

## SITTINGS AT SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE'S: THE CURIOUS HISTORY OF A PICTURE.

By MARTIN HARDIE,

NATIONAL ART LIBRARY, VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

FROM the correspondence of the Patisson family it is my privilege to select a series of letters that deal with a picture, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, at a period of his life that has been little touched by his biographers.

Mr. and Mrs. Patisson (William and Hannah), who lived at Witham, in Essex, determined in 1811, to have the portrait of their two sons painted, and the family letters tell in all its completeness the story of the picture—*ab ovo usque ad malum*—from the selection of the artist, to the writing of the receipt for moneys paid. It is a story of procrastination and delay on the part of the artist, for the picture was six long years in the making. In 1811 William, the elder of the boys, who is on the right in the picture, was ten years old; and Jacob, who kneels on the bank with his arms round the donkey's neck, was eight. When the picture was exhibited in 1817 the boys had so grown out of recognition that it was hardly necessary for Lawrence to implore them to "keep their own counsel and mine."

The first letter in which there is any intimation of the coming portrait is written on May 9th, 1811, to Mr. and Mrs. Patisson by their friend, Henry Crabbe Robinson, the famous Peninsula correspondent of the *Times*, and an intimate friend of Lamb, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and the leading spirits of his day. He writes:—

And now, my dear friends, have you not forgotten the month of May and the Exhibition, and the intended portrait, and the artist who is to be chosen? Do not delay your picture scheme another year. Come over and fix on your artist, and we can make any arrangements you please for the summer.

A reference to the same writer's *Memoirs* shows the following two entries:

June 18th, 1811. Accompanied Mrs. Patisson and her son William to Lawrence the painter. On entering the room he fixed his eyes on William with evident admiration, not noticing the mother, who *had been* handsome. On my asking him whether he could find time to paint the boy, he said, in a half whisper, To be sure, he *must* be painted. The picture was to include a brother, and it was arranged that the two boys should wait on Mr. Lawrence on Wednesday, the 26th inst.

June 26th. Went with the Patissons to Lawrence's. He consented to paint the two boys for 160 guineas. They had their first sitting to-day.

The story is then continued by three notes written by Sir Thomas (then Mr.) Lawrence from his residence in Greek Street, Soho, to postpone appointments he had made. They show thus early that he was a past-master in the art not only of polite letter-writing, but of procrastination as well, and are the beginning of what—to use his own words at a later date—was a "record of broken engagements and unsteadiness of purpose."

A long letter from Mrs. Patisson to the boys' grandmother, dated July 2nd, 1811, describes vividly her journey with the boys by chaise to London, an accident in Aldgate, and their arrival at Lawrence's studio. From this point I must give the writer's own words:—

Now for Lawrence. I will give it in a dialogue. Mr. L.: 'I am very glad to see you, Maam, for I much want your assistance. *You* must be in this morning's sitting.' (I stared.) 'I mean, I must *place* you to judge of my plans in the composition of this picture.' (Then I was placed, my head put in a particular direction.) 'Now, does Wm. look like himself?' 'No, Sir.' Another change or two. Mr. L.: 'Understand me, Maam, I can take him either grave or gay, it is a face admitting of a good picture either way, but I wish to consult your *feelings*.' (I mentioned the grave sketch in my box as painful.) Mr. L.: 'I acknowledge, were I taking him for myself as a study, I should prefer him thus.' (His head erect and grave, but a very clever look.) I said his profile was bad, but I forgot—he said sooner in the conversation, 'Will you forgive me for having made the youngest so much more visible than Wm. You will have his front face and his figure, while Wm. is behind, but the youngest is so much more lively and animated.' I said, 'As you please, we cannot suspect *you* of partiality, and on your taste I rely.' Mr. L.: 'My plan is this. I mean Jacob to be feeding the donkey, whose head is to be in the middle, seen between them, while Wm. is leaning on it, and looking up; but I see you wish Wm. looking at you.' Again I left it to him.

Lord Castlereagh was announced as in the gallery. He did not interrupt *our* conversation for his Lordship, who *waited* for us, for the first and last time in the Patisson Annals.

