

IN AINO-LAND.¹

BY MABEL LOOMIS TODD.

THE legend runs that when a certain god and goddess were selected at creation to evolve from chaos the island of Yezo, they were endowed equally with materials and ability to complete the task. To the god were allotted the eastern and southern parts of the island, while the goddess was to attend to the western portion. They began together, vying amiably with each other during the progress of their work. But, alas! the goddess one day met a female friend, and, after the manner of women, stopped to chat with her. This friend, sister of Aioina Kamui (one of the most ancient forefathers—indeed, the Adam of the Aino race), must have been a seductive talker, for the two conversed idly a long time about their neighbors and acquaintances, while the god in the east kept steadily at work. Looking up suddenly, and seeing how nearly completed his portion was, and frightened at the state of her own unfinished regions, the goddess hastily threw together her remaining materials in a careless and slovenly manner, leaving this western coast in its present rugged and dangerous condition. But, add the Ainos in telling their legend, no one, even if disposed to grumble at the dangers of these shores, should presume to blame the Creator for such a state of things, as it is wholly the fault of his deputy and her tendency to gossip. The moral is said to be often pointed by their lords at women who talk too much: "Set a watch over your lips, and attend to your duties; for see how rough the west coast of Yezo is, and that all owing to a chattering goddess."

The chattering, nevertheless, may have credit for a very picturesque bit of work. The steep cliffs, often richly wooded to their summits with ancient trees, sometimes rise in bare and rocky impressiveness many hundred feet above the sea. Innumerable streams rush in white torrents down these majestic heights, using every ravine for their swift descent, until the whole face of the coast appears laced with the flying spray of continual cascades. Tiny fishing-villages find a precarious foothold at the bases of

cliffs that are entirely inaccessible, on beaches that are almost too narrow for the single row of thatched dwellings huddled against the steep rock behind; while constant surf, beating white and high before them, seems to make a village highway by the sea equally impossible.

In the summer of 1896, as a lay member of the Amherst College expedition which visited northern Japan to view the total eclipse of the sun, I had the rare opportunity of seeing the absolutely primitive "hairy Aino" of that region.

In the southern portion of the island, near Hakodate and Sapporo, and about Volcano Bay, travelers have visited these shy and silent people. But several hundred miles north are many Ainos who, until the summer of 1896, were strangers to the members of any race but their own or the few Japanese who are establishing small fishing-villages along the coast. The dwellers in the province of Kitami are too distant to be sought by visitors; and a foreign woman, the Japanese officials informed me, had never before reached Kitami.

Skirting the rough western coast by steamer, and rounding Cape Soya, the eclipse party located at Esashi, which must not be confused with another town of the same name near Hakodate. The news of the arrival of strange white foreigners spread quickly among the neighboring villages. Walking with stately tread, bushy-haired and bearded groups of Ainos often passed the expedition headquarters, apparently looking for nothing unusual, and giving no evidence of curiosity, yet never failing to see every foreign figure within their range. Humbly accompanying their lords, women and children frequently followed, far less imposing than the men. Somewhat larger, and apparently stronger, than the Japanese, although not taller, the older men are actually patriarchal, with long beards, and masses of thick hair parted in the middle. Many faces have a benign and lofty expression.

Driven gradually through ages from the south to Hokkaido, the Ainos are among the few races yet retaining, in this over-civilized world of ours, an utterly unspoiled simplicity. Their origin has never been satisfactorily traced, but they were certainly in Japan long

¹ The pictures in this article, with the exception of the drawing on page 346, are from photographs taken by Professor W. K. Burton and kindly lent for publication.

before the present race of Japanese had arrived, and names clearly originating in the Aino tongue are still retained all over the empire. Gentle and subservient to the conquering race, it is evident that they formerly held more egotistic views than now, even fancying themselves the center of the universe, as is shown perhaps by an old national song:

Gods of the sea, open your eyes divine.
Wherever your eyes turn, there echoes the sound
of the Aino speech.¹

Amiable and full of kindly hospitality, the Aino seem to possess no ambition or capacity for mental training. It is said that the descendant of a certain prince or high chieftain is now perfectly content to black the boots of an American in Sapporo. They are barbarians pure and simple, in spite of a distinctive folk-lore and the practice of considerable ceremony and forms of etiquette upon special occasions. The salutation between Aino men is elaborate and respectful. Stretching out their hands, the fingers are allowed to pass softly back and forth along the palms for some time, during which verbal greetings and best wishes are exchanged. Stroking their long beards slowly is the part most obvious to a foreigner, while a gentle and inarticulate sound in the throat is intended to convey consideration and appreciation. The formal salutation sometimes lasts only a few minutes, though often much longer.

