



JURASSIC LONDON 2015 **Christmas
Stocking
Stuffer**

Stocking Stuffer

2015



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And a selection of works currently in the public domain,
lightly edited for modern readers.

Selected and introduced by Jared Shurin

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“A popular and fairly orthodox opinion concerning book-collectors is that their vices are many, their virtues of a negative sort, and their ways altogether past finding out.”

Leon H. Vincent

The Bibliotaph and Other People (1899)

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The Chief Delight

Jared Shurin

As 2015 rolls to a close, it is worth reflecting on one of the odder years in the short history of Jurassic London.

In what was our ‘slowest’ year to date, we only published four books (excluding this one), and a mere 48 short stories (a tidy 50 by the end of the year). It is slightly disconcerting to think that this constitutes our lowest output since 2011. The books: *they creep up on you*.

This year, we continued trying new things, but also set aside some of our previous projects. The shared world of Pandemonium is, for now at least, left dormant. But *We Need to Talk*, our first shamelessly literary book was an outstanding success – not only because it was assembled in under two months, but also because it introduced us to an entirely new world of readers and writers (and retailers and reviewers). And if 2015 lacked one of our traditional ‘flagship’ anthologies, Lavie Tidhar and Rebecca Levene’s *Jews vs ...* series more than filled that gap, a pair of titles (plus omnibus edition) that proved both attention-grabbing and immensely enjoyable.

Aleriel, following the format of *The Brick Moon*, was another success. The formula of ‘charming-but-significant source material plus beautiful cover plus critical introduction plus provocative sequel’ has proven surprisingly easy to repeat, and there are already plans in place to do more in this style.

Similarly, taking open submissions for our sister site, *Pornokitsch*, has introduced us to new writers and new authors. Despite the seedy name, *Pornokitsch* also provides our stories with a substantially larger audience than our chapbooks ever did. We’ve loved our chapbooks program, and meeting all the terrific new writers that have come out of it. But given our goal is not just to find new voice, but also to introduce to them new readers, we think that this is a better way of achieving it.

On the subject of goals, Jurassic London is a not for profit publisher, and the proceeds from the sales of our books are distributed to selected charity partners. This year, those charities included The Trevor Project, The Eve Appeal, Guide Dogs, MOSAC, The Homestead, UNHCR, and The Red Cross.

We are incredibly grateful to the authors, artists, partners, producers, suppliers and, most of all, readers, that make this possible. Your dubious taste in reading material has made the world a slightly better place. Thank you.



In keeping with 2015's theme of experimentation (or perhaps 'nostalgia', or even 'relying heavily on the efforts of others'), this year's Stocking Stuffer is a break from tradition, as the contents are all reprints.

I am perpetually prowling through archives, and am in the habit of copying out extracts when they touch on topics near and dear to my heart. For example, book collecting. Given all that I've noted above, sharing these 'inspirational passages' seemed appropriate for this year's holiday season. Whatever form a book may take: physical, digital, chapbook, paperback, hardcover limited edition, stone tablet... there will always be collectors looking to wedge it into a shelf.

Mitchell Buck and 'Book Collecting' is a fine start to the lot, enthusing, as he does that 'Blessed, indeed, is the willing self-denial which produces the ransom of a good book, at the expense of the ephemeral luxuries of life!'. A man that shares our priorities.

J.H. Slater's 'The Hunting-Grounds of London' is both beautiful and depressing. Even as Slater mourns the disappearance of the bookshops of old, he still lives in a London where more than 450 abound (according to the Booksellers' Association, there are currently fewer than 300, including all the chain stores). Slater and Buck are united in their appreciation of serendipity – in fact, the title of this introduction is a quote from Slater, who refers to the 'hunting' as 'the true book-lovers chief delight'.

The next two selections shine a spotlight on two of those true book-lovers: one forgotten, one remembered for everything *else* he

did. If you'll forgive the seasonally-inspired sentimentalism, one of the wonders of loving books – from Plutarch to *Divergent* – is that it is a passion that unites and connects so many very different people.

And the final selection, 'Removing Stains' is a messy reminder that books, over time, become objects with stories of their own. For those looking for more practical advice, the rest of the volume (not included here) does include instructions for removing everything from egg yolk to blood. Just in case.

On that messy note: have a wonderful holiday and a very happy New Year.

Jared Shurin
London
December 2015

Book Buying

Mitchell S. Buck

As by far the greater portion of rare and desirable books to be had in America from time to time are sent over from England and the Continent by dealers' agents, it follows that the amateur collector in this country must depend largely on dealers for his supply of books. Except at auctions, there are comparatively few opportunities of buying at first-hand, although rare items of American printed books are sometimes unearthed and, in the old book stores of the larger cities, bargains are not uncommon. These latter, however, are usually limited, at best, to picking up some good first edition of a modern author, worth, perhaps, five dollars, and carelessly marked, with numbers of other books, at about twenty-five cents. Better fortune sometimes attends. For example, one may sometimes find a really rare and valuable book which, in dim but inadequate realization of its value, has been marked higher than its neighbors - perhaps up to about one-tenth of its real value. Such an incident, however, is among the exceptions. In any case, the stories of wonderful finds in years past, along the quays of Paris or in the stalls of London are, for the American at least, almost like romances which could never come true.

