

"I said no more, perceiving he was displeased at my questioning him."

Leslie says of him: "He felt deeply and almost impatiently the gulf between the technical merits of his pictures and those of the great Venetians or Rembrandt, whom at different epochs he worshipped with equal reverence. I have no doubt his inferiority to these men in power, in mastery of materials, and in certainty of method was just as apparent to Sir Joshua as it is to any unbiassed judge who now compares his pictures with those of Titian, Rembrandt, or Velasquez. . . ."

"Estimating Reynolds at his best, he stands high among the great portrait painters of the world, and has achieved as distinct a place for himself in their ranks as Titian or Tintoret, Velasquez or Rembrandt."

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, born in 1802, in London, on or about March 7, was the fifth child in a family of seven children. The father, John Landseer, a most skilful engraver, was the author of some books on the art of engraving and archæology. He once gave a course of lectures before the Royal Institution. The mother, whose maiden name was Miss Potts, was a gifted and beautiful woman, whose portrait was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

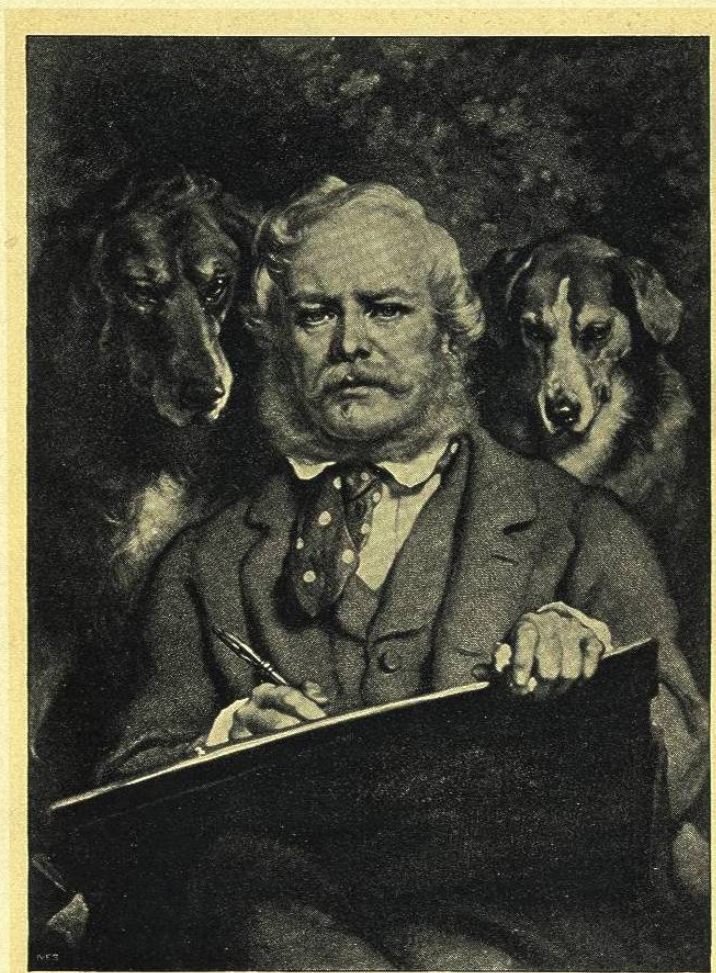
The boy Edwin began to draw very early in life. Miss Meteyard quotes these words from John Landseer: "These two fields were Edwin's first studio. Many a time have I lifted him over this very stile. I then lived in Foley Street, and nearly all the way between Marylebone and Hampstead was open fields. It was a favorite walk with my boys; and one day when I had accompanied them, Edwin stopped by this stile to admire some sheep and cows which were quietly grazing. At his request I lifted him over, and, finding a scrap of paper and a pencil in my pocket, I made him sketch a cow. He was very young

indeed then — not more than six or seven years old.

“After this we came on several occasions, and as he grew older this was one of his favorite spots for sketching. He would start off alone, or with John (Thomas?) or Charles, and remain till I fetched him in the afternoon. I would then criticise his work, and make him correct defects before we left the spot. Sometimes he would sketch in one field, sometimes in the other, but generally in the one beyond the old oak we see there, as it was more pleasant and sunny.”

