

Romance of the Gainsborough Portrait.

Never was romance written more alluringly than is the history that clings to the Gainsborough portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire, which has just been returned to its rightful owner, after having been in the possession of a thief for almost 25 years. As was told, C. Morland Agnew, with the precious canvas in his possession, sailed for Liverpool on the Etruria, of the Cunard line. Curiously enough, with Mr. Agnew on the ship was another passenger, a stranger to him, but who had in his possession \$125,000, a portion of the gold which had been paid for the return of the famous Gainsborough.

This man is none other than the chief who, in May, 1876, cut the picture from its frame and who has had it in his possession ever since. Interesting in its early history, the canvas, which has been known as the masterpiece of Thos. Gainsborough, has been a connecting link between the lives of scores of persons representing almost every walk of life.

An incident many years ago brought together two men, one a thief by profession, the other a man who has devoted his life to following the vagaries of Dame Fortune—a professional gambler—but one who has a world wide reputation as an honest man. The name of the thief has not yet been given for publication. The other was Patrick Sheedy, whose life, filled with adventure, has carried him into every country in the world.

Many years ago Sheedy, a much younger man than he is now, found himself deserted by luck, stranded in Chicago.

He came under the observation of a young man who had sat by his side during the long hours of a night spent in front of a faro table.

As Sheedy's luck had been bad the other's had been proportionately good. They had breakfast together, and after breakfast the more fortunate of the two said to his companion, whose name he had learned: 'Mr. Sheedy, money is of little value to me. Here is \$500 which I want to lend to you. I have a presentiment that I am doing myself a greater favor than I am doing you, and that some time you will be able to repay me, and I am sure that when that time comes you will do so.'

Sheedy took the money. What it profited him is not known even to himself. So often has he been buffeted by fortune that he has ceased to remember the ups and downs of his early life. But he always remembered the giver.

William Pinkerton, a brother of Robert, is western manager of the detective agency, and makes his headquarters in Chicago.

For a great many years he has been on terms of intimacy with Patrick Sheedy.

He heard of the story told by Reilly, and knew the name of the man in whose possession the picture was.

While at dinner with Mr. Sheedy in Chicago a few years ago William Pinkerton suggested that his friend was just the man to bring about the return of the canvas to the Agnews. Mr. Sheedy replied that he would keep his eyes open, and that if ever came across any one who could tell him about the picture or those who stole it he would do what he could to place the matter right.

It so happened that Patrick Sheedy one time found himself in Constantinople. While there he was visited by a mysterious Greek, who told him that a friend of Mr. Sheedy, who had heard of his arrival in the Turkish capital, was very anxious to see him. The Greek intimated that the friend of Mr. Sheedy was in trouble.

An investigation was made and Mr. Sheedy found that his friend was none other than the one who years before had lent him the \$500 after his disastrous experience at the faro table.

The wheel of fortune made a complete revolution. The man who had been Mr. Sheedy's benefactor had attempted to turn a little game of torgery in Constantinople, had been captured, convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, but after serving three weeks had escaped, only to fall into the hands of some brigands, who held him captive.

They demanded \$1500 for his release. This money was promptly paid by Mr. Sheedy who was glad of the opportunity to return the favor which had been granted to him.

The man who had been so successful at the faro bank in Chicago and who had the adventure in Constantinople is the same man who stole the picture from the art rooms in Bond street.

Relating his adventures, Mr. Sheedy told

William Pinkerton of the manner in which he had been able to repay the obligation which had rested upon him for more than twenty years. Mentioning the name of the man whom he had been successful in releasing from captivity in Constantinople, Mr. Sheedy was surprised to hear his companion say, 'That is the man who stole the Gainsborough picture.'

Mr. Sheedy at once volunteered to bring about the return of the canvas if proper arrangements could be made. He said that his friend had turned over a new leaf after his experience in Turkey, and was then living an honest life in England. He is the father of children now approaching maturity, none of whom has ever heard of their father's experiences as a thief.

Mr. Sheedy first exacted from Mr. Pinkerton a promise that no attempt should be made to discover the identity of his friend while he (Sheedy) was opening negotiations.

A trip was made to England, and Mr. Sheedy found his old friend more than willing to permit the picture to be returned to the Agnews. He thought, however, that he was entitled to a reward, and placed his figure at £5,000. A proposition was made to C. Morland Agnew, who directed that all further communications should be sent to the detectives at Scotland Yard.