When a person of high rank in the nation comes to an Aino house, a ceremonious *sake*-drinking takes place. One drop is whisked off the "mustache-lifter" to the god of the sun—in the Aino language, Chippu Kamui; another to the god of the mountains, Kimon Kamui; then to the god of the sea, Atoi Kamui; to the god of Hokkaido, Mushirori Kamui; to the god of villages, Kotangoro Kamui; to the god of the house, Tsuigoro Kamui; to the god of fire, Abe Kamui; and to the god of all, Obishida Kamui, who is included last with a comprehensive sweep of the mustache-lifter toward the whole room. It is only the first cup of sake which must be thus dispersed to the reigning powers; afterward all the drops are religiously kept for the active participants in the ceremony, who may then proceed to enjoy themselves with light hearts.

Women give very humble greeting to men, a part of which consists in rubbing the up-

per lip with the forefinger. Preliminary motions having been made to attract a man's attention sufficiently for him to indicate that she may proceed, she waits his invitation to speak. When a man is met out of doors, women always step aside to give him room to pass. But with all this humility, and although they do all the work with ceaseless industry, and even the consolations of the most primitive religion are denied them,—for they are not even allowed to pray, since they are generally supposed to possess no souls,—nevertheless an angry woman is one of the things most dreaded in Aino-land. The variety of epithets and bad names for an offending person which she has at her command is really startling. She does not scruple to make faces at and otherwise annoy and frighten any one who may have incurred her anger; and the men are terribly afraid of a woman in this state of mind, for there seems hardly any end to the vindictive performances with which she will afflict a man who has displeased her, especially if he be her husband. The worst thing she can do is to hide or destroy his "god-sticks." The deities can hardly be supposed to know who makes away with the sacred symbols, and a man who neglects his *inao* becomes an outcast. The gods deserting him, men follow suit. But women, continually repressed, and allowed no part in religion, probably become at times so reckless as to fear neither gods nor men. Indeed, suicides among them are not uncommon. After early youth they are by no means to be compared with the men in fine appearance. Many girls are handsome, but the women of middle age are characterized by a stolidly dull expression of indifferent and weather-beaten resignation.

Long ago, in the first days when travelers caught glimpses of Aino women, it is not strange that they were described as wearing mustaches, since from a short distance away the heavy blue-black tattooing about the lips gives exactly that effect. The process of producing such mouth-decoration is described as exceedingly painful; but the Aino women have borne it heroically, sustained by their certainty that it is beautifying. Horizontal slashes are made with a sharp knife, crossed by slanting cuts very close together, and subsequently opened wider. The coloring-matter, made from the soot of birch-wood scraped from the bottom of an iron kettle, is then rubbed in unflinchingly, and afterward washed with water in which ash-bark has been soaked to produce an indelible stain. For two or three days the

¹ There is a marked difference between the music of this nation and that of the Japanese. Generally major instead of minor, it is entirely melodious to Western ears.

lips are so swollen and sore that speaking or attempting to eat is almost impossible. Many women have their hands, wrists, and arms similarly treated, showing permanent rings and bracelets in every available spot; and I

tiful dark eyes are shaded by long, thick eyelashes. In the younger generation, too, the luxuriant black hair is sometimes simply coiled instead of being cut in the singularly awkward native way—perfectly short at the



ENGRAVED BY H. DAVIDSON.

AINO WOMAN (SHOWING TATTOOED UPPER LIP) CARRYING CHILD IN JAPANESE FASHION.
THE HEAD-BAND SUPPORTS ANOTHER BURDEN IN THE ROLLED-UP MAT.

saw a few with ornamented foreheads. Tattooing was forbidden by the Japanese government about eleven years ago; and while not absolutely suppressed, it must be done surreptitiously, and is far less general than formerly.

Young Aino girls are often attractive. Their clear, somewhat brunette skin shows a warm russet red in the cheeks, and beau-

back of the head half-way to the top, and standing out thickly on each side like a big hearth-brush. The profile and rear views are rather absurd. Aino women have handsome teeth, white and even, and they do not blacken them, as a former Japanese fashion decreed for the married women of that nation. Inordinately fond of jewelry, of whatever material, the richest woman is she



DRAWN BY EDWARD POTTHAST.

