THE WELL-TEMPERED COLLABORATOR

ROBERT CHARLES SANDS

DISSERTATION FOR THE DEGREE OF Ph. D.

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James H. Pickering

Major professor

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ABSTRACT

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ROBERT CHARLES SANDS

By

Llewellyn Eugene Foll

Robert Charles Sands (1799-1832) was one of New York City's most popular authors during the Knickerbocker period. Today, due to the inequities of fate, his love of collaborative writing, and the diffusion of his talent, he is virtually unknown, even to students of American literature.

This neglect of Sands is unfortunate, for he made undeniably important contributions to American literature. With the poem Yamoyden (1820), he showed that America had subject matter for imaginative literature in the Indian and our native landscape. While editor of the Atlantic Magazine and New York Review (1824-1826), he became one of the country's most important critics and helped shape the emerging nation's ideas on literature. Always an advocate for a unique national literature, Sands was willing to undertake personally any new literary venture. His short prose fiction has to be counted among the best of the early American short stories. The exuberant yet genteel sense of humor which permeates his writing places him in the tradition that

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became one of the most uniquely American features of our literature. His interest in the human mind, especially its darker sides, anticipates the studies of guilt by Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe.

All in all, Sands deserves a niche in the gallery of American literary men, and it is the purpose of this dissertation to help carve a place for this neglected Knickerbocker. This purpose is accomplished (1) by bringing together for the first time all the available information, both primary and secondary, on Sands's life, his work, his friends, and his times; and (2) by reevaluating Sands's achievements and place in American literature according to the perspective provided by nearly 150 years of history and the literary standards developed during those years.

One obstacle to Sands's achieving any permanent reputation was his love of writing with and for other people; in fact, the single most common element in the wide variety of his work seems to be his collaboration. In college he produced two literary journals in collaboration with members of the Columbia Peithologian Society. After college he and three friends formed the Literary Confederacy for the avowed purpose of improving their literary talent by constructive criticism of each other's work. The group wrote for literary and critical journals and published two series of essays in New York newspapers. The best example of Sands's collaboration is the poem Yamoyden, a verse romance written with his friend James Eastburn. Sands also worked with William Cullen

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Bryant and Henry Anderson in editing the New York Review. Later he collaborated with Bryant and Gulian C. Verplanck to write and edit three numbers of the first New York literary annual, The Talisman (1828-1830). In his last year (1832), Sands joined Bryant, James K. Paulding, Catharine Sedgwick, and William Leggett in producing the collection of stories, Tales of Glauber-Spa.

Even Sands's individual productions were often inspired or inaugurated by others: his two biographies, "Historical Notice of Hernan Cortes" (1828) and Life and Correspondence of John Paul Jones (1830), were both written upon request and were built around a series of letters. The majority of his poems are translations or imitations of classical, Biblical, or Romance language verse. Sands just seemed to work best when he had someone else to suggest ideas which he could use as a framework on which to hang his erudite wit.

Collaboration always makes it difficult to give credit where credit is due; consequently Sands's reputation has suffered. This dissertation establishes Sands's share in these collaborative efforts by comparing them with their original MSS and by examination of club minutes and personal correspondence. Invariably Sands was the major creator, and fellow collaborators usually gave him entire credit for a work.

Another barrier to any lasting fame was the wide diffusion of Sands's talent. He simply spread himself too thin to achieve greatness in any single area. Besides being a full-time journalist, Sands wrote in nearly every literary genre

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but drama: essay, literary criticism, poetry, short story, and biography. With the exception of poetry, Sands practiced each of these at a different period in his short life. Therefore, this critical biography uses the genre which dominated a period as a framework in which to examine the life and writings of Robert Charles Sands.

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I also wish to acknowledge the invaluable services and cooperation of the New York Historical Society and the New York Public Library's manuscript division and Berg Collection.

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INTRODUCTION . . . .

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St. Tammany Magazi

CHAPTER IV. THE POE

Production of Yamo
Criticism of Yamoy
"Papantzin" (124)
Translated Verse (
Other Original Poe
Summary (139)

CHAPTER V. THE CRIT

Coming of Age (142
The Atlantic Magaz
The New-York Revie
Sands's Philosophy

CHAPTER VI. THE JOU

CHAPTER VII. THE BI

"Historical Notice
John Paul Jones (2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I. THE SANDS FAMILY 16

Relatives, Distant and Close (16)
New York City During Sands's Childhood (23)

CHAPTER II. THE AMATEUR LITTERATEUR 30

Columbia College (30)
The Peithologian Society (33)
Law vs. Literature (41)
The Bridal of Vaumond (44)

CHAPTER III. THE ESSAYIST 53

Organization and Membership of the Literary Confederacy (54)
"The Neologist" (64)
"The Amphilogist" (74)
The Literary Journal (82)
St. Tammany Magazine (87)

CHAPTER IV. THE POET 92

Production of Yamoyden (92)
Criticism of Yamoyden (112)
"Papantzin" (124)
Translated Verse (128)
Other Original Poetry (132)
Summary (139)

CHAPTER V. THE CRITIC 142

Coming of Age (142)
The Atlantic Magazine (152)
The New-York Review and Athenaeum Magazine (165)
Sands's Philosophy of Literary Criticism (175)

CHAPTER VI. THE JOURNALIST 183

CHAPTER VII. THE BIOGRAPHER 199

"Historical Notice of Hernan Cortes" (200)
John Paul Jones (209)

APTER VIII. THE K

Collaboration on t
The Sketch Club (2
Tales of Glauber-S
Sands's Short Fict

APTER IX. THE DEA

OTES . . . . . .

IBLIOGRAPHY . . . .

CHAPTER VIII. THE KNICKERBOCKER WIT 218

Collaboration on the Talisman (218)
The Sketch Club (238)
Tales of Glauber-Spa (245)
Sands's Short Fiction (252)

CHAPTER IX. THE DEAD OF 1832 279

NOTES 293

BIBLIOGRAPHY 314

"Ah, there's Sa

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INTRODUCTION

"Ah, there's Sands," said the slim, mild-mannered man as he gently nudged his dozing companion, who had momentarily succumbed to the warmth of the June sun and the steady lapping of the waves.

"Aye, prompt as usual," returned the agreeably rotund figure next to him as he roused and peered toward the lush green shore of New Jersey. Then he twisted in his seat and looked around the cabin of the ferry: "Fine boat Stevens has here. I miss the old horse-boat ferry he used to run, though. Malodorous, but fascinating."

The smaller man in the conservative brown coat smiled inwardly at the easy way his companion had thrown off the cumbersome Latinate words which so often stifled his prose and made his conversation as imposing as his appearance. "Let's go out on deck," he suggested.

Outside they had a better view of the small inlet and ferry dock they were now cautiously approaching. From the dock a dusty road wound around a hill into Hoboken, which, in 1827, was a village of about 50 houses scattered around the large hill on which stood the palatial home of Col. John Stevens. Many of the houses were large and had that look of prosperity about them, for they belonged to wealthy New Yorkers

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As the ferry quietly inched toward the dock, the larger man squinted into the sun, then shaded his eyes with his hands in order to get a better look at the medium sized, round shouldered, young man who was talking to an old dock worker seated on a wooden crate. The young man wore thick glasses set in octagonal, wire frames, which made his eyes look rather sharp and beady. His receding hairline was subtly camouflaged by rather tousled hair, which was combed forward from the back of the head in the style currently popular. He was listening intently and apparently with empathy as the old resident of Hoboken told how his wife's health was steadily failing.[1] In fact, he scarcely seemed to notice that the ferry had docked and the two observers on deck had disembarked and were walking briskly toward him.

"Sands!" At hearing his name shouted, the bespectacled young man turned to greet his friends: "Gentlemen, gentlemen, welcome to the Elysian fields. I'd like you to meet my old friend, Hans Van Endt. Hans, this is the most Honorable Gulian Crommelin Verplanck, our distinguished representative from New York to the United States Congress, recently returned from the halls of parliament in Washington." The introduction was delivered in mock-heroic tones as he waved his hand toward the broadly grinning, larger man, who obviously appreciated the mock-heroics. Turning to the man in the brown coat, who was smiling graciously, Sands continued the

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introduction: "And this is Mr. Bryant, the editor of the Evening Post and our country's finest poet."

"Mein pleasure, mein pleasure," said the old man, bowing stiffly to each man. As Sands shook hands with the old man before they parted, he dropped several coins into the man's hand. "Get something for Mrs. Van Endt," he said quietly to Hans.

Sands took Bryant and Verplanck by the arm and headed them towards the estate of Col. Stevens, who had turned his grounds into a vast park popular among New Yorkers wanting a taste of the country. He charged six cents for admission to the well kept woods which ran for two miles along the cliffs overlooking the Hudson River. As the trio approached the entrance to the park, the attendant waved them on because Sands was a friend and neighbor of Col. Stevens.

"Nice man," said Verplanck in reference to the old man at the dock as they began to climb the broad, well-gravelled walk leading to the bluffs.

"Perhaps he's a distant relative of yours," Bryant quipped in reference to Verplanck's Dutch ancestry.

"Yes, a great old man," replied Sands. "I first met him at a Dutch festival over in Communipaw. Unfortunately, he has only one god, and him only does he serve--Bacchus. Until recently he worked in the Hoboken distillery."

"The Dutch do love their spirits," mused Verplanck. "I just returned from visiting my relatives up around New Rochelle --better stocked cellars I never saw. By the way, a man I

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"Good," replied Sands enthusiastically, "we must have the Talisman finished in a month. Let's hear the tale."

"Well it seems that this old gentleman, in an attempt at civility, sent the lady next door a basket of plums from his bumper crop. The lady interpreted the gift as symbolic of the gentleman's intention to marry her, and planned a wedding." As the threesome continued to climb the broad path, Verplanck filled in the details of the story amid great outbursts of laughter.

They stopped several times to look at lower Manhattan of which they had a nearly perfect view from the Weehawken bluffs. The low, compact skyline of crowded buildings was broken only by the tall church spires and masts of ships. Bryant remarked once, "I thought I was getting away from my office, but I can nearly see it from here."

