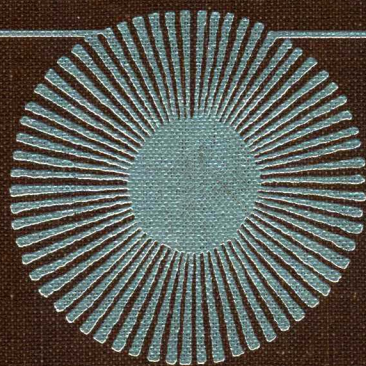

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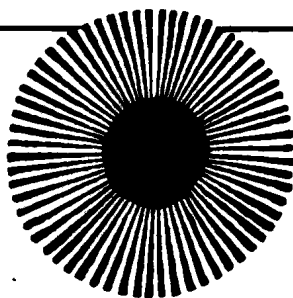
The
NEW MOULTON'S

Volume 10

HAROLD BLOOM

General Editor

The
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NEW MOULTON'S
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Volume 10

Late Victorian—Edwardian

General Editor

HAROLD BLOOM

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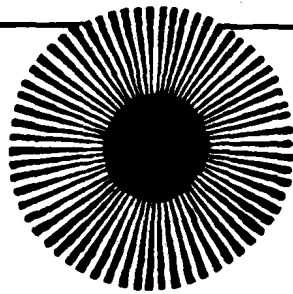
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RICHARD WILLIAM CHURCH

1815–1890

Richard William Church was born on April 25, 1815, in Lisbon, Portugal, and spent most of his childhood in Florence with his parents. In 1828, following the death of his father, the family moved to Bath and Church attended several local schools before matriculating at Oriel College, Oxford. A great influence in his life at this time was George Moberley, a cleric who later became bishop of Salisbury.

At Oxford Church met John Keble and John Henry Newman, becoming an ardent disciple of Newman and a supporter of his Tractarian movement. Church completed his undergraduate education at Oxford in 1836; in 1838 he was named a fellow of Oriel and was ordained. Church's first published work was a translation of St. Cyril's writings, a volume in Pusey's *Library of the Fathers* (1841) written in the year he resigned his fellowship at Oriel. His *Life of St. Wulfstan* was published in 1844. Two years later he started with his friends a newspaper, *The Guardian*, contributing essays and reviews that were later published in book form as *Occasional Papers* (1897). A series of articles that he wrote for the *Christian Remembrancer* in 1847, during a trip abroad, were later published as *Essays and Reviews* (1854). Church again held an Oriel fellowship from 1847 to 1853, resigning in order to marry a niece of George Moberley. From 1853 until 1871 he served the parish of Whatley, Somersetshire, where he was apparently much-beloved, returning occasionally to Oxford to preach. In 1869 he was appointed chaplain to by now Bishop Moberley, and two years later, on the recommendation of Gladstone, became dean of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Despite his preference for rural life and his distinct dislike for administrative tasks, Church proved so effective as dean that in 1882 he was seriously considered for appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury but declined for health reasons. In the last years of his life he completed his history, *The Oxford Movement* (published posthumously in 1891), considered his outstanding work; his indebtedness to Newman in matters of style and spirituality is reflected throughout the text. Church is also remembered for his biography of Spenser (1879), and also wrote biographies of St. Anselm, Bacon, and Queen Elizabeth. His many essays on Christianity appeared in more than a dozen collected editions, and several volumes of his sermons were published during his lifetime; *Village Sermons* (3 vols.) appeared posthumously in 1892–97.

Richard William Church died in Dover on December 9, 1890.

"A book of letters rather than a complete biography," such is the modest claim made by the editor of the *Life and Letters of Dean Church*. We think the reader's verdict will be that a book of letters thus edited comes quite near enough to a complete biography. Certainly the best biographies in our language are little more than well-edited correspondence, or, as in the case of *Boswell's Johnson*, notes of familiar conversation; and nothing is so like good talk as a good letter. Whatever Miss Church's own work might seem to lack is abundantly supplied by Dean Paget's Preface and Canon Scott-Holland's brilliant estimate. "The letters," writes the Dean, "tell the story of their writer's life; what he was in the depth of character and personality, must be left untold." Doubtless all that close friends saw in Dean Church cannot be told, but "the distinctive notes of his mind and work" are clearly and sufficiently indicated in this very attractive volume.

The person thus outlined before us proves to be well worth considering. It was said of him, on his election as Fellow of Oriel, that "there is much moral beauty about Church that they could not help taking him"; and that seemed the general judgment among those who knew him when Gladstone drew him from his rural retirement and made him Dean of St. Paul's. It is what you feel in all his writings—the moral beauty of the man, a measure and charm which are no tricks of a well-trained pen, but the natural outcome of character. It is not the beauty of flexible weakness, but of polished strength; the beauty not of a fragile carving but of a columnar shaft finely proportioned to bear its burden to the best advantage. Large intelligence, thorough scholarship, rare and delicate taste, sim-

ple and earnest devotion, were all combined with a certain judicial poise, a just measure in thought and conduct. The friend and disciple of Newman and Pusey, he was the partisan of neither, and could recognize the worth of Arnold and the chivalry of Stanley. He was himself of weight oftener by a certain unconscious influence than by any direct effort. His character acted as a force. Holding himself apart in a certain wise reserve, he the more thoroughly affected the judgment and conduct of his fellows. It was less what he said than what he did not say that checked and repressed them. His silences were speeches; his suppressions were verdicts. Wisely bold at need, he had no love of figuring at the front of the stage. He had greatness thrust upon him. He could be generous and expect no recognition. You cannot think of his taking an unfair advantage or attempting to hold untenable ground. He knew how to handle hot coals without fanning them into a blaze. He could write history from one side of a controverted position, and remain impartial—just to opponents, and no more than just to friends.—C. A. L. RICHARDS, "The Story of Dean Church's Life," *Dial*, March 16, 1895, p. 176

He did good work in literature in connection with his cathedral charge, notably the *Spenser* and the *Bacon* in the "English Men of Letters," but he would have done much more in the Whatley rectory. He was too good to waste on the details of business management which a much smaller man could have attended to as well or better. Classed as a Puseyite and Ritualist, he was very different from Pusey in the breadth of his intelligence and sympathy, in the uncloistered quality of his

learning and his thought; and as for ritualism, he cared little or nothing for its vestments and its posturings. What he did care for was the liberty of worship in the English Church. Nothing in his letters is so surprising as the absence of any desire on his part to make his way the universal law of doctrine or of ritual. The man is never lost in the official personage, however sometimes fettered and obscured. We always know that he is there with his beautiful intelligence and gentle heart, a man whose praise must be extremely sweet for those who are alive, to find it here; as where it is written of Mr. Goldwin Smith, "I think he has given us up too soon. So much nobleness and elevation are a loss to any society, and we can hardly spare him."

