

## Gerard Dow's Portrait of Himself

EVERY great portrait-painter combines two elements in his work—external characteristics of his sitter, and those inner qualities which, for want of a better name, we term personality. In painting his own portrait the artist of perception looks upon himself not only from the outside, but within as well, and while presenting his best qualities, he also puts into the rendering his own view of life.

The handsome face and grace of manner shown in this portrait of Gerard Dow appeal to our sense of beauty, and at once tell us that its original was a man of taste and fine perception, and awaken our interest in his work. In few of Dow's pictures do we find any action, yet in vigor of brush-work and in mellowness and transparency of coloring he is close to his master, Rembrandt, while in precision of execution and in truthfulness of observation he rivals him.

When Dow became a pupil of Rembrandt in 1628 he was fifteen years of age, but he had already had six years' training under other masters. It was after this apprenticeship that the present portrait was painted, showing him in his early manhood. In composition it is simple and admirable, and in color tender and exquisite. The expression is one of nobility and sweetness, while the finish of details is remarkable and true. It resembles a work of Rembrandt in the management of light and shade, and is not below that master in the rich golden tone and poetic character and expression. Dow never painted a crowd, and generally shows his figures only in half-length.

This portrait, in the collection of George A. Hearn, Esq., was acquired in 1894 from the collection of the Marquis de Santurce in London, and has not been hitherto reproduced. It is in a most marvellous state of preservation.

W. STANTON HOWARD.

# The Economy of Jane Stebbins

BY E. AYRTON

THE neighbors called her stingy, and even her best friends owned that Miss Stebbins was an economist, as they partook of her bread and margarine and thrice-watered tea. To some people, indeed, the terms thrift and extravagance would seem out of place when associated with a weekly income which, in shillings, does not reach a double figure. In the village, however, such means were considered as an elegant affluence. "Eight shillings a week, let alone a trifle by needle-work, do seem a tidy bit for a single 'ooman,"—so ran the general opinion.

It was not to Miss Stebbins's daily pinching and scraping that the neighbors objected. They all had to burn the candle ends and even consider the cheese parings. What shocked them was her omission to "do the thing handsome on occasion." They had never forgotten her appearance at the Squire's yearly treat in her every-day bonnet. To be sure, the weather had looked "a bit threatensome," but every self-respecting woman had defied the elements in a much beribboned and befeathered head-gear. Perhaps a rueful recollection of spoilt finery added a bitterness to the contempt.

So it was probably only owing to the extreme paucity of heiresses in the neighborhood that Tobias Ling, the hoary village reprobate, ever conceived the desperate idea of laying siege to Miss Stebbins's elderly heart. "Now 'is darter's married and gone to furrin parts, 'ee be looking out for some un else to keep 'im like, but 'ee'll meet 'is match in Jane Stebbins,"—so chuckled the gossips with an unintentional truth.

For, to every one's amazement, Miss Stebbins seemed to look favorably on her undesirable admirer. She was seen walking out with him one Sunday afternoon,—the regular method of progression in a country courtship, although, in this case, instead of showing an obvious attach-

ment, the lovers were as far removed as the six-foot lane would allow.

"Eh, but that's a rom couple surely," ejaculated Jessop the carpenter, as he watched them passing out of sight, Miss Stebbins delicately picking her way, a refinement of genteel poverty, while old Tobias slouched along, unashamedly dirty and out at elbows, with an audacious crimson scarf and unvenerable gray curls. Perhaps, as Jessop's worthy spouse affirmed on hearing of the incident, Jane Stebbins was only giving Tobias a lesson. "It b'aint likely," Mrs. Jessop said, "that sot as Jane be in her natty ways, she'd fash herself wi' a man about the house, not to speak o' the expense."

From the two parties chiefly concerned little could be learnt. Many were the times that Miss Stebbins was approached, but with unfailing ill success. As for old Ling, when plied with half pints and queries at the familiar bar of the Griffin, he only wagged his head and chuckled hoarsely, "We be a-doing nicely, thank'ee; this beer do seem to be uncommon good-flavored like to-day."

Consequently, when, on Whit-Sunday, the parson announced that the banns were put up between Tobias Ling, widower, and Jane Stebbins, spinster, both of this parish, something like an electric shock was given to the congregation.

"You might ha' telled me the pig was in the flower-garden, and I couldn't ha' stirred," said the carpenter's wife.

However much the news may have overwhelmed Mrs. Jessop for the moment, by the time the service was over it only seemed to give her an additional activity. She fairly raced down the aisle; but Miss Stebbins had, that day, taken a back seat, physically, and so was already making good her escape. Mrs. Jessop, however, was not a woman to be easily balked. When she got home she refused to divest herself of her bonnet