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Chap. XVI. Painters and other Artists in the Reign of Queen Anne.

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C H A P. XVI.

Painters and other Artists in the Reign of Queen ANNE.

THE reign of Anne, so illustrated by heroes, poets, and authors, was not equally fortunate in artists. Except Kneller, scarce a painter of note. Westminster-abbey testifies there were no eminent statuarys. One man there was, who disgraced this period by his architecture as much as he enlivened it by his wit. Formed to please both Augustus and an Egyptian monarch, who thought nothing preserved fame like a solid mass of stone, he produced the Relapse and Blenheim! Party, that sharpened the genius of the age, dishonoured it too—a halfpenny print of Sacheverel would have been preferred to a sketch of Raphael. Lord Sunderland and lord Oxford collected books; the duke of Devonshire and lord Pembroke, pictures*, medals, statues: the performers of the time had little pretensions to be admitted into such cabinets. The period, indeed, was short; I shall give an account of what I find in Vertue's notes.

— P E L E G R I N I

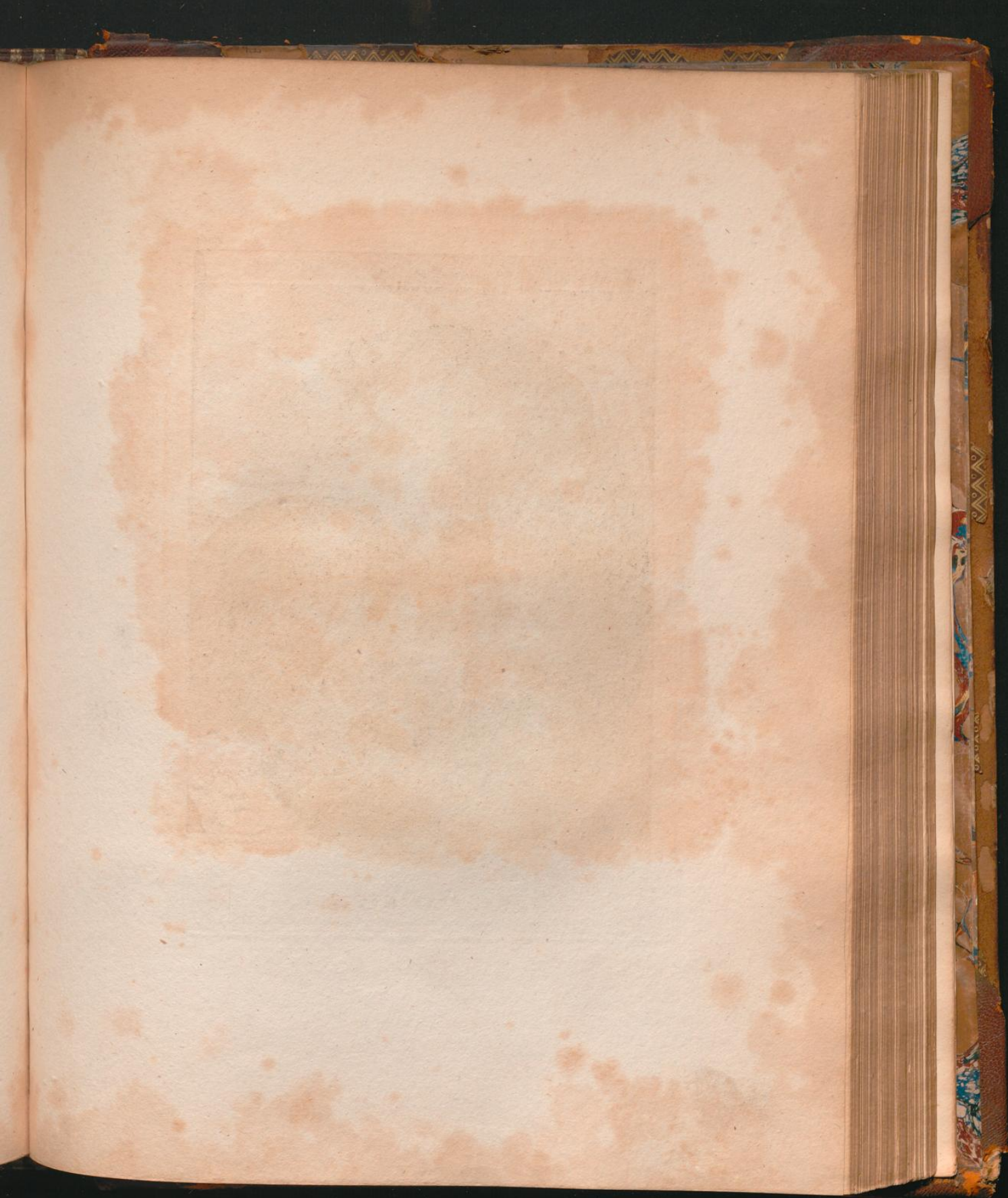
was brought from Venice in this reign by the duke of Manchester, for whom he painted a stair-case in Arlington-street, now destroyed. He performed several works of this kind for the duke of Portland and lord Burlington, a saloon, stair-case and ceilings at Castle Howard, the stair-case at Kimbolton, and a hall at fir Andrew Fountain's at Narford in Norfolk. He made several designs for painting the dome of St. Paul's, and was paid for them, though they were not executed, and was chosen one of the directors of the academy. He painted besides many small pieces of history, before he left England †, whither