His letters have the apparently inevitable felicity of style that marks his various books, and it is interesting to find one of them written at the request of some one who would learn the secret of his charm. He can only say that he has watched against the temptation to use *unreal* and *fine* words, and read good English, Newman's in particular, with Shakspeare's, Wordsworth's, and the rest. It is eloquent for his catholicity that Lucretius was his favorite classic, and Matthew Arnold's books an indispensable resource. But the evidences of this quality are many. His character was transcendent of all sectarian distinctions, and the adherents of every sect will find much to profit them in this practically autobiographic record of his scholarly and thoughtful life.—JOHN WHITE CHADWICK, "Dean Church," *Nation*, May 2, 1895, pp. 348–49

Of no modern writer is the saying so obviously true as of Church, that the style is the man. What interests us far more than any particular page in his writings is the personality behind them, a personality concealed rather than obtruded, but plainly individual and full of charm. His peculiar note is a melancholy compounded of many simples, and including those of the scholar, the divine, the traveller, and the accomplished gentleman. He was a student at once of books and of men. Born at Lisbon and bred in Italy, the son of an English merchant of cosmopolitan business and interests, by a lady of German extraction, he was by nature and inclination sealed of the tribe of the wise Ithacan, who knew the cities and ways of men. Hence he was never trammelled by those insular prejudices which surprise us in so many of the religious leaders of his time. Moreover his paternal grandparents were both Quakers; and this fact, while it would still further broaden and deepen his sympathies, may account also for that peculiar vein of quietism and humility which distinguished him; a love of retirement and aversion from great place, in which he recalled his great predecessor at St. Paul's, Dean Colet, whose favourite motto, *Si vis divinus esse, late ut Deus*, Church might well have adopted for his own.

The note then of Church's writing is, as we should expect, a reflective note, a note of moderation and wide sympathy. His best work consists of critical studies of Anselm, Dante, Spenser, and Bacon. He was gifted with considerable historical insight and historical imagination, and some of his shorter studies, such as those on early Ottoman history, and the court of Leo X., are admirable specimens of their class. In theology his interest was in moral rather than doctrinal or philosophical questions; his book on Anselm, for instance, ignores almost altogether the philosophical treatises, and his sermons before the Universities or at St. Paul's were always upon such topics as "Civilisation and Religion," "Human Life and Its Conditions," "The Discipline of the Christian Character," subjects which required a large and clear outlook, a mind versed in facts more than theories, and a knowledge of historical perspective. His style, properly so called, may be defined as in the best sense

academic; it is periodic in structure, correct in syntax, and harmonious in flow and cadence. It is not hard to trace in it the influence of Newman; the qualities which Church had in common or by contact with Newman, candour, lucidity, and precision, are reflected in his style; amongst smaller points of resemblance may be noted the occasional startling use of very familiar phrases; but it lacks Newman's extraordinary flexibility and ease. Its defect is the defect of the academic style, a tendency to become dry; and the defect of excessive moderation, a tendency to become tame. Further, the periods are not always well managed, the principle of suspense is too freely used, or, on the other hand, the paragraphs run to seed. But when at its best, the style is vigorous and vivid, and at no time is it without dignity.—H. C. BEECHING, "Dean Church," *English Prose*, ed. Henry Craik, 1896, Vol. 5, pp. 617–18

The attention of the literary world cannot fail to be attracted by the publication, in a handy form, of the "occasional papers" of so noted a man as the author of *The Oxford Movement* and *The Beginnings of the Middle Ages*—a man who refused the primacy of the Church of England and, earlier, the arch-deaconry of Wells, and only reluctantly accepted the appointment of dean of St. Paul's, half inclining to continue his work as parson of the little village of Whatley in Somersetshire.

Of the fifty-four essays contained in these two volumes (*Occasional Papers*), all but one—"A Fragment on Elizabeth," the opening chapter of an intended life of Queen Elizabeth for the "English Statesmen" series—appeared originally in either *The Guardian*, *The Saturday Review*, or *The Times*. Forty-one of them are book reviews and criticisms, and most of the remainder obituary notices. Well versed in theology, philosophy, and history, both ecclesiastical and secular, the author combined the power of looking at large questions largely with the critic's nice sense of detail. That he writes, however, from the orthodox and high-church standpoint is always apparent; and this could hardly be otherwise, for the greater number of the essays were contributed to *The Guardian*, a professedly high-church journal. Such being his point of view, anything like entirely unprejudiced criticism, in most of the subjects treated by him, is out of the question; nor are we surprised by the writer's occasional slight tendency to digress along certain familiar or favorite lines of thought and study. With these few words on the essays as a whole, we will pass to a very brief consideration of some of the more important ones.

The first is an extended review of Carlyle's *Cromwell*, written on the occasion of the publication of the book. That it is decidedly adverse in its tone is no more than the reader expects; but it is not harshly or dogmatically so. The characterization of Carlyle's style as an "interweaving of school-boy jargon and conversational familiarities with high-pitched declamation of an antique cast," is not altogether unjust. He points out the mistake which the book makes in "forcing home-bred English Puritans into full-blown divine heroes," and he contends that the writer's mind, as shown in all his works, "is not one of the deepest class. Breadth of painting not analysis, phenomena not their meaning, are his aim."

In his review of Colonel Higginson's translation of Epicurus, Dean Church, after passing some strictures on the translator's too wide departure from a literal and accurate rendering, undertakes to gauge the writings of the pagan philosopher by a comparison with the New Testament—hardly a fair method of estimating their value. An unusually appreciative and scholarly review of Guicciardini's works forms one of the longer papers. The Dean's early life in Italy, where his first thirteen years were

passed, partly accounts for that familiarity with Italian literature which he shows here as well as in his book on Dante. A review of Lecky's "European Morals" follows the above, and shows considerable critical and philosophical insight.

The chapter on *Ecce Homo!* is somewhat of a surprise, or was, we imagine, when it first appeared thirty-one years ago. This book has met with more censure, as well as commendation, from all sects and parties, in the church and out of it, than any other work of its kind. That *The Quarterly Review*, with its orthodox and conservative predilections, should criticise the book in the harshest terms as unscholarly and irreligious, was to be expected, and that *The North American Review*, in its thorough-going zeal for a liberal and enlightened Christianity, should "damn it with faint praise," was equally natural; but here was *The Guardian*, of well-known high-church prejudices, commending the book in no half-way terms and pronouncing it "a protest against the stiffness of all cast-iron systems, and a warning against trusting in what is worn out." With these words the reviewer summarizes his opinion—one of the earliest, if not the very earliest, published—of the work which afterward drew forth an extended and commendatory review from Mr. Gladstone and notices innumerable from other writers.

