From the Picture by] THE FERRY, NORTH HOLLAND. *[G. H. Boughton, R.A.*
(City Art Gallery, Manchester.—By permission.)

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Illustrated Interviews.

LXXI.—MR. GEORGE HENRY BOUGHTON, R.A.

By Rudolph de Cordova.

THE painter of Hope—I had almost written poet—for there is in all Mr. Boughton's work that subtle suggestion of emotional aspiration which is the hall-mark of all inspired poetry, and, indeed, of all inspired work. It is not with him so much the theme as the way in which it is presented which gives the peculiar impression to his art, whatever the medium; for, as everyone knows, Mr. Boughton is as exceptional a worker in pastel as he is in oil.

"That is the most comfortable chair," said Mr. Boughton, indicating it, when he had received me in his beautiful studio the day I called on him for the purpose of this interview.

"You had better have it," I replied, with a smile.

His smile answered mine as he sat down. "It's just the chair for this operation, and you are just like a photographer who puts two cold things behind one's ears and says, 'Please look pleasant.'"

I shivered at the suggestion, and drew closer to the fire. There was a pause while I warmed my fingers, and Mr. Boughton got into a reminiscent mood.

MR. G. H. BOUGHTON, R.A.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

"I am here for you to talk," I said; "please begin."

"I began near Norwich," said Mr. Boughton, with another smile, "but I remember nothing of my life there, for I was only two when I was taken to America with my people, who went with 'bag and baggage, scrip and scrippage.' Not only my own folk, but a number of others we knew went too, so it was almost like the pilgrimage of the early settlers of New England. When I was quite a little chap I had a serious accident, and the top of my head was nearly knocked off. I was not allowed to do anything, and, to amuse me, one of my elder brothers used to take me on his knee and teach me how to draw elephants. Elephants, sailors, and wild Indians were my passion in those days, and I used to copy them so that I could draw them pretty well and not childishly when I was only five. When I went to school, the first thing I did was to draw Indians and things on my slate, and on the slates of my admiring fellow-pupils. They were determined that my art efforts should not perish beneath the effacing sponge, so they cut them in with a knife. The result was that, as every boy wanted his slate decorated in a similar manner, I decorated them all. The master, I regret to say, had no soul for art, for when he saw them he asked at once who had done them. The boys with one accord shouted 'Boughton'; there was nothing mean about them. They had the pictures, and I had the thrashings resulting from them—five thrashings. The result was that I fainted. The master was frightened and sent at once for my eldest brother. My brother came, and when he found out what had happened he said to the master, 'Now let us see what you used on him,' and to the delight of the boys he proceeded to thrash him with the weapon he had used on me.

From the Picture by THE EDICT OF WILLIAM THE TESTY. [*G. H. Boughton, R.A.*

(Knickerbocker History of New York.)

Small variation of large picture in Corcoran Gallery of Washington.—By permission.

"I need hardly say that after that episode I ceased attending school—that school.

"At the next place I curbed my ardour in the matter of carving, but I used to draw every mortal thing that came under my notice. One day a kindly relative gave me a silver half-dollar (two shillings). It seemed an awful lot of money to me, for I had never had more than a few coppers, and what I was to do with such a fortune puzzled me. 'Buy something useful,' said a friend. 'I should get a book if I were you.' 'The very thing,' I thought; another advised a history

YOUNG SHAKESPEARE AND ANN HATHAWAY BY THE AVON. [By permission.
From the Picture by G. H. Boughton, R.A.

book. I took my little sister with me, and walked into a bookseller's. 'We want a history,' we said.

"'History of what?' asked the shopman.

"*That* had never occurred to us.

"'History of England?' said the man.

"Thinking well of the idea, we asked, 'How much?'

"'Fifteen dollars,' he replied. The proprietor came up at this juncture, and thinking that my eight or nine years did not look like fifteen dollars' worth of history, asked how much money I had. When I told him, he suggested a natural history—ten cents—and produced the book. 'This—why this is a menagerie,' I said when I opened it and saw the pictures, but I took it, because I knew I should be able to use it for drawing purposes. Years afterwards I used to go to that same shop to buy drawing materials, and one day I saw a copy of the *Art Journal*, the price of which was then fifty cents. I saved up my pennies and bought copies at a time when only people who were well-to-do could afford the *Art Journal*."

"Did it influence you then?"

