

paper for another time. Meanwhile, that is my constant prayer.

THE LITERARY FLOWERING OF EARLY CINCINNATI

PART TWO

THE INFERNAL REGIONS AND THE BIZARRE BAZAAR

September 28, 1998

J. Roger Newstedt

The city of Cincinnati stood proudly if not entirely serenely as the New Year in 1828 arrived, unprepared for and unwitting of what was to happen to her in the next two years. The Cincinnati Chronicle had greeted the advent of the leap year 1828 "with pardonable complacency." New buildings were being erected as never before, immigrants were arriving so rapidly that the three hundred new houses that were to be built during that year would not be able to satisfy their needs, new manufactories were appearing, steamboats were being constructed, commerce was growing along with both exports to and imports from New Orleans, and the city had grown to more than 19,000 souls.²³ On the tenth of February of that year the steamboat, Criterion, bound from Memphis to Pittsburgh, reached the public landing at Cincinnati, bringing with it Mrs. Frances Trollope, her son Henry, her daughters Emily and Cecilia, the Trollope's manservant, and the artist, Auguste Hervieu.

What would bring this well-born English lady, reasonably educated, widely acquainted with highly-placed figures in England, to make this long trip to

³ Trollope, Frances: *DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS*, Edited by Donald Smalley, p. xix, Reprinted by Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass., Published by Vintage Books, Inc., by Arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1974

the interior of the American continent? The answer is relatively simple: Money, or more correctly, the lack of it. According to Donald Smalley's excellent edition of her Domestic Manners of the Americans, republished in 1974, (coincidentally the year of our 125th anniversary), Frances Trollope and her husband, Thomas Anthony Trollope, had built a large and handsome house near Harrow, on leased land, on the expectation of inheriting a comfortable fortune from a childless uncle, who unfortunately had the unseemly ill-taste to marry a second time and produce an heir in his old age. "Mr. Trollope, a pedantic, irritable man dogged by ill-luck and violent headaches, was an able student of the law, but he had ruined his practice by arguing with his clients." I am sure that no member of the bar in this club would ever dream of making that kind of mistake. The Harrow estate continued to exceed his income, and they were committed to a long-term lease, so they were in desperate circumstances. Just at that time, they were visited by an old friend, Miss Frances Wright, a Scot by birth but English by rearing, who had inherited a large fortune, permitting her to exercise her "intense enthusiasm for nearly all advanced causes, including socialism, rationalism, and women's rights. She was a reformer by temperament," and she had already made two trips to America. After the first trip, she had been helped by Thomas Trollope to get the book of her travels published, and before the second trip, they visited her in France at which time she had introduced them to General Lafayette, a sort of Grandfather to his ward, Miss Wright, at his chateau, La Grange.

On this visit to Harrow Miss Wright was full of her plans for the development of Nashoba, her colony that she had founded on the Wolf River, fifteen miles inland from Memphis, where:

"she had bought several hundred acres to set up a model plantation that was to solve the problem of Negro slavery in America. Here slaves would work their way to emancipation while the schools of Nashoba prepared them and their children for leading free and enlightened lives outside the United States. But Nashoba was also to be the seat of a white cooperative community, an improved and

more daring New Harmony, where European settlers of good will and advanced thinking could live in communal harmony amid the charms of rustic scenery in a brave new country. The Trollopes were not ready to become members of Fanny Wright's freethinking communal society"

but they listened with eager attention to the glowing accounts she gave them of Western America.

The fanciful dream of a business venture in America to recoup the family fortunes was too strong a temptation, and it was finally decided that Frances Trollope would sail for the United States with Miss Wright, taking her middle son and two daughters with her, as well as a protégé, Auguste Hervieu, 33, an artist and French exile, who was to be the drawing master at Nashoba. The oldest son, Tom, 17, and the youngest, Anthony, 12, were to remain in school at Winchester. It was planned that Henry, being somewhat ailing and an unwilling student, as well as a failure in a Parisian counting-house, was in time to run the department store which Frances was to build and begin with the meager funds the Trollopes could scrape up.

Mrs. Trollope had had no training to equip her for this plan, and certainly could have had no appreciation of the true nature of the Western country to which she aspired to go; the wherewithal to make the project a possible success was totally insufficient; and the idea of sending fashionable fancy goods and luxuries from London and Paris for sale in the Western country had a very limited likelihood of success. These defects were not apparent to the adventurers. She was soon to encounter reality.