Shortly after passing the terraced bluff on which the famous Hamilton-Burr duel had taken place, Sands guided them up a narrow, seldom used path that soon led down into a natural ampitheater formed by a combination of hills and rocks. At one end was a rocky bluff that had broken off from the cliff behind it and had slipped down several yards. The top of the crumpled bluff formed a natural stage for the ampitheater; however, being so high, it seemed more like a pulpit, and, like a pulpit, it could be easily mounted from behind by steps formed of broken rock. Sands and his friends climbed

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the pulpit, and, as they lounged in the sun on the top of the rock, Sands told the legend about the place: "The natives say the devil used to hold meetings in this ampitheater and that he used to harrangue his audience from this bluff when it was attached to the cliff. During one meeting lightning struck the rock on which the devil stood and caused this part of the bluff to break off and slide down several yards to the bottom of this glen."

As the afternoon wore on, the trio turned back toward Hoboken. On their way they concocted a tale using the Devil's Pulpit as the locale of the climax. It was decided that Bryant would write it up for their joint publishing venture, the Talisman. Sands offered to show the place to his friend Dr. John Nielson, an amateur artist, so that he could make a sketch for an engraving to accompany the story in the gift book.

Back in the Sands's hospitable home, the three men retired to Sands's study and relaxed around a bowl of milk punch. Sands furnished cigars for everyone; as they smoked, they talked further about their plans for the Talisman. "Why don't we work on that sketch about the man with matrimonial problems in New Rochelle," suggested Sands. From the twinkle in his eyes, it was plain to see he enjoyed this kind of joint creativity.

"Fine," said Verplanck. "Which one of you wants to act as amanuensis?"

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materials. Obviously, this was not a new procedure; these friends had often before composed a tale together.

Verplanck tilted his chair back into his favorite position, a precarious balance on the chair's two back legs, and said, "Let's make him half-French in order not to offend anybody in New Rochelle." After several suggestions, Bryant came up with the name De Viellecour, which seemed to please everyone. Then Verplanck began describing the home and estate of Mr. De Viellecour, which amounted to a composite of the homes he had just visited in New Rochelle. As he talked, Sands wrote furiously, taking down Verplanck's descriptions and adding details of his own. Verplanck described the library: "There stood, armed in its massive and embossed boards and brazen clasps, the old family Bible; a book of which even those famous Bible-collectors, Earl Spencer and the Duke of Sussex might envy him the possession."[2]

Bryant, perhaps taking a clue from looking around the Sands library, added, "Then there was a grand worm-eaten folio of Boileau, with the spirited engravings of Picart." There was a hearty roar of laughter at the mention of this item, for they knew how much Sands's sister Julia prized that collection.

Sands, now in high spirits and anxious to get on with the plot, added, "There too stood--the source of all his wo --the "Art d'Ecrire par M. Villemain, maître écrevain juré;" a superb system of penmanship, by the writing master of 'Monseigneur le Grand Dauphin.'" It had been decided that the

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Great roars of laughter followed each item suggested for Mr. De Viellecour's library. While the last roar was dying out and while Verplanck tilted his chair down and got up for more punch, Sands, with a broad smile on his face, wrote furiously. As soon as he finished writing, he read the passage to his companions: "Therein were to be seen samples of the hands of Romaine, and Ronde, and Bâtarde, and Coulée: and there too was unfolded the analysis of all letters, into pleins, and délés, and liasons: and there were cadeaux, and traits de plume, and paraphes, which might have defied even the late Emperor Alexander, the prince of all chirographical flourishers, to have imitated." While Sands read the catalog of terms he had compiled, they laughed softly because none of the trio took their penmanship seriously. But when he read "the prince of all chirographical flourishers," they burst into wild laughter again. Bryant laughed until tears came to his eyes. Sands's mastery of florid diction never ceased to amuse them.

Because of their laughter, they could not hear the gentle knocking on the study door. But they quieted down slowly when Julia, Sands's younger sister, opened the door. She was smiling prettily as she said, "Jim Johnson, the man who built that new house down from the church, just came to the door. He said he was passing by and heard all the laughter

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and wondered if we might not be having a party. I told him it was just some sober and sedate scholars in the throes of composition." At this bit of irony, laughter again filled the room.

Having about laughed and written themselves out, Bryant and Verplanck made ready to leave. They wanted to be sure to catch the last ferry back to New York. The evening had been a success: the setting of the story had been composed and a rough outline had been plotted. They knew Sands would finish the story himself, which he did. "Mr. De Viellecour and his Neighbors" was published in the Talisman for 1828 and Verplanck gave credit for the story to Sands when he edited Sands's works after his death.[3]

The scene just described is typical of Sands's favorite diversion--the witty interchange of joint authorship. Sands loved to write; he once called composition his mania. But what he enjoyed even more than writing, was writing with other people. Most of his social life was centered in groups where joint composition took place. Verplanck sums it up well in his memoir of Sands which serves as an introduction to Sands's collected Writings: "He had this peculiarity, that the presence of others, in which most authors find a restraint upon the free course of thought and fancies, was to him a source of inspiration and excitement."[4]

Upon surveying the wide variety of Sands's literary output, the single most common element seems to be the collaboration. In college he produced two literary journals in

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collaboration with the Columbia Peithologian Society. After college he formed the Literary Confederacy with three friends "to endeavour, by all proper means, to advance their mutual and individual [literary] interest." The group wrote for literary and critical journals and published two series of essays in New York newspapers. The best example of Sands's collaboration is the poem Yamoyden (1820), a verse romance written with his friend James Eastburn. Sands worked with William Cullen Bryant and Henry Anderson in editing the New York Review (1825-1826). Later he collaborated with Bryant and Verplanck in producing three numbers of the literary annual cited above, The Talisman (1828-1830). In his last year (1832), Sands joined Bryant, James K. Paulding, Catharine Sedgwick, and William Leggett in producing the collection of stories, Tales of Glauber-Spa.

Labelling Sands a collaborator is not meant to detract from the value of his work nor to imply that Sands never produced anything on his own, for of course he did. But even his individual productions were often inspired or inaugurated by others, as the opening sketch indicates. His two biographies, Life and Correspondence of John Paul Jones (1830) and "Historical Notice of Hernan Cortes" (1828) were both written upon request and were built around a series of letters. The majority of his poems are translations or imitations of classical, Biblical, or Romance language verse. Sands just seemed to work best when he had someone else to suggest ideas which he could use as a framework on which to hang his erudite wit.

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But while writing with and for other people motivated and inspired most of Sands's work, the same collaboration proved to be the undoing of his literary reputation. Today, Sands is virtually an unknown author and is seldom mentioned even in the most thorough American literary histories.[5] The fact that much of his work was produced in collaboration is part of the reason for this regrettable neglect. For one thing, collaboration makes it difficult to determine specifically what Sands should be credited with. The poem Yamoyden is a case in point--a critic can admire a passage of its verse, but because it is the result of collaboration, he is unable to give the credit for that passage to a specific author. And when the anonymity resulting from collaboration is compounded by the habits of anonymity typical of that period, a habit which Sands especially loved and exploited, it becomes even more difficult to find and evaluate the work which made him such a popular literary figure among contemporaries who knew of his work. Another problem raised by this "joint-stock authorship," as Verplanck calls it, is in the nature of the work produced. Too often it was light, humorous, topical material, widely popular in his day, but nonetheless ephemeral. Furthermore, Sands's collaborative works were generally produced in great haste and published with little or no revision, a fact which seems not to have bothered readers during his lifetime, but which has since reduced the critical estimation of Sands.

His nearly non-existent place in American literature is

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unfortunate, because Sands's work, even today, makes enjoyable reading, especially his prose. Furthermore, he has made undeniably important contributions to American literature. First, with the poem Yamoyden, he showed that America had a subject matter for imaginative literature in the Indian and our native landscape. While editor of the Atlantic Magazine and New York Review, he became one of the country's most important literary critics and helped shape the emerging nation's ideas on literature. Always an advocate for a unique national literature, Sands was willing to try any new literary venture from critical journals to gift books. His short prose fiction has to be counted among the best of the early American short stories. The exuberant yet genteel sense of humor exhibited in his writings places him in the tradition which became one of the most uniquely American features of our literature.[6] His interest in the human mind, especially its darker sides, anticipates the studies of guilt by Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. All in all, he deserves a niche in the gallery of American literary men, and it is the purpose of this dissertation to help carve a place for this neglected Knickerbocker. This purpose will hopefully be accomplished by (1) bringing together all the available information, both primary and secondary, on Sands's life, his work, his friends, and his time; and by (2) reevaluating Sands's achievements and place in American literature according to the perspective provided by nearly 150 years of history and the literary standards that have developed during those years.

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As mentioned above, collaboration seems to be the unique thing about Sands's work, and thus provides the title for this study. Another important feature of Sands's work is its wide variety. Sands wrote in nearly every literary genre but drama: essay, literary criticism, poetry, short story, and biography. With the exception of poetry, Sands practiced each of these at a different period in his short life. Therefore, this critical biography uses the genre which dominated various periods as a framework for examining the life and writings of Robert Charles Sands.

Very little has been written or said about Sands since the eulogies and tributes at the time of his death. The best of these was by his close friend, William Cullen Bryant in the Knickerbocker Magazine (Jan. 1833). Another friend, G. C. Verplanck, used Bryant's article in his "Memoir" of Sands, published as a preface to his edition of The Writings of R.C. Sands (2 vols.; New York, 1834). Since Verplanck's "Memoir" amounts to a composite recollection of Sands's two closest friends during his later years, since both friends were literary collaborators with Sands, since both men were major authors of the period, and since the recollection was written immediately after Sands's death, the "Memoir" naturally serves as a primary source of information to anyone writing on the life and works of Sands. Therefore this dissertation relies heavily on Verplanck's "Memoir." Evidence from other sources generally proves the accuracy and reliability of Verplanck; his few errors, mainly in names and dates

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connected with Sands's early life (before Verplanck met Sands), have been pointed out and corrected in this critical biography. The "Memoir" is most valuable for the descriptions of Sands's personality, characterized by his humor, his learning, his sensitivity, his enthusiasm, and his charm. Only the recollections of close friends yield these insights into a person's character.