* Prince George of Denmark, the queen's husband, had a collection of medals, which her majesty took in her share of his personal estate, the whole of which amounted to 37,000*l.* The queen had half; the rest was divided among his nephews and nieces, who were so many, that they did not receive above 1500*l.* each. Vide Secret Hist. of England.

† When the famous system of Mr. Lawes was set on foot in France, the directors, as ostentatious as their apes the South-sea-company, purchased the Hotel de Nevers, and began to decorate it in the most pompous manner. Pellegrini was invited from England to paint the ceiling of the principal gallery, and wrote a description of his work—all that now remains of it; for



MARCO RICCI.





SEBASTIAN RICCI.

whither he returned in 1718, but quitted it again in 1721, and entered into the service of the elector palatine. With him arrived

MARCO RICCI, OR RIZZI,

who painted ruins in oil, and better in water-colours, and land-forms. He and Pelegrini disagreeing, Marco went to Venice and persuaded his uncle to come over, Sebastian Ricci, who had been Pelegrini's master, and who was soon preferred to the disciple. Ricci's works are still admired, though there is little excellence in them; his colouring is chalky, and without force. He painted the chapel at Bullstode for the duke of Portland, and in The last supper has introduced his own portrait in a modern habit. At Burlington-house the hall and some ceilings are by him, and a piece of ruins in the manner of Viviano. Ricci, and Caffini another painter here at that time*, passed off several of their own compositions as the works of greater masters. Sebastian painted the altar-piece in the chapel of Chelsea-college; but left England on finding it was determined that sir James Thornhill should paint the cupola of St. Paul's. Marco Ricci died at Venice in 1730.

— BAKER

painted insides of churches, and some of those at Rome. In Mr. Sykes's sale was a view of St. Paul's since it was rebuilt, but with a more splendid altar.

JAMES BOGDANI

was born of a genteel family in Hungary; his father, a deputy from the

for the system burst, and the king purchasing the visionary palace, it was converted into the Royal Library, and Pelegrini's labours demolished.

France, the heathen gods, the river of Mississippi, religion, and all the virtues, and half the vices, as allegoric personages, with which the flatterers of the former reign had fatigued the eyes of the public, were here again re-assembled; and avarice and prodigality and imposture were performed out of the same censures with which ambition and vain-glory and superstition had been made drunk before. Pelegrini's account of that

work may be seen in l'Histoire des Premiers Peintres du Roi, vol. ii. p. 122.

* Sebastian Ricci excelled particularly in imitations of Paul Veronese, many of which he sold for originals; and once even deceived La Fosse. When the latter was convinced of the imposition, he gave this severe but just reprimand to Sebastian: "For the future," said he, "take my advice: paint nothing but Paul Veroneses, and no more Riccis." Vide Life of Mignard in l'Histoire des Premiers Peintres du Roi, p. 152.

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states.

states of that country to the emperor. The son was not brought up to the profession, but made considerable progress by the force of his natural abilities. Fruit, flowers, and especially birds, were his excellence. Queen Anne bespoke several of his pieces, still in the royal palaces. He was a man of a gentle and fair character, and lived between forty and fifty years in England, known at first only by the name of the Hungarian. He had raised an easy fortune; but being persuaded to make it over to his son, who was going to marry a reputed fortune, who proved no fortune at all, and other misfortunes succeeding, poverty and sickness terminated his life at his house in Great Queen-street. His pictures and goods were sold by auction at his house, the sign of the Golden Eagle, in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields. His son is in the board of ordnance, and formerly painted in his father's manner.