After arriving on Christmas Eve at New Orleans, and two weeks traveling by steamboat to Memphis, and Nashoba, Mrs. Trollope was shocked to find that the idyllic rural retreat she had expected, Nashoba turned out to be a shabby, unkempt clearing set in the midst of a swampy forest, a number of crude log cabins, a few Negro slave families with children, a white overseer suffering from malaria, and his sickly wife. She shared a cabin with her hostess, where the rain dripped

through the roughly laid roof shingles, the floor planks were loosely suspended a few feet above the marshy ground, and the chimney, built of logs plastered with mud, caught fire, as she was to write, "at least a dozen times a day." The food and drink were even worse. Fanny Wright's sister, Camilla Whitby, was ill with an ague, and Mrs. Trollope began to fear for the health of all. Hervieu found that there was as yet no school, so he had no teaching of painting to do, and decamped for Memphis, where he scrounged for portraits to be painted. Mrs. Trollope had to float a loan from the trustees of Nashoba on January 23, 1828 of \$300 to help defray her travelling expenses to Cincinnati.

In Cincinnati, Mrs. Trollope immediately ran into difficulty with the inn-keeper of the Cincinnati Hotel, who objected to this woman ordering tea served in her room, and although I am sure he was unacquainted with Procrustes and his bed, he soon demonstrated that he was the most Procrustean of inn-keeper, forcing his guests to adjust their ways to live by his rules. She had difficulty in looking for a house to rent, being unaware that the young lad her agent supplied to help her look expected to be paid for his service by her and not the agent. She finally found a proper dwelling, Gano Lodge, owned by Daniel Gano.⁴ In addition, she was not too impressed with this city which she had been led to believe was quite "beautiful" but which she found rather commonplace, "by no means a city of striking appearance, lacking domes, towers, and steeples." Actually, there were two spires, both on the First Presbyterian Church, with cupolas at their top, leading to the sobriquet, the "two-horned church" but since they were only 84 feet above ground level, perhaps Frances was not entirely wrong in her observation.

Mrs. Trollope was sensible enough to not rush into building her department store in this strange boom town, and indeed spent over eleven months in feeling her way. She came to know the Western Museum, one of

⁴ Venable, William H.: *BEGINNINGS OF LITERARY CULTURE IN THE OHIO VALLEY*, op. cit., P. 354, 1891, Reprinted by Peter Smith, 1949.

Dr. Daniel Drake's earliest projects begun after the War of 1812, as we learned in Part One of this series.²⁵ Planned to house natural history objects collected in the Western region, including mastodon bones from Big Bone Lick in Kentucky, fossils and geologic specimens, as well as artifacts of the native American Indians, the gathering of specimens had been started in 1818. The Western Museum Society was "formally opened on June 10, 1820," and soon Mons. Joseph Dorfeuille, from New Orleans, a naturalist and with some scientific training, came to Cincinnati and he was placed in charge. After three years the stock-holders gave him the ownership and he had been trying to make the Museum show a profit thereafter with little or no success.

This led him finally to accept the need for showmanship over pure science, and he had added curiosities, monstrosities, and even wax figures, including those of Tecumseh, and a Tableaux on the Death of George Washington, etc. just one month before Mrs. Trollope arrived. Even these embellishments had not sufficed. By April, Frances was employing her dramatic talents in writing the script and designing the stage setting for The Invisible Girl, the Egyptian Mysteries, Hecate and the Three Weird Sisters, and the Magic Chamber. The oracular voice of the Invisible Girl was none other than her son, Henry, whose rudimentary Latin, Greek, and French made a tremendous impression.²⁶ The artist, Hervieu, painted transparencies, and a young, budding sculptor named Hiram Powers, prepared more and better wax figures, and many mechanical contrivances the better to bamboozle the citizens.

This success led Mrs. Trollope to conceive of presenting some of the more striking scenes from Dante's Divine Comedy, which, with the help of Hervieu and especially of Powers, was to become The Infernal Regions, a spectacle that was to entertain more than a

⁵ Venable, William H.: op. cit., pp. 310-315, 1891, Reprinted 1949.