In buying from dealers, especially those who specialize in rare books, it is often, unfortunately, necessary that the bibliophile of moderate means, to whom these pages are particularly addressed, is obliged to pause before the price of some much desired volume. His buying problems are much more complex than those of his wealthy fellow-collector, to whom price is little object, since he must not only hunt out the volumes he wants, but also copies priced reasonably to be within his reach. Blessed, indeed, is the willing self-denial which produces the ransom of a good book, at the expense of the ephemeral luxuries of life! But under such conditions it is essential that the amateur have a fairly complete knowledge of the value of books,

particularly along his own special lines, in order that he may not be driven to unnecessary hardships through paying unjustly high prices for his treasures.

While the prices of books vary greatly, according to condition and binding, they also vary to an astonishing extent with various dealers. The prices marked by some dealers are often high for certain kinds of books and low for others. Bargains often may be secured from the dealer who marks his books, not according to their present market value, but according to the price he himself paid for them, since it follows, naturally, that a bargain for him is a bargain for his customer. Information of this kind, in respect to particular dealers, is very valuable to the amateur who visits their shops, but he often gains it only after considerable experience.

Cautious buying, so often sneered at, is, nevertheless, essential, and the amateur bibliophile owes to himself not only complete information as to the 'right' editions of books, but also a thoroughly developed knowledge and judgment which will enable him to value books with fair accuracy. He must realize that in many cases the dealer is wily and seductive; moreover, his wares plead for themselves to trouble the heart of the hesitating purchaser. He also must develop a certain amount of guile, and must be able to harden his heart, if necessary, against all appeal. This is one of the most difficult of all things to do, and is the triumph of knowledge over ingenuousness and of reason over bibliomania.

To the collector of moderate means, even though his library be small, his books represent a certain form of investment, fairly secured. It has been pointed out by Mr. J. H. Slater, editor of the *English Book Prices Current*,¹ that books bought as an investment are not really so, because to be a good investment they would have constantly to increase in value to equal the income from the purchase price, had it been invested in another way. This increase in value, however, often actually takes place, and in a fair sized collection of books, judiciously gathered, the abnormal increase in the value of some volumes will help to balance the sluggishness or depreciation of others. The bibliophile,

1 A selection from Mr. Slater appears elsewhere in this very volume - JS

however, may well rest content, and consider himself well repaid for his efforts to buy carefully, if the value of his collection as a whole remains equal to the sum total of his expenditures, and he may accept the pleasures of possessing and reading the volumes in lieu of interest on the investment.

As the market value of books changes constantly, and depends not only on varying rarity, but also on demand, it is necessary that the collector have some idea as to what constitutes rarity, and the conditions governing demand. For this a considerable amount of study is necessary. It has been pointed out that rarity itself does not make for value, if there is no demand. An unique copy of a book is necessarily rare, but if no one wants it, it will not bring a price in proportion to its scarcity. This is a hard rule which one must apply, and a rule often unjust to the books themselves. Yet, while there are many books of great merit slowly disappearing from the world because of neglect, it is also true that the books most in demand and commanding the highest prices in first or early editions are, in the main, books of great intrinsic merit, well known and, for one reason or another, justly famous.

The bibliophile must judge for himself as best he may, what books indicate by their nature and celebrity a permanent value and what books command excessive prices for the moment simply because of inflated interest and demand. Conditions governing market value change in large, general movements, often affecting whole classes of books. .

The greatest care is necessary in purchasing modern editions, especially of modern authors, as the number of modern books and editions, whether the books be good, bad or indifferent--the latter two adjectives usually applying, unfortunately--present an extremely complex field from which only great foresight will select books of merit which will be sought after several generations hence.

The amateur should also observe with a certain amount of suspicion books printed in very 'limited' editions, with a view of establishing immediate rarity, permitting himself an interest only in those of obvious merit, where the limited edition is not necessitated by limited demand, and avoiding those books so printed of which previous editions much in demand have been issued... Books from famous private presses, examples of the highest state of typography of their

time, such as the Kelmscott Press books printed by William Morris, or books printed by some famous printer, such as John Baskerville, of Birmingham, are almost certain to increase substantially in value in the long run over their present-day prices and are, moreover, delightful books to have.

To be properly considered with the general subject of buying, are the special copies of volumes known as ‘association books.’ These are unique copies, connected in some direct way with the author or with some prominent personage. Because of the sentimental interest attached, these usually command high prices. Included under this heading are presentation copies with inscriptions by the author, the author’s own copy of his book, generally with autograph corrections, and books with autograph annotations by some contemporary or later, but equally famous, person or author. There is no standard by which to judge the proper value of such special copies as they are unique, and such copies may change hands several times at close intervals with a considerably varying but generally increasing price. Copies of this kind are generally held at high ransom by dealers, especially in the ‘high rent districts’ of our large cities, and the amateur bibliophile is wiser to hope merely that, as sometimes happens, chance may throw such copies, until that time unrecognized as such, into his hands without extra premium. Dealers, and even collectors, often attempt to establish an association value in a book by inserting autograph letters or signatures of the author; but such volumes, although thus made of considerable interest, obviously cannot properly be considered under this heading.



Book Repair and Restoration: A manual of practical suggestions for bibliophiles (1918) by Mitchell S. Buck

The Hunting-Grounds of London

J.H. Slater

At the present time there are, if the Post-Office Directory is to be believed, about 450 booksellers in London; but in this computation are included publishers, stationers, and even bookbinders—in fact, almost everyone who has anything whatever to do with books—so that the figures are by no means to be relied upon. The number of booksellers who make a speciality of second-hand volumes is very much less than 450, if we include only those who follow a single business, namely, that of buying and selling books, and very much greater if we add to the list the army of general dealers who sell books occasionally, or as an adjunct to some other occupation.

