

we saw him approaching the house. My host, with a look of considerable annoyance, rose to receive him. He was a young and pleasant-looking man.

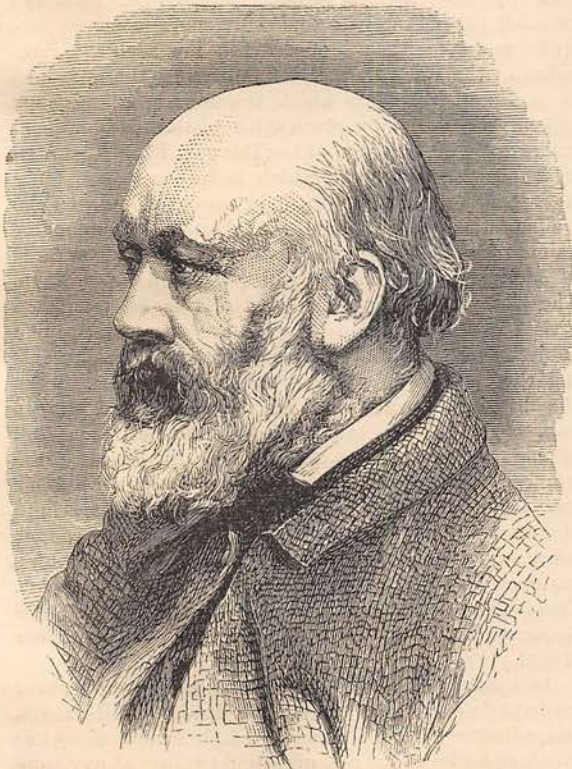
"Ah, Mynheer Van Deck, bonjour," he said. "You have in your house, I am given to understand, a foreigner, supposed to be an English spy. I am come to demand him from you."

"I am the person to whom you allude, monsieur," I said, rising from my seat and going forward. "You are, however, wrongly informed. I am an Englishman, but not a spy. I landed, not knowing that this part of the island was in possession of the French, and had I not been detained I should have returned to my ship."

"I am not here to dispute the point, monsieur," he said, bowing politely. "I must perform my duty, and that is to convey you with me to Cheribon, where my superior officers will investigate the matter. You have supped, I conclude; we will therefore take advantage of the cool of the evening, and make good as much of our journey as the waning day will allow us to perform."

My Dutch friend shrugged his shoulders. There was not much time for consideration. I saw that I had no resource but to obey, though I must own that I did so with a very bad grace.

JOHN PHILLIP.



Among the artists of our own time there has been none who rose more steadily and deservedly to reputation than the late John Phillip. His merit was emphatically of that sterling kind which never achieves fame by a sudden stroke, because it does not appeal to the half-educated eye, and will not play fast and loose with artistic truth in order to win popular favour. But it was of a kind that was sure to make its way among those best qualified to judge, and who are the natural

and rightful leaders of public opinion. Thus it was that, although Phillip did not at any time "take the town by storm," as some now nearly-forgotten celebrities have done, he yet advanced regularly from good to better, and from better to best—never, during the whole of his too short career, retrograding a single step—and eventually took his right place in the very foremost rank of his profession, that place being assigned him not merely by the applause of his countrymen, who hailed with delight every fresh production of his genius, but also by the concurring suffrages of his brethren and rivals in art. Any time during the last twenty years it has been evident to all competent judges that he was pursuing his upward course with undeviating certainty, and that he was destined, if he lived, to attain to the greatest eminence. His contributions to the Royal Academy were anticipated with eager interest, and were received year after year with more lively admiration and ever warmer praise. Such praise and admiration were richly due, because his works, his later ones especially, embodied the highest excellencies of the limner's art: in design simple and tender, playful or serious, romantic or humorous, according to the nature of the subject, they were always marvellous in their execution, revealing the possession of a power in the management of his material such as few artists ever attain, and which none of his contemporaries could fairly claim to rival. The colouring of his later works—those which he produced after studying the best specimens of the Spanish school—may be worthily classed with that of Velasquez, whose manner he seems to have studied carefully, while he as carefully steered clear of mere surface and technical imitation. In his Spanish pictures the atmosphere and general tone are as Spanish as the figures, while the entire subject is invariably rendered with a force and vigour equal to, and sometimes surpassing, that of the old Spanish masters themselves. This result of study is the more remarkable, that Phillip's earliest works, which we can recall to mind as they were exhibited nearly thirty years ago, gave little or no intimation of this dormant power.

John Phillip, one of the artists of whom Scotland has reason to be proud, was born at Aberdeen in April, 1817. His parents were of humble origin, and without the means of cultivating the talent for art, of which he gave promising indications very early in life. They apprenticed him, however, to a painter and glazier in his native town, and while following this craft the boy appears to have made his first attempt at oil painting, and to have produced some portraits, probably executed with house-painting materials, affording unmistakable evidence of a capacity for art which wanted but the opportunity to be developed. Mr. G. Huntley Gordon, writing in the "Athenæum," states that his father, the late Major Pryse Gordon, was the first to discover Phillip's genius. The boy, he tells us, had been sent by his master to the major's house to put in a pane of glass, being strictly charged to get the job done before that gentleman should come down to breakfast. But when the major came down he found that nothing had been done, and he accordingly reproved the lad for his idleness, when the latter, somewhat shamefacedly it may be assumed, excused himself on the ground that he had not really been able to take his eyes off the pictures that hung in the room. It was not surprising that the major should feel interested in such a youth, or that he should stretch out a hand to befriend him. Ere long he gave him a letter to

Lord Panmure, recommending the bearer of it to his lordship's favourable notice. The reply was characteristic: in it Lord Panmure undertook the charges of Phillip's education as an artist, urging his friend the major to use all diligence in freeing the lad from his present engagements, "to be prompt and spare no expense," and enclosing at the same time a cheque for £50. "Thus," says Mr. Gordon, "was Phillip made comfortable during his academical studies, and for some time after, until commissions began to flow in upon him."