WILLIAM CLARET

imitated sir Peter Lely, from whom he made many copies. There is a print from his picture of John Egerton, earl of Bridgwater, done as early as 1680. Claret died at his house in Lincoln's-inn-fields in 1706, and, being a widower, made his house-keeper his heirs.

THOMAS MURRAY

Painted many portraits. At the Royal-society is a picture of Dr. Halley by him, and the earl of Halifax had one of Wycherley. There is a mezzotinto of Murray.

HUGH HOWARD,

better known by Prior's beautiful verses to him than by his own works, was son of Ralph Howard, doctor of physic, and was born in Dublin Feb. 7, 1675. His father being driven from Ireland by the troubles that followed the Revolution, brought the lad to England, who, discovering a disposition to the arts and belles lettres, was sent to travel in 1697, and, on his way to Italy, passed through Holland in the train of Thomas earl of Pembroke, one of the plenipotentiaries at the treaty of Ryfwick. Mr. Howard proceeded as he had intended, and, having visited France and Italy, returned home in October 1700.

Some years he passed in Dublin; but the greatest and latter part of his life



A. Bannerman Sculp.

MURRAY.

he spent entirely in England, practising painting, at least with applause: but having ingratiated himself by his fame and knowledge of hands with men of the first rank, particularly the duke of Devonshire and lord Pembroke, and by a parsimonious management of his good fortune, and of what he received with his wife, he was enabled to quit the practical part of his profession for the last twenty years of his life, the former peer having obtained for him the posts of keeper of the state-papers and pay-master of his majesty's palaces. In this pleasing situation he amused himself with forming a large collection of prints, books, and medals, which at his death* (March 17, 1737) he bequeathed to his only brother Robert Howard, bishop of Elphin, who transported them to Ireland.

Mr. Howard's picture was drawn by Dahl, very like, and published in mezzotinto about a year before his death. Howard himself etched, from a drawing of Carlo Maratti, a head of Padre Resta, the collector, with his spectacles on, turning over a book of drawings.

JAMES PARMENTIER,

a Frenchman, born in 1658, was nephew of Bourdon, by whom he was first instructed; but his uncle dying he came to England in 1676, and was employed at Montagu-house by La Fosse to lay his dead colours. King William sent Parmentier to his new palace at Loo: but he quarrelled with Marot, the surveyor of the buildings, and returned to London; where not finding much employment, he went into Yorkshire, and worked several years both in portrait and historic painting. The altar-piece in a church at Hull, and another in St. Peter's at Leeds, Moses receiving the law, much commended by Thoresby, are of his hand. His best work was a stair-case at Worktop. To Painter's-hall he gave the story of Diana and Endymion. On the death of Laguerre in 1721, he returned to London, in hopes of succeeding to the business of the latter. He died in indifferent circumstances Dec. 2, 1730, as he was on the point of going to Amsterdam, whither he had been invited by some relations. He was buried in St. Paul's Covent-garden.

JOHN VANDER VAART,

of Harlem, came to England in 1674, and learned of Wyck the father, but

* He died in Pall mall, and was buried at Richmond.

did

did not confine himself to landscape. For some time he painted draperies for Wiffing, and portraits * for himself, and still-life. He was particularly famous for representations of partridges and dead game. In old Devonshire-house in Piccadilly, he painted a violin against a door that deceived every body. When the house was burned, this piece was preserved, and is now at Chatsworth. In 1713 he sold his collection, and got more money by mending pictures than he did in the former part of his life by painting them. He built a house in Covent-garden, of which parish he was an inhabitant above fifty years. He was a man of an amiable character, and dying of a fever in 1721, at the age of seventy-four, was buried in the right-hand aisle of the church of Covent-garden. Prints were taken from several of his works; some he executed in mezzotinto himself, and others from Wiffing; in which art he gave instructions to the celebrated John Smith. Vander Vaart, who was a bachelor, left a nephew, Arnold, who succeeded him in the business of repairing pictures.

RHODOLPHUS SHMUTZ

was born at Basil in Swisserland, and in 1702 came into England, where he painted portraits: Vertue says, "They were well-coloured, his draperies pleasant, and his women graceful." He died in 1714, and was buried at Pancras.

