

## FROM READERS.

### Henry Llewellyn Williams's Reminiscences of the Famous Old English House of Lloyd.

New York Times Book Review:

**N**OT to know 'Lloyd' is to argue yourself unknown"—as regards publishers extant. The Librarian of Knoxville, Tenn., "can find no publisher of the name of Lloyd,"

English or American! Luckily that literary horn of plenty, this journal, furnishes, as usual, light on this darkness. Its London letter, published in the same issue as "Librarian's" letter, says: "Household Words has passed into the hands of the Lloyd Company, publisher of The Daily Chronicle and several other papers." Among the several others is Lloyd's Newspaper. To the British masses it is what The Times is to the official class and The Illustrated News to society.

Who was Lloyd? Edward Lloyd was one of that brave, devoted, and intelligent band of news vendors supporting with hard fighting such heralds of free speech as Hone, Horne, Hunt, Jerrold, Knight, &c. As the Government duties forbade a cheap journal, the letters were shattered by the newsmen, though not removed till 1861, when an American established The London Telegraph as a daily at one penny. From 1830 Lloyd and the London newsdealers, Purkess, Vickers, Chard, Clark, Appleyard, (father and son,) Barth, Cleave, &c., baffled the Home Office and defied crushing fines and pestiferous prisons. After many attempts, Lloyd successfully started his newspaper, universal where a Briton settles. I can believe neither that Knoxville has no attractions for an Englishman nor that, one being there, he has not brought in Lloyd's.

Besides supplying news, Lloyd recognized the ravenous demand for light reading. Remember that the Original Penny Magazine and Chambers's had reached a two-hundred-thousand circulation. Lloyd launched "pilot balloons"—weeklies, monthlies, plain and illustrated, all penny ventures. But at the first, like others, his Atlas, Entertaining Magazine, Miscellany, (do not confound with the later Halfpenny Miscellany, Miss Braddon's,) contained copious American matter and French translations. Finding that a serial novel carried the publication, he determined to make it carry itself. The meeting half way a population earning dribbets had been tested by Alderman Kelly, who did a formidable installment business—selling costly novels and Bibles to the lower middle class—he sold 250,000 of the Scriptures through canvassers. Dickens's novels were in shilling monthly parts, and, lastly, his "Master Humphrey's Clock" came out in cheap weekly parts. Lower still, the notorious "Chief Baron" Nicholson floated a "Penny Pickwick." The ball was rolling. The day for scrappy papers—the forerunners of Tidbits, the Paris Voleur, and The London Thief (fact!)—was over. The continued tale was to rule indefinitely.

Lloyd brought out fiction in penny weekly parts; eight pages with one illustration. He relied on home talent. We say talent, for his authors—showing his good editorship—became mostly famous in their lines. They blushed at their maiden efforts, mainly anonymous; the connecting link is that a certain one is by the author of a named other. Still, from Pot calling the Kettle black, Cockneys know who wrote "The Black Pirate," or "The Red Barn." The authors of the popular Highway Knights Series—"Paul Clifford," "Gentleman Jack," "Tyburn Tree," (Purkess, not Lloyd, by the way,) "George Barrington," (a pickpocket, to be accurate,) &c., include a distinguished actress, a clergyman, (perhaps his pseudonyms, Malcolm J. Errym and Septimus R. Urban are anagrams,) to whom the lachrymose "Ada, the Betrayed" is ascribed also, and well-known novelists and journalists. Sala repudiates one Lloydish perennial—for it still sells and is played—"The Ruffian Barber"—but "G. A. S." was never appended to a general denial that he wrote for the "Shoreditch penny dreadfuls." He sinned in good company, for his principal in that galley, Lloyd's factotum, Tom (Thomas Peckett) Prest, gloried in his works. Prest leads the long line of London writers whom the multitude loved and sought—Pierce Egan, Jr., (editor of The London Journal;) the brothers St. John, (excluding Bayle;) Fairfax Balfour, (Watts Phillips,) and his brother, J. F. Smith, (Lloyd made him "his" by republishing, in parts, after The London Journal publication, his "Stanfield Hall";) Sir John Gilbert drew the illustrations to the Tudor episodes, Pettitt and Merritt, Brent, and Garvice. These exclude The Family Herald writers, whom Stevenson called "the Lady Messalina" school. Prest was to English sub-literature what Ponson du Terrail, ("Rocamboles";) Dumas, Montépin, Pont-Jest, ("The Thugs,") and Richebourg are to France, and Ned Buntline (Judson) to us. I know the New England clique mock at Buntline—but his "Buffalo Bill" will live as long as "Leatherstocking." As for Prest, with his knack to capture and hold public attention, his "Claude Duval" ran three years, "Varney the Vampire" two, "Ela the Outcast" makes a dozen hundred-page books here, "The Old House in West Street" covers a hundred numbers, and "Angelina" was reprinted entirely as a volume—unprecedented honors among people who never see a sovereign whole. As for his renowned "Blighted Heart," G. R. Sims the other day came upon a day laborer blubbering over a new edition of that "racker." He declared to the playwright that it made him miserable! Sims reflects that "one pauses in awe-struck surprise at the British Navy being educated to weep over 'The Blighted Heart,' and at the next halt in the 'March of Intellect!'" But all the world is kin before Prest and the Lloyd books.

