[From the Saturday Review.]

## THE PARSON OF THE OLD NOVELISTS.

In the modern rage for historical gossip, the passion for intruding into old-world secrets and realizing obsolete manners, it is remarkable how little we can get to know of the sociable of the clergy of but a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago. The most curious and determined investigation always comes to a stop here. We hear a great deal about the politicians, the wits, the squires, the courtiers, the actors, the beaux and belles, the footmen, the waiting-women of the last century, but the social life of the clergy is still as but a *terra incognita*. It has no historian, no diarist, no chronicler; and—perhaps what more than all accounts for the blank—it has no fiction devoted to its delineation; none, that is, in comparison with the enormous mass of literature dedicated to the portrayal of clerical life and character in our own time. Mr. Trollope alone, the self-constituted bard and laureate of the clergy, presents more pictures of clerical character than the whole fiction of the world up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Accustomed as people now are to get their ideas of the class, beyond their own limited experience, from the novelist, they naturally turn to the pages of fiction for information as to a past period. There is no indeed an absolute blank. But the invariable reference, by every inquirer, to Parson Adams and Parson Trulliber shows how circumscribed is the field. Richardson, to be sure, has his parsons, but he throws most of his interest and his undue share of his prose into them. They are mere conventionalities, and tell us nothing, being simply reflections of the virtues or the villainies of their patrons and employers. Dr. Bartlett, Sir Charles Grandison's "monitor in cassock," lives in his patron's house, conducts family worship, sings his praises with tears in his eyes, and provides him an amanuensis in the person of his nephew. The ruffian abductor Sir Hargrave Pollexfen has always ready to mumble the marriage service over the terrified and fainting Harriet Byron, had not the opening words of the service give her female strength enough to dash the book out of his hands with the well-known cry, "No doubt beloved." Clarissa has her venerable pastor, Dr. Lewin, a worthy divine; her cousel relations have their sycophantic, pedantic, time-serving tool, Mr. Brand; but not one of them, has made himself a name. Goldsmith's Dr. Primrose we feel to be himself; we can scarcely accept any part of his delightful book as a picture of manners; it is the one novel from which we do not require this sort of truth. Even the plays of the time that come down to us tell us nothing. Parson Adams resents the scraps of wit against the clergy quoted from plays of his day, and wonders Government does not interfere; but few of these survive. The real wits, little respects they showed for morals, as a rule let religion and the parson alone, probably because the parson occupied no place in the mind of the fashionable world. The clergy, as a body, were not interesting to the readers and critics of the period. Whenever there are good livings there will be men of family and social consideration; but the wits wrote for London and of London, and knew uncommonly little about the dignified component of country society. Their stock idea of the parson seems to have belonged to the curate order of the profession, the chaplain, and perhaps the Ordinary of Newgate. To the mass of the people, on the other hand, especially the rustic population, the clergy thus represented religion and learning, at a time when learning was reverenced more than it has been since, and Latin was a mystery, an innocent, yet awfully learned, branch of black art. A great deal was taken for granted and excused in a man who was an adept. Our readers will remember Addison's story to the point; but his characteristic humour expresses itself in so terse a form that we may indulge them by quoting it entire:

"I have heard of a couple of preachers in a country town who endeavored which should outshine one another, and draw together the largest congregation. One of them being well versed in the Fathers, used to quote every one and then a Latin sentence to his illiterate hearers, who, if they understood themselves so edified by it, that they flocked in greater numbers to this learned man than to his rival. The other, finding his congregation slackening every Sunday, and hearing at length what was the occasion of it, resolved to give his parish a little Latin in his turn, but being unacquainted with any of the Fathers, he digested into his sermon the whole book of *Qui Gnocas*, adding, however, such explications to it as he thought might do for the benefit of his people. He afterwards entered upon *As in præsenti*, which he converted to the same manner to the use of his parishioners. This, in a very little time, thickened his audience, filled his church and routed his antagonist."

And, even where there was not a pretence of learning, the parson, who was good company, found tolerant judges, their reverence not exacting celebrity. The *Connoisseur* tells us of the sporting parson arriving, full gallop, at the church doors, where all the congregation awaited him, giving his "brown scratch bob" a shake, clapping on his surplice, and giving *entire satisfaction* to both parishioners and squire, both in desk and pulpit, the squire inviting him to dinner, where jovial round rounds were only interrupted by the bell for the second service. The literary interests of remote districts were mainly sustained, however, by the clergy, and we read of a little centre of intellectual activity—a club of parsons who assembled every Saturday at the nearest market town to be shaved, to exchange sermons, and to discuss the monthly reviews.