While still very young, the lad learned the process of etching from his father and elder brother Thomas, the latter one of the most eminent of engravers. At seven, he drew and etched the heads of a lion and a tiger, “in which,” says Frederick G. Stephens, “the differing characters of the beasts are given with marvellous craft, that would honor a much older artist than the producer. The drawing of the tiger’s whiskers — always difficult things to manage — is admirable in its rendering of foreshortened curves.”

At thirteen he drew a magnificent St. Bernard dog. Edwin saw him in the streets of London, in charge of a man servant. He followed the dog to the residence of his owner, and obtained permission to make a sketch of him. The animal was six feet four inches long, and, at the middle of his back, stood two feet seven inches in height. These creatures are capable of carrying one hundred-



SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

weight of provisions from a neighboring town to the monks at the Monastery of St. Bernard, eighteen miles.

Stephens says: "It is really one of the finest drawings of a dog that have ever been produced. We do not think that even the artist at any time surpassed its noble workmanship. The head, though expansive and domical in its shape, is small in proportion to that of a Newfoundland dog; the brow is broad and round; the eyes, according to the standard commonly assumed for large dogs, are far from being large, and are very steadfast in their look, without fierceness; the ears are pendulous, placed near to the head, and fleshy in substance." A live dog, admitted into the room with this picture, became greatly excited.

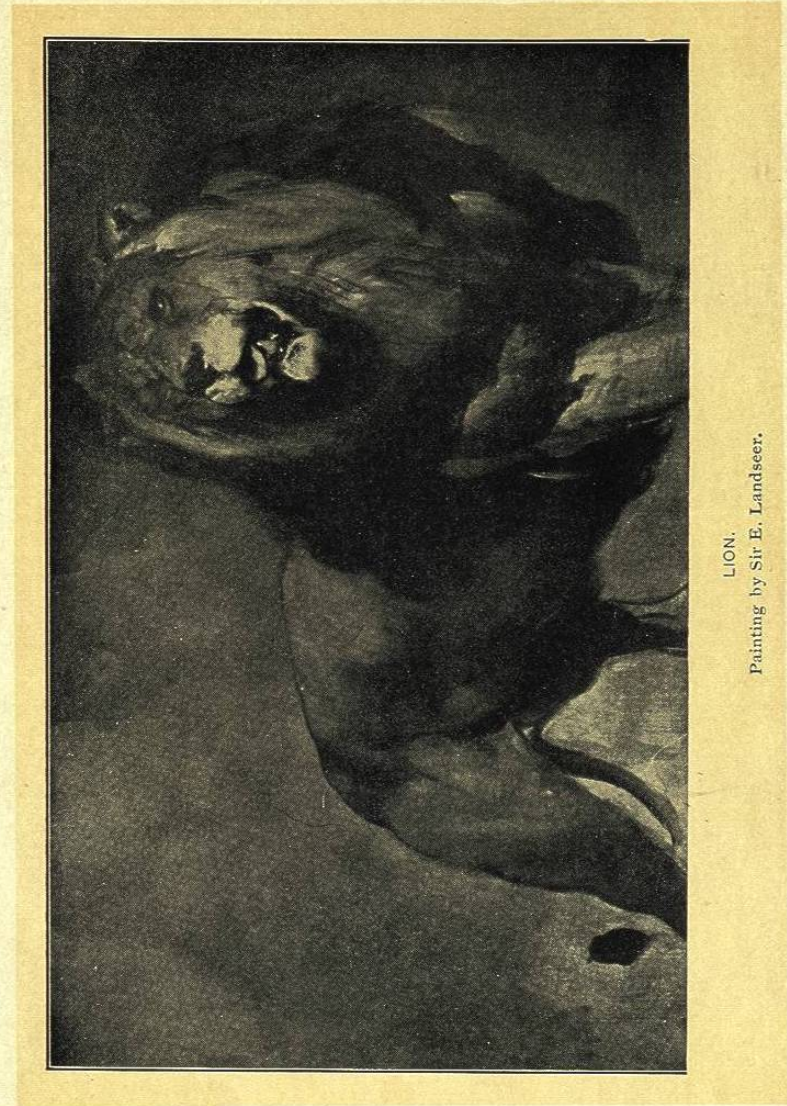
When Edwin was thirteen, in 1815, he exhibited some pictures at the Royal Academy; a mule, and a dog with a puppy. The following year he became a student at the Royal Academy. He was a bright, manly boy, with light, curly hair, gentle and graceful in manner, and diligent in his work. Fuseli, the keeper of the Academy, was much pleased with him, and, looking around the room upon the students, would say, "Where is my little dog boy?" This was in allusion to the picture of Edwin's favorite dog, Brutus, lying at full length of his chain, near a red earthenware dish. The picture, though very small, was sold in 1861 for seventy guineas.