The Writings, including the "Memoir," were reviewed by several journals and more tributes were paid during the next year (1835), but by 1843 Lewis Gaylord Clark, in a series of four articles written for his Knickerbocker Magazine, was treating Sands as some kind of novelty and forgotten curiosity from the past. During the rest of the nineteenth century, various items of Sands's works were collected into some of the popular anthologies, but nothing else was said of the man or his work. Literary histories and biographical dictionaries have relied entirely on the Bryant and Verplanck accounts.

The only study devoted exclusively to Sands in the twentieth century is a Master's essay (unpublished) by Jane Margaret Tiquin (Columbia University, 1936). The most valuable aspect of this study is the bibliography which compiles Sands's contributions to the Aeronaut MSS and lists the extant Sands letters in the New York Historical Society. Ms. Tiquin made very little use, however, of these primary sources in her essay, which is little more than a paraphrase of Verplanck's "Memoir." Several other twentieth century works have studied Sands in connection with other topics:

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Kendall B. Taft discussed both Sands and his works in Minor Knickerbockers (New York, 1947). William Cullen Bryant II naturally mentions Sands in "Bryant: The Middle Years: A Study in Cultural Friendship" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1954). John P. Pritchard considers Sands one of the Literary Wise Men of Gotham (Baton Rouge, 1963) and James T. Callow frequently refers to Sands in Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855 (Chapel Hill, 1967). Outside of these studies, Sands has been mentioned only in passing, if at all, by twentieth century scholars and historians.

This study is, of course, indebted to the above mentioned authors and to the following primary sources: (1) the manuscript by Frederick De Peyster containing brief biographies and selections from the writings of the four Literary Confederates [Sands and three friends] (New York Historical Society c. 1870); (2) the thirteen MS volumes containing the works of the Literary Confederacy (at Columbia University); (3) the two volumes of Aeronautica (minutes of the Confederates, also at Columbia); (4) the collating MS and the fair copy MS of Yamoyden (Columbia); (5) letters from Sands to Eastburn (NYHS); (6) Letters from Sands to Verplanck (NYHS); (7) Miscellaneous Sands correspondence (NYHS); (8) the Bryant-Verplanck correspondence (Berg Collection--NYPL); and (9) the Minutes of the Sketch Club (on microfilm at the Detroit Institute of Art).

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MSS, have been perused or used at one time or another by the authors of the studies mentioned above. This study, however, is the first to use sources 1-7 with any thoroughness. Never before have the Yamoyden MSS been compared; never before has the only extant copy of St. Tammany Magazine (NYPL) been studied; never before have the Aeronaut essays been compared with their printed versions in the New York Commercial Advertiser and Daily Advertiser.

With the exception of a letter in the Philadelphia Historical Society, no other primary sources were discovered in a survey of the major East Coast research libraries. Thorough research of and correspondence with living descendants of the Sands family has turned up no other letters or manuscripts other than those already known to exist.

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CHAPTER I

THE SANDS FAMILY:
FROM THE ISLE OF WIGHT TO THE ISLE OF MANHATTAN

Relatives, distant and close

The lineage of the Sands family can be traced back to the time of England's Edward the Confessor (1041). The name itself, according to the Domesday Book and Camden's Survey of Britain, derives from a place called Sande on the Isle of Wight.[1] Through military prowess, sparkling personalities, and good marriages, various members of the Sands family became part of the nobility.

Shakespeare portrays one Lord Sands as a bawdy wit, evidently very popular in the court of Henry VIII. Upon seeing Anne Boleyn and several other beautiful women in Cardinal Wolsey's banquet hall, Lord Sands gets off a double-entendre:

> Sands: Sir Thomas Lovell, had the cardinal
> But half my lay thoughts in him, some of these
> Should find a running banquet ere they rested,
> They are a sweet society of fair ones.
>
> Lov: O, that your lordship were but now confessor
> To one or two of these!
>
> Sands: I would I were;
> They should find easy penance.
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> Lov: Faith, how easy?
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> Sands: As easy as a down-bed would afford it.[2]

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Sandys, Knight of the Garter and an important figure during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII. His merry banter, which soon causes Anne Boleyn to say, "You are a merry gamester, My Lord Sands," provides one of the few light spots in a dull and dreary play.

Three centuries later in New York City, a distant relative of Lord Sands, Robert Charles Sands (1799-1832), had a similar reputation: "his conversation was full of sprightliness and information," reports his close friend and biographer, Gulian C. Verplanck. "The whimsical and lively wit, the odd and sometimes grotesque humours . . . made him as entertaining as his learning and originality of thought did an instructive companion."[3] Both Lord Sands and his nineteenth-century descendant were well-tempered conversationalists.

History records another distant relative with whom Robert Sands had something in common, this time literary interest. George Sandys, who came to Virginia in 1621 as one of the colony's administrators, produced "the first strictly literary work" in America.[4] In 1626, he translated Ovid's Metamorphoses into verse. Nearly two centuries later, Robert C. Sands was to share his interest in the classics. In fact, Verplanck claims that when it came to classical studies, "he had few equals, probably in our country no superior" ("Memoir," pp. 27-28). And like the earlier Sandys, Robert's favorite mode of poetry was the imitation or translation.

Coincidental resemblances to distant relatives aside, Robert Sand's immediate ancestors came to New York from Reading,

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England, via Plymouth Plantation, Block Island, and Long Island. The first ancestor to reach the New World was James Sands (1622-1695), who probably[5] came to New England about 1640.[6] Being a seaman, James never stayed for any length of time here; instead he continued his marine career and soon became a captain. James was briefly a follower of Anne Hutchinson; in 1642, he was engaged in building a house for the notorious Antinomian.[7] In 1658, Captain James Sands brought his wife Sarah to Plymouth and settled down there, but she died soon after coming to New England. Two years later, James helped purchase Block Island from the Indians and moved there. During King Philip's War (1675-76), the 300 Indians who had been allowed to remain on the island threatened the settlement; consequently, Captain Sands raised a militia company to defend the Englishmen on the island. Little did he know that his great-great-great-grandson would romanticize the Indians engaged in King Philip's War with his poem Yamoyden (1820). Captain James married a Rhode Island girl named Anne Walker and raised six children before his death in 1695.

Three of Captain James's sons, John (1649-1712), James (1673-1631), and Samuel (1680-1730), bought the northern part of Cow Neck, Long Island, in 1696. This area, directly across the Sound from New Rochelle, consequently became known as Sands Point. John followed his father's trade, and became a sea captain, carrying on trade between Virginia and New York. He is remembered most for bringing some young locust trees from Virginia which, in the course of time, spread and

produced a valuable stand of timber along the Northern part of Long Island. "The house he built and in which he and his wife, Sybil, lived is [today] probably one of the best preserved on the island."[9] His son, John II (1684-1763), and his grandson, John III (1709-1760), were both farmers on Sands Point.

Comfort Sands, the father of the subject of this biography, was the fourth son of John Sands III and was born at Sands Point on 21 February 1748. Comfort attended school until he was twelve years old, a good education for that time. He went to New York in May of 1762 to work as a clerk for his brother Cornwell.[10] This marked the beginning of a remarkably successful career as a New York merchant, a career which exemplifies the business opportunities to be found in New York prior to the Revolution.

New York in 1762 was still a small town, still influenced by the Dutch who had lost control a century earlier. The homes of the wealthy clustered about the Bowling Green and The Battery at the southern tip of Manhattan Island. To the north and east lay the homes of the poor. The city limits were less than a mile from the battery. Even then the city was cosmopolitan, a characteristic which it has never lost. Besides the Dutch, Samuel Eliot Morison says, "There were already enough Irish in New York to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, enough Jews to maintain a synagogue, enough Scots to support a Presbyterian church, and enough Germans to maintain four churches with services in their language."[11]

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In 1763 Comfort Sands went to work for Joseph Drake, who ran a store in Peck Slip, one of the docks that lined Front Street on the East River. Because the waterfront merchants were the ones most threatened by Britain's various import taxes, Comfort Sands soon got involved in waterfront politics. In 1765 he helped burn ten bales of stamped paper in a British ship lying in Burling Slip, just a few blocks down from Peck Slip. In 1769, shortly after opening his own store in Peck Slip, he joined the association boycotting articles taxed under the Townshend Act. Their action was effective in helping to get the act repealed in 1770.

As soon as he had established his own business, he married Sarah Dodge on 3 June 1769. During the next twenty years, this marriage produced fifteen children, eight of whom reached maturity. Most of these children married into wealthy families or joined banking houses which still exist. Comfort's descendants are now to be traced among the Prime, Ward, Hoffman, Jay, Coster, Ray, and other prominent New York families.

As the Revolution approached, Comfort Sands served on most of the important revolutionary committees and was elected to New York's Provincial Congress in November of 1775. During the war, Comfort Sands was Auditor General of the new state. Because the British controlled New York, his family was constantly on the move, living wherever personal business, state business, or federal business led them: Philadelphia, Rochester, Schawangunk (N.Y.), Poughkeepsie, and finally New Rochelle.

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Comfort Sands believed whole-heartedly in the American cause and devoted his fortune, talents, and ships to help win the war. Towards the end of the war (1782), Comfort and two of his brothers, Richardson and Joshua, joined Robert Morris of Philadelphia and William Livingston of New Jersey in an agreement to supply the American army. Their timely support helped win the war, but drained the fortunes of Robert Morris and the Sands brothers.[12] The new government refused to reimburse these men after the war. Comfort Sands finally received partial reimbursement for his investment after twenty years of litigation.[13] In 1888 his descendants were still attempting to get some of his claims paid.[14]

But while he lost most of his capital during the war, Comfort Sands, like so many of those early New York merchants was shrewd and lucky. "Every interest he touched seemed to flourish."[15] He bought up many soldiers' pay certificates at a discount, and, after the war, he and his brother Joshua cashed these in for a fine profit and invested in real estate. Around 1785 they bought 160 acres at the point where the ferry docked in Brooklyn. They subdivided the property into lots which they advertised widely; however it was not until 1801, when the United States purchased land in Brooklyn for a navy-yard, that the lots began to sell.[16]

In 1794, Comfort Sands partially retired as a merchant and lived from his investments while he served as President of the Chamber of Commerce for the next four years. In the same year, he began building a house, planned by his wife,

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at 26 Pine Street, on a lot which ran through to Cedar street. It was probably, like the homes nearby, a town house on a street full of "cheerful-looking two-story buildings of light colored brick or wood painted white or yellow," as Verplanck described the neighborhood in a Talisman essay, "Reminiscences of New York." But Sarah Dodge Sands was never to live in the house, for she died on 24 January 1795, before it was finished.