The chapters on Cardinal Newman are well worth reading, as being from the pen of one who formed a life-long intimacy with him during student days at Oxford and was his ardent admirer and follower up to his conversion to the Romish Church. Essays on Robertson, Maurice, Renan's writings, Lamennais, Fénelon, and Bossuet can be no more than mentioned here, while many other chapter headings which would still further whet the appetite, must be omitted altogether. An obituary notice on the author's uncle, Sir Richard Church, a general in the Greek army during the war for independence, will be read with interest at this time.—PERCY F. BICKNELL, "Dean Church's *Occasional Papers*," *Dial*, June 16, 1897, pp. 360–61

No one can read (Church's) remarkable sermons and the essays which accompany them, without becoming convinced that Church was quite emancipated from any narrow ecclesiasticism, that he had no dread of scientific inquiry, no distrust of human society as a whole; that he had a calm belief in the overruling providence of God in nature, in mankind as well as in the Holy Catholic Church. It was by no means the case that he did not distinguish between the great supernatural powers of the Kingdom of God, and the progress and development of human society, but he looked forward with a kind of sanguine optimism to the transformation and consecration of the latter, by the gradual extension of the Divine graces of the former. In the opinion of the wisest of his contemporaries the Churchmanship of the Dean of St. Paul's was not only wider but truer than that of Newman. It certainly was more human and sympathetic.

He never attempted to deal definitely with the teaching of the advancing school of Biblical criticism. But he certainly was not unmindful of the seriousness of the question. He more than once declared that England and the English Church were singularly unprepared for meeting the new theories; but he was always calm in his own mind on the subject, and recommended calmness in others. He drew "a contrast between the certainties of physical science, and the contradictory and uncertain results, the barrenness as a whole, of criticism." He advised courage and honesty, but also patience, which is essential to a real love of truth. It was not dishonest to feel that there are some questions which had better be left alone, some which will never be answered on this side of the grave, and

perhaps not on the other. It was part of his large-hearted, broad-minded character that, while belonging to an older generation, he still did not hold himself aloof from those who had advanced on to new and perhaps perilous grounds, and probably by his sympathy and wisdom he was able to guard and correct some exaggerations and impetuosities.

Many of his works can only be briefly mentioned. Essays on *Bacon* and *Spenser*; a charming account of Brittany, based upon reminiscences of a tour he made there; *The Rise of the Early Ottomans*, are specimens of widely differing subjects that illustrate the versatility of his literary powers. His style has been often spoken of as possessing the scholarly finish of the best educated English in all ages. He was once asked how style could be studied and formed. He said he did not recognize in himself any special training for style. "The great thing in writing is to know and feel what you want to say, and to say it in words that come as near to your meaning as you can get them to come." He quoted the saying, "Always cut out a passage which you are most proud of." He attributed great value to careful reading of good English in the best writers. And it is very characteristic and touching to note that he said, "Besides these, I heard and read a good deal of Mr. Newman's preaching, and it is, I am sure, to him that I owe it that I can write at all simply, and with the wish to be real."—AUGUSTUS B. DONALDSON, "Richard William Church," *Five Great Oxford Leaders*, 1899, pp. 373–75

MARY C. CHURCH

From "Preface"

Life and Letters of Dean Church

1894, pp. xii–xxii

There was in the mind of the late Dean of St. Paul's an unusual combination of certain traits and habits which are generally regarded as characteristic of separate and special studies; of scholarship, of natural science, and of history. He had the delicate sense of appropriateness, the abhorrence of all that was flaunting and slipshod, the love of neatness and finish, that gave charm and taught reserve to the scholars of his day. Nor did he ever drop the pursuits for which these scholarly gifts enabled him. He loved his classics as real friends: one volume after another in his library bears his tidy and discriminating notes, as witnesses to the width and care with which he read; while the great authors who were closest to his heart, Homer, Sophocles, Lucretius, Virgil, went with him on his holidays, and bear many dates in Switzerland and Italy, with Alpine flowers between their leaves. Far on in life a tour through Northern Italy made him think he had never before done full justice to the *Georgics*, though still he kept for Lucretius a throne apart. He was working steadily at the *Ethics* when he was past seventy: he had Homer by him in his last illness. And thus behind that scholarly grace and insight which were felt in his essays on Dante and on Spenser, there was always the sustained interest and work of a true scholar.—He himself might have laughed if any one had treated him as a real student of natural science. But there was no mistaking the scientific character of his mind, and it can hardly fail to be noticed in his letters. He wrote the article on the discovery of Neptune which caught Le Verrier's attention and first set the *Guardian* in its consistent attitude towards the achievements of natural science. His eager and painstaking interest in botany gave to his friendship with Dr. Asa Gray a peculiar intimacy and delightfulness. His prompt and frank appreciation of Mr. Darwin's

great work, at a time when such appreciation was far less general than it is now, was the outcome of a mind that knew at all events what that work meant, and knew enough about it to be neither timorous nor hasty. One feels that such a mind was not likely to blunder about scientific points, nor to imagine that it understood them unless it really did so. It was at least in such sympathy with the distinctive excellences of the man of science as could hardly be attained without some share in them.—But, strong as were the scholarly and scientific elements in the mind, it was in the field of history that its largest and most characteristic and most brilliant powers came to the front. The study of human nature, in its variety, its strangeness, its complexity; the analysis of broad movements into their component forces, or the tracing of them to their many causes; the severance and appraising of good and bad in the mixed actions of famous men; the redressing of unjust judgments; the patient observation and description of great courses of policy or action;—these were tasks to which the Dean brought his very keenest interest, on which he spent his most serious and concentrated work, in which he seemed to know no weariness. And for these tasks he had rare gifts—gifts which stood him in the same stead whether he set them to summon up and portray the scenes, the struggles, the characters of St. Anselm's day, or to tell the deeds and sufferings of that vast drama through which the Ottoman power moved to its stupendous triumph and the exhausted Empire to its doom, or to achieve what will surely last as the most adequate and justly balanced presentation of the Oxford Movement.

It was probably through this diversity of gifts and studies that he gained a peculiar breadth of thought in deliberation and in judgment. He saw things largely, with an ample and appreciative survey of their conditions: that which would especially appeal to the scholar or the man of science, neither displacing nor being displaced by the dominant interest of the historian. And, scanning thus the richness of the view, he was apt to take with him, in judging the affairs and cases of ordinary life, a broader volume of thought, a greater multitude of considerations, than most men bear in mind. He was less likely than most men to forget in forming a judgment something that should have been remembered: something that told upon the problem and might help one towards precisely solving it. One constantly felt when one was seeking counsel from him how much his mind was carrying as it did its work. It carried much, and yet was never cumbered; partly because he had a singular habit of disregarding, as if by set purpose, what was really trivial; never worrying himself or others over little things, and even, with all his own exactness, letting harmless, blameless inaccuracy sometimes go unnoticed; as though life were too short, too full, too grave for a man to take every chance of setting others right. And thus he guarded a certain simple loftiness, a quiet, unconscious dignity of thought in the common ways of life; and when hard cases or great questions came before him, he seemed instinctively to know what should be regarded and what let slip. Statesmanship has always been a rare quality among men; and it has so often and so disastrously been claimed or imagined where it was not that its very name is in some danger of discredit. But it is hard to find another word which would as well suggest the Dean's way of making up his mind; his broad range of thought; his prompt dismissal of all that was irrelevant or unimportant; his steady hand in balancing considerations and his just sense of proportion; his patient endurance and frank avowal of uncertainty; his strong refusal to be unjust even to his own side; his undismayed anticipation of great perils and unexcited contemplation of great aims; his equality of courage for self-refraining and for decisive action.