Authors of the eighteenth century wrote, however, at a time when rustics and rural pursuits were the ridicule of fine people; when Millamant mauseled walking as a country diversion; and "loathed the country and everything belonging to it," and the parson certainly not less than his surroundings. They wrote, too, in an age of fine clothes, when language separated the civic from the laity by this one distinction. When a parson is under dissenion we are never allowed to forget his clothes. Thus the history of Parson Adams's cassock accompanies his own. It had got a rent in climbing over a stile ten years before the story begins, and by the end of it scarcely a rag remains. That word *cloth* accounts for a great deal of oblivion in the great world. At a time when gentlemen gittered in scarlet and gold lace, the inevitable gown and cassock stood at a disadvantage; and when swords were not only worn but drawn, the compulsory submission to undo and insult which the cloth exacted was a still greater disquisition. When wit and repartee were everything in conversation, it needed a double allowance of wit to shine in pudding-sleeves. They did shine we know, but the gown was an incubus to the clergyman in gay society, and a constant butt for the dull joker. His cloth was a continual consciousness to Swift; that he made capital of it—"the old wig of clerical cut and musty gown"—does not the less prove that the consciousness was an irksome one. Being once present at a discussion on the personal appearance of Julius Cæsar, "For my part, said Addison to Phillips, a man's mien and dress, "I should take him to have been of a lean habit, pale complexion, extremely neat in his dress, and five feet seven inches high"—an exact description of Phillips himself. "And I, Mr. Philips," said Swift, "should take him to have been a plump man, just five feet five inches high, and very neatly dressed in a black gown with pudding-sleeves." The supernatural be assigns to the party; it was over the parson's we know—

Dear reverend shadow, would thy gown descend, Do but hear on the clergy how gulls his tongue ran.

And this captain "all daub'd with gold lace" falls foul at once of the shabby cassock and rumpled band:

Whenever you see a cassock and gown, A hundred to one that it covers a clown.

Observe how a parson comes into a room, &c.

So satirist of that date ever supposes that a woman can turn her thoughts on a parson till her forty-fifth year. He is the *jeune premier* of the old maid of genteel life. Even the devotee who dignifies good company by her scruples is not led to them by the parson. He has had no influence over her. The gospel gossips of the *Spectator* are Dissenters, and the *Lady Prue* who goes to hear Whitefield accepts his teachings, but expects the lady of her parish to condone her four hours' flirtation with the colonel. Not that this argument goes very far. Swift, in his pudding-sleeves broke some female hearts. The captain's red coat only gives him five minutes' start in the favor of fair eyes, but a start which the parson of that day could not overtake. As it was, an author—we know what later on is the century shows an exceptional success for the cloth. Miss Byron, in her *Ophelia*, makes an interesting young parson a protegee to the hand of her heroine—a good promotion as times then went. Of course he is refused in favor of the libertine hero, and of course her aunt had taken his timid advances as intended for herself, and is furious accordingly at the *dénouement*; but Sir Sonis is intended to be interesting, and not ridiculous, in the reader's eyes, which is a testimony to the inherent female sympathy with the clerical profession.

As for Fielding's (her brother's) standing representatives of the class, we may be sure the ladies some excuse for holding aloof from the comedy of their lives the reminder they assembled these types. Trulliber is rated an exaggeration, yet it is impossible to suspect much literal truth in the sense where he entertains his brother parson Adams, and snatches the cup of ale from his hands, reproving Mrs. Trulliber, who stands behind his chair (her place at meal times) for helping that guest when he had called first. "No, sir, no, I should not have been so rude to have taken it from you, if you had *cured* your; but I have you know I'm a better man than to suffer the best in the kingdom to drink anything in my own house, when I *could cure*." Not is Parson Adams, though a better man, a more desirable inmate of a lady's drawing-room. It is scarcely to be wondered at that he can get no secular access to the good lady from Mrs. Slipslop, her waiting-maid, who is herself a cousin's daughter. He fits much better the kitchen, where he so often confesses himself with Sir Thomas's ale after his four services. Scholarship and piety are good things, but a woman must—be excused—from caring for them when they can only be heard through the fumes of cudgels and tobacco. It may be that the novelist's old plan of leading the hero through a series of adventures confines him to such company as at least is introduced at the alehouse, for certainly the parson seems much more at home there. "The parson," says one man, "took me for a Presbyterian because I could not drink with him." And how Adams's salary of £23 a year could supply him in beer alone is a problem nowhere explained.

