

# Artists Who Flee from Work and More Wealth—In London Sargent and Abbey, Americans, Dodge the Rich Who Come With Blank Checks

LONDON, July 25—Chelsea, the artist suburb of London, and once the home of Carlyle, is in process of passing away. The old-fashioned quarter along the Thames, three miles south of Westminster abbey, was at the zenith of its glory twenty-five years ago when Rosetti climbed the tree beneath his studio windows to escape the wrath of his Sacred Bull. The Sacred Bull and Rosetti are both dead now, and on the spot where the bull did the chasing is erected a modern apartment building known as Rosetti Mansions. Turner, who died in a tumbled-down building near Rosetti's studio, knew Chelsea at its best. To-day the prestige of the famous haunt of artists is maintained chiefly because two famous men, delighting in the hequatched associations, continue to live there.

The Thames is no longer particularly beautiful there, and many of the ancient landmarks themselves, one after another, have been destroyed. Most of Chelsea no longer looks centuries old. The Bohemian element of artists has largely disappeared and in its place a less reputable contingent, neither Bohemian nor conventional, has flooded the quarter.



EDWIN A. ABBEY IN HIS STUDIO.

But so long as Sargent and Abbey live, Chelsea will not cease to be the Mecca of many modern pilgrimages. Sargent is at present the greatest drawing card of the three. How long he will remain so is a question much discussed in London just now.

**WHEN SARGENT FLED INTO SPAIN**  
Sargent's position is unique. Three interesting things are true of him. He is the lion of the hour; his income from his annual sale of printings is \$100,000; he has his enemies—as every strong man should have. Louzing is not one little bit to Sargent's taste. He closed his rambling studios the other day and ran away in sheer terror of his admirers. The last week before he went, he couldn't even be induced to open his letters. He is said to have remarked that he simply couldn't hear it if anyone else asked him to paint them. So he departed for Spain just in the height of the London season and will remain there until the last of September. He will not even paint another Wertheimer for a few months. The wealthy banker has some member of his family sit to Mr. Sargent every year and is himself probably the maddest of the Sargentites. He pays his bills to the painter in blank checks.

Sargent is so shy that if you say painting to him he blushes. He is the most modest of men and never refers either to himself or his work. His agony is reported to have been intolerable last year when various papers published a story to the effect that Sargent's "little son" was to be page to the queen of the coronation. Sargent is unmarried and his confirmed bachelorhood is a matter of regret to many high born English ladies. Yet Mr. Sargent does not pose as a woman hater. Indeed, when ladies visit his studio on the rare occasions when he entertains, they are charmed by the simple cordiality of his welcome. But the artist never seeks the society of women. However, he doesn't seek the society of much of anybody. His neighbor, Abbey, is his great friend, Frank Millet and Alfred Parsons are others. Hilleu, the French etcher, is an intimate

he permit it. But he won't. He visits the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire and the Duke and Duchess of Portland annually and sometimes is induced to go for week-ends and dinner parties in between. But with the exception of these two families, the famous American seldom joins the ranks of the fashionable.

Sargent has three fads. He is passionately fond of music and plays the piano well. He bicycles and keeps himself fit by daily rides about the environs of London. He collects pictures and his studio is filled with work of his contemporaries. His generosity to young artists is proverbial. He is a visitor in one of the art schools and takes keen pleasure in methods of teaching art.

No living artist makes such a fabulous income from his actual work in hand as Sargent. His fee is \$5,000 a figure and last year he exhibited seventeen pictures, several of which included three figures. The seventeen included a number of paintings which, for reasons best known to himself, Mr. Sargent sent direct to their purchasers. Mr. Sargent invests his money immediately and spends comparatively little on himself. He lives at the studios and has a single man servant.

#### SARGENT'S NEIGHBORS, ABBEY.

Boldini who painted that haunting portrait of Whistler, displayed for the first time this year at the New Gallery, has a large following in London which is making a strong attempt to push Boldini into Sargent's place of prime favor. Sargent doesn't seem worried, but the critics who always look askance at such continued and boundless success as Sargent's, prophesy that his day is almost run. Boldini is the man named who will be greatest next.

Another who must flee to avoid work and wealth is Abbey, Edwin Austin Abbey, "who does painted illustrations," is painting his vast official picture of the Coronation partly in Chelsea and partly at his country place, Morgan hall, where all sorts of armor and historic setting help him in the staging of the ponderous picture. For this too, the king has already given Mr. Abbey several sittings and the queen will give at least one before the work is concluded, six months hence. Nearly all the great dukes and duchesses have sat. It is a fact not generally known that Mr. Abbey's picture of the coronation is not primarily for English consumption, if one may use the expression, but for traveling purposes in the United States. It is being painted at the expense of the Agnews, the picture dealers, and will be exhibited by them in America immediately on completion. In addition to this picture Mr. Abbey is at present working on one of a series of paintings by various artists illustrative of the history of the city of London. These illustrations will hang in the royal exchange. Mr. Abbey has also just finished an altar piece for the American church in Paris.

#### ABBAY VERSUS SARGENT.

Abbey as a man is a strong contrast to Sargent. He is seen much more in society than is Sargent and is given credit for being rather fond of titles. While of a retiring turn, he none the less seems to enjoy going about and willingly makes use of the social opportunities so freely given the successful artist.

Phil May is a great friend of Abbey and so is Dana Gibson, although Abbey and Sargent, whose studios in Chelsea are only fifty yards apart, are more intimate. Abbey and Frank Millet used to live down at Broadway in the vicinity of Mary Anderson de Navarro, and Abbey is said to have been one of "our Mary's" devotees. But the best thing the average Englishman has to say of Abbey is that he is an ardent cricketer.

"I believe he'd rather be a great cricketer than a great artist," someone observed recently.

Another American seen more or less in Chelsea, is J. J. Shannon, youngest of the quartet. Ten years ago Mr. Shannon was a poor student at the South Kensington School of Art. To-day what with the sudden patronage which Queen Victoria was moved to give him, Mr. Shannon's vogue in England is great. He is the most American of the four men here mentioned, and is said to retain a vast affection for the United States. His home is in Auburn, N. J.

of Sargent's and so is Manchin, the Italian, whose curious work with blocks of paint Sargent much admires.

#### CAN'T BOTHER WITH NOBILITY.

The nobility would entertain Mr. Sargent more frequently than they do would