In the temperament and disposition of the mind that was thus endued and trained and used there were two notes which entered into much that was characteristic of it. They were its independence and its sense of humour. But the note of independence had a peculiar quality, due in part at least to one great experience in the Dean's life. He had been a disciple; and he had gone straight on, holding his own unshaken course, when his master had swerved off and left him. The enthusiasm and inspiration which Mr. Newman could infuse had filled his heart: then came the great loss of 1845; and after that he could be no man's disciple; he must think for himself, with no dependence on another's thoughts. Independent he would anyhow have come to be, by the necessary bent of his own nature, and as a matter of duty to himself. But Mr. Newman's secession hastened his development in this regard; and it gave to the independence of his mind a distinctive beauty. For independence, admirable as it is, is apt to be somewhat unconciliatory and uninviting, apt to discourage the approach of kindness by showing too plainly the strength if not the pride of self-sufficiency. In him it was refined and chastened by an undertone of pathos. He was detached from many things that entangle men; he seemed ready to detach himself from more; and with him peculiarly one felt how the stronghold of a true man's life is not near the frontier, but somewhere far away, remote and lonely and aloft. But that great experience of disappointment which had pressed forward the work of his detachment, the realisation of his independence, was felt in the result: felt through a certain quiet and simple gravity, verging towards sadness, and guarding independence from all touch of hardness or ungentleness or indifference or pride.—It was in his courage of decision that the robust, unhampered energy of an independent mind declared itself most plainly. All his reverence for the rights of others and for the full scope that they should have and use, all his dislike of ill-grounded positiveness, all his insistence on the limitation of our knowledge, all his resolute recollection of our vast uncertainty and ignorance, did not stay him from saying clearly what, so far as he could judge, he clearly saw. So he dealt with the great problems of speculation, with the questions of political and social life, with the difficulties that men come to in their own separate experience. He never forgot the humility that becomes men in this dimly-lighted world, and the determined patience which all true service of mankind demands, where tasks are complex and results are almost sure to be deferred and mixed and fragmentary: he never trifled with the indefeasible right, the inevitable duty of each man ultimately in matters of conduct to make up his own mind; but where he had to give advice, or bear his part in controversy or discussion, he saw neither reverence nor patience nor humility in disguising what he thought or professing any doubt he did not feel. He believed that men were meant to think and judge and choose, as in God's sight and mindful of their condition: so he did his best with the faculties he had; and he frankly said what he believed.—There was, in his exercise of deliberation and judgment, a rare union of balance and decision, of reserve and self-committal, of deference and self-respect, of modesty and boldness.

The sense of humour seldom gets due credit for the good work it does or helps to do. Men often mark the blunders that are made through lack of it; but they do not generally think of the real excellences of mind and character into which it enters, and which more or less depend on it for their preservation and advancement. It was in the late Dean of St. Paul's a very keen and delicate sense; it was delightful to tell him a good story, or to watch him as he saw some ludicrous position, or recalled some bit of misplaced pompousness: he

had a quick eye for fun, and enjoyed it splendidly. And this sense of humour ministered to much that was both strong and charming in him; it bore a real part in making him what he was, and enabling him for the especial work he did. Without it he might hardly have been able to sustain the perfect simplicity and lightness of manner which saved him wholly from that suspicion of somehow liking homage, and that annoyance and unreality in receiving it, to which big people are sometimes liable. It was inconceivable that he should play the great man, or put himself in any attitude, or let any one make a fuss about him, or approach him otherwise than with straightforward plainness, or talk as though there were anything mysterious or unusual about him. He would have seen too vividly the humour of the situation, and might perhaps have conveyed to his visitor very gently whatever sense of it he was able to receive. And so the consciousness of power, the discipline of prominence, the enthusiasm of friends, the praise of strangers never touched with any change his simple, genial enjoyment of all pleasant things that came to him: frankly and naturally he welcomed them: great or small, homely or recondite, rare or commonplace, passing or enduring, he found and owned the pleasure in them, delighting if he could help others to be as pleased as he was. But meanwhile all this simplicity and ease and unpretentiousness was making it possible for him, without any risk of mistake in others' minds or in his own, to maintain a singular and natural dignity;—a dignity as clear and obvious as it was unobtrusive; a dignity which others were the more unlikely to forget because he never thought about it. Probably no one ever tried either to flatter him or to take a liberty with him without presently regretting the attempt.

But all that has hitherto been said stays very far behind what those who knew the Dean will look for in any study of his mind. And as one tries to press on and reach the real secrets of his distinctive strength, the traits which gave his work its singular purity and value, one finds, of course, that it is impossible for criticism to halt at the frontier of personal character: impossible to appraise the gifts and habits of a man's mind without speaking of the forces that ruled his heart and will. If a man is sincere and thoughtful and consistent, if he is trying honestly to live one life, not two or three, his moral qualities and his religious convictions will tell all through his work, in the manner of his thinking, in his instinctive attitude towards all that comes before him, and in the very style of his talking and writing; and on those qualities and convictions his work

will depend for its most penetrating and most lasting power. It is certain that if the Dean had been less patient, less strenuous in his effort to be just to all men, he never could have borne the part and left the mark he did. The notes of patience and of justice are on all his work: even as one felt them in the way he spoke of men, in the weight he gave to the considerations which might fairly weigh with others, in the large allowance he would always make for the vast diversity of men's gifts and opportunities, for the inscrutable depth of every human life, for the unknown hindrances and difficulties and discouragements through which those who seem to advance slowly may be winning a heroic way.—But patient as he was, he could be angry when need came; angry with a quiet and self-possessed intensity which made his anger very memorable. The sight of injustice, of strength or wealth presuming on its advantages, of insolence—(a word that came from his lips with a peculiar ring and emphasis),—called out in him something like the passion that has made men patriots when their people were oppressed, something of that temper which will always make tyranny insecure and persecution hazardous. One felt that many years of quiet and hidden self-control must lie behind the power of wielding rightly such a weapon as that anger: an anger that was just and strong and calm.—But further back in his character than either patience or the power of anger there was an habitual feeling of which only those who knew him well, perhaps, became distinctly conscious, but which, when once it had been discovered, might be traced in much that he said and did. It was as though he lived in constant recollection of something that was awful and even dreadful to him; something that bore with searching force on all men's ways and purposes and hopes and fears; something before which he knew himself to be, as it were, continually arraigned; something which it was strange and pathetic to find so little recognised in current views of life. He seemed to bear about with him a certain hidden, isolating, constraining, and ennobling fear, which quenched the dazzling light of many things that attract most men; a fear which would have to be clean got rid of before time-serving or unreality could have a chance with him. Whatever that fear was it told upon his work in many ways; it helped him, probably, in great things to be unworldly; it sustained with an imperious and ever-present sanction his sense and care for perfect justice, in act and word, in his own life and in his verdicts on the past; and it may well have borne part in making his style what it was; for probably few men have ever written so well and stayed so simply anxious to write truly.