AN AINO VILLAGE.

who owns the largest number of necklaces. These are made of large porcelain or stone beads, with big circular ornaments suspended from them—sometimes pieces of leather studded with bits of brass or German silver. The beads are undeniably picturesque, many being of a brilliant turquoise blue, and oddly mottled ones brought from Saghalin, the penal island of Russia. The necklaces are worn at bear-feasts, when everything is in gala array for the only great occasions of the Aino year.

Bear festivals, now becoming rarer, are the opera, theater, afternoon tea, reception, and dinner-party of the Ainos. Shooting bears with poisoned arrows, like tattooing the mouth, has now been forbidden by the government. The poison with which the hollow groove in the arrow-head was filled was made from a combination of the brains of crows, tobacco-ashes, and two kinds of insects—one of them the *krombi*, a water-insect found attached to sticks and stones; the other called *yonsike*. In early spring, when the deep snows of a Yezo winter are yet hard upon the ground, the mighty Aino hunter

sets forth upon the only pursuit which seems to him worthy of manly attention. After the bear has been killed, either in its den, where it lies still partly torpid, or just outside, having been annoyed into emerging, or in the pit where it has been decoyed, the hunters make profound obeisance to this object of their admiration. Upon returning to the village, the whole scene is related realistically to those left behind, while the deities are praised for their gracious presence, which brought success to the hunt, and sake is taken in unlimited quantities with the bear's meat at the great feast.

Getting stupidly drunk upon sake is, indeed, the chief vice of this otherwise amiable and harmless race. It is said of the Aino men that nine out of ten are sake drunkards. Fortunately, the women are not considered worthy to receive enough of the precious liquid to reduce them to any such state.

Bear-cubs are often taken alive, nourished, and brought up by the women in the same way as very young infants. This curious cus-

tom, stated by some travelers, has been as vigorously denied by others; but Esashi held many eye-witnesses to its reality. When the baby bear gets too large to be a safe playmate in the house, a great entertainment is made, guests are invited, even from distant villages, and the women are arrayed in all the pomp of jewelry and beads, some going so far, it was asserted, as to wash their hands. The men put on their head-dresses of shavings, and the sacred sticks of willow wood are placed in the hearth as offerings to the gods. The little bear is then killed in a very cruel manner, after the situation has been explained and his pardon asked for doing away with him. Sake is again drunk to excess, much as during the other bear-feast, and for two or three days scenes of revelry prevail.

There are no roads outside the villages in northern Yezo, no jinrikisha,—those most fascinating man-power carriages,—no kago, or swinging cars, and no side-saddles; nevertheless, while the astronomers were adjusting apparatus and testing object-glasses, my exploring expeditions went on,

though in a primitive method. The country is thickly covered with scrub bamboo, very tough, and breast-high, through which a few foot-paths have been worn; but the beach at low tide forms the best road, and many a mile of Kitami sands has felt the galloping feet of my rough little Yezo pony as I traversed the country from one village to another.

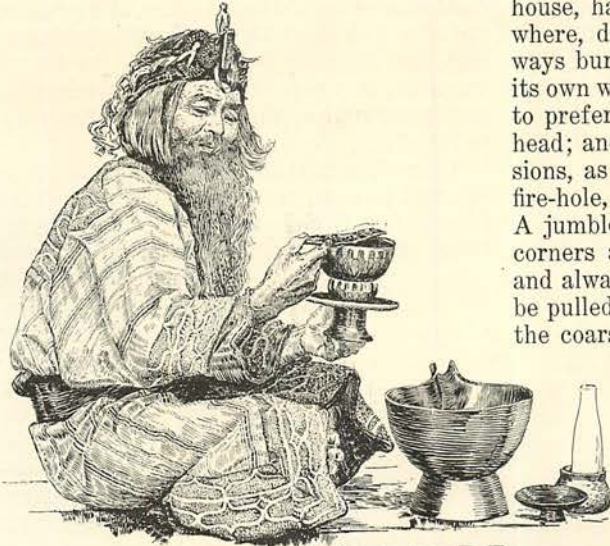
The Hokkaido horses themselves deserve a separate word. They seem to possess an abundance of good qualities which their appearance would scarcely justify one in anticipating. Ordinarily they can use two gaits, a short, quick trot,—rather an indiscriminate sort of scramble,—and a smooth gallop, rapid and comfortable. Both Aino and Japanese are fearless and skilful riders along the narrow paths through the tall undergrowth.