Two years later, Comfort Sands, then 49 years old, married 36-year-old Cornelia Lott. The Lotts were basically of English ancestry; Cornelia, however, was named after her French great-grandmother. Comfort Sands had known the Lott family for years, having at one time been a neighbor on Long Island and having served on several revolutionary war committes with Cornelia's father, Abraham P. Lott.

The new house on Pine Street, of which Cornelia became mistress, was probably the most beautiful house on the street, at least it was the most expensive according to the "List of Houses and Lots valued at £2000 and over in 1799."[17] Though Cornelia inherited a ready-made family, she naturally longed for children of her own. Her prolific husband soon satisfied this wish, and the year 1799 found the new Mrs. Sands with child. She decided to have her firstborn at her parents' home in Flatbush, near Brooklyn. As a result, Robert Charles Sands was born at Flatbush, 11 May 1799. Soon thereafter, the new baby was brought to the Sands home at 26 Pine Street in the city.

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New York City during Sands's childhood

New York City at the turn of the century was still only a large town of 60,000, with most of the people living within a mile or so of the Battery. A recent historian of the city describes it as "part rustic, part urban. Blackberries grew on Bleecker Street, and a glass chandelier dangled from the vaulted dome of the Park Theatre."[18] It was a lively, growing city--it had doubled its population in the previous decade and would add as many people in the next, the first decade of the nineteenth century. From his home in the heart of the city, young Bob Sands had a perfect vantage point from which to watch this decade of growth.

Sands spent the first ten years of his life in the house on Pine Street. The next street down, Wall Street, was the center of fashion, while William Street, which intersected Pine Street at the nearest corner, was "the shopping-centre."[19] From the windows of the family home, Sands could see and hear the chimney sweeps, milkmen, bellmen, and bakers. He could see black women peddling mint, strawberries, radishes, and steaming hot yams. Adding to the collage of sights and sounds were the hot-corn girls wandering "barefoot and shawl-wrapped through the streets, with cedar baskets in the crooks of their arms, crying in sing-song voices, 'Hot corn! Hot corn! Here's your lily-white corn! All you that's got money--poor me that's got none! Come buy my lily-white corn and let me go home!'"[20]

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and crooked and followed former footpaths. In contrast, Broadway, only a block and a half away, was a straight, broad street lined with poplars.[21] In all streets there was a constant problem with pigs. Even though the Evening Post waged constant war against them and "everyone admitted they were unsightly, malodorous, and kept the walks filthy," it was argued that they were helpful as scavangers.[22]

The Sands home, located only four blocks from Bowling Green, was near the best homes in the city which were still clustered around the Battery. Sands most likely visited one of the most famous of these old homes, the Kennedy mansion. This house, located at 1 Broadway, had been General Washington's headquarters during the Revolution, but was now occupied by Sands's half-sister, Cornelia Sands Prime, wife of Nathaniel Prime, one of the city's richest men.[23] Here Sands probably met some of the aristocracy of the city which, according to Allan Nevins, "prided itself upon substantial virtues and substantial possessions--solid mahogany, thick cut glass, heavy solid silver sets, old and pure wines, and old customs."[24]

These people had all made their money in mercantile pursuits and were proud to be businessmen. The European wars and revolutions had stimulated American commerce, and when the Barbary pirates were finally put down in 1805, nothing remained to hinder their trade. In 1806, one-fourth of the total American exports left from New York City. Business and trade completely dominated its life. As one early traveller, John Lambert, said, every "thought, work, look, and action

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of the multitude seemed to be absorbed by commerce."[25] Young Bob Sands was probably very much fascinated by the busy life around him; at least his later writings reveal a wide range of knowledge about life and a keen observation of people. Kendall Taft, an authority on Knickerbocker writers, comments that Sands "found literary material in the spectacle of New York life."[26] Young Bob most likely visited the market place where much trade was still carried on in Dutch, and in 1807, at the age of eight, he probably was part of the excited crowd that watched the first steamboat, the Clermont, set out for Albany.

With the turn of the century, Republicans replaced the Federalists in both the state and national elections: Jefferson became President, George Clinton governor, and enough legislators were elected to have a Republican majority. Sands's first decade was thus dominated by the Republicans, a fact which probably influenced his later Republican loyalty. Other politically related events probably fascinated him as a child. For example, the Hamilton-Burr duel took place when Sands was five, so perhaps some of his earliest recollections were of the Hamilton funeral, which was one of the largest New York City had ever seen. Bob was probably also among the crowd of curious boys who watched the construction of various defensive works such as Castle Williams on Governors Island and the Southwest Battery at the tip of Manhattan, which were built after the British attempted to blockade the harbor in 1806. After the passage of the Embargo Act late

in 1807, he probably heard a good deal of political discussion among the businessmen that gathered in the Sands household, discussion that was bound to temper his republican principles.

At the turn of the century, New York and Philadelphia carried on a constant feud about which was the better city. One German visitor is quoted as saying, "If Philadelphia should become extinct, everybody in New York would rejoice, and vice versa. New York is the vilest of cities, write the Philadelphia journalists. In New York they speak no better of Philadelphia."[27] Competition between the two cities was especially keen in the area of book publishing. Early in the nineteenth century New York began to take the lead away from Philadelphia. Since seventy per cent of the books published were pirated from England, it was inevitable that America's commercial capital would become its publishing capital as well. And where the publishers are, writers soon gather.

New York authors often gathered in groups, "drawn to each other by similar intellectual or social tastes."[28] There was a certain gregariousness about New York authors, and Sands grew up to become one of the most gregarious. But while Sands was still a child, the most famous group was the one writing the Salmagundi essays: Washington and William Irving and James K. Paulding. After Washington Irving's return from Europe in 1806, he lived at the corner of William and Anne Streets, just four blocks up from Pine Street. It

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was there he wrote the "Letters of Jonathan Oldstyle," Salmagundi, and the History of New York.[29] Since Sands was "an assiduous reader of works in the English language," according to his school mate Frederick De Peyster,[30] it seems likely that Bob sought out Irving's home to watch for the young author who was suspected of writing Salmagundi, then the talk of the town.

One of the places New York authors liked to gather was in the reading rooms of publishers like James Eastburn, a new-comer from England. Shortly after coming to America in 1803, Eastburn established the "first reading-room on a becoming scale, in this country."[31] He published the American editions of the Edinburgh and London quarterly Reviews, and had a fine collection of old and rare books. His shop was at the corner of Pine and Broadway, just a block and a half from Sands's home. It was perhaps here that Sands read Gulliver's Travels, an unforgettable boyhood experience which he mentions in one of his Neologist essays.[32] It was here perhaps Sands met James and Manton Eastburn, the publisher's two sons, who were two years older and two years younger than Sands, respectively. In college, the Eastburn brothers were to become two of his closest friends.

Sands was a precocious child. According to his friend William Cullen Bryant, "Young Sands was noted in early life for his quickness of intellect and his facility in acquiring knowledge."[33] Cornelia Lott Sands had been raised in a home dominated by fine taste and culture and had been given a

good education. She taught Bob to read at a young age and guided him in his early studies. Gulian C. Verplanck gave Mrs. Sands credit for "exciting in him an ardent thirst for knowledge and love of reading."[34] Sands seems never to have lost this intellectual curiousity inspired in him by his mother.

At the age of seven, Sands began attending Mr. Rose's Latin school in Brooklyn. If it seems strange that young Bob Sands would be sent all the way over to Brooklyn to go to school, remember the investment of his father and uncle in that community. Joshua Sands had built a fine home on the Brooklyn property, and young Bob Sands probably stayed with his cousins in Brooklyn during the worst of the winter weather.

In 1809, Comfort Sands moved his family to Newark, New Jersey, at that time a beautiful and quiet village. Though no reason for the move is recorded, his motives are predictable: the embargo had all but ruined trade in New York City, so there was little necessity in maintaining a house and office in downtown New York. Also, many of the social elite were finding the resort areas of New Jersey, such as Hoboken and Newark, pleasant places to live, and the new steam ferries to New Jersey ports made commuting to the city quite easy. Fortunately for young Bob Sands, Newark had an excellent teacher, a Mr. Findlay. At a time when instruction in the classics was generally poor in America, Findlay was an exception. Later Sands gratefully praised him for instilling

in him a deep love of classical literature, especially Virgil's Aeneid, which he turned to as a source of inspiration and refreshment the rest of his life. Findlay also gave Sands a thorough grounding in the classical languages during the three years he tutored him.

Early in 1812, The Sands family moved back to New York City, where they lived on North Moore Street, only one block from Hudson Square (later St. John's Park), "the most elegant building spot . . . in the whole city."[35] The reason for the move back to New York may have been so that Sands could be near Columbia College; at any rate, the new home was within half a mile of the college. During 1812, Rev. Melancthon Whelpley, who was later pastor of the Presbyterian church in Wall Street, prepared Sands for college entrance. The quality of education Sands received from his three tutors is indicated by the fact that he was able to skip his Freshman year. He entered Columbia as a sophomore in October of 1812.

In summary, it seems that Sands might have inherited his lively, gregarious personality, great intelligence, and love and interest in culture and the arts. His environment helped shape these aspects of his character. First, the secure financial position of his family made a good education possible. His living in New York City during one of its more exciting decades was itself an education. Thus, even though he was just thirteen, Sands was well prepared for college and for any profession he might choose.

