor was Morland ever so poor as was Wilson, that he could not obtain the comforts of life. For a part of every day at least he was sober; and while sober he worked well; moreover his pictures caught the public fancy, and always "sold," albeit usually at much less than their value.

But truly evil days were drawing near. At thirty-nine he was stricken with palsy, and his right hand so affected that he could no longer paint, but only make brave drawings with pencil and chalk. At last, on the 19th of October, 1804, he was arrested by a publican for debt and taken to a sponging-house. Here, while trying to make a drawing which could be sold to pay off the amount, he was seized with a fit,—the beginning of brain-fever.

He had been for some time separated from his wife, who had never ceased to care for him, notwithstanding the separation, but she was not called to his bedside; perhaps it was not thought that he would pass away so soon. He died on the 29th of the same month, and, when the sad news came to her she took a convulsion. Three days later she died, and the two were buried together in a small graveyard by Hampstead Road.

"As an artist," says Cunningham, himself an artist as well as a writer, "Morland's claims to regard are high and undisputed. He is original and alone. . . He has taken a strong and lasting hold of the popular fancy; not by ministering to our vanity, but by telling plain and striking truths. He is the rustic painter for the people; his scenes are familiar to every eye, and his name is on every lip. . . The coarseness of the man and the folly of his company never touched the execution of his pieces."



The Inside of a Stable.

From a painting by Morland in the National Gallery, London, Eng.

to which was attached a short, thick tail not unlike a painter's brush. Thus accomplished and accounted, with little money in his pocket, and a large conceit of himself, he made an excursion to Margate, with the twofold purpose of enjoying life and painting portraits."

Here his oddity of dress—he invariably wore a green coat and top boots to complete the effect of the curled and powdered wig above described—quickly enough attracted attention to him, while his evident talent brought him sitters in plenty. He was, however, too impatient to finish many of the portraits that he began, and so lost custom. To make matters worse, he threw himself into all sorts of dissipation, and, not contented with wrecking his own life, married a wife (the beautiful Anne Ward, sister of Ward

Swiveler was happy in finding one street upon which he could go and come without fear of meeting creditors, but poor, reckless Morland could scarcely find a corner anywhere where he might not be called upon to do the impossible. "His clothes were now mean," we are told, "his looks squalid, and when he ventured into the streets of London he was so haunted by creditors, real or imaginary, that he skulked rather than walked, and kept a lookout on suspicious alleys and corners of evil reputation. If he saw anyone looking anxiously at him, which many must have done out of compassion for the wreck which folly had wrought with genius, he instantly imagined him a creditor, and fled like quicksilver, for he was in debt to so many that he dreaded duns in every street."

Hospital Nursing at Home.

By Elizabeth Robinson Scovil.

FIRST AID TO THE INJURED.

The time to prepare for an accident is before it happens. Afterwards, in the terror and anxiety, there is no time to lose in looking up materials for first aid, which should have been at hand. Moments are precious, and in some cases make all the difference between life and death. Prompt action can nearly always lessen suffering, and this saves the strength of the injured one.

THE EMERGENCY BOX.

Every house mother should have on a convenient shelf a good-sized box with the things in it that are needed in ordinary accidents. Pieces of soft cotton