"Indeed, it did. It was at its best at that time, and it was publishing good things by Mulready, Turner, Constable, and Collins, and men of that stamp. It was the first *real* art publication I ever saw.

"Once again I had an accident, and I was not allowed to do anything. The best

surgeon in the town in which we lived was called in to see me, and when I was getting better he said I must not be excited in any way, and must not even read. 'May he draw?' asked one of my sisters. 'Yes,' said the doctor; 'can he draw?' And when my sister said I could he asked to see some of my work. My drawing-book was given to him. I had been to the theatre just before and had seen 'Black-Eyed Susan,' and drawn all the characters from memory. The surgeon, who was an enthusiastic art amateur, was delighted with the promise of the work, and took an interest in me from that day. He used to come for me to go drives with him on his rounds, and it was he who awoke the delight which exists in me for landscape and colour. He used to take me to the houses of his patients who had paintings, and they allowed me to see and study them, so that I really got a magnificent start."

"At that time I take it you had not formulated any idea of art as a career?" I ventured.

"No; on the contrary. When the question arose what I should be, whether I should be educated on classical or commercial lines, I selected the latter, and went to a commercial college for two or three years. The master was the kindest old man I had ever met in my life. He was interested in art, and he told my brother, for my parents were dead at the time, that I ought not to be allowed to waste my life in commerce. But, I confess, I never did waste any *gifts*, but some futile time in business.

"Just about this time two or three good landscape artists and one portrait painter were in the town, and my doctor friend got them interested in me. I went sketching landscapes with the former, and the portrait painter helped me and gave me hints, and was kindness itself. Then a curious thing happened. I was still at school, and I did not get much pocket-money. One day I bought a comic illustrated paper from New York. It invited paid contributions in art and humorous literature. I made a sketch and wrote a joke to go with it, and a friend, who was apprenticed to an engraver, got me a block. I drew my sketch on it, he engraved it, and we sent it to New York, with a letter asking if it would do. 'Yes,' replied the editor; 'it's splendid—the very thing I want.' We got six dollars for it, which meant three dollars each, and that was big pocket-money, I can tell you. I did not tell my brother, for he was inclined to be pious; but I assured him that it was all right, and that the money had come from work. We worked this oracle for two years, and I did sometimes two drawings a week; while, in addition, I used to write little things for the papers, for which they also paid. One fine day I went into a shop to buy some fishing-tackle. There I saw what appeared to me then to be some curious-looking things in a case, and I asked what they were.

"'Oil-colours in tubes,' said the shopman.

"That settled me. I didn't buy any fishing-tackle, but I bought what colours I could with my available cash and went tick for more, as well as for oil and millboards. Then I started off home and got an *Art Journal* on the way. In it there was a reproduction of the 'Market Cart,' by Gainsborough, which is now in the National Gallery. I copied it in oils, and two or three more pictures, and took them to the old boy at the shop, and showed him what I had done with his oil-colours."

"And he——?"

"He gave me unlimited credit," replied Mr. Boughton. "One day when I called he had a lovely big canvas in the shop for a painter with a big reputation, who had come to the town to do some work for a millionaire who lived there. 'Who's going to take that canvas up?' I asked. And when I was told it was waiting for the boy to come in for it, I said, 'Let me take it.' I was seventeen at the time. I took off my coat, shouldered the canvas, and went off with it. The painter, who was a fine-looking man, was in his shirt-sleeves too, and when I took it into his room he said, 'Put it down there.' There was a beautiful landscape, in a splendid frame, leaning against the easel at the time, and I went down on my hands and knees in order to get a better view of it. 'You're fond of pictures?' queried the painter.

"'Yes, very,' I replied, and my eyes were widely opened, taking it all in.

"'Do you see anything you'd like to suggest?' he asked, pleasantly.

"'The cows are not quite up to the rest, are they?' I asked, with the effrontery of youth.

"'You're quite right; cows are not my strong point,' he said.

"Then I awoke to the enormity of my boldness, and I dashed out of the room. Four or five days after the old man at the shop had a new oil sketch of mine. The painter went in and saw it, and it resulted in his asking me to go and see him, and for two or three weeks he took me under his wing."

THE VISION AT THE MARTYR'S WELL, BRITTANY. [By permission.
From the Pictur by G. H. Boughton, R.A.

Mr. Boughton stirred the fire quietly.

"And then?"

"I had a little money left to me just then, and the dream of my life was to go to Europe.