The real book-hunter does not follow the Directory, but his nose, which frequently leads him into strange places where there are no recognised booksellers, yet booksellers in plenty—a seeming paradox, which is readily explained by the fact that there are multitudes of what may, without offence, be called ‘book-jobbers,’ whose names are either not in the Directory at all, or appear there under some other designation.

A man may buy up a roomful of furniture, taking the books of necessity; or a houseful, and with the mass of goods and chattels perhaps hundreds of volumes which are not thought good enough to be disposed of separately, and are therefore cleared out at a nominal figure, and retailed anywhere and everywhere as circumstance and opportunity suggest. Are these dealers, brokers, and what not, booksellers? Heaven save the mark, no! not in a specific sense; but they sell books, notwithstanding, and their shops are, in very truth, recognised hunting-grounds of the Metropolis. There are literally hundreds of them, and they are to be met with, as a rule, close together, where rents are low and the footsteps of the income-tax fiend are unknown.

This is one description of bookseller, but there are several others: the man with the barrow, for instance, who works at his trade all the week, and comes out on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings in certain localities, to do what bartering he can with casual passers-by.

To compare these classes with the recognised booksellers, some of whom have an immense turnover, would, of course, be absurd; but they have their uses, and instances are not wanting in which mightily successful dealers have begun in this humble manner, and literally forced their way up from the pavements of the East End or the Surrey side to more pleasant places in the West. High or low, rich or poor, their shops or stalls are alike objects of extreme interest to thousands who have learned enough to know that the best books are generally the cheapest. Whatever the size of the premises they own, they contribute in their several degrees to the wants of all classes of book-men, whose delight it is to forage for themselves, and to seek that they may find. The lordly collector who pays by cheque may or may not be a book-hunter. If not, he misses much of the pleasure that accompanies the tracking down, step by step, of some coveted volume which is, perhaps, more or less easily obtainable almost at any time in exchange for plenty of money, but is rarely met with casually.

It is this tracking down, hunting which is the true book-lover's chief delight, and, needless to say, his primary object is not to secure books of great price for a nominal sum. If it were, he would at the end of a long life have few successes to report, for the search for rarities is so thorough and systematic that hardly anything of substantial pecuniary value can run the gauntlet all the way to the shop-board or the barrow. The harvest has all been gathered long ago, and nothing is now left but gleanings in fields already raked. The book-lover eliminates as far as possible the question of value from his walks abroad, and leaves his gold at home to be expended as opportunity arises in the auction-room, where open competition holds the market in a virtual equipoise, or in the shops of recognised dealers, who hold his commissions and are always on the look-out for important works. He is aware, however, that intrinsically good books are to be met with continually in all sorts of places, and it is these that he hopes to obtain, and from these that his library is most often recruited. Between one edition of some interesting

or instructive book and another there may be an immense disparity in cost, but very little textual difference, or even none at all. In some cases the cheaper volume may be the more accurate of the two, and may also contain additional matter, which renders it more important and desirable from every point of view, except a sentimental one.

It is the search for volumes of this kind, sound and honest, yet not aristocratic, that has kept the bookstalls open for 300 years and more, for, to be precise, we know that St. Paul's Churchyard and Fleet Street were, in addition to other less known localities, much frequented by book-men as far back as the reign of Henry VIII. In these districts Cardinal Wolsey's agents kept a sharp look-out for copies of *A Supplicacyon for the Beggars*, which Simon Fyshe, 'a zealous man for the reformation of abuses in the Church,' had boldly published and was scattering abroad in the year 1524, and which seems to have had a stealthy run for six years, for it was not until 1530 that it was openly prohibited by proclamation. Neither Fleet Street nor St Paul's Churchyard is, however, a hunting-ground for book-men now. The former is wholly given up to newspapers and machinery, and the latter to drapers and warehousemen, and there is no room anywhere for small dealers in second-hand books.

Indeed, the whole of London has been turned topsy-turvy so far as they are concerned. New localities they abhor, and the greater part of London is new, in the sense that very many old districts and streets have been rebuilt, or entirely swept away by the march of improvement and the increasing desire for wide thoroughfares and open spaces. What place more famous once than Little Britain, which during the last twenty or thirty years has swallowed up Duck Lane—another book-hunting locality—bodily? It was here that Thomas Britton, a coal-dealer, prowled around during his spare moments, pouncing upon anything and everything that took his fancy; rejoicing especially in works of magic, witchcraft, and astrology, either printed or in manuscript. The catalogue of his library is extant, and it is clear that he was a very far-sighted and keen-scented man, and one, too, who was blessed with a taste and discrimination most rare among dealers in small coal. In Little Britain *Paradise Lost* went begging. The stalls must have been littered with the very first, or 1667, issue, for in that year the Earl of Dorset had

a copy of it thrust under his nose and pressed upon him by a bookseller who complained most bitterly that he could not get rid of his stock. About the year 1760 the whole of the trade had vanished from Little Britain, though at the present time the once-famous thoroughfare boasts one bookseller and also one newsagent, the sole representatives of past times. As for the rest of the denizens, they follow the more prosaic occupations of builders, bootmakers, butchers, hairdressers, restaurant-keepers and publicans, the last-named being especially in evidence. In this locality, as in many others, the thirst for knowledge has been quenched, and the thirst for beer become almighty.