Now I sat down, seeing him painting only the background, because I *stand* when I see him work. I observed he left the outlined two faces untouched. But when I crossed the room, unfettered by any outline, *there* was a *new* face of Wm. without eyes or mouth, which you would have known anywhere, drawn over the two faces in part, there-

fore all the first sitting is lost. But he said, while talking, 'Do not think I am losing time. All this previous study is time gained in the end.' I kept in my pleasure at the likeness, thinking it premature, but when I heard L. saying to himself, 'I shall have a very strong likeness, I see,' then I spoke. He was quite pleased, but he soon told me Wm. must be taken talking; so he kept him in full chat, and two clever, well-informed boys they seemed: William



JACOB PATTISSON.

FROM THE SKETCH BY SIR T. LAWRENCE, P.R.A.

the Conqueror down to G. 3rd. I saw the slate full of appointments: he fixed Friday at 4 o'clock, much regretted not being able to name an earlier time. I said: 'I am *fully* aware of your engagements; their being so numerous, and our time so limited, made me, as you recollect, at first hesitate whether you could paint them.' He then said: 'Do not mention it, two (in an undertone) such beautiful subjects.' He touched me to let the children go on, I paused, he said: 'Take him (pointing to Wm.) altogether, I have *never* had such a subject, no never such a subject.' Every letter is to Quality, the appointments, all except some physicians, the same. Yet he mentioned none, and is perfectly unassuming. To Wm's beauty we owe the picture far more than to the 160 Gs. At first he said Jay must sit all the time. I begged it might be Wm., so Jay was dismounted, and Mr. L. said: 'Thank G—— I am not to be plagued with you to-day.' We are silent most of the time, *i.e.* Mr. L. and I, but when Wm's face is lighted up we generally exchange a reciprocal look of pleasure. He is too *jocose* with Jay for my plain love of truth, such as 'The donkey is to come up by the mail.' Mr. L. is absorbed in his art, but his fine face shows all his delight, when he catches a happy look or makes a

fortunate stroke. He is a perfect gentleman (save the affront to J.), *quite poor*, because he lives in the first circles, the Prince and such grandees, H. C. R.\* hears, his associates: he is courted by all, reads poetry most delightfully, and is reckoned very fascinating.

We shall now quote extracts from other letters written by Mrs. Pattison to the grandmother:—

July 6th, 1811. We regretted Wm's indisposition; to him it was immaterial, as the face was not dry enough to proceed, and the whole sitting must be Jay's. . . . His expressions were very elegant, but his unassuming manners and mildness, with the flashes of his eye, strike Wm. quite as much as they do me. . . . Now for a dialogue between Mr. L. and Jay.† 'Pray, Mr. L., what colour shall you make my donkey?' 'Why, I think pink would look lively.' 'Now, you cannot be in earnest.' Mr. L.: 'I think there is vivacity in the colour.' 'No, no!' Soon after—'I want very much to know *one thing*, Mr. Lawrence, that is, what colour are my cloaths to be?' 'As you object to a pink donkey, suppose I dress *you* in pink.' 'I don't want none of your jokes, Sir, tell me the real' (used as a noun). Mr. L.: 'Well then, as you wish it, I will tell you the truth.' 'Thank you, Sir, that is right.' Mr. L.: 'The truth is, I don't know myself.' I expected Jay angry or disappointed, but he looked delighted. 'Then, as you don't know, will you let me choose for you?' Mr. L.: 'Certainly *you* may choose.' Jay exultingly called out: '*None* of this filthy ugly *grey*, but a dark blue.' Mr. L.: '*You* have chosen, but *I* am at liberty to please myself.' 'Oh no.' Mr. L.: 'Oh, but I am assuredly. However, I am inclined to believe it will be *dark blue*.'‡ 'Thanks, thanks,' vociferated Jay, jumping up, and quite forgetting his sitting attitude. Mr. L. then said, in a pleasant but graver tone: 'As the composition of the picture will be favourable to colours, I should like to dress the eldest in a very rich dark brown or a *red* suit.' Jay laughed, and shewed he thought this a little like a *pink* dress, and hugged himself in idea in his blue. Mr. P. is sure, if he had gone at first, the man and the pictures would have tempted him into £200 for full lengths. *Entre nous*—I was glad H. C. R. did not join us.