The novelist and essayist of that day allied themselves with the rustic and the rustic fondness for sermons. It was the fashionable world, and that took the matter in hand, and made Roger, when he restricted his pastor to a choice from a library of standard divines of his own selection, pay the double penalty of his presence of the parish. Parson Adams has a faith in his own sermons which Addison, a more admiring parishioner, the joke is relished of his pulling them out to read to the most incorrigible audience, his wife and the ale-house, but his sermon on Vanity in his pocket, and his offer of his MS. volume in pledge for a pipe of tobacco. Fielding's sermon is indeed a time-honored joke. In one of Smollet's prefaces—after the model which Mr. Dickens Scott has made so familiar—the Reverend Mr. Jonathan Dustwich, who is coming up to town with a sermon in his pocket, hears the news of a publisher, "You need not take the trouble to bring any of your sermons on speculation, for I read sermons but Methodists and Dissenters"; going on further to explain that he himself was a sinner in that sort of conduct, and that the man whose judgment he depended on in such matters had gone abroad as carpenter in a man-of-war.

This change, then, has occurred in time. The parson of old, to be worth drawing at all, must be either a disgrace to his cloth or an object—rather disputable, we pedant, or an amiable eccentric and but, or simply conventional of the traditional type, a piece of furniture utterling platitudes which the reader never dreams of reading, but who must be there for the credit of the house or hangings. Any we could only be subordinate. That he should take the lead and wrestle against the progress, that he should be well-mannered, handsome and interesting, is an idea of another century which deserves further consideration.

## ART ITEMS.

### American.

—The *Tribune's* Washington correspondent, G. G. adds: "Why cannot we have in the two vacant panels of the House of Representatives landscapes and marines by Church and Bierstadt, and by our Hunts, Rossiters, Rothwell and Hamilton? The pictures of Mr. Hamilton are among the best treasures of rich Philadelphians; they are not known as they should be known elsewhere—certainly not Washington. Nature has left out of him as she leaves out of most poetic artists, the pushing, lobbying, bragging element. A few of his pictures have been purchased by connoisseurs of New York and Boston, and a few have gone to Europe, where they are greatly admired, his water-colors especially. Mr. Dickens took home one of his marine views—What are the Wild Waves Saying?—which, I hear, now hangs in a place of honor in the charming library of Gad's-Hill-Place. There is one picture by Mr. Hamilton which would show greatly in the Capitol. It is a large sea view by moonlight—a vivid and impressive picture representing the capture of the Serapis by the Bon-homme Richard, commanded by that desperate adventurer, the half romantic hero, Paul Jones. The French ship, dismasted, riddled, and burning, is blazing out fire and smoke, crimsoning the crests of the waves and the white moonlight, and painting the clouds with a fearful glare. The frames seem to me to be of a peculiar ghastly red, as though colored by the light of the fire licked up from the steaming deck. The picture has an absolute historic value, and ought to belong to the nation."

—The same correspondent, a lady, we believe, thus refers to an unworthy treatment of one of our most celebrated artists: "Mr. Falk Mills to make a marble group for the pediment of the southern wing of the Capitol. Mr. Mills is son of Clark Mills, Esq., best known to fame through his Jackson, or rather through his rearing and 'cavorting' war-horse, for the old hero himself is quite a secondary personage. 'Scribing' doubtless runs in the Mills family and the young man has also inherited some of his father's industry and enterprise. I have not seen the model of the group it is proposed to set upon this magnificent 'coign of vantage,' to challenge the criticism of the Senate. Some of our local reporters say it is highly poetical, allegorical, and moral in character, and I suppose we ought to be satisfied with so much. But I have of it, little is something allowed in the proposal to intrust a work of such difficulty and importance to a young man of so little experience in art and so little reputation as an artist. Mr. Mills may yet be able to plan and execute as great works as his sire one needed for this position, but I cannot believe he is now competent. Then the house he springs from has had its share of patronage. Mr. Mills *pire* has received much sustenance from Government—wilfully savage and inhospitable to great artists, she adopted and fostered himself and later, has been almost equally kind to Mr. Stone. They are her Romulus and Remus, and it is full time they were weaned. It is time that some national commissions were given to our best artists. I will not talk the contract for this 'big job' for Miss Hosmer or Miss Stebbins, as Congress is not up to the justice of paying equal wages for equal work, except, indeed, when the woman be exceptionally young and pretty."