⁶ Trollope, Frances: *DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS*, op.cit., Edited by Donald Smalley, p. xxiv-xxxiv, Reprinted 1974.

quarter of a century of visitors. A four-page program by Frances was preserved and quoted years later by son, Tom:

"The World to come, as described by Dante, and comprising, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, will be exhibited in a room adjoining the Western Museum on the 4th of July, and days following. Admittance, twenty-five cents."

Central to the spectacle was "a grand colossal figure of Minos, the Judge of Hell," holding a two-pronged scepter. On his right appeared a frozen lake from which emerged the heads of doomed earthlings, including Ugolino, pictured "eternally gnawing the head of his enemy." A "BLACK IMP" was "seated on a rock dandling a young monster." Throngs of condemned spirits "in all varieties of suffering" crowded about a fountain of flame in the midst of the frozen lake, and birds and animals of hideous form and evil omen fluttered over the heads of the sufferers. On the left of Minos a skeleton ascended a column of icicles, the bright surfaces of which glared red with the reflection of hell-fire, and held aloft a standard with these lines, prepared for the occasion by Mrs. Trollope:

To this grim form our cherished limbs have come,
 And thus lie smoldering in their earthly home.
 In turf-bound hillock or in sculptured shrine
 The worms alike their cold caresses twine.
 So far we are all equal: but once we left
 Our mortal weeds, of vital spark bereft,
 Asunder farther than the poles we're driven-
 Some sunk to deepest Hell, some raised to highest
 Heaven.

Behind Inferno gleamed Hervieu's transparencies of Purgatorio and Paradiso, bright with symbols of hope and progress upward, in some attempt to counterbalance the threats of hell with the promises of heaven:

Still farther on the left of Minos, and melting into distance behind him, is seen the shadowy region of Purgatory. Four bright stars - the Cardinal Virtues - give a delicate and cheering light amid the gloom. A group of figures loaded with the burden of their sins

are about to plunge into the lake of purgatorial waters, in the hope of depositing them there. A boat wafted by the wings of an Angel is bearing departed souls toward Heaven; and near it is a column of pale light to direct its course, encouraging Dante to proceed with her to Heaven, leaving behind his former guide, Virgil, who cannot be admitted being a Pagan. Groups of Pilgrims who have passed through Purgatory are ascending the mountain. Still farther to the left, and opening in unbroken splendor above the head of Beatrice, is seen the Heaven of Heavens. The golden light pours down on the heads of the Pilgrims, and angels are seen floating in the air and encouraging their efforts.

But the emphasis was on Inferno and the terrifying images ("size of life") that Powers fashioned for the foreground. Later advertisements speak of "unearthly sounds, horrid groans, and terrible shrieks" which seemed to be emitted from "every direction." "At a moment when utter darkness prevails all the sufferers, imps, and monsters are heard shrieking together till the light returns. . ." It was Inferno that the crowds came to see. They pushed against the grating set across the room to separate them from the scenery and reached out to explore the mysteries of hell with their fingers as well as their eyes. To prevent damage to the figures, Powers put up a card written in flame-colored letters threatening immediate and dire punishment to anyone who dared touch the denizens of the nether world. Adventurers who refused to heed this warning recoiled in fear and astonishment as a sharp electric shock went through their bodies. But this new terror merely heightened the attraction of the Infernal Regions for the citizens of Cincinnati.²⁷

The success of these efforts must have given Mrs. Trollope much encouragement in her scheme to produce an even more grandiose object, her Bazaar. In due course, she set about her appointed task, purchasing the site

⁷ Trollope, Thomas Adolphus: quoted by Smalley, from *WHAT I REMEMBER*, New York, 1888.

for Trollope's Bazaar for \$1,655,²⁸ east of Broadway very near to where the stockade of old Fort Washington, demolished twenty years before, had stood and close to the location of Richard Allison's and William Goforth's medical office described in Part One. She chose this area, a quarter of a mile away from the accustomed fashionable stores on Fourth street, without what we now would call adequate market research, assuming that the attraction of her store and its contents would be sufficient. It was almost as if, "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure dome decree" although the Ohio was not a sacred river, and the nearest caverns were many miles to the South in Kentucky.