CHAPTER II

THE AMATEUR LITTERATEUR: SANDS AT COLLEGE

Columbia College

Sands could not have attended Columbia College at a worse time. In 1812, when Sands entered as a sophomore, Columbia was just beginning to recover from its academic nadir: "During Bishop Moore's regime," says university historian Horace Coon, "the college sank to its lowest level in numbers, reputation, and resources."[1]

The trustees, perplexed by inefficiency and lack of discipline in the college, took matters into their own hands in 1810 and set up guidelines regulating admission and studies. No student was accepted unless he had a sound understanding of Greek and Latin. The curriculum was thoroughly revised and organized into four distinct levels or classes. "Progression" was instituted, which meant "a gradation of exercises, from easier and shorter, to more difficult and ample, according to the power of performance."[2] Progression also meant that "on no account ought students in the more advanced classes, to spend their time in those elementary studies which occupy beginners." Thus Sands could enter the sophomore class after a private examination.

Bishop Moore was pressured into resigning the next year,

1811, and Dr. John M. Mason, the leader for reform in the trustees' committee on changes, became provost. Dr. Mason greatly improved the academic quality of Columbia, but he was a poor administrator. The institution failed to get the financial support it needed. During Sands's junior year (1814), the trustees complained to the state legislature that "Columbia presents a spectacle mortifying to its friends [and] humiliating to the city."[3] Specifically, an unfinished new wing of the college was in ruins, there was no place for a library, and the library itself was "the subject of ignominious comparison." Scientific laboratory equipment was worn out and there was no money for the chemistry professor's salary.

Some of these problems were undoubtedly caused by the War of 1812, which completely halted shipping, the city's main industry. Many stores were boarded up, and many people fled the city: the streets were strangely quiet. The war kept the city in constant turmoil over the threat of invasion by the British. New Yorkers were naturally more concerned about fortifying the city than supporting Columbia college.

Though Sands's three years at Columbia coincided exactly with the three years of war and the depressing state of Columbia, these distractions seemed not to hamper his education.

Classical languages and literature were then the keystones of Columbia's curriculum. This suited Sands, who had a life-long interest in the classics and earned a reputation

as one of America's best classical scholars. Dr. Mason stressed teaching the classics "not merely as the authorities of language, but as models of thought and style."[4] His method was evidently successful with Sands, for classical allusions and phrases permeated his speech and writing. An anonymous critic said after his death that his classical "knowledge had a strong influence not only in enriching his conversation . . . but in affording an abundance of illustration which he used with discrimination and taste in his writings."[5] Besides the classics, Sands studied English composition and literature, speech (declamation), history, geography, ethics, philosophy, mathematics(algebra and trigonometry), natural science, astronomy, and psychology ("analysis of intellectual powers").

Sands apparently did well in this whole range of subjects, even science and math. Bryant points out that "He mastered the various branches of mathematics, taught at Columbia College, with the same ease and the same readiness of comprehension as his favorite classics, and the success with which he pursued them, is a proof rather of a capacity than an inclination for acquiring them."[6] At the end of his junior year, the Faculty of Arts awarded him "the book" at the commencement exercises. The reward of a book was another of Dr. Mason's innovations for academic improvement at Columbia. A special examination for honors was held once a year and top students received "books of definite value to be 'conferred in the most public and impressive manner.'"[7] At his own graduation

the next year, he delivered the valedictory address, another honor.[8]

As Bryant suggests, Sands attained these honors as much by natural genius as by scholarly diligence. As a boy of about fourteen, he probably found it difficult to stick to the books when so much was going on outside: "I am no scholar," he reflected later, "perseverance was never one of my virtues."[9] We can almost picture him looking out of a window in one of the study rooms on the upper floor of the college building which stood on a hill two blocks from the busy Hudson River: "The student's clouded eyeballs roam, / Bent idly on the ponderous tome."[10] Sands was probably writing from personal experience when he penned these lines for the introduction to his juvenile, verse romance The Bridal of Vaumond.

The Peithologian Society

Fortunately we have a fair picture of Sands while at college through the records and publications of the Peithologian Society, a cultural fraternity sponsored by Columbia. In a time when there were no athletic programs, student government organization, or Greek letter fraternities, student extra-curriculur activities centered in the college literary societies. The Peithologian Society had been formed in 1806, four years after its only rival, the Philolexian Society. Each society had a room in the college, and these soon became the centers of student life. Their rivalry was a chief source of school spirit. The History of Columbia University notes with interest "that the color of the Philolexian Society was

white and the color of the Peithologian blue, and that the two together make the 'Colors of Columbia, the dashing White and Blue'" (p. 93).

The Peithologians, whose "principle object [was] the improvement of its members in Oratory, Debate, and Composition," met every Friday evening.[11] Members had to be "Students of Arts in Columbia College" and without any connection, past or present, with the Philolexian Society. Students receiving a B.A. degree were awarded honorary membership and thereafter paid no dues. The members were divided into four groups or "classes," the plan being that at each meeting,

> the members of one class shall deliver orations, original or selected; those of another shall hand in essays, and the two remaining classes shall debate, one on the affirmative and the other on the negative of the question selected. The order shall be arranged so that every class shall perform each of the above duties once in four weeks.[12]

Besides the usual offices of president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, two or three critics were elected semi-annually. The critics evaluated the essays handed in, and judged the debates and orations. They were thus responsible for the intellectual quality maintained by the club, which in turn determined how well the club met its principal objective.

Sands's popularity is indicated by the many offices he held during his three years as a Peithologian. He was elected secretary at the first election after his initiation, and from then on held either the office of vice-president or president; except for one term during his junior year, he was

a critic. It was possible to be critic while holding another office.

Besides the obvious leadership opportunities and practice in criticism, the Peithologian Society was important to Sands for the friendships he developed there. Serving as secretary while Sands was president was John Neilson, Jr., whose father was a prominent New York physician and whose mother was a Bleecker, an old Knickerbocker family. Although he was four months older than Sands, he was two years behind him in college. Neilson's quiet, gentle manner, refined taste and sense of humor appealed to Sands, and Neilson became one of his closest and most enduring friends.

But even more congenial to his spirit was James Wallis Eastburn, son of the New York publisher.[13] Though two years older than Sands, he was a year behind him in college. Eastburn served as secretary of the Peithologians while Sands was vice-president, but more importantly, they served together for a year and a half as critics. This provided opportunity for the two to work out their critical ideas and aesthetic theories, an important element for their future collaboration. They were good for each other: Eastburn was naturally timid and reserved, while Sands had a good bit of fire and was somewhat of an exhibitionist. On any project they approached, Sands provided the passion and drive, while Eastburn kept things on a steady, even keel. Jane Tiquin sums up this balance well: "His [Sands's] imagination was easily fired but his nature was so impulsive and vacillating that he needed a

quieting, steadying influence to carry anything through to successful conclusion. This influence Eastburn supplied."[14] As Sands himself put it, Eastburn's "example checked my wider range" (Quoted by Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 4). Later in his career, Bryant was to take Eastburn's place as a steadying influence.

Sands's collaboration with Eastburn began in their second year at college with The Moralist, a literary periodical sponsored by the Peithologian Society and probably published by Eastburn's father. The title was inspired by the eighteenth-century essayists, whom the Peithologians strove to imitate. The Moralist, however, shared the fate of several other periodicals of the time--only one number was published, of which there is no extant copy.

The next year (1815), Sands and Eastburn tried again, this time publishing for the Peithologians a periodical entitled Academic Recreations. The name and purpose borrowed the part of their weekly program which followed the orations, essays, and debate. As the "Constitution and Bylaws" defined it: "The Academic Recreations shall consist of original essays and communications from the members, and shall be purely literary, to the exclusion of politics and personality" (p. 15).

The introductory article, probably written by Sands, summed up the purpose: "We neither look for emolument nor fame. Enough will it be if our feeble efforts can contribute to amuse, though for a moment, to expand the bud of youthful

talent, to improve in matter and in mind, in head and in heart."[15] As with other of Sands's early literary efforts and even the Peithologian Society itself, this publishing project was a conscious effort to improve his compositional skills. Sands already seems interested in becoming an author. Six numbers of the periodical, each a 48 page duodecimo, were published by James Eastburn, Sr., from February through July, 1815. The project apparently died with Sands's graduation 1 August 1815.

Contributions were anonymous, identified only by an initial or a Latin pseudonym. Verplanck says Sands "contributed a large proportion both in prose and verse: ("Memoir," p. 5). With one exception, the only initial found in both the prose and poetry sections of the magazine is "X." Presumably, then, the signature "X" stands for Sands. If this is so, then Sands contributed nine of the thirty-five articles found in the six issues of Academic Recreations. His greatest single effort was a five-part essay on "The Origin, Progress and Perfection of Romantic Fiction both in Prose and Verse." This survey is largely literary history and contains virtually nothing of critical importance. His other articles were "On the Contemplation of the Beauties of Nature," and "Female Talent, with a few remarks on the influence of females in society." Besides the introductory essay, the only other thing Sands probably wrote was "Petition of the Carrier," a humorous note concerning the request for new shoes by the carrier who delivered the magazine to customers--an obviously facetious,

tongue-in-cheek reference to the magazines small number of subscribers and an early example of Sands's peculiar brand of humor.

The final quarter of each issue was devoted to "Original Poetry." The six issues contain sixteen poems, half of them by "X" or Sands. Most of them are mediocre productions, but they do give an early indication of Sands's poetic interests: nature poems and romantic narratives about remote or legendary lands or people. Nearly all of Sands's later poetry falls into these same two categories.

Typical of the verse romances is "Athlin and Anna, or the Legend of the Isles," supposedly "a fragment of a Scottish Tale," obviously inspired by Sir Walter Scott. Scott's great popularity and influence in America were becoming obvious in 1815. Sands was already looking toward the Indian as a source of material, as indicated by "Athula; an Indian Tale."

The other poems are unremarkable nineteenth-century nature poems, even down to the titles: "Evening Hymn," "Ode to Music," and "Sunset." The best of these, the "Evening Hymn," begins with a familiar ring:

> Hail to the evening star on high!
> Hail to the shades of night descending.
> Hail to the tints of yonder sky,
> With the dim, sombrous landscape blending.
>
> The bird has sought his mossy nest,
> The woods scarce feel the breeze's motion;
> All nature owns the reign of rest,
> Lulled by the murmur of the ocean. (P. 238)

The simple abab rime-scheme seems appropriate for a poet in his apprenticeship. Phrases like "mossy nest" reflect the

reluctance among American poets to give up eighteenth-century diction for Wordsworth's ideas of simplicity. In this respect the poem is typical of much early American poetry which wrapped Romantic ideas in neo-classic diction.[16]

The youth of the authors is readily apparent throughout Academic Recreations; nearly everything smacks of the composition class. Verplanck, usually hyperbolic in his praise, discreetly sums up the project of the Peithologians: it "did credit to their scholarship and taste" ("Memoir," p. 5). Yet we have to admire this sincere attempt at self-improvement. Columbia University, it should be noted, still prizes Academic Recreations as the first printed student periodical at Columbia.

