



THE LATE ANDREW LANG

“A gentleman among *canaille*,” was the way in which Andrew Lang referred to Edgar Allan Poe in one of his *Letters to Dead Authors*. He was always rather proud of the characterisation and believed honestly in its truth. There is an old story to the effect that once, in a London literary club, Mr. Lang was expressing himself vigorously to the late Henry Cuyler Bunner on the subject of American letters and men of letters. Bunner was not the man to take these remarks placidly. He had developed symptoms of a rabid Anglophobic nature, and the Englishmen he met seemed to be stepping on every sensitive nerve in his system. Having a pretty caustic tongue of his own he gave quite as good as was sent. Finally Lang, surprised and ruffled by the sturdy counter-attack, asked: “Well, Bunner, are there no Englishmen whom you like?” “Oh, yes,” was the reply, “there are three large classes. Those born in Scotland,

those born in Ireland, and those who stay permanently in Westminster Abbey.”

Not exactly new, but always worth while retelling, is the story of Rebecca Gratz, from whom Scott drew the portrait of that Rebecca who is possibly the most enduring of all his women characters. W. S. Crockett narrates it in *The Scott Originals*, a book which has just been issued in this country by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons. In one way, the origin of Rebecca is an exception to the general rule, for Sir Walter seldom went far afield for his characters. To confine oneself to *Ivanhoe*, the name Ivanhoe was suggested by an old rhyme: the tragic death of the Templar was founded on a death which took place in Scott's presence in the Edinburgh Parliament House. The name of Front-de-Bœuf was borrowed from a roll of Norman warriors occur-



REBECCA GRATZ

ring in the Auchinleck Manuscript. But Rebecca's *alter ego* belongs to America, a land seldom mentioned in the Waverley novels, and the story of that *alter ego* was told to Scott by the first great literary ambassador of the new world to the old, Washington Irving.

Irving went to Abbotsford in the autumn of 1817, and there spent several of the most delightful days of his life, rambling about the hills and streams, and listening to old tales told as no one but Scott could tell them. Scott was then forty-six, and in the brilliancy of his early fame; Irving was thirty-four, and just rising in his literary reputation by the favourable reception of his *Salmagundi* and the *Knickerbocker History of New York*. To the speedily ripening friendship between the two is owed the character of Rebecca. During one of their many talks on personal matters Irving

confided to Scott an account of the great tragedy of his life—the death of his fiancée, Matilda Hoffman, and the beautiful devotion of her friend, Rebecca Gratz of Philadelphia. Matilda Hoffman was seized with consumption, and faded away in a single winter, dying in 1809 at the age of eighteen. Irving was then twenty-six. He lived forty-four years longer, treasuring her memory, sleeping with her Bible and Prayer Book beneath his pillow. After his death there was found in his home at Sunnyside a little repository of which no one but himself knew the secret. It was opened; a memorandum told the story of his sorrow, and there lay the picture of his betrothed; a braid of her golden hair, and a slip of paper, on which he had written “Matilda Hoffman.”

Matilda Hoffman's closest friend, the ministering angel at her sick bed, was Rebecca Gratz. She was the daughter of Michael Gratz, a native of Upper Silesia, who had emigrated to America when a mere youth, and engaged in the business of supplying Indian traders with merchandise. Michael Gratz grew wealthy, married Miriam Symons, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and of his eleven children Rebecca was born on March 4, 1781, and lived to complete



THE GRAVE OF REBECCA GRATZ IN THE JEWISH BURIAL GROUND IN PHILADELPHIA

her eighty-seventh year. It was the story of her love romance and sacrifice as told by Washington Irving that captured Scott's imagination. She loved, but her religion rose up a barrier between her and every boon that the world could bestow. Loyal to the ancestral faith, she could not conscientiously marry one of a different creed. Like Irving, Rebecca Gratz lived the life of a celibate. She wedded herself to the most varied acts of philanthropy, and the rest of her career became one long chain of golden deeds. The whole spirit of the life of this noble Philadelphia Jewess is summed up in the words with which the daughter of Isaac of York bids farewell to Rowena in the last chapter of *Ivanhoe*.

With very few exceptions it may be taken for granted that an author is never quite satisfied with his **Explaining an** illustrator, or sure that **Anachronism** the illustrator has given the proper attention to the text of the story. Dr. Cyrus Townsend is no exception to this rule. Some time ago he was shown a rare copy of the Bible illustrated with steel engravings. One engraving in particular was pointed out to him. It represented the children of Israel crossing the desert, the warriors wearing armour of the sixteenth century. "How could that have been?" was the puzzled question. "Very easy," replied Dr. Brady, sweetly. "As usual, the artist had not read the book."

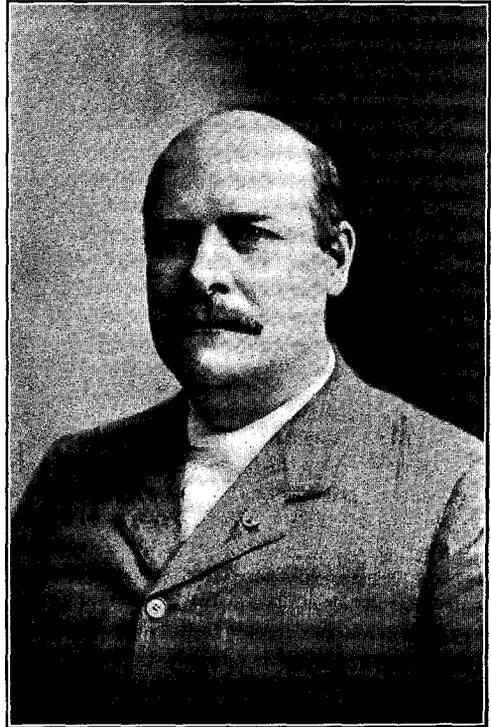
It is very seldom that a contributor has anything to boast of after an encounter with Mr. Robert **An Exchange** H. Davis, of *Munsey's*, but the other day we heard of a man in Memphis who recently exchanged shots with Mr. Davis and seems to have had rather the better of the exchange. This man submitted a story to *Munsey's*, and asked for a quick decision. A glance showed the tale to be an old friend. It originally appeared in the *Overland Monthly* under the title "The Luck of Roaring Camp." So Mr. Davis wrote:

MY DEAR SIR: We should be very glad to use this splendid story, but unfortunately

Bret Harte had it copyrighted when he first wrote it, and his publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company, who now own the copyright, would object, we fear, to your receiving money for it.

Naturally Mr. Davis thought that this would effectually close the episode. But he did not know the man in Memphis. Back came the reply:

DEAR MR. EDITOR: I have looked that matter up and I find that the story was first wrote



DR. CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

in 1886 and the copyright has run out and you have a perfect right to pay me for it, and I hope to receive check by return mail.

This rather staggered Mr. Davis, but he tried again:

MY DEAR SIR: We are very glad to hear that the copyright on *The Luck of Roaring Camp* has expired. How very careless of Bret! However, I regret that it seems still impossible to pay you for this story, because I now recall that, when Bret Harte lay on his death bed, he made me promise that I would never, never buy and print a story of his that