July 18th, 1811. Then, to my regret, came H. C. R., whom I vainly tried to keep silent. It fidgets and spoils my sittings to have him. L. likes me to sit *quiet* and answer a little, but not to keep up a chat. I asked if Wm. might eat a biscuit. 'Certainly.' I gave him one. 'And won't you give the painter one, too?' said he, in such a pleasing manner, he so quiet, H. C. R. so rough.

Aug. 9th. Yesterday was a tremendously bad day, but I thought in thunder, lightning, rain, I must meet the Wizard Lawrence, for truly he has, you know, always bewitched us. . . . At last Jay says, 'Mr. Lawrence, Sir,

\* H. C. R. here and elsewhere refers to Henry Crabbe Robinson.

† It must be remembered that Jacob was aged eight.

‡ In the picture Jacob is dressed in dark green and Wm in red.

do you remember saying to me one time, Thank God, I am not to be teased with you sitting. Now I have thought I might just as well have said to you, Thank God, I am not to be teased with sitting to you.' I checked Jay for his rudeness. 'Nay,' cried Lawrence, 'it is not rudeness, but true wit.' Oh, Jay's conceit! he quotes it so. Mr. Lawrence whispered me: 'Already this picture is much admired; it is quite a favourite in the room.' I sat looking at a face which invited my attention, so mild, so intelligent. At last I said: 'Is not this a *very* strong likeness?' 'Yes, particularly so, it is my Lord Castlereagh.'

Aug. 16th, 1811. I arrived at L.'s at 4. I was ushered in, and Edward said, 'Master's compts. to you Maam: he has not had a walk to-day and is now gone out, but will return very soon.' Alack! thought I, here I may sit till 9 o'clock. I was very nice in a turban (for the rides are spoiling my white bonnet) and I had Bacon's Essays, so I sat down in the gallery. Soon came a gent, and looked in. I saw him, and as he saw me behind a great picture I felt as if I looked like Lady Teazle behind Joseph Surface's screen. In one of Jay's scampers downstairs he met Mr. L., who received me in about a quarter of an hour. . . . He then talked so sweetly and so cleverly, when Edward, who always opens the door and shuts it before he speaks to Master, bounced in, looking so flurried. Somebody (I thought it sounded Lord——) *would* see Mr. L. He had got in before he was aware, indeed, he could not prevent it. The man's flurry was nothing to the master's, down went his pallet, he gave such a look. He was not angry with E., but with the Somebody. He turned (I thought a bailiff was coming in and meant to set off) to me: 'I am sorry to leave you for a minute, but my Lord Lindsay insists on seeing me.' I was so frightened that I said very confusedly, 'Let me resign my sitting to him.' 'That you shall not,' and away he went. He staid about five minutes. Twice the door opened and shut, and at last he came in. He said, 'There are some words no persons understand, such as five or two minutes. They promise not to keep you, and then detain you.' We resumed our chat. E. came in quietly: 'My Lady Bur— something wishes to speak with you, she will not detain you.' 'My best respects to her Ladyship, I am particularly engaged, I have received her letter, and she shall have the miniature\* in a fortnight.' Was it not polite to us to keep on painting little Jig? I said, 'I fear you never had so troublesome a sitter.' 'Oh yes, I have, for I once had to paint a Newfoundland dog.' 'Did it sit here?' 'Yes, just where you do.'

Aug. 1811. J. said, 'Mr. L., Sir, you always speak by the *reverse*, so I shall. Now, pray, is the King a better sitter than me? You understand *better* is the *reverse*.' 'Oh, yes, and I will answer so. The King is *still better* than you, for he was more active than you the first half of the time, and asleep the other half.'