### Foreign.

—When that little marvel, the portrait of a *conducteur* by Antonello da Messina, which is now in the *salon carré* of the Louvre, was put up at the Pourtales sale, the combatants were France and England. People were not much astonished when offer after offer was made, and 1,000 guineas were proffered for a panel not more than 12 inches in its largest measurement, and representing a man's head and shoulders. The interest grew painful even to picture-buyers when the limit of the wildest idea was passed, and France got the work at a prodigious price. Englishmen grumbled, and still grumble, that their country hesitated to give 10,000 guineas for the Antonello. It is now understood that France would not have yielded at less than that sum. Such was the case in this great struggle—the most momentous of recent picture-buying fines.

—At the second sale of the San Donato collection, in Paris, on the 20th February, so enormous a sum as 5,000 guineas was bid by the Marquis of Hertford, for "Broken Eggs," by Greuze, which is known by Mosler's engraving, and measures 73 centimètres in height by 94 centimètres in length. This fact passed all existing bounds. The picture of a young woman is seated on the floor in a cottage, with a young coxcomb, finger in lover's ear in her panier of broken eggs. A lad endeavors with indifferent success to assuage the wrath of an old woman who complained to Louis XV. of Germain, and Mdlle. Cellier.

—Another picture, the famous "droll" of the Palais Royal, has been seriously hurt during a recent rehearsal in Monaco; his arm being fractured in two places, and bruised. He is progressing favorably towards recovery.


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HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES, SEWERS, &c.—OFFICE OF CHIEF COMMISSIONER, NO. 101 SOUTH FIFTH STREET.

PHILADELPHIA, March 2, 1870.

NOTICE—In pursuance of the provisions of an ORDINANCE OF COUNCILS, approved April 29, 1869, notice is hereby given that the final estimate for constructing SEWER will be made, and warrants drawn therefor, on and after the 1st day of April, 1870.

All persons having claims for work done, or materials furnished, in the construction of said sewer, are hereby notified to present the same to the undersigned, on or before the 1st day of April, 1870.

MAHLON H. DICKINSON, mh2w f6t] Chief Commissioner of Highways.

PROPOSALS.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES, SEWERS, &c.—OFFICE OF CHIEF COMMISSIONER, NO. 101 SOUTH FIFTH STREET.

PHILADELPHIA, March 17, 1870.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at the office of the Chief Commissioner of Highways until 12 o'clock, M., on MONDAY, March 21, for the construction of a Sewer in FRANKFORD, in the Twenty-first Ward, bounded and forty feet west from TWENTY-FOURTH STREET, from the end of the sewer on the SCHUYLKILL RIVER, FOUR feet in diameter.

Also, on CALLOWHILL street, from SEVENTEENTH to EIGHTEENTH street, THREE feet in diameter.

Also, on COLUMBIA Avenue, from HIGH to SEVENTH STREET, THREE feet in diameter.

Also, on THIRD Street, from MARKET Street to CHESTNUT STREET, THREE feet in diameter.

Also, on MAIN Street, (Manayunk), from the sewer thereon, to the northwest curb line of GERMANTOWN AVENUE, THREE feet in diameter.

Also, on WISTAR Street, from the sewer on TENTH Street to the east curb line of SEVENTH Street, THREE feet in diameter.

With such manholes as may be directed by the Chief Commissioner of Highways, and the Contractor shall take bids prepared for the same, and the same shall be a good Sewer to the amount of one dollar and fifty cents for each linear foot of front or each side of the street as so much cash paid; the balance in Public Improvement Loan, to be paid by the city. The Contractor will be required to keep the street and sewer in good order for three years after the sewer is finished. No allowance will be made for rock excavation except by special agreement.

When the street is occupied by a City Passenger Railroad, the Sewer shall be constructed along side of said track in such manner as not to obstruct or interfere with the safe passage of the cars thereon; and no claim for damages shall be paid the contractor by the Company using said track, as specified in act of Assembly, approved May 8, 1866.

Each proposal will be accompanied by a certificate of a Surety Company, that the bidder is in the Department as directed by Ordinance of May 25, 1869. Bidders are hereby notified that a contract within five days after the work is awarded to them, will be deemed as signing, and will be held liable on his bond for the difference between his bid and the next lowest bidder. Specifications may be had at the Department of Surveys, upon the terms heretofore adhered to. The Department of Highways reserves the right to reject all bids not deemed satisfactory.

The parties are invited to be present at the time and place of opening the proposals.

MAHLON H. DICKINSON, Chief Commissioner of Highways.

mh17 3t

TO CONTRACTORS.

PROPOSALS will be received at the office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, Park, 224 South FIFTH street, till noon of SATURDAY, March 19, 1870, for enclosing George's Hill Concourse, and a part of the Lansdowne Drive, with Iron Fence, for mechanizing the footwalks in that vicinity, and for paving the gutters with cobblestones.