In 1818, "Fighting Dogs Getting Wind" was

exhibited at Spring Gardens, and caused a great sensation. The *Examiner* said, in a review of the works of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water-Colors, "Landseer's may be called the great style of animal painting, as far as it relates to the execution and color, and the natural, as far as it concerns their portraiture. Did we see only the dog's collar, we should know that it was produced by no common hand, so good is it, and palpably true. But the gasping and cavernous and redly stained mouths, the flaming eyes, the prostrate dog, and his antagonist standing exultingly over him; the inveterate rage that superior strength inflames but cannot subdue, with the broad and bright relief of the objects, give a wonder-producing vitality to the canvas."

Landseer also exhibited this year the "White Horse in a Stable." It disappeared from the studio, and twenty-four years later, in 1842, it was discovered in a hayloft, where it had been hidden by a dishonest servant. It was sent to Honorable H. Pierrepont, for whom it was painted, with a letter from Landseer, saying that he had not retouched the picture, "thinking it better when my early style was unmingled with that of my old age."

In 1819, "The Cat Disturbed" was exhibited, afterwards engraved with the title of "The Intruder." It represents a cat chased to the upper part of a stable by a dog, into whose place she had ventured. Dr. Waagen said, "This picture



LION.
Painting by Sir E. Landseer.

exhibits a power of coloring and a solidity of execution recalling such masters as Snyders and Fyt."

About this time a lion in the Exeter Change Menagerie died, and the young artist succeeded in getting the body and dissecting it, acting upon Haydon's advice, of years before, to "dissect animals, the only mode of acquiring a knowledge of their construction."

The result was the painting of two large pictures, six feet by eight, and six feet by seven feet six inches respectively: "A Lion Disturbed at his Repast," and "A Lion Enjoying his Repast," followed by a third, "A Prowling Lion."

In 1821, the chief pictures exhibited were "The Rat-Catchers," where four dogs are catching rats in an old barn; and "Pointers, To-ho," a hunting-scene, which sold in 1872 for over ten thousand dollars. The following year, Landseer received from the directors of the British Institution seven hundred and fifty dollars as a prize for "The Larder Invaded." Eighteen other pictures came from Landseer's studio this year.

The most famous of Sir Edwin's early works was "The Cat's-Paw," sold for five hundred dollars, and now owned by the Earl of Essex. Its present value is over fifteen thousand dollars.

"The scene," says Stephens, "is a laundry or ironing-room, probably in some great house, to which a monkey of most crafty and resolute disposition has access. The place is too neat and

well maintained to be part of a poor man's house. The ironing-woman has left her work, the stove is in full combustion, and the hand of some one who appreciated the good things of life has deposited on its level top, together with a flatiron, half a dozen ripe, sound chestnuts. To the aromatic, appetizing odor of the fruit was probably due the entrance of the monkey, a muscular, healthy beast, who came dragging his chain and making his bell rattle. He smelt the fruit and coveted them; tried to steal them off the cooking-place with his own long, lean digits, and burnt his fingers.