So, too, Moorfields was once classic ground, as also the Poultry, but both places have been dead to bookish fame this hundred years. There are now no booksellers' shops in the Poultry, though Moorfields just saves itself, for it rejoices in the presence of a music publisher and a stationer. Speaking generally, the second-hand book trade has been driven bodily out of the central and eastern parts of London, and has settled itself in the streets west of Temple Bar and Holborn Viaduct, always avoiding the Strand, which, for some reason or other, has ever been regarded as an inhospitable quarter. There are certainly booksellers' shops in this important thoroughfare, three, I believe, is the precise number, but they are hardly sufficient to invest it with the dignity and title of a 'locality.'

In contrast to this, Holborn and the streets adjoining have always been a good hunting-ground, and are so today. *The Vision of Piers Plowman* was printed and sold in Ely Rents so long ago as 1550, and Snow Hill and Gray's Inn Gate were both world-wide localities, though the glory of all these places has since departed. Up to within five years ago there was a shop on the right-hand side of Gray's Inn Lane, just out of Holborn, given up chiefly to the sale of newspapers. It is shut up now, and, according to all accounts, will never be opened again, which is a pity, for it is a shop, or more probably the curtailment of much larger premises, with a notable history.

Here, in 1750 or thereabouts, carried on business one Thomas Osborne, who, although ignorant to a degree, brutal in his manners, and surly beyond description, managed to build up the largest business of its kind in London, or, indeed, anywhere else. Customers ignored

Tom Osborne's curses, and bought his books when they could, for sometimes, when particularly morose, he would shut himself up, like a hermit, 'with his lumber,' as a historian of the day termed the thirty whole libraries which he had amassed, and refuse to treat at all. Nevertheless, Osborne prospered exceedingly, and in the latter years of his life was the owner of a country house and 'dog and duck shootings,' all purchased and kept up from the profits derived from this shop in Gray's Inn Lane. The prices he asked were the most he thought he had the remotest chance of getting, and were often outrageous and extortionate, though at other times very much below what he might have obtained had he known his business properly. He seems to have taken a bird's-eye view of his stock, and to have appraised the value of individual books, not by reference to their rarity, but by means of a fractional calculation based upon the total cost—a rough-and-ready method of trading which attracted book-buyers from every part of London, and reconciled them to his insolence. Though Osborne was not the first dealer to issue a catalogue—one T. Green, of Spring Gardens, being credited with having revived, in 1729, this time-worn method of selling books—he carried on a more extensive business in this way than anyone who had preceded him, and in addition had the supreme honour of being knocked down by Dr. Johnson with a huge folio which the latter wanted to buy, and he (Osborne) refused to sell at any price. Either of these claims to distinction would have made the fortune of any man. It is stated by Sir John Hawkins that the book which Dr. Johnson wielded with such effect was the *Biblia Greeca Septuaginta*, printed at Frankfort in 1594. The identical volume was in the possession of Thorpe, a Cambridge bookseller, in 1812, but what has become of it since I do not know.

Though Osborne's shop, or what remains of it, is now closed, the neighbourhood is still as largely interested in the sale of books as ever, or perhaps even more so, for there has been an immigration from other quarters of London which improvements have converted into uncongenial ground.

The new Law Courts and their approaches stand upon the sites of Butchers' Row, Shire Lane, where Elias Ashmole lived, and countless courts and alleys beside. Clare Market has vanished within the last

two or three years, and Clement's Inn, with its narrow passages and dingy chambers, has been entirely rebuilt. Even Drury Lane, sacred to the memory of an army of general dealers who, up to within a comparatively short time ago, bought books by weight, is now past praying for to all appearances, for hardly a book of any kind is to be met with from one end of this grimy thoroughfare to the other. Let us walk into Bozier's Court, which is further to the west, and we miss the shop which Lord Lytton has immortalized in *My Novel*; in fact, the court itself is plastered all over with advertisement posters, and awaits the wreckers, for it is doomed. King William Street, Strand, was a booksellers' resort for a century and more, but the fraternity are leaving one by one, and only a very few are to be met there now. Westminster Hall, for centuries a virtual library, is shut up, and echoes spring from its stones when any casual stranger, armed with an order, is allowed to ramble through Rufus's deserted pile. In fact, wherever we stray, north, south, east, or west, we are forced to the conclusion that London has changed so utterly within the last twenty or thirty years that it is to all intents and purposes a different place.

And the booksellers appear to have changed, too, for there are no 'characters' among them, or, at any rate, very few. Every now and then you will meet with some strange mortal, who looks as though he had been transported bodily from the last century and tumbled unceremoniously into a brand new shop, with coloured glass above the portal, and fresh paint about the front; but you have hardly time to ruminate on the mutability of things under the sun and he is gone, to make way, perhaps, for a dealer in something superlatively new. An antiquary of the stamp of Francis Grose, the 'chiel' who went about taking notes, would stand aghast, then hasten to depart, could he but see the London of today.