Sands received his B.A. degree from Columbia on 1 August 1815. At the same time he was given "a diploma of Honorary Membership" by the Peithologians, whose records show that Sands regularly attended their meetings for the next three years and took an active part in the society. He frequently participated in the weekly debates and won an average of two out of three times. Manton Eastburn, James Eastburn's younger brother and a good friend of Sands, was president for part of the time Sands attended meetings of the society, and this fact may account, in part, for his continued participation. In 1816 and 1817, Sands delivered an oration at the public celebration or "Exhibition of the Society" which was held every April. In 1818, Sands reported his activities to James Eastburn:

> I have written a prologue, epilogue and three orations for the Exhibition of the Society, . . . which as Manton and the other honorary members have given themselves very great airs, is likely to be very disgraceful to the Society. I wrote a fiery declamation on the Sublime for one youth; and he speaks it so softly that one would think it was on the strength of milk and water--and another on absurdities, which the orator delivers like a Methodist sermon.[17]

About the same time, Sands did some other ghost writing, largely sermons "written in an animated and perhaps florid style." Verplanck reports that they "were much admired, when delivered in the pulpit with good emphasis and discretion, to congregations who little suspected to whom they were indebted for their edification. One of them,at least, has been printed under the name of the clergyman by whom it was delivered" ("Memoir," p. 7).

One of the addresses which Sands delivered before the Peithologians, they later saw fit to publish. This was a memorial given "on the occasion of the death of their fellow-member James S. Watkins, M.D."[18] Dr. Watkins died of tuberculosis, which he contracted from nursing his father who died shortly before him. At an extra meeting of the society, Sands was "unanimously elected to deliver a funeral oration" which "medical students [were] allowed to attend."[19] In style, the address has a great deal of rhetorical flourish which the Peithologians would admire, but in content, Sands chose a rather mature, non-sentimental approach. Manton Eastburn headed the committee which decided to have the address printed at an expense to the members of $14.12½. Sands's name was attached to this publication of his speech, and thus

in 1817, his name appeared in print for the first time.

Sands continued to attend the meetings of the Peithologian Society until the middle of 1818, at which time two of his best friends, Manton Eastburn and John Neilson, graduated and left the society. By this time, Sands was himself heavily involved with several publishing and literary projects. In the same year, 1818, Sands also received the M.A. degree from Columbia, an honor bestowed after three years on those alumni with good records and with potential for future success.[20] With new students taking the places of Sands and his old friends and with Sands having received the highest degree Columbia offered, he severed most of his connections with his alma mater.

Law vs. Literature

Sometime during Sands's sixteenth year, probably around the time of his graduation in August, he was fitted for glasses. He had been near-sighted since childhood, and most likely the heavy eyestrain involved with his college studies caused his myopic condition to worsen. Only those who have been near-sighted from childhood and who can recall the astounding, new world that opens up to them with their first pair of glasses can understand Sands's feeling as he saw details like the stars for the first time. That first view of the stars, he recalled, "filled him with the sublimest emotions."[21]

It was a good thing Sands had his eyesight corrected, because he went directly from the volumes of classics to the fine print of law books. Soon after his graduation in 1815,

Sands began the study of law with David B. Ogden, a distinguished New York lawyer.

According to Verplanck, "He entered upon his new course of study with an ardour and lively curiosity not very common among young law students, who have ever been 'smit with the love of sacred song,' or familiar with the delights of elegant literature" ("Memoir," p. 5). Apparently Sands was intellectually challenged by the subtle complexities of law. He learned to reverence common law and called those advocating codification and reform of the law heretics. In a lighthearted essay on the subject written after his admission to the bar, he alleged that if Jeremy Bentham and other reformers had "been born under the Old Testament dispensation, and raised in the Land of Promise, they would have been equally uproarious for codifying the moral law, and appointing a committee to revise Deuteronomy and Leviticus" ("Memoir," p. 6). His love of legal studies was eloquently stated in a letter to James Eastburn:

> I am now making an abstract of Coke upon Littleton and do actually feel as much interested in it, as I once was in the Fatal Revenge, on Henry IV. Certainly . . . there is no study in which those two grand faculties of intellect reason and memory are so much exercised, as law. Venerable name! Pettifoggers have trod in its temple and sullied its Parian marble, and villains have wove their filmy cobwebs around its walls, but the statues of Cicero and Hortensius, of Montesquieu, Coke, Hale, Blackstone, and Hamilton and thousand others, are towering in all their dignity and still the mighty fabric rears its majestic head, the prop and the glory of the earth.[22]

But we have here, in the first sentence of the above quotation, a hint of a struggle going on in Sands's mind

during the winter of 1816-1817, his second year of law. It appears that he was trying to do too many things at once. Besides studying law, he attempted to keep up with his classical studies, write poetry, do a good bit of "light reading," and play an active part in the Peithologian Society as an honorary member. On top of it all, his "natural complexion" or "mental inertia" caused him to do none of them justice. Speaking of writing, he told Eastburn, "All the ardour of composition fails. My pen drops from my hand, I throw the papers off one side--fly to something else--and this is generally soon abandoned."[23] Further on in the letter he reports: "I have determined upon an intellectual regeneration." Then he announces a corollary to his reform: "I have almost made a determination to give up Poetry. For I am convinced that to produce any thing worthy of posterity of any size, all the powers of the mind and all the attention must be devoted to it."

Apparently he was deciding to narrow his field of interests; thus, at least temporarily, he decided to give up literature for law. It was during the same winter that the following verses--which resemble William Blackstone's "Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse,"--were written:

> Farewell, delusive dreams! I ask now
> The wreath that Crowns the immortal poet's brow,
> Bought with a lingering pang of hope deferred,
> While glad success in his cold urn interred,
> Wakes not her taper's trembling brilliancy,
> Till on his vision bursts eternity!
>
> Far other prospects open on me now,
> Wild wastes and mountains bleak with rugged brow,--
> A mazy path that time hath ever strewed

> With tangled weeds, and many a bramble rude;
> Where patient toil alone the end can win,
> This journey ever seeming to begin.
> But, oh! how glorious is the meed obtained,
> By honest labour and by virtue gained.
> Who would not mount to live in deathless fame,
> And link his own with Tully's honored name;
> A prouder boast than conquered armies tell,
> Or vanquish'd realms, a victor's praise that swell.[24]

Apparently the reason for choosing law over literature was to have fame while he lived instead of after his death.

His promise to avoid poetry did not last long, for he enthusiastically announced to Eastburn a month or two later that he had "finished two parts of the 'Bridal of Vaumond.'"[25] However this winter of his discontent is interesting in light of his final decision to give up law in favor of literature--for him, the two apparently never could exist together. Much the same thing had happened a decade earlier to that first Knickerbocker author, Washington Irving.

The Bridal of Vaumond

The Bridal of Vaumond, which Sands mentioned to Eastburn, was a verse romance Sands had begun four years earlier in college. This gothic tale is in the irregular measure of Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel. Sands described his Faustian hero to Eastburn as,

> A man gifted by nature with all the exquisites of ugliness, crookedness and corporeal & mental deformity, the object of feminine aversion, masculine contempt, and loathed even by his own parents, [who] was tempted by friends in a repining mood and made a compact with them, the conditions of which were ex parte diaboli, that his infernal highness should give the wretch beauty, rank, riches, honour etc. and ex altera parte, that the wretch should own no other master, join in no holy right, &c and finally resign his body & soul to the devil.[26]

The poem is divided into three parts, each of which contains four scenes. A proem in Spenserian stanza sets the scene in twelfth-century Sicily:

> O'er her green hills and plains with glory clad,
> Mid dark forests of her giant mound,
> Where ruin marches in the vineyard glad
> And his dire steps since nature's birth resound,
> A rhymer wander'd; --he survey'd each bound,
> Till his tir'd eyes in weary slumbers close--
> Yet still the mountain's [Aetna's] roar re-echo'd round,
> Still fleeting visions wake in his repose:
> And there this wilder'd dream, yet all connected rose. (P. 14)

The sleeping "rhymer" dreams of Vaumond, whose compact with the evil spirits of Mt. Aetna is reiterated in scene I. In the next scene, the beautiful Isabel in her castle dreams of her lover, a young nobleman named Lodowick. At the tournament, which is the topic of the third scene, Lodowick and a mysterious black knight "tilt it long and furiously." Vaumond, wearing "armour forged by immortal hands" wins and claims Isabel as his reward.

In Part II, the reluctant Isabel is given an "infernal decoction" by Vaumond at a banquet. Suddenly she has an "uncontroulable passion" for Vaumond, much to the concern of Lodowick who is dancing with her. Gages are thrown down and a single combat arranged. Lodowick tries a secret interview with Isabel, but is rejected. He returns to his castle, where he is seized, spirited away, and thrown into a dungeon.

The dungeon, Part III reveals, is in the bowels of Mt. Aetna. After an earthquake, Lodowick escapes his dungeon and frantically searches for a way out of the mountain. He crosses a patch of boiling lava (described as "bubbling hell")

on a bridge that collapses as soon as he gets off. Finally he stumbles upon "The mountain spirits' trysting place:"

> And there was of flame a crawling ring
> Their giddy circuiting;
> All around it snakes were hissing
> Slimy folds in fold caressing;
> Lizards dragg'd their naseous mire
> Creeping countless round the fire;
> Living members there he spied,
> Sever'd from corses putrified
> And these around the circle leapt;
> But from the liquid trunk corrupt,
> Where loathing worm no longer supt,
> A myriad slimy insects crept. (Pp. 119-20)

This description of the evil spirits of Mt. Aetna reflects Sands's style throughout the poem, a style which is a creditable schoolboy imitation of Milton's grand, Latinate style. Sands's letters to Eastburn about this time show that he was much impressed with Milton's work, especially the shorter poems.[27]

Lodowick finds Vaumond consulting with the above-described evil spirits. He screams with rage and suddenly finds himself free, outside of Mt. Aetna. Lodowick then travels through Sicily, which gives Sands more opportunity to exercise his descriptive powers. Lodowick recuperates with a peasant who tells how a fiend caused he and his wife to have a misshapen son:

> The child grew up of dwarfish size,
> Huge feet, crook'd legs, and goggle eyes,
> With low-bent back and monstrous head,--
> Such was the fruit of the marriage bed. (P. 135)

Lodowick takes the peasant with him as he travels on.