"One morning I went out for a walk and met a dear old friend for whom I had painted some pictures at about £4 each. We got talking, and without any leading up he said to me, 'Have you ever thought of going to Europe?'

"'I should think I have,' I answered.

"'How much do you think it would cost you to go for a year?'

"I replied I thought I could do it for £200, or I might possibly manage it for £150.

"He asked me if I had any money towards the scheme, and I said I had about £50.

"'Well, you can go to Europe whenever you want to,' he said; 'I will advance the rest of the money, and you can paint me three or four pictures when you come back.' I had gone out without the remotest idea of going to Europe, and I returned home and announced my intention to my astonished sisters, who would not believe it. My brother didn't want me to go either, and offered me a partnership in his business if I would stay, but when he saw that I was resolute he did the brotherly thing and put his hand into his pocket and added to my letter of credit. I came to England and stayed in London for three or four weeks, went to Scotland and Ireland, and returned to London and went to Norfolk, but nobody I saw knew me. The only thing I did was to paint out of doors and see pictures, and I took back

studies for the work I was to do for my friend."

"How long did you stay?"

"Six or eight months. I made inquiries about getting into the Royal Academy School, but there were so many preliminaries to be gone through then that I gave up that idea, especially as I wanted to be a landscape painter, and this I did later on.

"Almost as soon as I got back I painted 'A Wayfarer,' an old man at the side of a road. I offered it for £5, but nobody wanted it at that price. A friend said to me, 'Send it to the New York Art Union.' The question of price arose, and he said, 'Ask £10 for it, for they are sure to beat you down.' Another friend said, 'They won't think anything of you unless you ask £20 for it.' I sent the picture, and put £20 on it. In a little while there came a letter, taking the picture at my price, and they sent the money at the same time, thinking it might be of use to me. Out of gratitude I spent £2 in tickets, and I drew a picture, and a very good one too. Somebody asked me if I would sell it, and what I would take for it. I said, 'An offer,' and he offered £15 and got it, which was about its value, and I blessed the Art Union for a Mascot.

"The next step in my life was a rather curious one. It was the depth of winter, and it struck me that I had never seen a winter landscape painted just as I saw it. I went into a field and worked until I was so cold that I was on the point of giving up. Then the thought came to me, 'Stick to it—that is the only way pictures are ever done.' I stuck to it, and to my delight it did look different to the ordinary winter landscape. I sent it to the New York National Academy of Design. It was the first thing I offered them. It was called 'Winter Twilight.' In a little while I got a letter, saying it was accepted and hung. Then I began to think of going to New York to try my luck. I went. A friend hired a studio for me, and I sold or gave away everything I had and went to New York, with nothing but the clothes I stood up in, my sketching easel, seat, and paint-box. As soon as I arrived I met a friend, who said to me, 'You're in luck: your picture has been sold to R. L. Stuart, the great sugar manufacturer' (the Tate of the United States). That picture had been skied, but the President, Mr. Durand, saw it, and said, 'That is too good a thing to be put up there.' He always sent six or eight pictures, in order that he might have one or more removed in just such cases; and, indicating a frame of his of about the same size, he said to the hangers, 'Suppose you put that down here on the line.' He was a friend of Mr. Stuart, who had asked him to buy anything by any young man which struck him, and it was just a proof of my good luck."

"Your good painting," I interrupted.

"There was perhaps a little of that in it, I won't deny," replied Mr. Boughton. "It certainly was different from anything else, for they were not in the habit of really painting in the open air at that time.

"The next incident of my New York life was also curious. When I arrived one well-known painter had just died in straitened circumstances, and it struck his artist friends that they would each add a picture to an exhibition which was to be held for the benefit of his widow. I was asked if I would do something. I had an idea, and I began on it at once. The lines I had chosen as the subject of the picture——'The Haunted Lake' (supposed to be haunted by the spirit of an Indian girl)—were:—

> When all night long, by her firefly lamp,
> She paddles her white canoe.

"It was a moonlight swamp lighted by a greenish light. I really painted it because I saw a frame which I thought I should like to fill. The leading landscape painter of New York at that time, Mr. F. E. Church, who had a studio in the same building, came in one day to see me, and the picture was just in his vein. 'For whom are you doing that?' he asked. 'For the Ranney fund,' I replied.

"'Nonsense,' he said; 'you must not give that. Why, we are only doing sketches. I can get you £20, or perhaps even £40, for it.'

