

LANDSEER

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Landseer by Moses Foster Sweetser

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MOSES FOSTER SWEETSER

LANDSEER

ARTIST-BIOGRAPHIES.

LANDSEER.



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PREFACE.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER discovered the dog, or at least perceived and revealed to the world unknown traits of the canine character, and gave new and nobler ideas thereof to all Anglo-Saxondom. In the great mines of Art, worked over by myriads for half a millennium, he sought out an untouched lode and happily found and explored it, to the perennial delight of unnumbered peoples, from the palaces of smoky and magnificent London to the shepherd-huts of remote Colorado and Australia. No artist, from the days of Giotto to those of Millais, has become so quickly and universally famous by means of countless reproductions of his works, scattered broadcast, as they are, through all the wide continents and islands where the language of Shakespeare and Macaulay pursues its conquering way.

The urbane old bachelor, surrounded by his rabble of dogs, was the chief character amid the resi-

dents of St. John's Wood, and often received at his house the most noble of the men of England, whether they bore coronets, or pens, or brushes. Landseer's social life, as distinguished from his artistic career, has not yet been described, and we wait for the kindly attention of a Tom Taylor to do it justice.

The present biographical sketch is based upon Mr. Algernon Graves's admirable "Catalogue of the Works of the late Sir Edwin Landseer, R. A.," Mr. F. G. Stephens's "Memoirs of Sir Edwin Landseer," and the large illustrated books written by Mr. W. Cosmo Monkhouse, and describing the artist's pictures. In connection with these, I have hunted through the biographies of Haydon, Robinson, Wilkie, Leslie, Scott, Bewick, Turner, and other contemporaries, in search of facts about Landseer's personal life, in respect to which the books above noted are deplorably meagre. The biography of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria's Journal have also been examined, for the same purpose; and the essays of Ruskin, Rossetti, Palgrave, and other British critics.

M. F. SWEETSER.

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LANDSEER.



CHAPTER I.

The Goldsmith's Family. — John Landseer. — The Artist's Brothers. —
A Student of Nature. — Haydon's Instruction.

THE trade of the goldsmith and jeweler is intimately connected with the higher branches of art, and many are the famous painters who have taken their first lessons in design under the direction of its skillful craftsmen. Especially is this connection apparent in the department of engraving, which, during its earlier stages, was practiced by the goldsmiths as a part of their business. Familiarity with the properties and capabilities of the metals is equally requisite in each profession, and he who can design and work silver and copper into jewelry finds it not difficult to operate upon plates of those metals with the needle and graver.