Meanwhile Vaumond, who can not take part in a religious ceremony, arranges an occult wedding. Another earthquake (an

easy way out of plotting difficulties) breaks up the wedding and Lodowick saves Isabel. In the final scene, Lodowick and Vaumond again meet in tournament. After a furious battle, Lodowick wins by finding a cross which he swings at Vaumond. This breaks the spell and turns Vaumond back into the hideous creature he was originally:

> Ha! --where that harness'd champion now?--
> An elf, all wrinkled, crook'd, and gray,
> Crouching beneath the cross upstarted--
> That mighty form hath passed away,
> Andlike unreal light departed! (P. 167)

He dies soon after being struck by the cross. Vaumond is, of course, the misshapen son of the peasant.

The plot was much better in its conception, as outlined in a letter to Eastburn, than in its execution. The basic conflict is not convincing or compelling: consequently, there is little suspense or interest. The line of the action is hard to follow: lack of background information on setting and character relationships, a constant use of other names and titles for the principal characters, and the abundant classical allusions bewilder the reader. The foggy plot is further clouded with the peasant subplot and another involving a page who is really a former girlfriend of Vaumond. It is hard to believe Ms. Tiquin's charge that Bridal is "a rather transparent and faulty imitation" of The Three Brothers, an 1803 novel by Joshua Pickersgill.[28] Had Sands been borrowing a plot, it seems he could have avoided some of the confusion which exists in Bridal.

More likely, the inspiration came from Matthew G. Lewis's

drama One O'clock (a recasting of his opera Wood Demon), which was published in New York in 1813, near the end of Sands's first year in college. Lewis's work was based on Pickergill's twist of the Faustian theme--a hunchback selling his soul to the Devil in exchange for beauty. Sands obviously read Lewis's drama, for, in a footnote, he admits borrowing from him the idea of swinging a cross at the devil's disciple to break the spell and transform him back into a hunchback. Sands heavily documented all his sources in 11 pages of notes at the end of the poem. But other than the basic idea, nothing else seems to have been borrowed.

Apparently Sands was intrigued by the device of a hunchback selling his soul for beauty, but he saw in it only potential for the plot of a romance, not the weighty theological and philosophical implications which appealed to Lord Byron. That great Romantic had long been attracted to it, possibly because his lame foot caused him to feel an affinity with the hero, and he began to explore the implications of such a Faustian deal in his dramatic fragment, "The Deformed Transformed" (1824). Sands, never deeply philosophical, made nothing of the larger implications of such a bargain as the hunchback made with the Devil.

In college, Sands began writing what probably was intended to be a lengthy poem with several subplots, but abandoned the whole thing after several thousand lines. Early in 1817, during a winter of loneliness because of Eastburn's absence and boredom and despair over doing nothing creative, Sands

again took up the poem. He revised the plot and finished writing the poem during the spring and summer. Part of the plotting problem came from not reworking the first part of the poem thoroughly enough to make it match his new conception of the plot.

James Eastburn, away at school in Bristol, Rhode Island, encouraged Sands by letter to finish the poem. He evidently continued his encouragement when the two were together during the summer vacation of 1817. In the "Introductory Epistle" to Part III, which is obviously dedicated to Eastburn, Sands claimed that if the last part of Bridal was better than the first, it was because Eastburn had not been present when the poem was begun:

> Thou wert not near when first the chords I woo'd;
> My heart retir'd in its own solitude . . .
> [And] droop'd until thy presence cheer'd the bard,
> Thyself its inspiration and its guard. (Bridal, p. 105)

When Sands's "heart retir'd in its own solitude" very little could be produced. He depended for inspiration on the encouragement and approval of others and collaboration with someone else, whether it be just the sharing of ideas or the actual division of labor.

Not only did Eastburn encourage Sands to complete the poem, but he probably also arranged with his father to have it published. Sands finished the poem at the end of the summer and the 186 page duodecimo was published by James Eastburn, Sr., in September, 1817.

Though the plot is weak and the reader is left with the impression that Sands finished the poem only because he had

started it, Sands did produce some fine verse. Much of it, to be sure, is as pedestrian as one might expect from a fourteen-year old in college, but there are several sparkling passages, usually descriptive in nature. But the best poetry is found in the introductory epistles which precede each of three parts. The first one is probably directed to Washington Irving, to whom "This Romance is Respectfully Inscribed by the Author." There was no apparent connection between Sands and Irving, who was in Europe at this time. Sands never directly mentions Irving,[29] but most likely he shared the then current opinion that Irving was America's best author. Sands, coming from a similar background and hoping for a comparable career, most likely felt an affinity with the famous Knickerbocker; and, of course, if he could gain the recognition of the country's greatest author, so much the better. Irving was later kind enough to say the work "shewed great poetical promise."[30] But generally relations between Sands and Irving were as cold as they were between Irving and most of the other New York authors.[31]

That it "displays . . . considerable talent for versification" was about the nicest thing the anonymous reviewer for the Analectic Magazine could say about Bridal. In an otherwise scathing review, Sands is taken to task for imitating Scott and Byron. The reviewer, obviously one of the early advocates for a national literature, not only dislikes imitating non-American authors, but also the using of foreign materials:

> For addicted as our reading population is to the laudable custom of admiring every thing which has crossed the Atlantic, still it has sometimes exhibited a little nausea at finding the same kind of dish served up by American cooks, without alteration of a single ingredient; and that when so boundless a variety of home materials was before them.[32]

The critic then offers an explanation for the obvious superiority of the introductory poems:

> The introductory epistles, where he speaks after his own manner, and does not servilely copy foreign poetry, are the best part of the book, and in one of them he exhibits very respectable powers of description. . . . He is evidently capable of appreciating and representing our natural scenery: all that is wanting is to give it a moral interest (p. 124).

Sands evidently took this advice to heart; henceforth he seldom used foreign material, and he became one of America's foremost proponents of a national literature. Furthermore, he "never referred to this early publication in conversation, but with apparent dislike," according to Verplanck ("Memoir," p. 8). The review cut Sands to the quick, and, while it only dampened his enthusiasm for poetry slightly, it was an important determinant of Sands's philosophy of literary criticism: he always avoided harsh criticism of new authors.

Other reviewers found things to like about the poem. Bryant sums up most of them when he praises "the facility of versification, the brilliancy of many of the conceptions, and the daring wildness of imagery."[33] The English paid it high tribute in Blackwood's Magazine by calling it one of the three "finest transatlantic poetic compositions we have seen."[34] But Irving's casual comment, that it "shewed great poetical promise," probably best sums up the importance of

the poem. Readers of Bridal, then and now, find it an interesting but second-rate romance, but the quality of verse does give an indication of better poetry to come. And Irving and other readers were correct, for Sands and Eastburn began Yamoyden, their most important poem, immediately after the publication of The Bridal of Vaumond. It thus was an important part of Sands's literary apprenticeship.

CHAPTER III

THE ESSAYIST:
BROTHER BOB AND THE LITERARY CONFEDERACY

The gregariousness which was typical of neo-classic artists and intellectuals manifested itself best in the clubs they formed for aesthetic and social purposes. The Scottish critics and philosophers had the Poker Club, later the Select Society, and the Friday Club. In London, authors and artists gathered around Samuel Johnson. In Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin helped start the Junto, a club devoted to singing, wine-drinking, and self-improvement.

New York had its Drone, Calliopean, and Friendly Clubs. The usual New York club, explains literary historian Eleanor Scott, "aimed at promoting friendship and good conversation, intellectual development, literary cultivation through frequent meetings devoted to debate and oratory, reading aloud, original compositions in poetry and prose, all presided over by the keen and candid critic."[1]

The Literary Confederacy, a club formed by Sands and three other friends soon after their graduation from college, was patterned after the New York literary clubs. The Literary Confederacy met weekly to socialize and exchange essays or other original compositions. These they recorded in a

manuscript periodical called The Aeronaut. The thirteen volumes of Aeronaut papers supplied material for two series of newspaper essays, for dozens of contributions to the Literary Journal, and for their own periodical of satire, St. Tammany's Magazine. The activities of the Confederates were recorded in a journal called Aeronautica. The Literary Confederacy allowed Sands to continue a form of collaboration which he had been introduced to and grown fond of among the Peithologians.[2]

Organization and Membership of the Literary Confederacy

The Literary Confederacy grew out of an organization formed during the winter of 1815-1816 for "the purpose of improvement in literary acquirements."[3] This group, which was probably called Societas Athenieusis, never really got going, "owing to the want of cordial agreement amongst some of the members and an evident indifference to the interests of the institution." Only four members were present at its last meeting--Richard R. Ward, Robert C. Sands, Samuel W. Greene and James W. Eastburn--and their conversation centered on a method for improving their literary abilities. "The idea of a periodical essay was started, and unanimously adopted; and Mr. J. W. Eastburn was requested to furnish a name, and to write the introductory paper."