PREUDHOMME,

born at Berlin of French parents, and educated in the academy there, went for some time to Italy, returned to Berlin, and from thence came to England in 1712, where he was much employed in copying pictures, and making drawings in chalk from Italian masters for engravers. There was a design of engraving a set of prints from all the best pictures in this country, and Preudhomme went to Wilton with that view; where, after an irregular life, he died in 1726 at the age of forty. He had contracted a French style in his pictures from his master monsieur Pefne.

COLONEL SEYMOUR,

nearly related to the present duke of Somersset and the earl of Hertford, had

* He twice drew his own portrait, at the age of 30, and of 60; and one of Kerseboom. I have a portrait of him by himself in water-

some



BOIT.

BAKER.

some fine pictures, and painted in water-colours and crayons. In the latter he copied from Cooper a head of sir John Robinson, lieutenant of the Tower. He also drew many historic heads and portraits with a pen. He lived in the house in Hyde-park at the end of Kenfington-garden.

— BOIT,

well known for his portraits in enamel, in which manner he has never perhaps been surpassed but by his predecessor Petitot, and his successor Zincke. Before I give an account of him, I must premise that I do not answer for the truth of some parts of his story, which to me seem a little incredible. I give them as I find them in two different MSS. of Vertue, who names his authors, Peterfon, a scholar of Boit, and another person. Vertue was incapable of falsehood—perhaps he was too credulous.

Boit, whose father was a Frenchman, was born at Stockholm, and bred a jeweller, which profession he intended to follow here in England, but changed for painting; but was upon so low a foot, that he went into the country, and taught children to draw. There he had engaged one of his scholars, a gentleman's daughter, to marry him; but the affair being discovered, Boit was thrown into prison*. In that confinement, which lasted two years, he studied enamelling; an art to which he fixed on his return to London, and practised with the greatest success: Dahl chiefly recommended him. His prices are not to be believed. For a copy of colonel Seymour's picture by Kneller he had thirty guineas; for a lady's head not larger, double that sum, and for a few plates 500*l*. If this appears enormous, what will the reader think of the following anecdote? He was to paint a large plate of the queen, prince George, the principal officers and ladies of the court, and Victory introducing the duke of Marlborough and prince Eugene; France and Bavaria prostrate on the ground; standards, arms, trophies. The size of the plate to be from 24 to 22 inches high, by 16 to 18 inches wide. Laguerre actually painted the design for it in oil. Prince George, who earnestly patronized the work, procured an advance of 1000*l*. to Boit, who took a spot of ground in May-fair, and erected a furnace, and built convenient rooms adjoining to work in. He made several essays before he could even lay the enamelled ground, the heat necessary being so intense that it must calcine as much in a few hours, as

* An act of tyranny, as the affair was not complete, nor was there then a marriage-act.

furnaces

furnaces in glafs-houfes do in 24 hours. In thefe attempts he wafed feven or eight hundred pounds. In the mean time the prince, who had often vifited the operation, died. This put a flop to the work for fome time: Boit however began to lay colours on the plate; but demanded and obtained 700*l.* more. This made confiderable noife, during which happened the revolution at court, extending itfelf even to Boit's work. Their graces of Marlborough were to be displaced even in the enamel, and her majefty ordered Boit to introduce Peace and Ormond, inftead of Victory and Churchill. Thefe alterations were made in the fketch, which had not been in the fire, and remained fo in Peterfon's hands when he related the ftory to Vertue. Prince Eugene refufed to fit. The queen died. Boit ran in debt, his goods were feized by execution, and he fled to France; where he changed his religion, was countenanced by the regent, obtained a penfion of 250*l.* per ann. and an apartment, and was much admired in a country where they had feen no enameller fince Petitot. Boit died fuddenly at Paris about Christmas 1726. Though he never executed the large piece in queftion, there is one at Kenfington of a confiderable fize, representing queen Anne fitting, and prince George ftanding by her. At Bedford-houfe is another very large plate of the duke's father and mother. I have a good copy by him of the Venus, Cupid, Satyr, and Nymphs by Luca Jordano at Devonfhire-houfe, and a fine head of admiral Churchill; and Mifs Reade, the paintrefs, has a very fine head of Boit's own daughter, enamelled by him from a picture of Dahl. This daughter was married to Mr. Graham, apothecary, in Poland-ftreet.