Casual travelers visiting Aino villages in the more accessible parts of the island, with an ordinary Japanese guide, see little of the striking race customs; but a friend of ours at Esashi had been for many years governor of a Hokkaido province. He is not only thor-



DRAWN BY G. M. CARPENTER.

INTERIOR OF AINO HOUSE, WITH AINO MAN AND WOMAN, THE LATTER WEARING THE CEREMONIAL BEAD NECKLACE.



DRAWN BY MALCOLM FRASER.

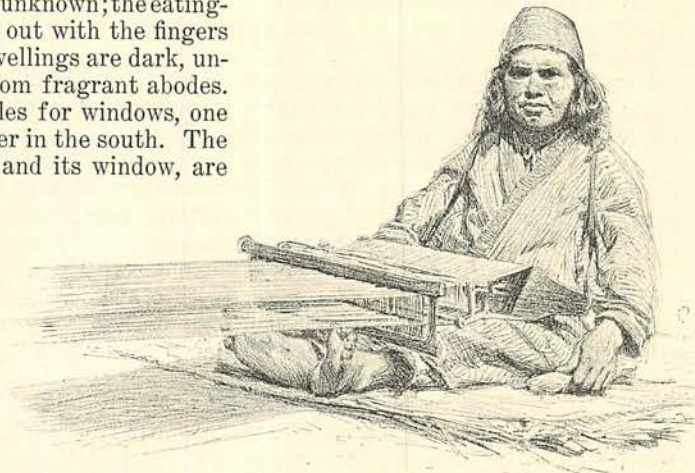
AINO DRINKING SAKE.

oughly familiar with the nation, but has a personal acquaintance with every individual Aino within a radius of many miles. Giving me most generously of his time and his influence with these retiring people, as well as of his skill in speaking their isolated language, my facilities for acquiring an unusual acquaintance with their curious habits were of the best. Coming with their special Japanese friend and master, I was treated more as an honored guest than as an inquiring stranger full of doubtful intentions. Everything of possible interest was joyfully brought forth.

The dirtiness of the Ainos, both personally and in their houses, is quite as phenomenal as the cleanliness of the Japanese. Bathing and washing utensils are unknown; the eating-bowls are merely wiped out with the fingers after a meal; and the dwellings are dark, uncomfortable, and far from fragrant abodes. Each has two small holes for windows, one in the east side, the other in the south. The east end of the house, and its window, are sacred; and outside is a row of poles upon which the master of the house has stuck the skulls of animals killed in the hunt, among them many inao, in honor of the numerous deities whose aid is constantly invoked. The raised part of the floor, like an ordinary Japanese

house, has its square or rectangular hole where, during my visits, fagots were always burning. The smoke, supposed to find its own way out of a hole in the roof, seemed to prefer loitering among the beams overhead; and the medley of household possessions, as well as the drying fish above the fire-hole, was draped inches deep with soot. A jumble of domestic debris usually lay in corners and about the sides of the room, and always piles of elm-fiber (*atsu*), ready to be pulled apart into threads and woven into the coarse cloth (*attush*) worn by both men and women. This wood-fiber is obtained from two kinds of elm, *Ulmus montana* (*ohiyo*), and *Ulmus campestris* (*akadama*).

During one of my rides a number of rivers had to be crossed, either by fording or by a flat-bottomed boat pulled over by a rope. One village of about twenty houses was close to a stream; and as we rode directly to the ferry in order to get as soon as possible to a Japanese house, a mile or two beyond, for luncheon, several thickly bearded men followed to watch, and perhaps to assist, the embarkation, while a handsome girl ran after to beg that we should stop on the return; for she must see the foreign lady, and feared no other would ever visit the village. A withered old crone, bent quite double, and walking with much difficulty by the aid of a long staff the curiously carved top of which reached high above her head, hobbled after, giving voluble directions to the men about getting us over the river. Quite different from the expres-



DRAWN BY EDWARD POTTHAST.

AINO WOMAN WEAVING CLOTH FROM ELM-FIBER THREADS.

sion of the older women generally, her face had a keen, cunning, almost sinister look, and her bushy white hair stood out on both sides as if electrified. Huge hoops of German silver ornamented her ears, and a broad brass bracelet her tattooed arm. Her mouth, too, was heavily tattooed, and she held her elm-fiber robe tightly together with one shriveled hand. Her small, sharp eyes followed us across the river and after we had struck into a quick gallop on the beach beyond.