It must not, however, be supposed that book-hunting as a pastime is extinct in modern Babylon. On the contrary, there are yet plenty of nooks and corners, and pestilential-looking alleys, that Death and the jerry-builder have apparently forgotten, and these places, we may be certain, harbour many folios. As a fact, I know they do; for in my time, and to some extent even yet, I have been and am a wanderer about such places, and have, on occasion, picked up many interesting mementos

there. What I merely wish to insist upon is that the older and recognised localities, which our fathers would naturally have visited a couple of decades or more ago in their search for old books, are not those which would, as a rule, afford much scope for enterprise now. We must go further afield, and not expect to find a mass of stalls huddled together in a single street, as though one locality had tapped and drained the life-blood of the rest. Circumstances have changed, and at the close of the nineteenth century booksellers have, to a great extent, ceased to be gregarious, except in Holywell Street, or, as it is more generally called, 'Booksellers' Row,' once the abode of literary hacks and bailiff-haunted debtors, which even yet has an old-world look with its overhanging houses and narrow roadway. Here there certainly is a long double procession of bookshops, many open to the street, every one of them crammed from floor to ceiling with great piles of lore.

And Holywell Street, be it said, is such historic and classic ground, that it is threatened every day by the improver, who longs to lay its north side open to the Strand, and will, we may be sure, effect his purpose in the end. It was here that Lord Macaulay used to take his walks abroad in search of books. As a rule he began and ended there; for a whole day's pilgrimage would not suffice to unearth more than a fractional part of the immense store of volumes that the labour of years had accumulated, and which was continually being decimated and renewed. In his day there were more books to be seen and handled there than now, for some of the shops have since been devoted to other trades. In Holywell Street, John Payne Collier was as well known as his own *History of English Dramatic Poetry*, which, nearly sixty years ago, littered the stalls, doubtless to his great disgust, seeing that to be in evidence there to any extent was then, as now, proof positive that the 'remainder-man' had been at work, to the bane of the author and publisher alike. Mr. W. Roberts, in his charming *Book-hunter in London*, narrates that Collier once picked up in Holywell Street for the merest trifle a copy of John Hughes's *Calypso and Telemachus*, an opera in three acts, first published in 1712, which contained thirty-eight unpublished couplets in the handwriting of Pope.

Halliwell-Phillipps was also an inveterate rambler up and down this thoroughfare, and several of his Shakespearean quartos came

from there in days when these small but almost priceless volumes were not so widely and persistently sought for as they are now. In fact, we have it in his own words that when he first began to collect anything and everything that related in whatever degree to the great dramatist, these early quartos were frequently to be met with at prices which, comparatively speaking, sound simply ludicrous in our ears. Should anyone rescue a copy now from some forgotten lumber-room, the fact is heralded by the press, and accounted most extraordinary, as indeed it is; for everyone, the world over, is on the look-out for rarities such as these. Though Holywell Street yet stands, and does a thriving trade among the bookish, let not anyone think that much is to be got for nothing there. On the contrary, the dealers who inhabit it are better versed than most people in the importance of each and every book they part with or throw into the boxes which receive the outcasts of literature. There are, however, good and valuable books by the thousand to be met with by anyone who does not object to pay a fair and reasonable price for them. To this extent, and in this particular, is Booksellers' Row the queen of London streets. From these remarks I except, of course, the extremely important shops of the West-End dealers into which correspondence flows from every part of the world.

This chapter is devoted to the 'Hunting-grounds' of London, and I deny that a collector who gives a standing order either verbally or by letter to a bookseller for some work he particularly wants is a book-hunter at all, at least so far as that particular transaction is concerned. To my mind Nimrod must handle his own bow and not entrust it to a deputy, even though he might by the rules of the chase be absolutely entitled to the quarry which the skill of the latter had brought down. Let him go where he will, East or West, the point of the compass makes no matter, he is a hunter only when he prosecutes his own inquiries and carries out in person all his arrangements. So we will avoid the great firms of book-sellers, although it may be taken for granted that almost any scarce work could be procured sooner or later from them, and go off on a chase in which we shall never, in all human probability, meet with any great prize, and may have to be satisfied with a little, that little, however, being much from many points of view.

At the present day books of all sorts are to be met with in great profusion in Farringdon Street. Every Saturday morning throughout the year light hand-carts to the number, perhaps, of thirty or forty, stand in a long line against the curb, and each is packed with works of all kinds. I am bound to admit that obsolete school-books and forgotten sermons constitute the great majority of these waifs and strays, but there is always a wide choice of useful books to be got for purely nominal sums, and occasionally one that is rare and valuable. Personally I never met with a really scarce book in Farringdon Street, but three years ago—and I mention this at the risk of being charged with travelling from the subject—I bought there the undoubtedly original study by Sir Joshua Reynolds for the portrait of the Right Honourable George Seymour Conway, afterwards Lord George Seymour Conway. The portrait was painted in 1770, and engraved in mezzotint by Edward Fisher the year following. The study is in oils, on thick paper of about twelve inches in height, and is so remarkable as a work of art, that it is a wonder it could have escaped recognition for an hour, instead, as was the fact, for a whole morning.

Should Farringdon Street prove unpropitious, Sunday morning in any week will see Lambeth Marshes and the New Cut, both on the Surrey side, crowded with barrows, and the same remark applies to the streets about the Elephant and Castle on Saturday evenings when the weather is fine. Generally speaking, the peripatetic book-seller is only to be met with on the first and last days of the week, but that he does manage to turn over a considerable part of his stock in the short time available is not to be doubted. He may not change—many of these men have haunted the same spot for years, and have their recognised stands—but his stock is, in one sense, ever new. A few months ago I saw in the Whitechapel Road a hand-cart full of small vellum-bound volumes, which proved to be Greek and Latin classics, printed in Paris a couple of centuries ago. The covers were remarkably fresh and clean, and somebody or other, or rather a succession of owners, must have taken the greatest care of these little books, which had thus ignobly fallen into the gutter at last. Next week at the same hour, they had all gone, having been disposed of to the more learned inhabitants of Bethnal Green at 2d. apiece.