"'Then whoever wants it can pay that for it to the Ranney fund. I said I would give this, and I'm going to.' I was obstinate, and nothing could alter my determination. He bullied me and called me pig-headed, and told the incident to some of his millionaire cronies. The Press noticed it among the first pictures in the exhibition, and when the time came for it to be sold two men got bidding for it, and it was bought by Mr. August Belmont for several hundred dollars.

"That was the start. The incident got talked about, and commissions came in fluently to do little things of a mysterious character. I painted 'The Witching Time of Night' for Mr. Walters, of Baltimore, among others, and then it occurred to me that I could go

on repeating this sort of thing indefinitely without any advantage to myself artistically. I had made some money and I had more coming in, so I decided to go to Paris in order to study with Couture. It was late in the summer, and I had two letters of introduction to Mr. Edward May, Couture's chief pupil, one of the few private ones he ever had. With him I had a curious experience. I called on him one morning and he opened the door himself. I was the typical callow art student, and he was a splendid-looking fellow who looked more like a Field-Marshal than an artist. 'I have brought a letter from Mr. Wright,' I said (he was the man who bought Rosa Bonheur's 'Horse Fair').

"'Have you brought any money from him for me?' he said, angrily.

"'No,' I replied, simply; 'he merely sent this letter.'

"May stormed for a while, and then I took the

ARMED PILGRIMS GOING TO CHURCH IN NEW ENGLAND.

From the Picture by G. H. Boughton, R.A. [Municipal Library, New York.—By permission.

second letter from my pocket, and said, 'As you don't seem to care about that, here is another.' It was from a man who was no more in his good books. 'He came here once with a letter of introduction, and now he is pestering me with more letters of introduction,' said May, still more angry.

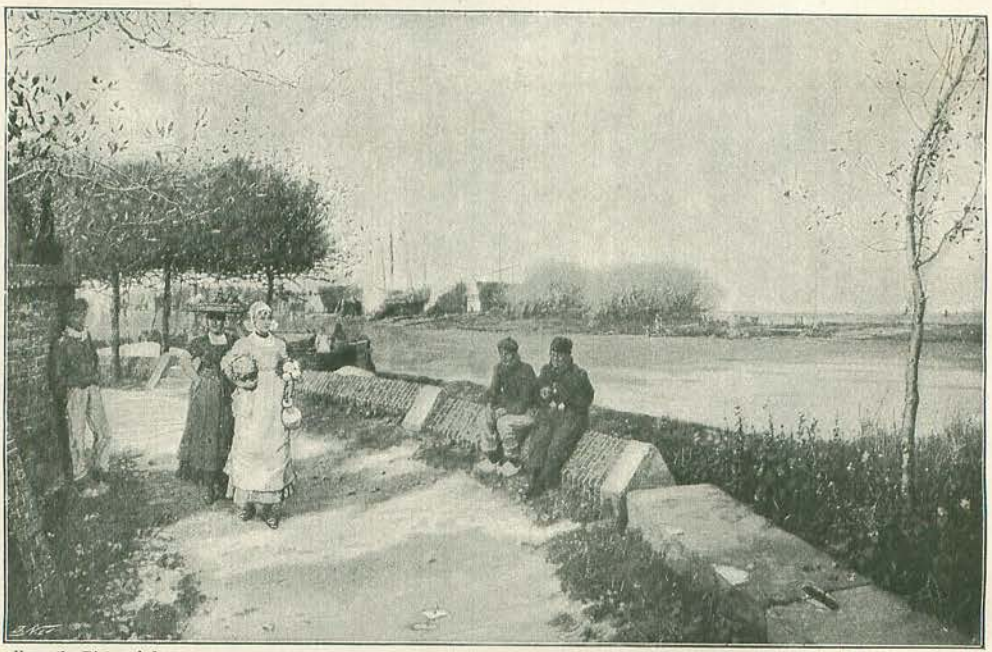
"'I didn't ask for these letters,' I said; 'I was asked to present them. I have done so, and when I go back I can say I have seen you,' and I turned on my heels.

"In a moment May had recovered from his unreasonable anger, and cried out: 'Here, come back, don't go like that; the fact of almost like a partner with my new wealth), and as I have just come from America I am flush.' At lunch he asked where I thought of studying, and I told him.

"'You can't study with Couture,' he said; 'he is in the country, and you'd better go there too, for no one is in Paris at this time of the year.'