Her husband and son Tom had come to Cincinnati late in November, 1828, and spent about two months here helping with the plans, but returned to England in late January of 1829, after which she began supervising the actual construction. I have found no drawing or etching of the marvelous Bazaar, but a description of it while abuilding was given in the Cincinnati Chronicle:

The Bazaar nearly covered an area thirty-eight hundred feet and varied in height from fifty-two to eighty-five feet. The front facing Third Street was "taken, in part from the Mosque of St. Athanase, in Egypt," and was formed of "three large arabesque windows with arches, supported by four Moorish stone pilasters with capitals." Above these were "large and beautifully wrought free stone ornaments," and still above these was a wall that terminated in "gothic battlements, each of which supports a stone sphere." The Chronicle considered this front a "rich and tasty compound of ancient and modern architecture," with not so much of either as to forfeit strong claims to originality. The sides of the Bazaar were of brick wall without openings; they were

⁸ Trollope, Frances: *DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS*, op. cit., Edited by Donald Smalley, p. xl, Reprinted 1974.

"castellated at such a height as to give the appearance of a flat roof to the building."

The front facing south, toward the Ohio River was, if anything, still more novel in appearance than the front that faced Third Street. Its chief feature was an Egyptian colonnade formed of four massive columns modeled after those "in the temple of Apollinopolis at Etfu, as exhibited in Denon's Egypt." The four great columns rose three stories, and their entablature constituted a fourth story. Above this rose a rotunda twenty-four feet in height to its curvilinear roof, and this was in turn to be topped by a large Turkish crescent!

The interior of the Bazaar was in keeping with the exterior. One entered the basement floor from Third Street by any of three several flights of stone steps and found oneself in a hallway sixty feet long; this hallway terminated at the base of the grand circular staircase, which spiraled through four stories up to the rotunda. Beyond this staircase on the basement floor were more rooms, which led into an area containing the bases of the four Egyptian columns of the southern front of the Bazaar. The basement had "several compartments," some of which were to be used for an "Exchange Coffee House."

The second floor, entered from Third Street by two circular flights of stone steps, was chiefly occupied by the room that was to be "appropriated exclusively to the sale of fancy goods." This room was the breadth of the building and sixty feet long. Two rows of Doric columns ran the full length supporting elliptic arches that formed a "handsome arcade." Beyond this room was a lobby through which passed the great circular staircase, and on the far side the lobby opened upon a balcony "formed by the Egyptian columns supporting the rotunda."

"Immediately in front of the balcony," or so says the Chronicle (the arrangement was admitted to be hard to visualize), "stands a separate building designed as an exhibition room for Mr. Hervieu's large and elegant picture of the Landing of Lafayette in Cincinnati."

On the third floor, immediately above the room designed for the sale of fancy goods, was the ballroom, its dimensions also thirty-eight by sixty feet. "The large arabesque windows in front, the lofty walls, and arched ceiling give a fine effect to this apartment." At the southern end of the room was an "elegant orchestra, supported by four Corinthian columns." The decorations executed by Hervieu for the ballroom were not only splendid but "the only specimen of the kind in the United States." The object of the artist had been to follow as closely as possible "the style of the Alhambra, the celebrated palace of the Moorish kings in Granada." Hervieu must have had a very busy time with his pencil and brushes. He had painted the roof to represent masses of granite "decorated at intervals by mosaic designs of a great variety of objects, and by accurate imitations of the brilliantly coloured tiles of the Alhambra." The windowless side-walls of the ballroom he had endowed with the simulacra of a double row of marble pilasters, and between each pair of false columns he had painted arabesque windows richly draped with crimson curtains. These blind windows he caused to look out upon "a variety of Spanish scenery." The Chronicle considered the perspective in these picturesque views to be remarkably fine.

Hervieu also exercised the magic of perspective in painting the music gallery, so that it appeared to lead to an upper apartment from which it was divided by a damask curtain. Below the gallery he executed "niches containing the figures of

infant boys, holding standards on which are various patriotic inscriptions." The door to the lobby was painted with ten allegorical designs representing the triumph of liberty over despotism, and in the lobby the muses of dancing and music floated above "a variety of arabesque ornaments in mosaic work.

The fourth floor contained a hall and five apartments, and above them, behind the gothic battlements, was a promenade that afforded a wide view of the city, the Ohio River, and the countryside. As for the interior of the rotunda, one is not surprised to learn, after the wonders of the ballroom, that Hervieu had had it covered with canvas and intended to paint it with fifteen hundred feet of panoramic exhibition.