SIR RICHARD BURTON

1821–1890

Sir Richard Burton was born in Torquay on March 19, 1821. He was educated partly in France and Italy, and in 1840 entered Trinity College, Oxford, which he left without a degree. In 1842, after joining the East India Company, Burton went to Bombay, where he remained for seven years. During this time he learned several languages, including Persian and Arabic, and gathered impressions reflected in four books on India, beginning in 1851 with *Scinde; or, The Unhappy Valley*.

In 1853 Burton traveled to the forbidden city of Mecca disguised as an Indian Moslem. His account of this adventure, *Pilgrimage to Al-Medina and Meccah* (1855), brought him wide recognition. Then in 1854 he went on an expedition into the interior of present-day Somaliland, which he described in another popular book, *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856). After serving in the

Crimean War, Burton in 1856 returned to Africa, where he discovered Lake Tanganyika while searching for the source of the Nile. This discovery he described in *Lake Regions of Equatorial Africa* (1860). He then made a trip to the United States, which provided material for his book *The City of Saints* (1861), on the Mormons of Salt Lake City.

In 1861 Burton entered the foreign service, becoming successively consul to Brazil, Damascus, and Trieste. The last post he held from 1871 to his death in Trieste on October 20, 1890. These postings and the journeys associated with them resulted in a great number of travel books, but Burton is best remembered today for a series of translations done during this period. These include unexpurgated versions of the *Arabian Nights* (1885–88), the *Kama Sutra* (1883), and *The Perfumed Garden* (1886; from the French).

Regarded as a man of action—"adventurer" is the term he would himself have used—he belongs to a class, at no time small in the history of this country, which includes such modern representatives as Livingstone, Gordon, and Stanley. To the fame, however, which he shares with these, Burton added something more than the erudition of a professor and something less than the imagination of a poet—a combination that raises him to a unique rank. His attainments as a mere linguist have, perhaps, been over-rated, because such attainments are rare among Englishmen. Clive never learned Hindustani, nor Gordon Arabic. But his facility in acquiring strange languages first opened to him the pleasures of study, and gave him the ultimate mastery over English. He learnt from men, not from books; and this chiefly in the East, where life is more according to nature, and where words are used to reflect feelings. He was fond of calling himself an anthropologist, by which he meant that he took for his domain everything that concerns man and woman. Whatever humanity does he refused to consider common or unclean; and he dared to write down in black and white (for private circulation) the results of his exceptional experience. Influenced by other motives, he adopted the same methods as Rabelais.

This, again, was but another facet of Burton's many-sided nature, though one which it would be wrong to ignore when estimating his character and life-work. His insatiable curiosity led him to explore almost every path of learning, especially the by-paths. The origins of civilisation, the hoary antiquity of Egypt, prehistoric connexions between the East and the West, the ancient race of the Etruscans, the mysticism of the Sufis, the wanderings of the gypsies, the colonial empire of the Portuguese—these were some of the matters that had a special fascination for him. His cast of mind was so original that not only did he never borrow from anyone else, but he was disposed to resent another's trespassing upon such subjects as he considered his own. But no man could be more cordial in his admiration of honest work done in bordering fields of learning. He was ever ready to assist, from the stores of his experience, young explorers and young scholars; but here, as in all else, he was intolerant of pretentiousness and sciolism. His virility stamped everything he said or wrote. His style was as characteristic as his handwriting. If occasionally marred by the intrusion of alien words and phrases, it always expressed his meaning with force and lucidness, and was capable at times of rising to unlaboured eloquence. And, with Burton, the style was the man. No one could meet him without being convinced of his transparent sincerity. He concealed nothing; he boasted of nothing. Such as circumstances had made him, he bore himself towards all the world: a man of his hands from his youth, a philosopher in his old age; a good hater, but none the less a staunch friend.

So long as the spirit of enterprise animates Englishmen, Burton's exploits will be honoured. So long as genuine literature is appreciated, his name will be preserved by some of his many books. But to those who were admitted to his intimacy,

the man himself was greater than what he did or than what he wrote; by them his memory will always be cherished as that of the most vigorous and self-centred personality they have been privileged to know.—J. S. COTTON, "Obituary: Sir Richard Burton," *Academy*, Oct. 25, 1890, p. 365

His translation of the *Lusiads* of Camoens proves both his philological and poetical powers, as does his rendering of *The Thousand Nights and a Night*; but while the latter must be locked in the closet of the scholar, the former can be read by each and all with advantage. The erotic nature of much of *The Thousand Nights and a Night* and of some other works which he had a share in preparing for the press has been brought forward by his enemies as proving that he had an impure mind, but nothing could be more unfair. As the pathologist must study pathology in order to find a cure for disease, so Burton, as a student of human nature, had to examine and analyse the impure as well as the pure, for human nature is so intimately compounded of both good and evil that he who studies one alone is apt to arrive at conclusions more erroneous than he would if he had never studied at all.—V. LOVETT CAMERON, "Burton as I Knew Him," *Fortnightly Review*, Dec. 1890, pp. 880–81

Night or light is it now, wherein
Sleeps, shut out from the wild world's din,
Wakes, alive with a life more clear,
One who found not on earth his kin?
Sleep were sweet for awhile, were dear
Surely to souls that were heartless here,
Souls that faltered and flagged and fell,
Soft of spirit and faint of cheer.
A living soul that had strength to quell
Hope the spectre and fear the spell,
Clear-eyed, content with a scorn sublime
And a faith superb, can it fare not well?
Life, the shadow of wide-winged time,
Cast from the wings that change as they climb,
Life may vanish in death, and seem
Less than the promise of last year's prime.
But not for us is the past a dream
Wherefrom, as light from a clouded stream,
Faith fades and shivers and ebbs away,
Faint as the moon if the sundawn gleam.
Faith, whose eyes in the low last ray
Watch the fire that renews the day,
Faith which lives in the living past,
Rock-rooted, swerves not as weeds that sway.
As trees that stand in the storm-wind fast
She stands, unsmitten of death's keen blast,
With strong remembrance of sunbright spring
Alive at heart to the lifeless last.
Night, she knows, may in no wise cling
To a soul that sinks not and droops not wing,
A sun that sets not in death's false night
Whose kingdom finds him not thrall but king.

Souls there are that for soul's affright
Bow down and cower in the sun's glad sight,
Clothed round with faith that is one with fear,
And dark with doubt of the live world's light.

But him we hailed from afar or near
As boldest born of the bravest here

And loved as brightest of souls that eyed
Life, time, and death with unchangeable cheer,
A wider soul than the world was wide,
Whose praise made love of him one with pride,

What part has death or has time in him,
Who rode life's lists as a god might ride?
While England sees not her old praise dim,
While still her stars through the world's night swim,

A fame outshining her Raleigh's fame,
A light that lightens her loud sea's rim,
Shall shine and sound as her sons proclaim
The pride that kindles at Burton's name.