If, however, wandering about the East End of London is not to the taste of the picker-up of unconsidered trifles, there is still the more primitive kind of shops to be visited. Great Turnstile still boasts a bookseller or two, and it was here, it will be remembered, that John Bagford, many years ago, divided his attention between making boots and shoes and ripping out the title-pages of the books that fell into his sacrilegious hands. He failed as a cobbler, but succeeded in amassing the most disreputable collection of titles that has ever been got together. The arch-Vandal failed in everything but his Vandalism, and surely any success is better than none at all. It is said of him that he searched all his life for one of Caxton's impossible title-pages, and died of disappointment, a story which is probably a gross libel on his accomplishments, for Bagford was not by any means an uneducated man.

Then, Little Turnstile hard by is worth a casual visit, and there are many shops in the streets extending east and west of St. Martin's Lane where books are to be bought in almost any number. The newly-built Charing Cross Road appears to be under a cloud; in fact, at this point we must turn back again, and make direct for Holborn, Bury Street, and the neighbourhood of Red Lion Square and Queen Square.

In Red Lion Passage there are several of the quaintest shops imaginable, one of them kept by a dealer who appears to have a mania for the very largest folios, though I notice that of late he has somewhat fallen away from his traditional custom in this respect. The books stand on their sides on the floor in columns of about six feet high; they are piled on and under the counter, and are seen peeping out of the black darkness of a room beyond. Petrarch would have avoided this shop lest history should repeat itself, and a folio break, not his leg merely this time, but his neck.

On the other side of the Passage is another temple of gloom and mystery, for it must be observed that the neighbourhood of Red Lion Square is generally in semi-darkness all the year round, except in the winter, and then it is frequently impossible to see at all when once the streets are left. The proprietors of this shop issue a periodical catalogue, which can be taken from a box at the door, and it may safely be said that there is no catalogue issued in London by anyone which is better worth

glancing over than this, notwithstanding an occasional misprint or two. The books are, generally speaking, of such an unusual and out-of-the-way kind that one cannot help wondering where they all come from. For instance, 'Ben Johnson's English Dictionary, 8vo., 1732,' must be a remarkable volume, and the 'Wuremberg Chronicle, folio, numerous wood-cuts, 1493,' equally curious. Then there is 'Peasson on the Creed,' 'Jewels, —, Works, folio, 1611,' 'Locke, Humane Understanding, folio, 1706,' 'Staunton: Shakispear,' and so on ad infinitum. Throughout the prices are moderate, extremely moderate; that, at any rate, is a fact worthy of distinct recognition, and some of the books, too, are anything but easy to procure, as witness 'Chaucer's Works, folio, 1602,' which is priced at £1 10s., 'Grafton's Chronicle, folio, 1569,' £1 5s., Swan's 'Speculum Mundi,' 4to., 1670, 3s., and many others. Dark though this shop may be to gaze upon, I regard it as a typical book-man's paradise.

Paternoster Row, further east still, is now of course, the headquarters of the publishers, though several second-hand booksellers still linger there. Before the Great Fire reduced the whole district to ashes they had it all their own way, and when the Row was rebuilt they flocked there once more, to be gradually elbowed out by giant houses which sell books wholesale. There is one shop in this thoroughfare so completely wedged up with books that it is a somewhat difficult matter to enter in at the door. Nobody who is not in the daily habit of passing by could avoid stopping to glance at the rows of volumes which the proprietor has reared up against a wall round the corner that leads into St. Paul's Churchyard, for he has decorated them with innumerable strips of paper writ large with pieces of advice on things in general, quotations from classical writers, the Bible and the Koran, which, though they have for the most part nothing whatever to do with the sale of books of any kind, attract by reason of their quaintness and the strangeness of their being.

And so we might go wandering for ever about New London, passing on every side the shadows of the old, but seeing little of the substance. Book-men of the true stamp are antiquaries, to whom novelty is abhorrent. The pleasantest places are to them those which time has consecrated with a gentle touch, and which reflect all their

imaginings, even as they echo their footsteps. These are departing under the mandate of an inexorable law, and we go with them.



The Romance of Book-Collecting (1898) by J.H. Slater

Richard Heber

Leon H. Vincent

A popular and fairly orthodox opinion concerning book-collectors is that their vices are many, their virtues of a negative sort, and their ways altogether past finding out. Yet the most hostile critic is bound to admit that the fraternity of bibliophiles is eminently picturesque. If their doings are inscrutable, they are also romantic; if their vices are numerous, the heinousness of those vices is mitigated by the fact that it is possible to sin humorously. Regard him how you will, the sayings and doings of the collector give life and color to the pages of those books which treat of books. He is amusing when he is purely an imaginary creature. For example, there was one Thomas Blinton. Every one who has ever read the volume called *Books and Bookmen* knows about Thomas Blinton. He was a man who wickedly adorned his volumes with morocco bindings, while his wife 'sighed in vain for some old point d'Alençon lace.' He was a man who was capable of bidding fifteen pounds for a Foppens edition of the essays of Montaigne, though fifteen pounds happened to be 'exactly the amount which he owed his plumber and gas-fitter, a worthy man with a large family.' From this fictitious Thomas Blinton all the way back to Richard Heber, who was very real, and who piled up books as other men heap together vulgar riches, book-collectors have been a picturesque folk.