At this juncture the matter was placed in the hands of Robert Pinkerton, with whom Mr. Sheedy conducted his negotiations. Immunity for the reformed thief was promised, and he came to this country. Mr. Agnew being convinced

that at last there was a prospect for the return of the canvas, which had been missing for twenty-five years, came over on the last western trip of the Etruria. With him was his wife, who is said to be an art connoisseur without a superior. Mr. Pinkerton vouched for Mr. Agnew for the integrity of Mr. Sheedy, and Mr. Sheedy vouched for his friend.

The £5000 was placed in the hands of Mr. Sheedy, and he obtained possession of the picture, which was packed in the false bottom of a trunk. The transfer of the canvas to Mr. Agnew was made in the Auditorium hotel, in Chicago, on Wednesday of the week before last. It was carefully examined and all precautions were taken against a fraud. It is the understanding of those who know most of this transaction that \$10,000 of the reward was pressed upon Mr. Sheedy and accepted by him.

The Cause of Baldness.

The hair of the head was evidently intended by nature as a protection to the delicate brain substance, and it would no doubt answer this purpose admirably if it were given the opportunity, as we see it pervasively do in the case of savages, football players and others who need such protection little.

It is generally supposed that baldness, like gray hair, is a necessary accompaniment of advancing age, but this is only because the older a man is the more time he has had to neglect and abuse his hair, and so the more likely he is to have lost it.

Some men are more prone to baldness than others because of thinness of the scalp, which interferes with the proper blood-supply to the hair roots. This is often a family failing; but in such cases baldness might be prevented or postponed for many years by care. In a few instances the hair falls out as a result of some special disease, but for the great majority of men there is absolutely no reason why, if

properly treated, the hair should not last as long as the man.

The chief cause of baldness is pressure by the hat, which constricts the blood-vessels and so interferes with the nutrition of the hair bulbs. It is probable, also, that the shutting off of light and air by the hat helps the mischief. An unhealthy condition of the scalp results, the sign of which is a plentiful amount of dandruff.

There are many facts which go to prove the truth of this opinion. In the first place, women rarely become bald. They wear hats, it is true, but their hats are not airtight casings, nor do they make pressure round the head like a man's hat. Then baldness is almost unknown among savages who wear no hats, and is comparatively uncommon with men in the tropics, where very light hats are worn.

Laborers are less prone to baldness than professional and business men. This has led to the belief that brain work favors baldness by withdrawing blood from the scalp, but this is only self flattery on the part of those who advance the theory. Laborers generally wear soft felt hats or caps, which are apt to be pushed to the back of the head so that the scalp gets plenty of light and air.

As further proof, we find that the baldest men usually have sufficient hair at the back and on the sides of the head below the hair line.

The inference is plain—wear a soft hat or none at all. If custom forbids this, then the best a city man can do is to wear his hat as little as possible, and never to keep it on in the house or office.

Audubon's Frogs.

As an agreeable variation from polite poultry keeping, raising frogs for the market is frequently brought forward as a vocation for young women who are obliged to be partially self supporting. There is nothing to be said against this way of earning money, and a valuable hint is contained in a little story, found in the Lexington

Leader, of the first venture in frog farming ever made in the United States.

Early in the last century, John J. Audubon, the great ornithologist, went down the Ohio river from Pennsylvania in a little steamer of his own, stopping at various points to secure specimens of little known birds, beautiful and accurate pictures of which afterward appeared in his fine work, 'Birds of America.'

While at Hendersonville, Kentucky, which he made his home for some time, he built a mill and proposed to raise frogs on a large scale, preparing for that purpose a pond about half a mile from the river.

The frogs multiplied wonderfully, and on warm summer evenings Audubon would sit under a tree near the pond, listening to the concert given by his stock, and calculating the amount of money he should derive from the sale of the grown frogs, which he purposed taking to the New Orleans market in his boat.

But one night, when the frogs were nearly grown, they heard the booming of bullfrogs in the Ohio. Their curiosity was aroused, and hopping out of the pond, they made their way to the river, into which they plunged and disappeared!

Thus ends the story of Audubon's frog farm. The moral for lady froggers to bear in mind is: Never count your frogs before they are sold.

Only in Self Defense.

An elderly woman who had brought up her children on the 'Go and see what Joe is doing and tell him to stop, and if he won't stop, whip him!' lines was talking with a young mother about her one hopeful, and it came out that he had been spared the rod.

'Do you mean to say that you never whip him?' exclaimed the elder woman.

'Never. That is—except in self defense,' was the faltering reply.

Italy has four large battleships under construction.



HUNTING RABBITS.