After the sitting at which this piece of conversation took place, Lawrence seems to have practically

\* "I have not infrequently heard Sir Thomas Lawrence spoken of as having painted miniatures, but I think his works of this nature are by no means numerous, if indeed always to be identified."—"British Miniature Painters," by J. J. Foster.

finished his work so far as the boys' heads were concerned, and Mrs. Pattison returned to Witham, leaving Henry Crabbe Robinson to guard her interests in connection with the completion and exhibition of the picture. Between August and December he writes several letters about visits to Lawrence, who always promised that the picture should be ready for the Academy in May. Finally, however, Lawrence



WILLIAM PATTISON.

FROM THE SKETCH BY SIR T. LAWRENCE P.R.A.

found it impossible to complete it, and the following letter is dated March 29th, 1812:

29th March, 1812. I saw Lawrence last week at the Royal Academy, and now prepare yourself to receive a slight mortification and disappointment. The Portrait will not be finished time enough for the Exhibn. He anticipated my enquiries by saying, I am very sorry I shall be unable to have our young friends finished for the Exhibn. He then proceeded to state that the picture on which he was at work when I went in (a large painting of a lady sitting, a gentleman leaning over her, and a naked child in her lap)\* he was obliged to complete this year. And he added, However I can promise Mr. P. he will have the picture quite as soon as if it were in the Exhibn.

Five months later the picture seems to have been no nearer completion, and the following two letters will speak for themselves:—

Witham, Augst, 22d: 1812.

My dear Sir,

The approaching *conclusion* of August most forcibly reminds me of a promise you *once* wondered I

\* The Earl and Countess of Charlemont with their child, exhibited in R.A., 1812. The portion of the picture with the Earl's portrait is in the National Portrait Gallery in Dublin.

could doubt. Allow me to remind you that our dear boys are rapidly outgrowing the appearance they presented to you in 1811. I have already *vainly* urged stronger pleas.

For your past attention to my wishes, allow me to subscribe myself,

Your obliged, H. PATTISSON.

Greek St., Septbr. the 2d, 1812.

Dear Madam,

I am without any other excuse than that which can be furnish'd by constant occupation with professional engagements, (but not, I must acknowledge, of such just selection as ought to regulate them,) and intentions that have always been proportion'd to the claims of Mr. Patisson and yourself on my respect and attention. You remind me of the promise which I once wonder'd you could doubt, and I now as sincerely wonder that I have broken that promise, notwithstanding the mortifying self-knowledge that years have given me. But this strain of confession is no part of active contrition for my strange neglect. I will offer its better evidence as soon as possible, and with the perplexing engagements that surround me, you must consider it as promising effort of repentance that I pledge myself to work upon the Picture, much or little, in this present month.

I beg my Comp'ts and Thanks to Mr. Patisson, and remain with great Respect,

Dear Madam, Your much oblig'd & obedt. Ser.

THOS. LAWRENCE.

As continued remonstrances were of no avail, Mr. and Mrs. Patisson decided on the advice of Crabbe Robinson to obtain the portrait temporarily from Lawrence, on the understanding that he would inform them immediately he was able to proceed with it. Accordingly Crabbe Robinson again took the matter in hand, and notes after a visit to Lawrence that "there are in the studio several old unfinished paintings like yours which appear to have been ripening." He writes on Oct. 26th, 1812:—

I have seen the picture, not improved, nor yet deteriorated by a few unintelligible dashes of black and red round the neck. In other respects it is as I saw it before, and in this state it will remain probably these six months. You will not, however, repine at this when I inform you that you are to have the custody of it till it can be completed. He says he will not send for the picture till he can at once proceed upon it, but it must be before next May, as he counts much on having it in the Exhibition. He looked piteously when I first spoke to him, and indeed unwell. He has been in the country for the first time these eight years.

The following letter was written by Lawrence shortly after in reply to one from Mrs. Patisson:—

November 13, 1812.