"He looked about for a more effective means, and, heedless of the motherhood of a fine cat, who with her kittens was ensconced in a clothes-basket, where she blandly enjoyed the coverings and the heat, pounced upon puss, entangled as she was in the wrappings of her ease. Puss resisted at first with offended dignity and wrath at being thus treated before the faces of her offspring. She resisted as a cat only can, with lithe and strenuous limbs; the muscular, light, and vigorous frame of the creature quivered with the stress of her energy; she twisted, doubled her body, buckled herself, so to say, in convulsions of passion and fear, but still, surely, without a notion of the object of her captor.

"Yet he had by far the best of the struggle, for her tiger-like claws were enveloped in the covering which erst served her so comfortably; and, kicking, struggling, squalling, and squealing as

strength departed from her, she flounced about the room, upset the coal-scuttle on the floor, and hurled her mistress's favorite flower-pot in hideous confusion on the 'ironing-blanket.' It was to no purpose, for the quadruped, with muffled claws, was no match for her four-handed foe. He dragged her towards the stove, and dreadful notions of a fate in its fiery bowels must have arisen in her heart as nearer and still more near the master of the situation brought his victim.

"Stern, resolute, with no more mercy than the cat had when some unhappy mouse felt her claws — claws now to be deftly yet painfully employed, Pug grasped her in three of his powerful hands, and, as reckless of struggles as of yells, squeals, and squalls, with the fourth stretched out her soft, sensitive, velvety forepaw — the very mouse-slayer itself — to the burning stove and its spoils. What cared he for the bared backs or the spiteful mewlings of her miserable offspring, little cats as they were? He made their mother a true 'cat's-paw.'"

Soon after the exhibition of this picture, Sir Walter Scott came to London and took the young painter to Abbotsford. The novelist greatly admired Landseer's work, saying, "His dogs are the most magnificent things I ever saw, leaping and bounding and grinning all over the canvas." After this, Landseer visited Scotland nearly every year, charmed by its scenery and enjoying the hospitality of the nobles.

In his thirty-second year, it seemed necessary

that the painter should have a home removed from the soot and noisy traffic of London. A small house and garden, with a barn suitable for a studio, were purchased at No. 1 St. John's Wood, a suburban region, which derives its name from having been owned by the priors of the Hospital of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. A premium of a hundred pounds being demanded for the house, Landseer was about to break off negotiations, when a friend said: "If that is the only obstacle, I will remove it. Go to the lawyers, and tell them to make out the lease, and that as soon as it is ready for signatures, you will pay the sum required; and I will lend you the money, which you can repay when it suits you, without interest."

The painter returned the money loaned, in instalments of twenty pounds each. Here he lived for nearly fifty years, his sister, Mrs. Mackenzie, being his housekeeper. Here he received more famous people than any other English painter save Joshua Reynolds. Here, as he grew wealthy, he brought his dogs and other pets; here the father, John Landseer, to whom the son was ever devotedly attached, died.

A writer in *Cornhill* says: "There were few studios formerly more charming to visit than Landseer's. Besides the genial artist and his beautiful pictures, the *habitués* of his workshop (as he called it) belonged to the *élite* of London society, especially the men of wit and distinguished talents—none more often there than

D'Orsay, with his good-humored face, his ready wit and delicate flattery. 'Landseer,' he would call out at his entrance, 'keep de dogs off me' (the painted ones). 'I want to come in, and some of dem will bite me—and dat fellow in de corner is growling furiously.'"

In 1826, when Landseer was twenty-four years old, "Chevy Chase" was painted, now at Woburn Abbey, the property of the Duke of Bedford. It is an illustration of the old ballad:—