And joy shall exalt their pride to be
The same in birth if in soul the same.

But we that yearn for a friend's face—we
Who lack the light that on earth was he—

Mourn, though the light be a quenchless flame
That shines as dawn on a tideless sea.

—ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE, "On the
Death of Sir Richard Burton," 1891

Sir Richard Burton has left behind him an enormous mass of published and unpublished writings, consisting of accounts of countries which he visited, reports to the Royal Geographical Society, treatises on various subjects connected with his expeditions, a translation of Camoëns, and numerous grammars, vocabularies, and other linguistic works. As an Oriental scholar it is possible that his much-discussed edition of the *Arabian Nights* is his most valuable production; and it is therefore probable that the destruction of his manuscript, *The Scented Garden*, was, at all events, a loss to Eastern scholarship. Generally speaking, his books, although graphic and vivacious, suffer from the want of a more complete digestion, and greater care in compilation, are too impetuous, and have the air of being written *au courant de plume*, without much arrangement or revision. Such volumes, however, as the famous *Pilgrimage to Mecca*; *Scinde*; or, *The Unhappy Valley*; or the Account of his Mission to the King of Dahomé, would alone be a sufficient monument even of an extraordinary man; but Sir Richard Burton lets them fall by the way as chronicles of his amusements and records of the more picturesque episodes of his career. Such was his force of character that all who came in contact with him were either violently repelled or strongly attracted. He was essentially a man of action, a good master and a bad servant, a born leader of men, one of those marvellously endowed beings who keep alive among us the traditions of hero-worship.—JANETTA NEWTON-ROBINSON, "The Life of Sir Richard Burton," *Westminster Review*, Nov. 1893, p. 482

PERCY ADDLESHAW

Academy, October 21, 1893, pp. 333–34

NO man of modern times lived a life so full of romance as Burton. To find his parallel we must turn to the careers of the Elizabethan heroes, notably Sir Walter Raleigh. For Burton was something more than a "gentleman adventurer." He was at once poet—as the Kasidah, wisely quoted by Lady Burton (in *Life of Richard Burton*) in full, shows beyond cavil—

historian, traveller, profound oriental scholar, and soldier. Even his faults, often virtues in uncongenial surroundings, were those of the Elizabethan age; and his failures were due almost entirely to the fact that he had to live, not under the patronage of Gloriana, but in our nineteenth century. (. . .)

Burton's Oxford career was not really unsuccessful, though his early training ill fitted him to understand or submit to college discipline. After being present at "the disgraceful scene of a race-ordinary," he was "sent down"; and he left the university defiantly driving a tandem, and kissing his hand "to the pretty girls." It was only when he began his military duties in Sind that his work became thoroughly congenial to him. His early years in India laid the foundation very firmly of his astonishing career. He acquired at this time that vast store of Oriental learning which caused the Somalis to say of him, at a later period, "Here comes the Shaykh who knows knowledge." Disguised as Mirza Abdullah the Bushiri, he gained a greater insight into Eastern life and character than any European before or since.

Sometimes the Mirza passed the evening in a mosque, listening to the ragged students who, stretched at full length with their stomachs on the dusty floor, and their arms supporting their head, mumbled out Arabic from the thumb, soiled, and tattered pages of theology upon which a dim oil lamp shed its scanty ray, or he sat debating the niceties of faith with the long-bearded, shaven-pated, bleary-eyed, and stolid-faced *genus loci*, the *Mullah*. At other times, when in merrier mood, he entered uninvited the first door whence issued the sound of music and dance—a clean turban and a polite bow are the best 'tickets for soup' the East knows; or he played chess with some native friend; or he consorted with the hemp drinkers and opium eaters in the *estaminets*; or he visited the Mrs. Gadabouts and Go-betweens, who made matches among the Faithful, and gathered from them a precious budget of private history and domestic scandal.

But Burton's life was an uninterrupted record of failure dogging the heels of success. The one man in India fully fitted, as he deserved to be by untiring and health-breaking study, to act as interpreter in the Multan campaign, he was passed over in favour of a man who "knows [only] Hindustani."

He left Sind and made his wonderful journey to Meccah, recorded in two brave volumes. Soon after his return from the birthplace of Mahomet followed the expedition to Harar, one of the most striking chapters of perilous travel in the book of African romance. Either of these exploits would have made the fortune of an ordinary man. But it was Burton's misfortune, partly through his own fault, to reap but seldom the full meed of success.

On his return, he volunteered for service in the Crimea, and joined Beatson's Horse; but here, as in India, he saw no fighting, though he gave plenty of proofs of his soldierly qualities. When peace was declared, he again started for Africa.

The melancholy quarrel that estranged him from Speke, his lieutenant, need not be referred to in detail. Lady Burton refers to it too often, and I think too bitterly. Burton's own elegy on Speke's firm supporter, Murchison—"I respect the silence of a newly-made grave"—and his reticence on the subject after Speke's death, show clearly how he would have liked his biographer to treat the matter. Moreover, Burton's services as an explorer are honestly enough recognised now. And as he was fighting with some one or other all his life, it is difficult to

believe that the blame must always be visited entirely on his antagonist.

Burton's next mission was a dangerous one. He went, bearing presents and warnings, to Gelele, King of Dahomey. He has written a full account of his visit to the country of the Amazons, giving us the history of the reigning dynasty, and a masterly exposition of the peculiar customs and religion of the people. He was, as usual, inadequately rewarded when his business was done, receiving a petty consulship in Brazil. He was completely lost at San Paulo. Though he did good work, it was work that could have been accomplished by any industrious man of average intelligence. His time of service in South America is the most barren and uninteresting part of his career.

Burton's great chance seemed to have come when he was given Damascus. Yet both he and his friends were doomed to disappointment. There is no doubt that his recall was the result of untoward circumstances combining against him. But Burton did not understand the Western mind as well as he did the Eastern. The extraordinary Shasli episode; his troubles with Rashid Pasha about the Druses; his severe and just, but somewhat tactlessly contrived, measures against the Jewish usurers—were sufficient to make his recall, at first sight, seem necessary to those who only knew the East through Bluebooks. That he was vilely insulted in the manner of it is certain. Where it is easy to agree with Lady Burton is in condemning the authorities for not offering her husband Teheran or Tangier after the Damascus problem was fully unravelled, as it was with the disgrace and downfall, a month later, of Rashid. That such a man as Burton should have been reduced to his last £15 is a burning scandal to the country whose interests he strove so gallantly to serve. His entire fitness for an Eastern post is demonstrated by the respect the natives of all classes and divisions felt for him, and the fear and love he awakened in his subordinates. Mr. Palmer, the famous Orientalist, at this time wrote to the *Civil Service Gazette* a letter which effectually disposes of all objections to Burton's merits as an Eastern consul.

"The Mahommedans," he writes, "whose fanatical aversion to Capt. Burton is the ostensible pretext for his recall, have been holding mass meetings, and even praying publicly in the mosques that God will send him back to them. Letters are flowing in every day from village sheiks and Bedouin chiefs asking that he may return to Damascus, as there is no one else to whom they can appeal for help or succour."