"Then a bright idea occurred to me. 'If, pending the arrival of your remittance, four or five hundred francs are of any use to you, I will let you have them, with pleasure.'

"'You angel,' cried May; 'four or five hundred francs will be my salvation.' Then



From the Picture by] MINDEN, NORTH HOLLAND. *[G. H. Boughton, R.A.*

(Owned by Sir Wm. H. Wills, Bart.—By permission.)

the matter is, I was expecting a model who is sitting for the hands in a picture I am doing, and he hasn't come, and now the whole of my day is wasted.'

"'Oh, if that is all, I will sit for your hands,' I said, 'if they'll do for you,' and I held them up for his inspection.

"'Do? They're the very thing. They're better than the model's; just the long, slim fingers I want for my Priest.' So in I went, and I sat the whole morning for the hands and also for the head. When it came time for *déjeuner* he said, 'I can't ask you to lunch, as I really am working on tick myself at the restaurant, for I haven't any money.'

'Then, lunch with me,' I said; 'I have a letter of credit on the Rothschilds (I felt he went on to say that there was a studio next door to his which I could use. 'I will put you in there,' he said, 'and give you the same instruction that Couture would, and I will take you from the beginning.'

"The next morning I was installed, and he set me drawing from the cast. I did it at once, as it was easy enough. I had been a student in the Academy of New York.

"'Yes, you can draw pretty well,' he said; then he gave me a drawing from life to copy, and I did it right off, for I work very rapidly. Then I had a study in colour from the nude figure to copy, and I did that bang off, for it was as simple as saying 'Bon jour'; anyone could do it. All this took less than a week, and then I got

to the living model, working all the time on Couture's principle. At last one day May said to me: 'The rest is with yourself. You draw well enough now; you never will be a *perfect* draughtsman, nor will anyone else, but you must work alone for the future.'

"All that good luck came because I wasn't offended with his brusqueness. He was the making of me in Paris."

"How long were you there?"

"Altogether about eighteen months. Then I went to Écouen with Edouard Frère, a pupil of Paul Delaroche, who advised, criticised, and suggested, but wouldn't take a sixpenny-piece in payment for his work. He had several other students working with him, and we learnt from one another. Frère's method was to tell you general principles, which would apply to anything and everything, instead of fads of his own."

"This was about the time that du Maurier was in Paris, was it not?" I asked.

"No, it was just after du Maurier left, so that the Bohemianism of Paris which I saw was not that depicted in 'Trilby.' Nor was I entranced with much of the Bohemianism that I saw there. There is a great deal of glamour about it, but the glamour consists chiefly in the after-talking of it rather than the living of it. It consisted for the most part in spending all one's money as soon as one got it, without any thought for the morrow. They were not good specimens of Bohemians I met, from this point of view. They were all poor enough, goodness knows! but they all had a taste for work and sobriety. It was the time of the American War, and I was in with the American set, and at times it was pretty bad rations, I can tell you. We used to get our meals at a Crêmerie, and the old lady used to let us come cheap on condition that we came every day. Generally one or two men turned up with us who had nowhere to go for their dinner, and they fed on the co-operative plan. One man would go without his soup, another without his entrée, a third without his meat, a fourth would contribute his cheese, a fifth a bunch of grapes, and in that way the odd man would get his

From the Picture by] "FRAGILE." *[G. H. Boughton, R.A.*

(Owned by H. J. Walters, of Baltimore.—By permission.)

dinner for nothing. The old lady used to wink at it, and sometimes donate a dish of her own with her eyes full of tears of sympathy. The common people of France are very nice if they like you; but if they don't like you, you'd better be in the infernal regions. Écouen, and I took up my quarters in a cottage belonging to an old blind woman, about whom I wrote a story in *Harper's Magazine*. She was a wonderful character."

Mr. Boughton's mention of *Harper's* gave me the opening I wanted.

From the Picture by] IZAAK WALTON AND THE SINGING MILKMAIDS. *[G. H. Boughton, R.A.*
(Owned by Charles Stewart Smith, New York.—By permission.)

When I got to Paris it was Couture and Delacroix. They were the fashion, as much as it is the fashion among certain sets to turn up one's trousers in Piccadilly on a fine day and carry a stick upside down. There was only talk of those two and of nobody else. An American friend said to me, 'Do you believe in following slavishly what everyone else is doing?' I didn't; so we went to

"When did you first take to writing stories?" I asked.