The pleasure given by the sight of the picture can hardly be so great as that which I have received in reading your letter, and I am particularly gratified by that part of it which informs me of Mrs. Patisson's\*

\* The boys' grandmother.

approbation of it; for I know the interest and anxiety you felt to have it. These are circumstances that make ample amends to us for the limits assigned to our department in the arts. We need not envy Historical Painters for that testimony to their merit—the exciting emotions of imaginary Grief or Pity, if we can thus awaken real feelings of a much happier Nature. I fear I must soon send for the Picture, yet I will not do so, till the moment comes, when I can gratify myself with proceeding on it for the Exhibition. . . .

Early in 1813 Lawrence sent for the picture, but on June 12th is still making apologies for its incomplete state. He writes:—

This Picture, which as an effort of my Pencil is not unvalued by me, and from motives and feelings of Respect is an object of interest with me, is still unfinish'd; and, with every just sentiment of regret and sorrow that I have so disappointed Mrs. Patisson and yourself, I must still request your acquiescence in its remaining so till the close of July or even the middle of the month of August.

Few but Artists are acquainted with the difficulties of making up a Picture after what is usually considered the most arduous part is finish'd. When a Father carried his son to Rubens and told him that he could be of use to him by painting his backgrounds for him, he answered that he would not take as Pupil a Person who must be as good a Painter as himself, for he found his backgrounds the most difficult parts of his Pictures.

I could make this to a superficial observer a finished Picture in five or six days, and to make it such as shall satisfy the eye of an experienced and able Artist when looking for one of my best Works, I know that it will occupy me at least three Weeks, and possibly still more. This time, from full knowledge of my own faculties, I am desirous of giving to it with as little interruption as possible; but I cannot do it at the moment when my hours are given to various objects and Persons whom without great offence I cannot send from my door. I have twice and for some length of period made the experiment of doing so, and found that it was construed into such an air of importance and fancied security, as perhaps would not be suited to my Station in Life, but certainly would be most offensive to my Nature and Opinions.

Let me then, Dear Sir, finish this Work with as much delight to myself as I felt when proceeding with it; and tho' its history must be the record of broken engagements and unsteadiness of purpose, let it still bear evidence on the face of it of such exertion of its Author's talent, as could not have been made from motives of ordinary kind or selfish interest—a remembrance of his Respect, as well as Skill.

Another year passed with remonstrances from Mrs. Patisson, apologies from Lawrence, entreaties from Crabbe Robinson, and still the picture was incomplete. Mrs. Patisson hears on good authority that "one gentleman has been kept *twelve* years, and somebody else four years, and that there are one hundred unfinished." In October, 1813, Lawrence promised that the picture should be finished by April,



WILLIAM AND JACOB PATTISSON  
(ENGRAVED UNDER THE TITLE OF "RURAL AMUSEMENT").  
FROM THE PORTRAIT BY SIR T. LAWRENCE, P.R.A.

1814, and added, "I claim the power of exhibiting the Picture of your Sons, for I will exhibit no picture in the ensuing Exhibition if that be not of the number." In Feb. 1814, he writes from his new house in Russell Square.

I shall be most happy to see my young and finest subjects in the beginning of March, and to shew their Father their Picture, not in the state in which he last saw it. Circumstances have yet denied me the pleasure of completing it; and the recent season, unusually disadvantageous to the Painter, together with the business of moving to a new Residence from a House which I had inhabited for so many years, unexpectedly added to the delay; for it was my full purpose to have completely finish'd it before the date of this Letter, and not to have had the pain of giving you and Mr. Patisson another disappointment. My Picture ought indeed to be of Value to atone for it.

Mr. and Mrs. Patisson seem in despair to have again taken the unfinished picture into their possession, and at intervals of many months received apologetic letters from Lawrence, of which the following two, with over a year's interval between them, will serve as a specimen:—

October the 9th, 1814.

. . . The Picture will not, I believe, receive Injury from hanging over the Fire-Place, as whatever of dust and smoke may rest upon it, will be effectually wash'd away, in my preparing it for its completion.

I am sorry not to have acknowledg'd Mr. Patisson's obliging present of Game. I have been recently, and am at this moment, engag'd on large Pictures of our late distinguish'd Visitors of Lord Wellington and of the Prince Regent to be sent to Vienna, and my time has been so constantly occupied by them, that I am oblig'd to appear a negligent correspondent to my Friends and my Employers, and be indebted to their indulgence on this account, as well as on that of my professional engagements.