To place Burton, as he finally was placed, at Trieste, was to banish him. And the exile must have been doubly bitter because he was almost on the threshold of his beloved East, and every week saw the Austrian Lloyd steamers steering for Alexandria and the rising sun. How valuable his services would have been his marvellous letter to Lord Salisbury on the Egyptian question shows. With almost brutal directness he begins "Annex Egypt." It is calculated to horrify a good many people who only know the Khedive's dominions as the place of the Sphinx, the Pyramids, and Shepperd's Hotel. But by those who have lived in the country and realise its importance to us, and who know how the *fellahin* feel towards our rule, it will probably be considered very seriously indeed: more especially when the plan for annexation that Burton designed is carefully studied and its masterly details thoroughly understood.

But from Trieste we got *Camoens* and *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, so that the loss was balanced by two great gains.

The second volume, dealing with Burton's life at the Austrian port, is far too long, and too full of trivial incidents, cuttings from cheap journals, and opinions and speeches of people of little importance even in their own day. It may be true, as Lady Burton says, that "these scraps of information will interest many people"; but their inclusion is none the less a mistake. Still, there are plenty of good stories and characteristic touches, for which we are grateful. The letter, addressed "to the Council," Burton received from a drunken English sailor, who had been robbed and imprisoned, is only one of a dozen anecdotes equally good:

Burton
i am hin trobel, kum & let me haout.

TIM TROUNCER

It is a pity that Lady Burton devotes so large a space to her husband's searches for gold. For though in many ways these expeditions, especially to Midian, were valuable, one cannot help feeling that the soldier, scholar, and poet suffered loss of dignity in working for company promoters who reaped all the benefits. Burton himself gained nothing from these trips except pecuniary losses he could ill afford.

But I have said enough to show how profoundly interesting the work is. No book that comes before the public can escape criticism; nor is it right that it should. Yet there are some books, and this is emphatically one, that cannot fairly be judged by the ordinary standards. To Lady Burton herself the task of writing her husband's life meant something more than the mere composing of a biography. It was a task very sacred in her eyes, and to appreciate her work fully the religious feeling that inspired its composition cannot be ignored. It is impossible not to feel irritated at times; it is equally impossible not to be awed into silence by the solemn and audacious manner of her style. These pages of hers open out to us a new side of Burton's character, a side which no stranger could ever understand, and which it were impertinence to attempt to criticise. The mystical leanings, the regular see-saw from Sufi-ism to Catholicism, the superstitions that made up an appreciable part of his character, only she could explain to us. Her work, despite portentous faults, is remarkable, and has a value beyond price. The critic, in despair, can only say to her, in the words of Burton's splendid *Kasidah*:

From self-approval seek applause: what ken not men
thou kennest, thou!
Spurn every idol others raise: before thine own ideal
bow.

And the most prosaic and least indulgent reader is forced to acknowledge that we have here revealed to us the man as he was. There can no longer be any doubt, if, indeed, there ever was any doubt, that England lost in him one of the bravest and noblest of her sons. And it will be remembered always with sorrow that he was treated with scant courtesy during his life and insulted with meagre honours. But

In days to come, days slow to dawn, when wisdom
deigns to dwell with men,
These echoes of a voice long stilled haply shall wake
responsive strains;
Wend now thy way with brow serene, fear not thy
humble tale to tell;
The whispers of the desert wind, the tinkling of the
camel's bell.

GEORGE BANCROFT

1800–1891

George Bancroft was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, on October 31, 1800. The son of a Congregational clergyman, he was educated at the Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard College, and the Universities of Göttingen, Heidelberg, and Berlin. He received a Ph.D. in history from Göttingen in 1820, and on his return to Harvard in 1822 became a tutor in Greek. In 1823, together with Joseph Green Cogswell, he founded the Round Hill School for boys in Northampton, Massachusetts; he remained connected with it until 1831. Bancroft married Sarah Dwight in 1827, and one year after her death in 1837 he married Elizabeth Davis Bliss.

Bancroft's career as a man of letters began inauspiciously in 1823 with the publication of *Poems*, which was generally ignored. In 1834, however, appeared the first volume of what was to be his major work, the *History of the United States*; the second volume was published in 1837, the third in 1839. Also in 1834 Bancroft began his political career by running unsuccessfully for the Massachusetts General Court, as the nominee of the Anti-Masonic party. Bancroft joined the Democratic Party in 1836, became influential within party circles, and later served as Collector of the Port of Boston (1838–40), Secretary of the Navy (1845–46), Acting Secretary of War (1845–46), and United States Minister to London (1846–49). In 1849 Bancroft returned from London and moved to New York City. There he resumed work on his *History*, which was eventually published in ten volumes (1834–74), and then revised and condensed for a six-volume Centenary Edition (1876–79). In addition, two volumes on the *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States of America* (1882), originally published separately, were added to the *History* for the six-volume "Author's Last Revision" (1883–85).

By 1850 Bancroft's reputation as the leading historian in the United States was firmly established. The first to attempt a comprehensive study of the entire span of American history, he also anticipated modern historical practices by placing a great emphasis on the use of original sources. At the same time, however, his concept of the nature of history was very much formed by his philosophical belief in the divinely guided progress of mankind toward perfection. Bancroft published a biography of Martin Van Buren in 1888, and died in Washington, D.C., on January 17, 1891.

Personal

Bancroft's habits are essentially those of a student. He rises early, and his morning hours are devoted to literary labor. In the later part of the day, if the weather is at all favorable, he takes a ride on horseback, and returns in time for dinner. The evening is devoted to the society of his friends, either in accepting invitations or in receptions at his own residence. Following the custom of his early friend Schleiermacher, he is at home on Sunday evening, and in the simplest and most unostentatious manner receives those who from personal friendship, or attracted by his reputation as a writer, fill his saloons.

While preparing a work on *Private Libraries*, I frequently saw Bancroft in his library, which occupies the entire third story of his residence. On such occasions he was always surrounded by papers and books, and deeply immersed in documentary examinations, historical composition, or the revisal of proof-sheets. At this time he very rarely allows himself to be interrupted, and almost invariably declines to receive visitors until a later hour in the day.