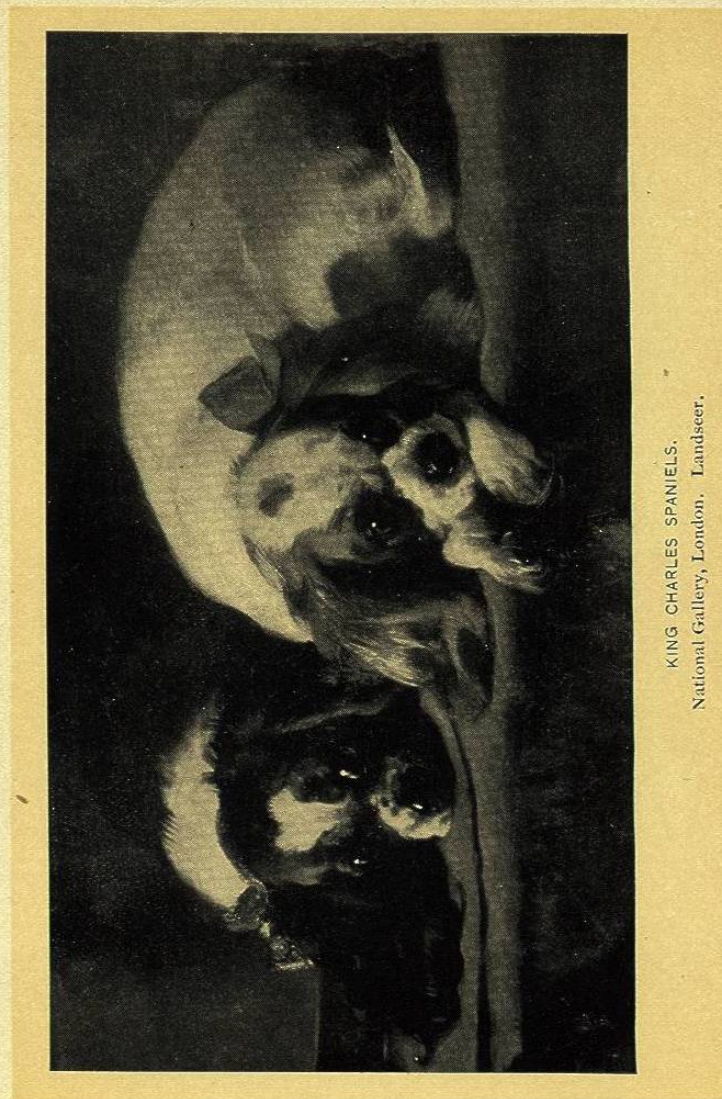
"To drive the deer with hound and horne
Erle Percy took his way,
The chiefest harts in Chevy Chase
To kill and bear away."

This year, he was made an associate of the Royal Academy, an honor seldom given to so young a man. He was made a full member at thirty. His first important picture exhibited after this, in 1827, was "The Chief's Return from Deer-stalking." "It is," says Stephens, "one of the best of his compositions, the subject giving scope to all his powers in dealing with dogs, deer, and horses. Across the backs of a white and a black pony two magnificent antlered deer are bound. A young chief and his old companion, a mountaineer,—with traces of the wear and tear of a hard life on his cheeks and in his gaunt eyes,—step by the head of one of the horses. They go slowly and heedfully down the hill. Two dogs pace with them; one of these turns to a deer's skull which lies in the herbage."

"The Monkey who had seen the World" appeared at the same time as "The Chief's Return," and was engraved by Gibbon as "The Travelled Monkey." The monkey, who has returned from his travels and meets his friends, is dressed in a cocked hat and laced coat, with a wide cravat, breeches, buckled shoes, and a pendent eyeglass. The latter, especially, astonishes his friends. Thomas Baring gave fifteen hundred guineas for this painting, and bequeathed it to Lord Northbrook.

Another picture of this time, engraved by John Pye, was thus described in the Catalogue: "William Smith, being possessed of combativeness, and animated by a love of glory, enlisted in the 101st Regiment of Foot. At the Battle of Waterloo, on the 18th of July following, a cannon-ball carried off one of his legs; thus commenced and terminated William's military career. As he lay wounded on the field of battle, the dog here represented, blind with one eye, and having also a leg shattered apparently by a musket-ball, came and sat beside him, as 'twere for sympathy.

"The dog became William's prisoner, and, when a grateful country rewarded William's services by a pension and a wooden leg, he stumped about accompanied by the dog, his friend and companion. On the 15th of December, 1834, William died. His name never having been recorded in an extraordinary Gazette, this public monument, representing the dog at a moment when he



KING CHARLES SPANIELS.
National Gallery, London. Landseer.