Besides, Lloyd's books were reprinted here. A relative, publishing in Boston and New York at the time, pictured his calls on the great popular publisher at Shoreditch. (He removed to the present premises of Salisbury Square and Fleet Street in 1850.)

Lloyd was a stout, ruddy, round-headed Englishman, a Panks, full of activity, and his work mapped out clearly in his solid head. He would interrupt the chat to speak through tubes to author, printer, and publishing office from his chair, as "How is 'Paul and the Pressgang' going?" and communicate the instructions from the reply: "Tell Mr. Scribe to keep 'Paul Pressgang' four numbers ahead," or "Scribe, just wind up 'Pressgang' in two issues and get on with 'The Dumb Boy of Manchester'—the play is a hit at the Adelphi." The chief American reprinters were in treaty with him, but the plan was checked by a rival, "Harry Hazel," who Americanized all Lloyd's stories, "Gallant Tom," "Jack Junk," &c., and so spoiled the market. You see, Lloyd's plan of launching a tale by giving a number or more with the first, suited us, as when we had five or six (Lloyd once gave away seventy-two pages for a penny to distance competitors!) they made our ninety-six-for-a-quarter book—by ingenious paging they counted as 112! This is one reason why native genius had no "show" ante-bellum.

As Lloyd's News succeeded, and authors left him, his obsolete books became mere metal and piles of woodcuts. I say cuts, for some of the illustrations to his first books were like Tudor blocks, done with the woodcutters' drawing knives, not gravers! Yet they were copied here with the text—see Dewitt's "Claude Duval," which had a long sale until Munro killed it with a ten-cent edition. Frank Leslie made a bid for them, and Dewitt would have bought what he had not reprinted; but it was all the lot, or none, with Lloyd. The blocks have fed the engine furnace and the plates have been transmuted into the linotype for The Chronicle and News. The British National Library has not a complete set even of Prest's operae, and those that lingered in the cookshop libraries—for you could read a pen'orth with your chop and potato—are now no more, since the Cockney eating houses have succumbed to dairies and American flapjack counters. Besides, The News, under Douglas Jerrold's fine conduct, became an institution. Furthermore, remembering he had a Chronicle in 1855, Lloyd bought a local paper and made it the daily of that name, still flourishing as a power. With that adorable Chinese loyalty, quite English, Lloyd replaced Jerrold, on his death, by his son Blanchard, who remained editor some thirty years. The present head of the house only knows these two great papers, though this purchase of Household Words points to a widening beyond the daily and weekly. As for "the penny dreadfuls" of 1840, I do not believe he knows one of them by name—certainly not by sight. Ichabod!

HENRY LLEWELLYN WILLIAMS.  
Pearl River, N. Y., Aug. 16, 1904.