The library contains not only every work he can procure bearing upon the history of the United States, and their early colonization, but also some of the best authors in each of the departments of knowledge; so that few questions can arise that he has not the means of answering in his own collection, which has already attained to the number of from twelve to fifteen thousand volumes, and, from the accessions constantly being made, promises to be much larger in the future.—JAMES WYNNE, "George Bancroft," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, June 1862, p. 54

Tall, spare, straight, incisive in speech and style, George Bancroft's appearance indicates deep thought and careful culture. He is a refined bookworm; a mingling of the Oxford professor, the ripe diplomatist, the seasoned man of the world. His tastes make him, in his eightieth year (he was born at Worcester, Massachusetts, October 31, 1800), a genial philosopher, at peace with the world and himself. He is an early riser, and does his work generally before two o'clock in the afternoon, after which he rides and dines. In the evening he amuses himself among his friends, and is passionately fond of the opera. When he lives in Newport, his house is the welcome resort of people of letters and people of fashion, and it is the same when he moves to his winter residence in Washington City. He is apt to seem absent-minded, but he is really not so. A little abrupt at times, he is exceedingly vivacious and agreeable in his intercourse with others.—JOHN W. FORNEY, "George Bancroft," *Anecdotes of Public Men*, 1881, Vol. 2, p. 35

It is the prose-Homer of our Republic whom it is my privilege to present to the readers of *The Critic*. Picture to yourself a venerable man, of medium height, slender figure, erect bearing; with lofty brow thinned, but not striped, of its silvery locks; a full, snowy beard adding to his patriarchal appearance; bluish gray eyes, which neither use nor time has deprived of brightness; a large nose of Roman type, such as I have somewhere read or heard the first Napoleon regarded as the sign of latent force; 'small white hands,' which Ali Pasha assured Byron were the marks by which he recognized the poet to be 'a man of birth';—let your imagination combine these details, and you have a sketch for the historian's portrait. The frame is

a medium-sized room of good, high pitch. In the centre is a rectangular table covered with books, pamphlets and other indications of a literary life. Shelving reaches to the ceiling, and every fraction of space is occupied by volumes of all sizes, from folio to duodecimo; a door on the left opens into a room which is also full to overflowing with the valuable collections of a lifetime; and further on is yet another apartment equally crowded with the historian's dumb servants, companions, and friends; while rooms and nooks elsewhere have yielded to Literature's rights of squatter sovereignty.—B. G. LOVEJOY, "Authors at Home: VI. George Bancroft at Washington," *Critic*, Feb. 7, 1885, p. 61

General

We should be faithless to one of the first duties of a literary journal, did we not appropriate an ample portion of our pages to a notice of a volume like Mr. Bancroft's. *A History of the United States*, by an American writer, possesses a claim upon our attention of the strongest character. It would do so under any circumstances, but when we add that the work of Mr. Bancroft is one of the ablest of the class, which has for years appeared in the English language; that it compares advantageously with the standard British historians; that as far as it goes, it does such justice to its noble subject, as to supersede the necessity of any future work of the same kind; and if completed as commenced, will unquestionably forever be regarded, both as an American and as an English classic, our readers would justly think us unpardonable, if we failed to offer our humble tribute to its merit.

(. . .) The interest of the narrative will be amply sustained, in the curiosity of its incidents and the gravity of its discussions. It will deserve the continuance of Mr. Bancroft's laborious researches and conscientious and well weighed reflections, and it will amply reward him. If he pursue the work as he has begun it, he will, at the conclusion, stand in a position toward the American people, which the most gifted and successful may envy; and one as far beyond the prizes of an ordinary ambition, as the voice of that fame which can never die, is beyond the breath of party favor. The work is vast, but not too great to be performed; it is not beyond the compass of resolute, persevering, and well directed effort, which in itself does honor to man. The perseverance even of an humble capacity, in a good cause, is a spectacle to command approbation, though sometimes not wholly unproductive of saddening emotions; but the high-hearted and indefatigable perseverance of a gifted mind, devoted to worthy ends, and inspired by pure principle, presents no mean image of that superior power, whose duration is as boundless as its intensity.—EDWARD EVERETT, "Bancroft's *History of the United States*," *North American Review*, Jan. 1835, pp. 99, 122

In closing our remarks, we must express our satisfaction that the favourable notice we took of Mr. Bancroft's labours on his first appearance has been fully ratified by his countrymen, and that his *Colonial History* establishes his title to a place among the great historical writers of the age. The reader will find the pages of the present volume filled with matter not less interesting and important than the preceding. He will meet with the same brilliant and daring style, the same picturesque sketches of character and incident, the same acute reasoning and compass of erudition.

In the delineation of events Mr. Bancroft has been guided by the spirit of historic faith. Not that it would be difficult to discern the colour of his politics; nor, indeed, would it be possible for any one strongly pledged to any set of principles,

whether in politics or religion, to disguise them in the discussion of abstract topics, without being false to himself and giving a false tone to the picture; but while he is true to himself, he has an equally imperative duty to perform,—to be true to others, to those on whose characters and conduct he sits in judgment as a historian. No pet theory nor party predilections can justify him in swerving one hair's-breadth from truth in his delineation of the mighty dead, whose portraits he is exhibiting to us on the canvas of history.

Whenever religion is introduced, Mr. Bancroft has shown a commendable spirit of liberality. Catholics and Calvinists, Jesuits, Quakers, and Church-of-England men, are all judged according to their deeds, and not their speculative tenets; and even in the latter particular he generally contrives to find something deserving of admiration, some commendable doctrine or aspiration in most of them. And what Christian sect—we might add, what sect of any denomination—is there which has not some beauty of doctrine to admire? Religion is the homage of man to his Creator. The forms in which it is expressed are infinitely various; but they flow from the same source, are directed to the same end, and all claim from the historian the benefit of toleration.

What Mr. Bancroft has done for the Colonial history is, after all, but preparation for a richer theme, the history of the War of Independence; a subject which finds its origin in the remote past, its results in the infinite future; which finds a central point of unity in the ennobling principle of independence, that gives dignity and grandeur to the most petty details of the conflict, and which has its foreground occupied by a single character, to which all others converge as to a centre,—the character of Washington, in war, in peace, and in private life the most sublime on historical record. Happy the writer who shall exhibit this theme worthily to the eyes of his countrymen!—WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT, "Bancroft's *United States*" (1841), *Biographical and Critical Miscellanies*, 1845

Bancroft is a philosophical historian; but no amount of philosophy has yet taught him to despise a minute accuracy in point of fact. His *brother* historians talk of "the grace of Prescott, the erudition of Gibbon, and the pains-taking precision of Bancroft."—EDGAR ALLAN POE, "Fifty Suggestions" (1849), *Essays and Reviews*, ed. G. R. Thompson, 1984, p. 1304

Bancroft is the "standard" American historian; the only one who has succeeded in attracting general attention, and in being accepted by all parties as an authority. He takes a philosophic view of events, and endeavors to show that the natural development of our government has been in accordance with the principles of the democratic party, as originated by Jefferson, and carried out by Jackson and his successors. He has been as fair as could be expected from a partisan who had his own theory of politics to establish. As a narrative, the work is clear and perspicuous; but the style, though carefully finished, is not indicative of genius. There are certain episodes, in which the desire for picturesque effect is quite evident; but the author is learned and laborious, rather than spirited and graphic. Perhaps it is too soon to expect a history of the United States that should unite accuracy in details with dramatic grouping, high moral views, and an imaginative style. The time may come for such a history; but Bancroft's differs as much from that ideal work as a topographical chart of Venice would differ from a painting by Turner of the domes of that sea-born city. It is not intended to depreciate the great merits of our historian; for it remains true that his is much the best thus far attempted, and no intelligent American can afford to leave it unread.