A weird fascination hung about her, and fortunately, in returning, a hard shower compelled us to take shelter in the house where she seemed to live. About were grouped daughters and granddaughters, both generations with babies strapped upon their backs Japanese fashion, and all but the youngest girls displaying the disfiguring blue-black stripes about the lips. Fagots burned, as usual, in the square hole, and about it lay a number of lazy Aino men. The whole household made way politely for the drenched foreigner and her companions; after hats and gloves had been taken to the fire to be dried, tea and sweetmeats were produced. One of the younger girls promised to give an Aino dance; but afterward, overcome by shyness, she slipped away. Several women were sewing characteristic figures, cut from blue Japanese cotton, upon aprons and kimonos of elm-fiber; and one was weaving the woody cloth itself in a primitive loom the parts of which were handsomely carved.

It was a strange scene—the dark room, the fitfully flickering fire, the idle men with their noble faces, the industrious women working by the firelight or leaning toward the faint light coming in at the open door from the clouded day without, the visitors in the midst of them, treated as honored guests, yet not disturbing the family routine.

Sharp-nosed dogs with beautiful, thick yellow coats peered in at the door, while just outside the dripping horses waited to be remounted, ready to resume their miscellaneous scramble or the free, wild gallop back to Esashi.

The native implements are of much interest, and have sometimes been handed down from parent to child through several generations. Frequently a family has only one of

each article, and that highly prized, which accounts largely for the prevailing disinclination to sell their possessions. To buy any of the utensils, ornaments, or treasures from an Aino house requires tact and diplomacy even more than that necessary in purchasing old mahogany or blue china from some unwilling but hesitating elderly woman on a lonely New England country road. My knowledge of the Aino tongue being even less than my familiarity with the Japanese, I left all these little amenities to my friend, only telling him that I would buy everything they were willing to sell. The result of his persuasiveness, and the promise of unlimited sake as well



DRAWN BY MALCOLM FRASER.

ONE OF THE TRIBE.

as the purchase-money, are a miscellaneous collection of Aino robes of elm-skin, and one of highly ornamental salmon-skin, bows and poisoned arrows, weaving apparatus with a strip of cloth, carved mustache-lifters, tobacco-boxes, knife sheaths and handles, and a sort of rude stringed instrument. He also induced them to part with other dearly cherished heirlooms; and one or two very old pieces of Japanese lacquer, made for Aino use, have found their way to a distant land, as well as many simpler utensils of white-birch bark. The larger part of this collection has been sent to Professor Morse at the Peabody Museum in Salem.

Contrary to the usual custom, one woman

thought she would like some money, and rather sadly, yet with much pride, brought forth a box containing five bead necklaces. She was certainly a person of great consequence. She fingered her possessions lovingly, looking regretfully at her cherished riches, though allowing me to examine them, while she said softly, in her curious native tongue, that the foreign lady might take her choice. Personally she would undoubtedly have been satisfied with little money; but an old Japanese man in the village, of much apparent authority, sent word to her that, as he had originally purchased the beads before she had come into possession of them, he would tell her their exact worth. Whereupon he proceeded to estimate the value, bead by bead, producing a result which made the gentle Aino woman open her soft brown eyes in amazement under their long lashes, and was the cause of considerable discouragement in the breast of the would-be purchaser. I finally brought them away, and with them two "god-sticks"—the inao already mentioned; not idols, but offerings to the gods. Maple and willow are commonly used for these, one end being converted into long curly shavings, either pulled apart in a fluffy mass, or kept in different sorts of careful ringlets. The fluffy one is dedicated to the god of fire; the smoothly curled one to the god of the mountain. They refused money for these sticks, which are made with some sort of sacred ceremony, but signified their entire willingness to accept a few quarts of sake and rice. These luxuries, dedicated to the gods in whose honor the sticks were made, are rededicated, after a sufficient time has elapsed, to the service of the master of the house and his friends in a more practical way.

Well-to-do families have one, two, or several round cases made of old Japanese lacquer, in which is kept everything of great value. When misfortune overtakes him, the owner of these covered boxes will part with them only at the very last, and an

Aino will often work a whole year to purchase one. The Ainos near Esashi had quite taken me to their innocent hearts, and every day several came with one thing and another, learning that I really enjoyed their utensils and ornaments. When an old woman appeared at the eclipse station carrying one of these precious round lacquer cases, with permission for me to buy it, I felt that I had indeed won their affection.