LEWIS CROSSE,

a painter in water-colours, who is not to be confounded with Michael Croffe or De La Crux *, whom I have mentioned in the reign of Charles I. Lewis Croffe painted feveral portraits in miniature in queen Anne's time, many of which are in the collektion of the duchefs of Portland, the countefs of Cardigan, &c. This Croffe repaired a little picture of the queen of Scots in the poffeffion of duke Hamilton, and was ordered to make it as handsome as he could. It feems, a round face was his idea of perfect beauty; but it happened not to be Mary's fort of beauty. However, it was believed a genuine picture, and innumerable copies were made from it. It is the head in black velvet trimmed with ermine. Croffe had a valuable collektion of miniatures, the

* It is Michael Croffe, of whom there is an account in Graham.

works

works of Peter Oliver, Hoskins and Cooper. Among them was a fine picture of lady Sunderland by the latter, his own wife, and a head almost profile in crayons of Hoskins; a great curiosity, as I neither know of any other portrait of that master, nor where the picture itself is now. That collection was sold at his house the sign of the Blue Anchor in Henrietta-street Covent-garden, Dec. 5, 1722, and Croffe died in October 1724.

Statuary in this reign, and for some years afterwards, was in a manner monopolized by

FRANCIS BIRD.

The many public works by his hand, which inspire nobody with a curiosity of knowing the artist, are not good testimonies in his favour. He was born in Piccadilly 1667, and sent at eleven years of age to Brussels, where he learned the rudiments of his art from one Cozins, who had been in England. From Flanders he went to Rome, and studied under Le Gros. At nineteen, scarce remembering his own language, he came home, and worked first for Gibbons, then for Cibber. He took* another short journey to Italy, and at his return set up for himself. The performance that raised his reputation, was the monument of Busby. The latter had never permitted his picture to be drawn. The moment he was dead, his friends had a cast in plaister taken from his face, and thence a drawing in crayons, from which White engraved his print, and Bird carved his image. His other principal works, which are all I find of his history, were,

The conversion of St. Paul, in the pediment of that cathedral. Any statuary was good enough for an ornament at that height, and a great statuary had been too good.

The bas-reliefs under the portico.

The statue of queen Anne, and the four figures round the pedestal, before the same church. The author of the Abregé, speaking of English artists, says, "à l'égard de la sculpture, le marbre gemit, pour ainsi dire, sous des ciseaux aussi peu habiles que ceux qui ont exécuté le groupe de la reine Anne, placé devant l'Eglise de St. Paul, & les tombeaux de l'Abbaye de Westminster." This author had not seen the works of Rysbrach and

* These two journeys, it is said, he performed on foot.

Roubiliac; and for the satire on the groupe of queen Anne, we may pardon the sculptor who occasioned it, as it gave rise to another satire, those admirable lines of Dr. Garth.

The statue of cardinal Wolsey at Christ-church.

The brazen figure of Henry VI. at Eton-college—a wretched performance indeed!

A magnificent monument in Fulham-church for the lord viscount Mordaunt. Bird received 250*l.* for his part of the sculpture.

The sumptuous monument of the last duke of Newcastle in Westminster-abbey, erected by the countess of Oxford, his daughter. The cumbent figure is not the worst of Bird's works.

At lord Oxford's auction was sold his copy of the faun.

Bird died in 1731, aged 64.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH

belongs only to this work in a light that is by no means advantageous to him. He wants all the merit of his writings to protect him from the censure due to his designs. What Pope said of his comedies, is much more applicable to his buildings—

How Van wants grace!—

Grace! He wanted eyes, he wanted all ideas of proportion, convenience, propriety. He undertook vast designs, and composed heaps of littleness*.

* Two very good judges, and men of excellent taste, sir J. Reynolds and Mr. Gilpin, have declared their admiration of the stupendous piles of Blenheim and Castle-Howard—and no doubt, vastness is very imposing—at a distance: but if the design and details are defective, the merit of grandeur remains with the person who is at the expence of the fabric, not with the architect who executes his commands. St. Peter's, St. Paul's, each strikes as a magnificent whole: but they charm too when the parts are examined, nor

have any superfluous weight. Large edifices might be erected from unnecessary excrescencies of stone that load the palaces above mentioned: and however admirable Vanbrugh's structures may be in their present state of *perfection*, I will venture to guess that their ruins will have far greater effect, not only from their massive fragments, but from the additional piles which conjecture will supply, in order to give a meaning to the whole.