In the summer of 1834 Phillip, then in his eighteenth year, came up on a holiday trip to London, to see the annual exhibitions. At that date he must have seen the works of Wilkie, of Collins, of Turner, and of Constable, on the walls of the Royal Academy Exhibition, and he doubtless drew from them incentives to sedulous labour and study. Three years later he came again to London, and this time remained in town two years, residing near Fitzroy Square, and entering himself as a student at the Royal Academy, and even sending some of his own productions (portraits) to the exhibitions of 1838 and 1839. He appears to have had from the first great facility in portraiture, and he continued to practise this branch of his art, of which he had formed a high estimate, to the end of his life. What were his first essays at subject painting does not appear, but he sent his first picture of this class, "Tasso in Disguise relating his Persecutions to his Sister," to the Royal Academy Exhibition in 1840, where it failed to attract attention or excite remark, being hung with the miniatures and water-colours in the architectural room.

The next seven years of his life Phillip passed in his native city, earning a competence by his portraits and his subject pictures of Scottish social life, the majority of them illustrating events connected with the Kirk of Scotland, to which he always showed a partiality, and one of which, the "Presbyterian Catechising," first brought him into notice in London. This picture he exhibited on his return to town in 1847, and from that date he sent his compositions regularly to the Academy, not always reaping the encouragement he deserved, but working on with energy unsubdued, and maintained by the inward conviction that the success he aimed at would be won. His exhibited pictures for the next few years were, "A Scotch Fair," in 1848; "Drawing for the Militia," in 1849; "Baptism in Scotland," in 1850; "Scotch Washing," and "The Spae Wife," in 1851.

Phillip's health was never very robust, and about this time it showed evident symptoms of giving way; he was advised, therefore, to leave England for some more genial climate, at least for a time, until the unfavourable symptoms should disappear or abate. Most English artists, when thus exiled by necessity, betake themselves to Italy as the land of art, and to Rome as the home of the artist. If Phillip had done the same, it is possible that he would never have won the fame that has crowned his life, although he would not have failed to distinguish himself. Happily for himself, and for the arts of England, his inclinations led him to Spain, where he took up his residence in Seville, remaining there several months, during which his health improved, while he industriously sketched the various features of Spanish life, and laid up a rich store of materials for future use. The result of his studies in Spain was strikingly manifest in two pictures which he sent to the Academy in 1853—"La Perla de Triana," and "Life among the Gipsies at Seville;" and still more re-

markably in two exhibited in the following year, one being the portrait of Lady Como Russell, and the other "The Spanish Letter-writer," which he painted for the Queen. He made no secret of the fact that he had adopted the method of the Spanish painters, and was pleased when the remark was made that the influence of Velasquez was clearly traceable in his work. Indeed he had intended nothing less, for he had studied the manner of that great painter with the determination that it should become his own, and he copied some of his finest pictures as closely as they could be copied—executing such tasks, it is said, with incredible rapidity, to the utter amazement of the native students who watched him as he worked.

Phillip repeated his visits to Spain from time to time, and during the remaining years of his life continued to enrich our home collections by the production of a series of unrivalled pictures, chiefly of Spanish subjects, which were received by the public with almost unvarying delight and commendation. Among the most remarkable of the Spanish pictures were, "The Gipsy Musicians of Spain," of which we give an engraving; the "Aqua Bendita," a picture beyond all praise, both as to design and execution; the "Boy Murillo selling his Pictures in the Market-place;" and the grand touching picture, "La Gloria, a Spanish Wake," a large canvas flooded with light, alive with the forms of mingled revelry and sorrow, and evidencing in every part the wondrous power and facility of hand the painter had by this time acquired. Alternating with the Spanish subjects were occasionally some masterly portraits, and some themes of Scottish life, such as "Sunshine in the Cottage," and "Collecting the Offerings in a Scottish Kirk," which the reader will perhaps remember; and two remarkable pictures of national interest, "The Marriage of the Princess Royal," painted by order of her Majesty, which picture has been truly described as the best pageant picture ever hung on the walls of the Academy; and the "House of Commons," painted for the late Speaker, which drew such crowds of admiring spectators around it a season or two ago. The last pictures from the easel of this distinguished artist—at least, so it is stated—are two fine Spanish subjects, relating to the national lottery, one representing the purchase of the tickets, the other the results of the drawing. In the first, the crowd are thronging to buy, eager to get their lucky numbers, and all hoping to win; in the second, the die is cast; the winners who laugh are few, and the losers with their long faces are many. In both of them there is a fund of humour and character, and of covert yet caustic satire; and both are distinguished by the painter's customary strength of colour and vigour of treatment. These two pictures were exhibited, not at the Royal Academy, but by the Messrs. Agnew, during the summer of last year.

As a man, John Phillip was genial and generous, ever ready to do a kindness to others. He hated bickerings, and resentments, and quarrels of all kinds, almost as much as he loved his art, and would rather at any time make a concession not due from him than risk a disagreement. The circumstances of his death were as sad as the event was unexpected. He was sitting as a guest with a brother artist, conversing on the subject he liked best, when he was struck by paralysis. He was taken home speechless, and never rallied, but died after a few days, on the 27th of February, 1867, having nearly completed his fiftieth year.

John Phillip was elected Associate of the Academy in 1857, and a Royal Academician in 1859.