The Bazaar was to be lighted with gas; tradition says that it was the first building in Cincinnati to use this means of illumination. The Chronicle conjectured that in the ballroom the effect of this bright light "upon the brilliant decorations and the no less brilliant assemblage of persons that will occasionally be collected within its walls, cannot but be truly fascinating to the beholder."⁹

During the work the poor trusting woman was overcharged, underserved, and in general abused by grasping, conscienceless Yankee traders. A contemporary editor is quoted as saying: "In building, a 'green horn' is snuffed like carrion by every rogue within cheating distance." She hired a contractor, an Englishman by birth, to lay the gas pipes, and made the ultimate in neophyte mistakes by paying him in advance, only to learn that he had absconded with the cash without doing any work; the second contractor she hired laid the pipes but the installation "manufactured

⁹ Trollope, Frances: *DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS*, op. cit., pp. xi-xiv, Edited by Donald Smalley, 1974.

nothing but smoke." The culminating blow occurred that August when she came down with what was diagnosed as malaria, and she was so severely stricken that her doctors for a time feared for her life. When she finally recovered, her funds had been completely depleted, and the thousands of dollars' worth of the 'fancy goods' which had just arrived from London had only been offered for sale a few days, when the sheriff seized them to satisfy the claims of the creditors. According to eye-witnesses, "people came in multitudes - to look at it; but buying it was another affair; nobody wanted any thing there." Trollope's Bazaar soon became known as Trollope's Folly.

What else had occupied our temporary emigrant before the dissolution of her ill-fated dream? A woman of indomitable courage and insatiably curiosity, buoyed by an incurable optimism; she had utilized her time very well. She had kept notes, of considerable depth and detail, of many observations of the new country and its inhabitants; she had recorded frankly her distaste for American men's habit of chewing tobacco and forever spitting, indoors as well as out. There is little doubt of the justification of this criticism; I am old enough to remember signs in Cincinnati trolley cars, as late as the 1920's "Do not spit on the floor." Spittoons in saloons, hotels, and business houses were still necessary in those latter days. She was a keen observer of the rude, uncouth, and obnoxious behavior of various social classes, even including a certain proportion of the better educated members. She was later to write "The total and universal want of manners, both in males and females, is so remarkable, that I was constantly endeavoring to account for it." And again, "They appear to have clear heads and active intellects; are more ignorant on subjects that are only of conventional value, than on such as are of intrinsic importance; but there is no charm, no grace in their conversation. I very seldom during my whole stay in the country heard a sentence elegantly turned, and correctly pronounced from the lips of an American." She was prone to compare a burgeoning community scarcely out of its pioneer frontier days with her centuries-old England with its established customs, to the detriment of the Americans, meanwhile protesting that she was not making any generalized criticisms.

She was a woman of some education and talent, fluent in French and Italian, well-versed in literature and drama in those two countries as well as her own, and acquainted with a very large number of distinguished men and women in English circles. In spite of this, it was apparent that her somewhat haughty demeanor, and unintentional condescending manner would get her into trouble, even when she was playing the part of Lady Bountiful to someone in need. It also appears that Mrs. Trollope was not received into the bosom of the intellectual life of the city.

She did have a special friend in Dr. William Price and his wife and two daughters. He was a friend of Fanny Wright, and had been prominent in Robert Owen's Community of Equality at New Harmony, before coming to Cincinnati. Price was a successful physician with an outgoing, pleasant nature, and an avowed atheist. His wife and daughters were churchgoers, and Mrs. Price would say, "La, the doctor don't think anything more of the Bible than of an old newspaper! but then doctors, you know, they have their own opinions!"³⁰ The two daughters gave frequent dances at their home to which the younger Trollopes were welcomed.

The Trollopes were also acquaintances of Mr. William Bullock and his wife, an Englishman who had achieved a measure of fame from his collection of curiosities exhibited in his museum in London, called the Egyptian Hall. He had purchased a large estate on the Kentucky shore of the Ohio, directly opposite Cincinnati, and he had given a large dinner party at their home in honor of Frances Trollope shortly after her arrival, with the literati and notables of the city collected for the occasion. The event does not seem to have been repeated, however. Mrs. Trollope gave parties of her own in her home, also, but as to whom attended and as to what transpired, she remained singularly silent.