The Ainos are very superstitious, and fortune-telling prevails, not by lines in the palm, but in ways quite as picturesque, and doubtless not less effective. After dark the fire is extinguished, and two small bamboo sticks, crossed and tied together, are laid before the fortune-teller, who begins to pray aloud. Before long, so an intelligent Aino told me seriously, the bamboo sticks stand upright, unaided, and by some of the more devout are said actually to dance, thus indicating that the spirit of the god has entered into them and is quite prepared to reveal the unknown. The fortune-teller is then moved to speak their fate for others in the assembly, who keep their heads devoutly bowed.

Medicines and care of the sick are recent innovations. When a person became

ill he simply wrapped up his head and lay down uncomplainingly to die, the chief attempt to circumvent fate being prayers to the gods, although certain plants were used in strange decoctions for familiar diseases. Superstitious ceremonies accompanied the drawing out of evil spirits, and charms were given to bring back the god of health.

When death has actually taken place, the subject is so full of horror that the people wish to forget it as soon as possible. Some necessary formalities have to be endured, for large household fires and feasts begin, crowds assemble, the chief treasures of the dead person are brought out, and countless god-sticks are made and placed about the body and the house. Finally the corpse is buried, and the survivors at once try to forget the place of burial, although sticks cut in the form of a



DRAWN BY MALCOLM FRASER.

AN OLD AINO CHIEFTAIN.

spear, for a man, are placed at the grave; but the Ainos will not tell where their dead are buried, and it is a remarkable ethnological collection which can boast a "grave-post" or an Aino skull. Each grave is in a separate locality, far away in the forest, or among the mountains; and so great is the fear of ghosts that the graves are almost never visited. The posts are apt to disappear soon, and the whole matter is covered with oblivion.

As an Aino stands in deadly terror of an angry woman, so he fears nothing so much as the ghost of an old woman, thought to be full of maliciousness and power for evil. A sort of belief in a personal immortality is thus shown to be inherent. Some of his certainties about a future existence would be of decided interest to the psychical societies. Few tribes remaining will, it seems to me, so well repay study, yet there are few of whom so little can be known. With no written language there can be no reliable records, and their own dread of speaking of the dead is an impediment to the accurate transmission of verbal history.

Unavoidably the Ainos are being pushed to the wall by the keen and brilliant Japanese, and it has been well said that they live "a

petrified life." The situation is not without parallel in our own relation to the Indians. Yet the Japanese government makes wise laws for the protection of the Ainos, and acts toward them in an altogether civilized manner. A society exists in Sapporo for their assistance, which numbers among its members several distinguished Japanese scholars.

One result only is inevitable from the collision of two races, where one is mentally inferior and the other is masterfully conscious of itself. Although the latest census gives the number of Ainos as about seventeen thousand,—a slight gain over the previous year,—the impression seems to be generally prevalent that they are steadily dying out. Half-breeds, Aino and Japanese, rarely survive the second or third generation. The race evidently lacks force, and will be entirely unable to hold its own in the march of nations. The bears are decreasing in number; tattooing, using poisoned arrows, and other characteristic customs, are forbidden by law, and will soon be only matters of tradition. The gradual extinction of an entire race will be one of the pathetic features of further development of the Hokkaido.

COLE'S OLD ENGLISH MASTERS.

GEORGE ROMNEY, THE PAINTER OF "THE PARSON'S DAUGHTER" (1734-1802).¹

BY JOHN C. VAN DYKE.

ROMNEY has always cut a rather romantic figure in English art, because of his lively spirit, his wayward imagination, his mingled strength and weakness, his promise of things never fulfilled. Of all the English painters he was the most mercurial in temperament, the most swayed by personal feeling. Restraint was not a word in his vocabulary. He had an impetuous way of throwing principles to the dogs which seems to have been placed to his credit as artistic righteousness, and an impatience of effort that his admirers have naïvely accepted as proof of peculiar genius. As for laws, he made them unto himself as the wind blew, and changed them again as the wind blew; and the only certain thing about him was

his uncertainty. A Euphorion-like fancy carried him along whither it would. Sometimes its drift was right, sometimes it was wrong; but, right or wrong, Romney was always being blown from one extreme to another. There was no such thing as repose in his life, and no man counted him happy till he was dead. The contrast with his two great contemporaries seems to emphasize his fickleness: for Sir Joshua was a character with a philosophy, and Gainsborough was a temperament under control; but Romney was largely an impulse.

He came out of the north of England, having been born at Dalton, in Lancashire, December 15, 1734. His father was a cabinet-maker, and wished his son to follow him; but the boy would be a painter, and so, at nineteen, he was apprenticed to Steele, a

¹ See the frontispiece of THE CENTURY for May, 1898, and that of the present number.