The



Archer pinx.

J. Chambers sculp.

S^r. JOHN VANBRUGH.

The style of no age, no country, appears in his works; he broke through all rule, and compensated for it by no imagination. He seems to have hollowed quarries rather than to have built houses; and should his edifices, as they seem formed to do, out-last all record, what architecture will posterity think was that of their ancestors? The laughers, his cotemporaries, said, that having been confined in the Bastile, he had drawn his notions of building from that fortified dungeon. That a single man should have been capricious, should have wanted taste, is not extraordinary. That he should have been selected to raise a palace*, built at the public expence, for the hero of his country, surprises one. Whose thought it was to load every avenue to that palace with inscriptions, I do not know: altogether, they form an edition of the acts of parliament in stone. However partial the court was to Vanbrugh, every body was not so blind to his defects. Swift ridiculed both his own diminutive house at Whitehall, and the stupendous pile at Blenheim: of the first he says,

At length they in the rubbish spy
A thing resembling a goose-pye.

And of the other,

That if his grace were no more skill'd in
The art of battering walls than building,
We might expect to see next year
A mouse-trap-man chief engineer.

Thus far the satirist was well founded: party-rage warped his understanding when he censured Vanbrugh's plays, and left him no more judgment to see their beauties than sir John had when he perceived not that they were the only beauties he was formed to compose. Nor is any thing sillier than Swift's pun on Vanbrugh's being Clarenceux-herald, which the dean supposes enabled him to *build houses*. Sir John himself had not a worse reason for being an architect. The faults of Blenheim did not escape the severe Dr. Evans, though he lays them on the master, rather than on the builder:

* The dukes quarrelled with sir John, and in the right, she employed sir Christopher Wren went to law with him: but though he proved to to build the house in St. James's-park. be in the right, or rather *because* he proved to be

The lofty arch his vast ambition shows,
The stream an emblem of his bounty flows.

These invectives perhaps put a stop to Vanbrugh's being employed on any more buildings for the crown, though he was surveyor of the works at Greenwich, comptroller general of the works, and surveyor of the gardens and waters. His other designs were,

St. John's church, Westminster, a wonderful piece of absurdity.

Castle-Howard in Yorkshire.

Eastberry in Dorsetshire.

King's-Weston near Bristol.

Easton-Neston in Northamptonshire.

One front of Grimsthorp.

Mr. Duncombe's in Yorkshire.

Two little castles at Greenwich.

The Opera-house in the Hay-market.

Durable as these edifices are, the *Relapse*, the *Provoked Wife*, the *Confederacy*, and *Æsop*, will probably out-last them; nor, so translated, is it an objection to the two last that they were translations. If Vanbrugh had borrowed from Vitruvius as happily as from Dancour, Inigo Jones* would not be the first architect of Britain.

Sir John Vanbrugh died at Whitehall, March 26, 1726. In his character of architect, Dr. Evans bestowed on him this epitaph:

* Inigo Jones imitated the taste of the antique, but did not copy it so servilely as Palladio. Lord Burlington, who had exquisite taste, was a little too fearful of deviating from his models. Raphael, Michael Angelo, Vignola, Bernini, and the best Italian architects, have dared to invent, when it was in the spirit of the standard. Perhaps there could not be a more beautiful work,

than a volume collected and engraved from the buildings and hints of buildings in the pictures of Raphael, Albano, Pietro Cortona, and Nicolò Poussin. It is surprising that Raphael's works in this manner have not been assembled. Besides thoughts in his paintings, he executed several real buildings of the truest delicacy.

Lie heavy on him, earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

———— ROBERTI,

an architect, who built the stair-case at Coudray, the lord Montacute's: Pelegrini painted it.

———— BAGOTTI

is mentioned by Vertue, but not with much justice, for admirable execution of a ceiling in stucco, at Cashiobury, lord Essex's seat. It represents Flora, and other figures, and boys in alto-relievo supporting festoons.

JOHN CROKER

was bred a jeweller, which profession he changed for that of medallist. He worked for Harris; and, succeeding him, graved all the medals from the end of king William's reign, of whom he struck one large one, all those of queen Anne, and George the first, and those of George the second, though Croker died many years before him—but none of our victories in that reign were so recorded.

ADVERTISE-