

**THOMAS CRAWFORD; HIS  
CAREER, CHARACTER,  
AND WORKS, A EULOGY**

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Thomas Crawford; His Career, Character, and Works, a Eulogy by Thomas Hicks

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**THOMAS HICKS**

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*over*

THOMAS CRAWFORD;

HIS

CAREER, CHARACTER, AND WORKS.

A Eulogy,

BY

THOMAS HICKS, N. A.

READ BEFORE THE CENTURY CLUB IN NEW YORK, ON TUESDAY  
EVENING, JANUARY 20, 1858.

*107*

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1858.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Century, held at the Club House, November 7th, 1857, Mr. T. P. Rossiter announced the recent decease of Thomas Crawford. At the instance of Messrs. C. M. Leupp, and O. S. Strong, a committee was appointed, of which Dr. Thomas Ward was Chairman, to report appropriate resolutions, and to invite some member of the Club to prepare a discourse in commemoration of the artist. On the evening of December 5th, 1857, the Committee reported a series of resolutions, and announced that Thomas Hicks had accepted an invitation to deliver the Address, which he accordingly read before the members of the Club and their friends, on Tuesday evening, January 26th, 1858.



## E U L O G Y .

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CENTURY after century the ocean washes its shores. Dashing in foam against the rocks, or rising with graceful line up the sands, it breaks and recedes. Sometimes the long monotony is interrupted by wreck and loss of life, and we recognize the omnipotence of a merciless element. So Death constantly leads away its victims, tearing the bloom from the cheek of health, and hushing for ever the voice of wisdom and friendship. Nature with her endless variety of life and light, darkness and decay, moves onward ; and suddenly we are startled and cast down in sorrow ; nations and individuals are common mourners, for a great calamity has fallen upon the world !

Thomas Crawford was born in the City of New York, March 22d, 1813, and died in London on the 10th of October, 1857. When the news of his death reached Rome, a meeting of the artists was held,



composed of Italians, Germans, French, English, and Americans, at which Mr. Terry and Mr. Freeman, his early associates in Rome, were the officers. After appropriate resolutions had been adopted, Mr. Gibson, the venerable and distinguished English sculptor, spoke of Crawford's genius in the most unqualified language, and the next day wrote to Mr. Terry the following letter :

“ROME, Nov. 5, 1857.

“DEAR MR. TERRY:—Among the many fine works which our late much lamented friend Crawford has left to this country, I think his model of the Indian is his best work.

“After his death, I began to think what compliment his friends and countrymen could pay to his memory; and it struck me that his model of the Indian might be cast in bronze, and placed in some fine public hall, where the people could see it close to the eye—there to stand as a monument to the author, an American sculptor of great genius, who distinguished himself at Rome for many years. I remain, dear Mr. Terry, truly yours.

“JOHN GIBSON.”

The career of this eminent man is instructive and worthy of commemoration from two points of view—from the high position he achieved and sustained in his art, and the genial relationship he bore among his fellow-men; as a man of genius, before whose industry and perseverance no obstacle could stand, and a father and friend whose fidelity and love were one unbroken stream of usefulness and enjoyment;

an artist whose name has now become historical; a man whose frank and ardent heart burned in sympathy with every generous impulse.

There is a similarity in the lives of all great men. They are cast in finer moulds; they are moulded in finer clay; and while boyhood is yet in its tingling ardor, restless with exuberant health and spirits, the natural bias of superior intellectuality is shown, and literally the boy is father of the man. Mozart, when four years of age, had learned, almost voluntarily, to play complicated music on the harpsichord; and the drawings of the shepherd boy Giotto attracted the attention and excited the surprise of the serious Cimabue, whose pupil he became. The boyhood of Crawford exhibited a similar precocity under less fortunate circumstances. The atmosphere which Mozart breathed was one of music; and the genial influences of religion and art charmed into perfection the graceful genius of Giotto. Crawford was born in a new country, at a period when painting was confined almost exclusively to portraiture—when sculpture as a fine-art was unknown, or was only struggling into rude shapes in the stonemason's shop. Without the force of example, and with surrounding circumstances adverse and ungenial, he showed an appreciation of form, and was constantly seeking the means to carve it into expression. The

divine spark was thus kindled, to burn brighter and brighter to the close. Still it was his good fortune to have a sister some years older than himself, whose cultivation and taste aided in the development of his mind, and whose virtues gave to his moral character the high tone and purity from which it never swerved.

From nine to fourteen years of age, his mind was incessantly occupied with drawing and sketching. For these occupations his lessons were neglected, and when he was not engaged with water colors, tinting some engraving according to his fancy, the print and picture auctions offered a feast which he could not withstand. He was so determined in his course, and made such progress, that he was placed regularly at a drawing-school, and the hours not engaged there were spent wherever engravings and other works of art were to be seen or sold. The time now arrived when he must engage in some employment, but he obstinately refused to accept the common occupations of store boy or office clerk, and the habit of watching the carvings of ornaments for churches and other buildings was so absorbing, that he placed himself with a wood-carver in preference. Thus the talent with which nature had endowed him was leading him to that particular branch of art in which he became so dis-