^o Trollope, Thomas Adolphus: quoted by Smalley from *WHAT I REMEMBER*, New York, 1888.

Mrs. Trollope did have sufficient contact with Timothy Flint, the author and editor of the Western Magazine and Review, to mention him in her book:

"The most agreeable acquaintance I made in Cincinnati, and indeed one of the most talented men I ever met, was Mr. Flint. . . His conversational powers are of the highest order; he is the only person I remember to have known with first-rate powers of satire, and even of sarcasm, whose kindness of nature and of manner remained perfectly uninjured. In some of his critical notices there is a strength and keenness second to nothing of the kind I have ever read. He is a warm patriot, and so true-hearted an American, that we could not always be of the same opinion on all the subjects we discussed; but whether it were the force and brilliancy of his language, his genuine and manly sincerity of feeling, or his bland and gentleman-like manner that beguiled me, I know not, but certainly he is the only American I ever listened to whose unqualified praise of his country did not appear to me somewhat overstrained and ridiculous."¹

Frederick Marryat, in 1840, gave some credence to the limitation of Mrs. Trollope's acceptance by Cincinnati society, when he wrote:

"A lady, who had long resided in Cincinnati, told me that they were not angry with Mrs. Trollope for having described the society which she saw, but for having asserted that that was the best society; and she further remarked" — "It is fair to us that it should be understood that when Mrs. Trollope came here, she was quite unknown, except inasmuch as that she was a married

¹ Trollope, Frances: *DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS*, op. cit., p. 90, Edited by Donald Smalley, 1974. See also Venable, William H.: *BEGINNINGS OF LITERARY CULTURE IN THE OHIO VALLEY*, op. cit., p. 357, 1891, reprinted 1949.

woman, travelling without her husband. In a small society, as ours was, it was not surprising, therefore, that we should be cautious about receiving a lady who, in our opinion was offending against les bienséances. Observe, we do not accuse Mrs. Trollope of any impropriety; but you must be aware how necessary it is, in this country, to be regardful of appearances, and how afraid everyone is of their neighbor. . . I have now told you all that we know about her, and the reason why she did not receive those attentions, the omission of which caused her indignation."²

Further confirmation comes from the pen of Thomas Adolphus Trollope, written in 1888:

"There were very few formal meetings among the notabilities of the little Cincinnati world of that time, but there was an amount of homely friendliness that impressed me very favorably; and there was plenty of that generous and abounding hospitality which subsequent experience has taught me to consider an especially American characteristic."³

Mrs. Trollope, although unsuccessful in her business venture, had left her mark on Cincinnati in the bricks and mortar of the Bizarre Bazaar, which remained in existence for more years than the city had use for it. Efforts were made to use it as an inn, a dancing school, and the ballroom did serve as the scene for some fashionable parties; once it became a Presbyterian Church, and in a supreme bit of irony it was followed by use as a theater, later a mechanic's institute, and even a military hospital. When Anthony

² Marryat, Frederick: *DIARY IN AMERICA, WITH REMARKS ON ITS INSTITUTIONS*, second series, Philadelphia, 1840. Reprinted and Edited by Sydney Jackman, p. 225, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1962.

³ Trollope, Thomas Adolphus: *op. cit.*, Edited by Smalley, *WHAT I REMEMBER*, New York; 1888.

Trollope visited Cincinnati in 1862, thirty-two years after his mother's departure, he found the Bazaar was a "Physico-medical Institute."

"It was under the dominion of a quack doctor on one side, and of a college of rights-of-women female medical professors on the other. 'I believe, sir [the proprietor said], no man or woman ever yet made a dollar in that building; and as for rent, I don't even expect it.'"

The failure of the Bazaar was not for want of trying; Mrs. Trollope had planned to stage evenings of entertainment in the Great Room, with the cooperation of two somewhat down-at-the-heels actors from the local theater the first one in Oct, 1829, with recitations, a scene from a Restoration play, and music from a string duet, was an artistic success but a financial failure, not being appreciated by the small and unresponsive audience. The second in November at least counted some of the fashionables among the audience but they were no more pleased by the comedian from New York and Philadelphia, so that at the third trial in December, Mr. Hervieu, the master of ceremonies, after viewing the entire audience of only six men from a steamboat, temporarily berthed at the public landing, regretfully canceled the performance.