Also, for macadamizing Lansdowne Drive from Sweet Briar to the horse-drinking basin, at the crossing of Lansdowne Drive, and for paving the gutters.

Proposals will be received for either or both sections of the work.

Plans and specifications may be seen at the Engineer's office, at Fairmount.

The right to reject any or all proposals is reserved.

JOHN C. CRESSON, Chief Engineer.

mh15 6t

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1870. FLORIDA STEP BOARDS. FLORIDA STEP BOARDS. 1870.

1870. WALNUT BOARDS AND PLANK. WALNUT BOARDS. WALNUT PLANK. ASSORTED. CABINET MAKERS. BUILDERS, &c. 1870.

1870. UNDERTAKERS' BOARDS. UNDERTAKERS' BOARDS. WALNUT AND PINE. 1870.

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*Messrs. Herring, Farrel & Sherman, New York:*

DEAR SIRS: We take pleasure in informing you that during the night of the 23d inst. another very destructive conflagration took place in this city, causing property valued at not less than one million dollars.

There were a number of your safes in the fire, and every one then exposed was proved entirely satisfactory, while the contents of other makers were more or less injured. YOURS, A. W. & E. P. CLEGG.

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A FURTHER ACCOUNT.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH OFFICE, GALVESTON, TEXAS, March 1, 1870.

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## TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY.

NAPOLEON has consented to arbitrate in the Tornado case.

THE Secretary of the Navy is to send a vessel of war to Cuba at once.

COMPLAINTS are prevalent in Paris of the inefficiency of the transatlantic mail service.

A NITRO-GLYCERINE factory exploded near Hackensack Junction, New York, yesterday, killing four men and a boy.

THE Senate of Massachusetts, by a vote of 22 to 17, has rejected the liquor license bill recently passed by the House.

THE Senate Naval Committee have agreed to report favorably upon the nomination of Commodore Winslow for Rear Admiral.

THE Louisiana Legislature adjourned sine die on Wednesday night. During its regular and extra sessions it passed bills appropriating $17,000,000.

THE New Jersey Legislature adjourned last night. A conference report on the general tax law was adopted, making the rate one mill on the dollar.

MR. GLADSTONE asserts that the Fenian prisoners are well treated, and complains on the subject. Amnesty, he says, is untimely in the presence of continued violence.

THE Missouri House of Representatives has passed a bill preventing municipalities and counties from subscribing to railroads beyond ten per cent. of the assessed value of taxable property.

IN the Mississippi House of Representatives, on Wednesday, a resolution was passed approving the action of the Legislature in electing Gen. Ames United States Senator. The resolution was lost for want of a majority.

THE plantation of Mrs. Emerson, an American lady residing in Wilmington, N. C., and situated near Sagua la Grande, Cuba, has been burned by the insurgents. Six plantations near Santa Espiritu have also been burned.

THE Senate Public Lands and Land Office Association, at a meeting held last Monday, directed their Secretary to commence suit against all delinquent subscribers to the fund, giving twenty days' notice in each case.

IN the examination before the United States Senate, yesterday, Orange Jacobs was confirmed as Chief Justice of the Washington Territory, and the following Consuls: James R. Partridge, of Antwerp, D. J. Will inson at Callao, and A. J. Thompson at Sonora, Mexico.

INFORMATION has been received at Washington that Hez Cloud, the most powerful of the Sioux chiefs in the Dakota country, is negotiate with the Government for removal to a reservation during the spring. He is chief of 2,500 Indians, and has influence with other chiefs.

The Superintendent of Registration at St. Louis has telegraphed Secretary Fish to know whether the rebellious States have ratified the Fifteenth Amendment, so that colored voters may be registered. The Secretary has replied that the amendment has been ratified when Georgia and Texas are admitted by Congress. The Superintendent, therefore, decided not to register the colored citizens at St. Louis.

In the Canadian House of Commons, on Wednesday night, Mr. Huntington spoke in favor of a customs union with the United States, as the only way to keep the population of Canada and promote its prosperity. He said the Dominion could not exist as a country together with a differential duty against British goods. He was cheered by his friends. Mr. Huntington's argument was a slander, and that the high tariff was for British benefit. He proposed to adopt, would be a crushing burden on the Canadians. Mr. Darien argued for the protection of manufactures, and against free trade. Mr. Darien argued for the protection of manufactures, and against free trade. Mr. Darien argued for the protection of manufactures, and against free trade