The name of Heber suggests the thought that all men who buy books are not bibliophiles. He alone is worthy the title who acquires his volumes with something like passion. One may buy books like a gentleman, and that is very well. One may buy books like a gentleman and a scholar, which counts for something more. But to be truly of the elect one must resemble Richard Heber, and buy books like a gentleman, a scholar, and a madman.

You may find an account of Heber in an old file of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. He began in his youth by making a library of the classics.

Then he became interested in rare English books, and collected them con amore for thirty years. He was very rich, and he had never given hostages to fortune; it was therefore possible for him to indulge his fine passion without stint. He bought only the best books, and he bought them by thousands and by tens of thousands. He would have held as foolishness that saying from the Greek which exhorts one to do nothing too much. According to Heber's theory, it is impossible to have too many good books. Usually one library is supposed to be enough for one man. Heber was satisfied only with eight libraries, and then he was hardly satisfied. He had a library in his house at Hodnet. 'His residence in Pimlico, where he died, was filled, like Magliabecchi's at Florence, with books from the top to the bottom; every chair, every table, every passage containing piles of erudition.' He had a house in York Street which was crowded with books. He had a library in Oxford, one at Paris, one at Antwerp, one at Brussels, and one at Ghent. The most accurate estimate of his collections places the number at 146,827 volumes. Heber is believed to have spent half a million dollars for books. After his death the collections were dispersed. The catalogue was published in twelve parts, and the sales lasted over three years.

Heber had a witty way of explaining why he possessed so many copies of the same book. When taxed with the sin of buying duplicates he replied in this manner: 'Why, you see, sir, no man can comfortably do without three copies of a book. One he must have for his show copy, and he will probably keep it at his country house; another he will require for his own use and reference; and unless he is inclined to part with this, which is very inconvenient, or risk the injury of his best copy, he must needs have a third at the service of his friends.'

In the pursuit of a coveted volume Heber was indefatigable. He was not of those Sybaritic buyers who sit in their offices while agents and dealers do the work. 'On hearing of a curious book he has been known to put himself into the mail-coach, and travel three, four, or five hundred miles to obtain it, fearful to trust his commission to a letter.' He knew the solid comfort to be had in reading a book catalogue. Dealers were in the habit of sending him the advance sheets of their lists. He ordered books from his death-bed, and for anything we know to the contrary died with a catalogue in his fingers.

A life devoted to such a passion is a stumbling-block to the practical man, and to the Philistine foolishness. Yet you may hear men praised because up to the day of death they were diligent in business,—business which added to life nothing more significant than that useful thing called money. Thoreau used to say that if a man spent half his time in the woods for the love of the woods he was in danger of being looked upon as a loafer; but if he spent all his time as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making Earth bald before her time, he was regarded as an upright and industrious citizen.

Heber had a genius for friendship as well as for gathering together choice books. Sir Walter Scott addressed verses to him. Professor Porson wrote emendations for him in his favorite copy of Athenæus. To him was inscribed Dr. Ferrier's poetical epistle on Bibliomania. His virtues were celebrated by Dibdin and by Burton. In brief, the sketch of Heber in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1834, contains a list of forty-six names,—all men of distinction by birth, learning, or genius, and all men who were proud to call Richard Heber friend. He was a mighty hunter of books. He was genial, scholarly, generous. Out-of-door men will be pleased to know that he was active physically. He was a tremendous walker, and enjoyed tiring out his bailiff by an all-day tramp.

Of many good things said of him this is one of the best: 'The learned and curious, whether rich or poor, have always free access to his library.' Thus was it possible for Scott very truthfully to say to Heber, 'Thy volumes open as thy heart.'

No life of this Prince of Book-Hunters has been written, I believe. Some one with access to the material, and a sympathy with the love of books as books, should write a memoir of Heber the Magnificent. It ought not to be a large volume, but it might well be about the size of Henry Stevens's *Recollections of James Lenox*. And if it were equally readable it were a readable book indeed.



The Bibliotaph and Other People (1899) by Leon H. Vincent

Napoleon

H.B. Wheatley

The more we know of Napoleon, and anecdotes of him are continually being published in the ever-lengthening series of French memoirs, the less heroic appears his figure, but he could not have been entirely bad, for he truly loved books. He began life as an author, and would always have books about him. He complained if the printing was bad or the binding poor, and said, "I will have fine editions and handsome binding. I am rich enough for that." Thus spoke the true bibliophile.

Mr. Edwards has collected much interesting information respecting Napoleon and his libraries, and of his labours I here freely avail myself:

Shortly before he left France for Egypt, Napoleon drew up, with his own hand, the scheme of a travelling library, the charge of collecting which was given to John Baptist Say, the Economist. It comprised about three hundred and twenty volumes, more than half of which are historical, and nearly all, as it seems, in French. The ancient historians comprised in the list are Thucydides, Plutarch, Polybius, Arrian, Tacitus, Livy, and Justin. The poets are Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Ariosto, the *Télèmaque* of Fénélon, the *Henriade* of Voltaire, with Ossian and La Fontaine. Among the works of prose fiction are the English novelists in forty volumes, of course in translations, and the indispensable Sorrows of Werter, which, as he himself told Goethe, Napoleon had read through seven times prior to October, 1808. In this list the Bible, together with the Koran and the Vedas, are whimsically, but significantly, entered under the heading Politics and Ethics (*Politique et Morale*).