Dec'ber the 9th, 1815.

. . . Certainly I cannot be satisfied with leaving the Picture in its unfinish'd state. The subject of it is too pleasing—the Proprietors of it are too much respected by me. It shall certainly be completed in this ensuing Year, tho' the Exhibition of it at the Royal Academy in May next, must at present be doubtful. This expression however you must not consider as declining it but must take it in the literal sense of the word; for I should really be very glad to place it there and yet may. You will have the goodness to send the Picture to me, the moment it is wanting by me; and I will not demand it but at the moment when I can immediately proceed with it, and when therefore the Donkey may be sent to Grosvenor Square, for that will certainly be a convenience to me.

In the spring of 1817 Lawrence at last writes in triumph: "I have the pleasure to inform you that the Picture is gone to the Exhibition, and that I consider it (and I hear speak the opinion of professional

Friends), to be one of my best Works." It is numbered 44 in the catalogue for 1817, with the title "Portraits of the sons of —. Patisson Esq."

A little later he sent the following letter:

May the 23rd, 1817.

I am highly gratified to learn that my own opinion of the comparative success of the Picture is confirmed by those of your Friends.

Our Exhibition usually remains open till the end of the 2 or 3rd Week of June, so that I hope you will be enabled to see it with the subjects of my Pencil, who are always remember'd by me with great Esteem. The power ascribed to Satan when entering Pandemonium, he has not bequeathed to the Natives of the World he ruin'd, or I should pray that your sons when entering the threshold of the Royal Academy, would dwindle into their former selves! but I must be satisfied if they are considerate enough to keep their own Counsel, and mine.

When selecting a Frame myself, I usually choose one Pattern as most advantageous to my Pictures, and the Price of that in which your Sons' Portraits are placed is Twenty Guineas.

The letters are now full of the criticisms (usually adverse) of friends and relations; bringing "mortification upon mortification." However, "Challons, an R.A. and celebrated artist, told Uncle B. it was the best painting in the room"—"Uncle B. saw the Duke of Wellington, stop, stop, examine, and talk evidently about it, but he could not hear one syllable of his opinion. Was not that tantalising?"—"I saw Flaxman for the first time since the exhibition of the picture. His praise of it is great and unqualified, and he is a man whose sincerity is not inferior to his judgement."

On May 29th, 1817, Mr. Patisson enclosed a draft for £105 in final payment for picture and frame, and received the following reply:—

May the 31st, 1817.

I have first to acknowledge in your letter the Receipt of £105, being the last Payment for my Picture of your Sons, and likewise the amount of the Frame in which it is plac'd.

We are as yet ignorant of the exact time when the Exhibition will close, but I imagine it will be about the 25th of June. It this year open'd a Week later than the usual period.

I know not what to say to these repeated Thanks for my having but too tardily performed a Duty. The one excuse that I view with more Satisfaction, because it tends to palliate my entirely unintentional delay, is that I know you have a better picture for it. I practise an Art, the difficulties of which are great, and conquer'd by slow Progress. This is not the opinion of an *Individual* Artist, whose Talents might possibly be of peculiar character, and need greater effort to be successful than Happier Natures, but it is an opinion that we all hold, because we all

experience the same necessity for Labour ; and the history of Artists will shew that unless dissipation, carelessness, or the infirmities of sickness weaken their exertion, the power of execution proceeds with their knowledge and experience till the advance of the Common Humiliator of all Power admonish to retire.

On October the 14th, 1817, Lawrence writes that he has sent off the picture by waggon from King's Inn Yard, adding that the delay has been caused by his making a slight improvement, and begging "that the Picture may be only slightly brush'd with the lightest Furniture Brush."