"Before I began painting seriously, and when I was quite a small boy, I sent a story to one of the big Boston papers; it printed it, but omitted to send me any coin in exchange. As far as Harpers were concerned, they asked me to do a drawing. I did a scene from the life of one of the

Governors of New York, and as it needed some explanation in writing, I supplied it. Their representative over here then asked me to write a short story, and as I had some ideas for one I jumped at it. After that, as you know, came 'The Rambles in Holland,' which I never intended to do at all, for Mr. M. D. Conway was to have accompanied Mr. Abbey and me, and have written the account of it. When he didn't turn up Abbey and I agreed that we'd do the articles together. I was prevailed upon, however, to write the first one alone, and I did, just to see how it would do. We sent it to the publishers, and they said, 'Spin this out,' so I took the same theme and spun it out into three or four papers. It was great fun in Holland. I used to sketch and write as I went along. One morning I went out for a walk, and to my disgust when a long way from the hotel I found that I had no sketch-book. I went to a tallow-chandler's and got the only thing in the shape of a book they had, one for keeping accounts, and I found it one of the loveliest things to draw on, for the perpendicular lines were especially useful when it came to the architecture. It always strikes me as an interesting thing in connection with that visit to Holland that, after I took to painting the short cape with the stand-up collar, which is called the Medici cape, probably because it is not, its possibilities may have so appealed to the milliners that they made it fashionable in England.

"After the 'Rambles' came three or four more short stories for *Harper's* and two for the *Pall Mall Magazine*."

"And there are more stories still?" I inquired.

"Yes; whenever I get an idea I set it down, simply to prevent it bothering me. I sometimes write in my sketch-books, sometimes in penny account-books, and I work anywhere and everywhere; but I very rarely sit down to write, and very seldom write at night."

Then we got to talking of other things, and incidentally the question of photography in its relation to art came up. "Do you believe in photography as an aid to the artist?" I asked.

"If he hasn't got an eye and doesn't want to take trouble or time over his work, or if he doesn't get any fun out of sketching, then, perhaps, photography is of some use. But if it is great fun to take your pencil and go into your work, as it is to me, you get a quality which you cannot possibly obtain with a Kodak, a quality which I may call artistry. To me, individually, sketching is like sport, and I doubt if a sportsman would have much fun in getting a man to do his shooting or fishing for him. I did once buy a beautiful Kodak, but I never used it and I gave it away. I could not give up the use of my pencil, for by training one's observation one can get an effect with a line which no artificial aid could possibly produce. Besides, one's memory is stimulated, and I can remember in even unimportant sketches every bit of colour that the original picture contained."

"How do you set to work with your pictures?" I asked.

"Oh, that is impossible to say. The idea comes, you don't know how, and you don't know whence. It is there, and if you are wise you take it. Of course, I make studies, but my great method is to have no method except to keep on working. I have never begun two pictures in the same way in my life, so I don't think I shall ever get into a groove. With me, things grow so that they often finish quite differently from the way they were begun, and that is one of the great charms of the whole thing, for there is in it an element of surprise even to one's self. I certainly cannot set out knowing exactly what I am going to get, as I would if I were a bootmaker going to make a pair of boots."

From his own work the talk drifted to the work of other men and the men themselves. With regard to Millais, Mr. Boughton was peculiarly enthusiastic.

"I consider his was one of the greatest characters I have ever met. Millais's kindness and simplicity were marvellous, and not the least of his personal charms was that you could always depend on him. One night at the club du Maurier was speaking about different men's advice, and he said, 'If I had a difficulty with a piece of work and wanted advice about it I wouldn't go to Ruskin if he lived next door, but I'd rather take the most expensive cab and go off to Millais and Leighton, even if they were miles off.' That is typical of the painter's view of Millais, Leighton, and Ruskin.

"When I first met Millais he said some nice things about some birch trees which appeared in the picture I had just exhibited. He asked me to go and see him, as he was also painting some birch trees. When I got to the corner of the street in which he lived I saw a most gorgeous equipage at the door; 'gorgeous equipage' but faintly describes the sort of thing it was; I couldn't demean it by calling it a carriage or a vehicle. Millais

MILTON'S FIRST LOVE. [By permission.
From the Picture by G. H. Boughton, R.A.

came out dressed for walking and spoke to someone in the carriage, and, as if replying to a question, shook his head. This little pantomime went on for a couple of minutes, and then the carriage drove off and Millais started for his walk.