A week later, the indefatigable Hervieu put his masterpiece, after many months of labor, on exhibition in the Gallery of the Bazaar; his painting of The Landing of Lafayette at Cincinnati, had been proposed years before to occupy that space permanently, and well could it have done so, since it was one hundred and ninety-two square feet of canvas, 12 by 16 feet. Lafayette had, in 1825, on his American tour been rowed across the Ohio in an "elegant six-oared barge" accompanied by a twenty-four gun salute amid enthusiastic welcomers, two days of ceremony, and spectacular fireworks over the river. Hervieu with much good sense had incorporated portraits of all the notable citizens and luminaries of the city, who had been present, and even some who had not, and the work was highly praised in the newspapers and the journals of the day. As good as it probably was, it was not

enough to save the day for Trollope's Folly, and early in March of 1830, Mrs. Trollope, still with the aid of funds earned by the faithful artist, went on board the steamboat, Lady Franklin, and took her departure forever from the scene of her disaster.

Her influence, however, upon Cincinnati and its citizens, and as it turned out, upon the nation as a whole, was to be manifest two years later when her book, Domestic Manners of the Americans, came to be published, in which she delights in "serving up Cincinnati with her usual piquant sour sauce" borrowing an apt phrase by Venable, himself a member of our Literary Club. The response of the Americans, whether Easterners or Westerners, was rarely charitable or kind, and even Timothy Flint, as complimentary as Mrs. Trollope's words of him had been, was not entirely free of partisanship. In his review of her book, he described her as "a short, plump figure with a ruddy, round, Saxon face of bright complexion," "singularly unladylike" in her appearance, "robust and masculine" in her habits, taking long walks in any kind of weather, as "voluble as a French woman." He acknowledged that she was an accomplished mimic, her conversation "remarkably amusing" and all in all "a woman of uncommon cleverness, a first rate talker."

Flint took pains to indicate that her conduct with Hervieu "which connexion naturally furnished much tea table conversation" had been without reproach. Writing of her Bazaar, he called it:

"a queer, unique, crescented Turkish Babel, so odd, that no one has seen it since, without wonder and a good humored laugh: a building which cost her twenty-four thousand dollars, on which she actually paid some twelve or thirteen thousand, leaving the remainder minus, spending, probably, four or five thousand dollars more in French articles of finery, which she exposed for sale in stalls in this building. . ."

Despite Mrs. Trollope's disparaging remarks as to the literary accomplishments of the Americans, there had been some degree of literary development, both in

Cincinnati and in New England during the 1820's, but it did not reach the intensity which appeared in the 1830-1850 decades. Much of this response of Cincinnati's citizens was, I believe, hastened by the smarting wounds left by Mrs. Trollope's pungent remarks. The affront was taken seriously by our citizens, their comments upon the "vulgar woman" were bitter, sometimes vituperative, and to a large extent unjustified. Nevertheless, it did seem to act as a "wake-up call" to the male and female inhabitants of the insulted city, and fostered the formation of the first Cincinnati Literary Society, and the meetings of the Semi-Colon Club, as we shall see in Parts Three and Four. Whatever else might be said of Mrs. Trollope, it would seem appropriate to give her credit for coming like a breath of fresh air to blow away the cobwebs of provincial narrowness.

AMERICA'S OLDEST PROFESSION

October 5, 1998

Marley P. Thompson

The first American settlers to push west included land prospectors. George Washington, whose first career was as a surveyor, joined with Thomas Jefferson's father, Peter, to help establish the Ohio company to claim, subdivide and sell tracts in the wilderness. Washington owned 63,000 acres and Thomas Jefferson-21,000 acres. Robert Morris, our first Secretary of the Treasury, acquired most of western New York and northern Pennsylvania for resale. Robert Livingston, the United States Minister to France and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, owned 180,000 acres in the Hudson Valley. Aaron Burr acquired the Bistrop Tracts in Louisiana - 300,000 acres. Chief Justice John Marshall bought 50,000 acres from Lord Fairfax for resale. All of the members of the Georgia legislature, as individuals, bought from the State of Georgia the land we now call Alabama and