Nothing further is said of picture or painter until ten years later, when the picture was sent to Lawrence at his request to be engraved. On returning to Town on August 13th, 1828, Lawrence heard of the death of Mrs. Pattisson, and writes a touching letter of sympathy that expresses to the full the kindness and gentleness of his nature. He ends by saying:—"Her generous confidence in so promptly acquiescing with you in parting with the Picture, and her mild forbearance during its long stay will be constantly remember'd by me with the most grateful feelings, and as obedient homage to her Spirit, I will expedite as soon as possible the completion of the Work that detains it from you ; since I know it is become more valuable to you, from its having so long been the object of her pleas'd attention. Within a few days the Engraver will be with me, and I trust I shall then be enabled to name the time for your receiving the Picture."

In little more than a year Lawrence himself was dead, and three short notes deal with the engraving, which he had placed in the hands of Bromley, by whom it was published in 1831, under the title of "Rural Amusement." The first of these is written on behalf of his father by William, the elder of the boys, who had now been called to the Bar, and is addressed to Mr. Keightley, Sir Thomas Lawrence's Executor:—

5th Feb., 1830.

Sir,

The late Sir Thomas Lawrence having requested of Mr. Pattisson, of Witham, permission to have the picture of his sons engraved at his, Sir T. L.'s expense, Mr. Pattisson acceded to such request, and accordingly sent the picture to Sir T. L. more than 2 years and a half ago. It was afterwards placed by Sir T. L. in Mr. Bromley's hands to engrave, and is now partly finished. Owing to Sir T. L.'s decease, Mr. Pattisson has desired me to ask of you as sole exor. of Sir T. L. whether you wish to stand in Sir T. L.'s place as to the engraving. If so, Mr. Pattisson has no objection to your so doing, and going on and having the engraving completed. But Mr. Pattisson would then thank you for a note addressed to him acknowledging that the picture is in your possession as exor. of Sir T. L. and a promise from you that Mr.

Pattisson shall have the picture home on or before this day two months.

Yours for Mr. Pattisson,  
W. H. PATTISSON, Junior.

2, Old Square,  
Lincoln's Inn, 5, Feb., 1830.

I accept the above offer on the terms above mentioned.

A. KEIGHTLEY, Jr.,  
Executor of the late  
Sir Thos. Lawrence.

11, July, 1830.

Mr. Bromley presents his Complts. to Mr. Pattisson, and begs to inform him that Mr. Shee will touch on the Proof and not the Picture.

Those who have visited the Hautes-Pyrénées may remember the monument of white marble standing on a rock that juts out into the Lac de Gaube. It records the melancholy fate of a young Englishman and his wife who were drowned in the lake in 1832, within one month of their marriage. The husband was the "William" of these letters, and in the correspondence now before us are all the love-letters written by his wife to the day of their marriage—real, living love-letters of an Englishwoman. It is a sad and romantic story, but its place is not here.

The picture was sold at Christie's in 1860, for 200 guineas, and since then has been in the possession of the Naylor family of Leighton Hall, Montgomeryshire. About three years ago two finished sketches by Sir Thomas Lawrence for the boys' heads were discovered in a farmhouse near Witham, where they had lain unrecognised for many years, and are now in the possession of Mr. F. L. Pattisson of "The Lea," Esher, by whose kind permission they are here reproduced.

I cannot end better this story of a picture than by quoting the words written in 1829 to Mr. Pattisson, by Henry Crabbe Robinson, on hearing, in Naples, of Sir Thomas Lawrence's death:—

I doubt whether Sir Thos. Lawrence will be considered as a great artist by posterity. I incline to think not, but he was at least a skilful and popular artist, who did better than all others what all his rivals tried to excel in, and he who does that is no common man. He was, besides, an honourable man, free from envy and jealousy, generous and kind-hearted. Even the little circumstances which we have remarked in his conduct respecting the picture and since, shew him to be of a kind and forgiving temper. I heard of his death with sincere sorrow. How deeply would dear Mrs. P. have mourned over him, whose heart so affectionately attached itself to every kind of excellence, and who was almost extravagantly an admirer of Sir Thos. How delightful is the thought, whencesoever derived, that there is an abode for such departed spirits, as will render them still members of one Community and inhabitants of one country.