Napoleon was not, however, satisfied with the camp libraries which were provided for him; the good editions were too bulky and the small editions too mean: so he arranged the

plan of a library to be expressly printed for him in a thousand duodecimo volumes without margins, bound in thin covers and with loose backs. "In this new plan 'Religion' took its place as the first class. The Bible was to be there in its best translation, with a selection of the most important works of the Fathers of the Church, and a series of the best dissertations on those leading religious sects—their doctrines and their history—which have powerfully influenced the world. This section was limited to forty volumes. The Koran was to be included, together with a good book or two on mythology. One hundred and forty volumes were allotted to poetry. The epics were to embrace Homer, Lucan, Tasso, Telemachus, and the *Henriade*. In the dramatic portion Corneille and Racine were of course to be included, but of Corneille, said Napoleon, you shall print for me 'only what is vital' (*ce qui est resté*), and from Racine you shall omit '*Les Frères ennemis*, the *Alexandre*, and *Les Plaideurs*. Of Crébillon, he would have only *Rhadamiste* and *Atrée et Thyeste*. Voltaire was to be subject to the same limitation as Corneille.'" In prose fiction Napoleon specifies the *Nouvelle Héloïse* and Rousseau's *Confessions*, the masterpieces of Fielding, Richardson and Le Sage, and Voltaire's tales.

Soon after this Napoleon proposed a much larger scheme for a camp library, in which history alone would occupy three thousand volumes. History was to be divided into these sections—I. Chronology and Universal History. II. Ancient History (a. by ancient writers, b. by modern writers). III. History of the Lower Empire (in like subdivisions). IV. History, both general and particular. V. The Modern History of the different States of Europe. The celebrated bibliographer Barbier drew up, according to the Emperor's orders, a detailed catalogue of the works which should form such a library. "He calculated that by employing a hundred and twenty compositors and twenty-five editors, the three thousand volumes could be produced, in satisfactory shape, and within six years, at a total cost of £163,200, supposing

fifty copies of each book to be printed.” The printing was begun, but little was actually done, and in six years Napoleon was in St. Helena.

In his last island home Napoleon had a library, and he read largely, often aloud, with good effect.

It is an interesting fact that among Napoleon’s papers were found some notes on Geography written when a boy, and these close with the words— ‘*Sainte-Hélène—petite île*’.



How to Form a Library (1886) by H.B. Wheatley

Removing Stains

A. Bonnardot

Before discussing the means of attacking stains which may blemish a book or a precious print, I am going to say that, in certain cases, it might be very desirable to allow them to remain. If I possessed, for example, a missive addressed to Charles IX during the night of Saint Bartholomew, and stained with bloody finger-prints, I would take great care not to disturb these marks which, supposing their authenticity established, would increase tenfold the value of the autograph. If the custodian of the Laurentian Library at Florence should efface, from his Longus manuscript, Paul Louis Courier's puddle of ink, he would commit an act of vandalism, for that ink stain is a literary celebrity.

To speak of more ordinary examples: one often finds on a book or print, a signature or inscription which may sometimes be an autograph well worth preservation. I very rarely efface signatures or the notes of early, unknown owners; I find it pleasanter to respect these souvenirs of the past. In the same way, some curious objects have certain defects which, I think, add to their interest. For example, a statuette of the Virgin, in silver or ivory, of which the features and hands are half effaced by the frequent contact of pious lips. Restore such worn parts, and the sentiment is stripped from a relic of past ages. It is far better to leave untouched such scars, which attest the antique piety of the cloister. A vellum *Book of Hours* of the Fifteenth Century, worn and soiled through prayer, has, to my mind, acquired a venerable patina. Here, a spot of yellow wax; there, the head of a saint blemished by the star-print from a tear of devotion: are not these stains which should be respected? On the other hand, a blot of ink or an oily smear point only to carelessness and should be removed.

About the year 1846, I was invited by M. A. Farrens, a skilful restorer of old books, to see in his work-shop a *Dance Macabre* in

quarto, imprinted on paper, at Paris, toward the end of the Fifteenth Century; a rare volume which he was restoring for M. Techner.

The portions already cleaned and restored, compared with those still untouched, excited my admiration. The numerous worm holes, the torn places, had disappeared through an application of paper-paste, so well joined, so well blended in the mass, that I could hardly detect the boundaries of the restorations. The letters and wood-cuts suffering from lacunae had been reformed with great skill on a new foundation. The soiled surfaces of the pages had entirely disappeared before I know not what scraping or chemical action. In a word, M. Farrens was putting into use every secret of restoration to give again to this volume its original lustre.

Ah well! today, I confess, that if I possessed this book in the dilapidated state in which I saw it, I would leave it just as it stood, and limit myself to the indispensable repair of a new and solid binding. Its worn and soiled condition came, very probably, from the frequent and pious turning of its pages, in that monachal perseverance of prayer of which our century knows nothing. Its shocking and decrepit condition had, to my eyes, a secret in harmony with all books of the kind, which, from each page, recall to us our insignificance.



Essai sur l'art de Restaurer les Estampes et les Livres (1858), translated from the French by Mitchell S. Buck