"'I really was going to call on you,' I said, when we met; 'but as you are going out I will come another day.' Again Millais shook his head. 'Wait till that blessed thing gets round the corner,' he said, with a smile; 'what do they know about half-finished pictures? I want you to see my work.' Then we went back and we talked for half an hour of the picture, which was afterwards known as 'Winter Fuel.'

"He was a great lover and admirer of children, and loved not only to talk of them, but to them. He used to say, 'People think lightly of men who devote themselves to painting children, but a man who can paint a baby can do anything, children are so delicate and so subtle in every way.'

"Millais would come to you whenever

you sent for him. If you were in a bother about your work he'd come in with his beautiful great presence, and say, after looking at it, 'Let's see! Oh, I'll tell you what is the trouble: give me a piece of chalk, or a pencil, or something,' and then he'd make the most beautiful drawing, correcting the action of a limb, or whatever else was wrong. I remember once I was painting the portrait of a little girl, and I couldn't get it like her. My wife was out shopping, and Millais met her and began talking to her. He asked after me, and my wife told him that I was worried about the picture, which I couldn't get right. 'I'll go up and see him,' said Millais.

"'Will you?' said my wife; 'that is the very thing of all others he'd like.'

"'Is he at home now? Do you think he'd see me?' asked Millais.

"'Of course he will,' Mrs. Boughton replied.

"He came; he looked at the picture. 'Oh, I know that girl,' he said. 'It's her mouth you've got wrong; give me a bit of pencil. This is the way her mouth goes,' and, as he said the words, he drew on a piece of paper the correct lines. 'That's the only thing wrong with it. Put that right, and you won't have any more trouble with it.' He was exactly like a doctor in his manner, and most soothing. The great thing about him which always impressed you was his clean mind and his sense of healthfulness. He was always like a healthy English squire who had lived all his life out of doors."

For Browning, whom he knew well, Mr. Boughton has also a great admiration. "Browning had the most marvellous memory I ever knew," he said, as we talked of him, "and could quote Milton, Shakespeare, Spenser, and a host of other poets by the page together. If one wanted a quotation for a picture, one had only to go to him, and he would be able to give the necessary lines without a reference to any book, and he'd reel them off letter-perfect. I remember once, though, a funny failure of his memory—the funnier because it was in one of his own poems. When the phonograph was first brought over to London it was being shown at the house of an artist, and we were all asked to speak something into the receiver. Browning modestly declined for a time, but we egged him on, and at last someone said, 'Quote some lines from one of your own poems,'

"'I know those least of all,' he replied, with a smile, and eventually he said he thought he knew 'How they brought the good news from Aix to Ghent' better than he knew anything else. He began splendidly:—

> We sprang to the saddle, and Joris and he;
> I galloped, Dirk galloped, we galloped all three;
> We—we—we; we—we—we!

"'Upon my word, I've forgotten my own verses,' he exclaimed, and stopped there. Somebody prompted him; he took up the thread again, but he couldn't get on any farther.

"He apologized, but the owner of the phonograph declared that the cylinder was more valuable to him on account of the breakdown than if the poet had recited it right through.

"One night Wilkie Collins, William Black, Millais, Browning, and I were dining all together at the Reform Club. Browning began telling a story from an old Florentine poem. It took him between twenty minutes and half an hour, and we sat open-mouthed, like children, listening to the wonderful rhythm of the words and entranced by the marvellous power of the speaker. It was all impromptu, but some time afterwards Black referring to it said, 'Do you know, that might have been taken down verbatim, and it would have stood as splendid literature without a single alteration of a word!'

"But there was another side to Browning, which came out at the same dinner. We were talking about the disappearance of the commercial or advertising poet whose verses were used to proclaim the superiority of his employers' wares. 'How funny those were,' said Browning, and he quoted a most absurd verse in laudation of Somebody's Trousers, as glibly as if he were the author. We were even more surprised than ever. Millais said, 'How on earth can you remember such beastly things?'

"'Because I don't forget them,' replied Browning. 'You know we go through a wood and gather burrs and thousands of dead leaves and all kinds of rubbish, and find them sticking to our clothes, but when we come to look we find we have lost our *watch!*'"

Mr. Boughton was in a reminiscent mood, but the hands of the clock pointed ominously to the hour of an appointment, and the exigencies of space compel me to bring the records of a most interesting chat to a "most lame and impotent conclusion."