Eastburn chose the name Aeronaut for their periodical. He explained the meaning of the name in the first article contributed to the Aeronaut which was read on 18 May 1816.[4]

Eastburn evidently thought the chariot of Icarus (Aeronaut), soaring an even distance between Earth and sun, typified what they wanted to do in their essays:

> We wish only to follow the sublime aspirations of those who in their invention of their airy car, thought to travel over every region, & trace every sea. The aeronaut can only catch a glimpse as he passes along of what is beneath. This we desire to do; to match a few rays of the scenes we may behold, and be enabled to make a portrait of them, faint indeed, but sufficient for our purpose. The Aeronaut is confined by no limits. . . . Nothing external is concealed from his observation. Nothing superficial can escape his notice. (Aeronaut, I, 8)

The modern air traveler probably better understands what they were striving for than they themselves did. Eastburn continued to elaborate on their metaphoric title and purpose:

> We mean not to pretend to take deep & inside views of things; but to skim over the surface, & make use of what we may happen to behold. If we cannot instruct others, we will at least strive to amuse them; and if we fail even in that, we shall have the satisfaction of reflecting that such was our intention. (Aeronaut, I, 8)

The plan was to meet once a week to hear an essay by one of the four members. Then the author of the article was to transcribe his contribution in the Aeronaut MS. During the last of May and through June and July of 1816, members entered essays in the manuscript periodical once a week or more often. By the end of July eighteen papers filled the first 300 page manuscript book. Eastburn quite accurately assessed its value the next year in his "Succinct Account . . . of the Literary Confederacy":

> The first volume may be considered as on some accounts the least interesting of the whole work. It was not likely that a few inexperienced young men should at once adopt the requisite style and manner of essayists.

> Their subjects at that time were quaint, and their style, perhaps more heavy, than afterwards. . . . But at the same time, the first volume will always be regarded by the association with interest, as it shows the germ and promise of the future, and dates the progress of their minds.

From August until the following May (1817) the Literary Confederacy met only once a month due to summer vacations and James Eastburn's absence during the winter. Upon Eastburn's return in May from Rhode Island Seminary, the Confederates took stock of their situation. Samuel Greene, New York businessman and former Columbian, had never contributed to the Aeronaut, and, "as his business precluded the regularity of his attendance," he was dropped from membership.[5] Eastburn's brother, Manton, was chosen in Green's place in order to keep the original number of four, which the Confederates seemed to like.

The only non-Columbian and non-Peithlogian was Richard Ray Ward (1795-1893), the oldest member of the group. He was a lineal descendant of Roger Williams and his father had distinguished himself as a Lieutenant-Colonel during the Revolution. Raised and schooled in Rhode Island, Ward came to New York in 1816 to begin a law practice. Sands probably met him in connection with his own law studies. Although a lawyer by profession, Ward was an antiquarian in his spare time. He was a close friend of New York artists and authors, but never produced anything of literary value. Sands, the Eastburn brothers, and Ward, then, made up the membership of the Confederacy from 1817 to 1819, which proved to be the most productive period for the club.

In 1819 Dr. John Neilson, Jr., took the place of James Eastburn after Eastburn's death. In college Neilson had been a friend of Sands and the Eastburns. Soon after Eastburn's death the Confederacy lost its purely literary character; however they met regularly on a social basis at least until 1830. Frederick DePeyster, quasi-historian of the Confederates, says that "half a century later [the original compact of friendship] was in full vigor between the two surviving members, Bishop [Manton] Eastburn and Mr. Ward."[6]

In 1823 the members drew up legal articles outlining the "principles and objects" of the Literary Confederacy, thus making official what had formerly been a gentlemen's agreement.[7] In the first article they agreed to "reserve a friendly communion in all the vicissitudes of life and endeavour, by all proper means, to advance our mutual and individual interests." To accomplish this, they agreed to "candidly advise each other on every subject according to our best judgment and receive calmly the advice of each other." Naturally they were to "support the character and good fame of each other" and be loyal. It is the second article of their agreement however, that makes their endeavour of interest to American literary history:

> That we will, jointly and severally, so far as is consistent with our several avocations and duties, labour to promote the cause of learning and literature in the United States, according to those convictions and ideas we have always jointly entertained on the subject.

The whole idea of the Confederacy was to improve their writing by practice and eventually produce something that would improve

the state of literature in America.

By-laws provided for the operation of the Confederacy: "Whenever any two or more of the members shall be within two miles of each other, for any length of time exceeding one week, they shall meet together." A paper was to be read at each meeting. Meetings and papers were rotated among the four so that each member would entertain and contribute a paper once a month. The papers were to be constructively criticized by the group as a whole and then transcribed into the manuscript book by the author. Detailed minutes of the meeting were to be taken and recorded by the host in Aeronautica. The oldest member was to be chairman; thus, Ward, who outlived all the other members, was the one and only chairman. New members were to be admitted only upon the occasion of the death of an original member.

The members of the Confederacy come alive in Aeronautica, the record of their weekly meetings. Unfortunately, only the minutes from 1822 through 1829 survive, the period after most of their writing and publishing had been done; however these provide a fascinating, intimate account of New York life and letters in the 1820's.

Sands's account of the 28 December 1821 meeting illustrates well the casual good times which characterized the confederates' activities:

> It being understood that the meeting was to be held at Brother Manton's this evening, the fraternity accordingly all punctually assembled there, but to their great astonishment it appeared that Manton had gone to dine at Mr. Hallidays, without giving due notice of the same--so growling all the way at Brother

> Manton, they repaired to Brother Bob's [Sands's] office, where fortunately there chanced to be a good fire. The worthy Chairman [Ward] having taken his seat, business was entered upon by each of the Brother's smoking a segar. This being concluded, the conduct of Brother Eastburn was then commented upon, and after a long and patient discussion in which Brother Eastburn was treated with all brotherly kindness and affection, it was unanimously resolved that he had behaved in a very ungenteel manner towards the Brothers, and that on the succeeding evening a severe reprimand should be administered to him by the Chairman.
>
> Brother Ward then read to the Confederates a very remarkable dream, or vision, which he had experienced a few nights before: and in which the future destinies of the Confederates were traced in a wonderful manner. This piece was in Ward's best style and gave great satisfaction to all his auditors. Brothers Sands and Neilson also read several interesting and amusing pieces, which I [Sands] have now forgotten.
>
> After the regular business of the Society was concluded, a committee was appointed to determine in what manner the Confederates should spend the remainder of the evening; and after mature deliberation it was settled that they should repair to a certain house in Nassau Pt. for the purpose of eating buck wheat cakes & drinking coffee. The Brothers accordingly came to this said house, where they were entertained in a sumptuous manner by the lady of the house, & two pretty little girls her daughers. The coffee was exquisite, the fried ham delightful, and the pancakes beyond compare. During the repast we were entertained by the innocent prattle of the little girls, who waited on us like a pair of Jebes. And Brother Ward the Jupiter of our party found his bowels of benevolence so moved by the pancakes, and the charming children, that he made each of them a present of a quarter of a dollar, over and above the cost of the supper. The Brothers, then, after a short walk, by the way of settling the vivies, repaired each to his proper habitation in a sober & sedate manner. (Aeronautica, pp. 1-5)

Sands appears to be the only one still taking the original commitment to literary production seriously in 1822.

> 21 June 1822: After the reading of the minutes of the preceding evening, brother Sands produced a comico-serious poem, the subject of which the present writer [Eastburn] has some how or other just at this moment forgotten--but which, being in Spenserian

> measure, had an admirable effect--and was allowed by all except its author, to be very fine--and one of his Chefs-d'ouvre--Brother Sands proceeded, in the absence of other entertainment, to make a motion; and his motion was, that brother John should be appointed a committee to review a recent play of M.M. Noah Esqr, entitled, "The Grecian Captives"--for that it displayed most gross, palpable, and intolerable ignorance of dramatic laws, and even common school mythology. (Aeronautica, pp. 64-65)

All productions and activities were supposed to be kept secret and Sands explained why in the minutes for the meeting on 28 June 1822:

> There is a most delicious sensation occasioned by the reflection that we have many things reserved for our own peculiar enjoyment & withheld from the commoners & are rare productions containing the very quintessance of wit & humor which the World would tremble with delight to receive locked in our strong box await our decision of their fate & spread out their charms for no other eyes than ours. A fine manuscript is to me [Sands] like a mistress whose devotion I would preserve but the moment it is thrown open to the world it becomes little better than a mere Wanton exciting & satisfying the desires of all who choose to approch her. (Aeronautica, p. 68)

During July of 1822, all the members were away from the city on vacation. At the meeting on July 26, Sands, always prone to exaggerate,

> . . . gave a description of his voyage up the North river through the Highlands. He had also been on top of the Kaats-kill mountains, & painted as vividly the beauties of their scenery, & the sublime effect of the sun's rising as seen from their top, that the Confederates, one and all, swore by Gog & Magog that they would go there in a body one of these days. Although they were too polite openly to question Brother Sands veracity, the Confeds., whose loftiest aspirations, had never carried them higher than the top of Mount Hope, & which they had hitherto considered as one of the highest mountains in the known world, were a little staggered when Brother S. told them that the Kaats-kill mountains were twenty times as high. (Aeronautica, pp. 72-73)

On 16 August 1822, the Confederates met at Sands's office

because

> Br. Sands had been confined to the House the preceding 24 hours in consequence of a bruise received by being thrown out of a waggon on his return from a visit to Eastburn's family in Weehawken. The fruits of Sands's confinement were translations in serio-comic prose from one of Metestasios plays, which Br Neilson who knows a little of Italian & Br Ward who knows nothing of it pronounced to be excellent. The verdict of the Brs was confirmed by Mr. Payne a gentleman well versed in the language of the modern Romans. (Aeronautica, pp. 78-79.

Sands attended meetings more regularly than any other Confederate but he was absent on 13 December 1822 because he "had fallen into bad company & went with them to the theatre preferring the cunning Mr. Matthews to the sprightly Dr. Neilson, the serious Dr. Manton & the sober Dr. Ward" (Aeronautica, p. 106).

With the exception of a single entry, there is nearly a six year break in the journal after the 5 February 1824 meeting. Sands writing on 27 November 1829 explained, in words that startle and amuse his biographer, that there were meetings during that period:

> Let not however the reader of this imperishable volume who with patient toil & industry may chance to decipher these chronicles, some two or three thousand years hence, by the aid maybe, of antique dictionary & lexicon, suppose that for these last seven years, the ties which once bound the brothers so closely together have become loosened or that they have had no pleasant meetings, no noches ambrosian as Blackwood says, during this long interval. On the contrary, the Brs. have met full oft during this period--sometimes in the sultry dog days, sometimes in the piercing cold of winter, frequently with pinched noses & thrilling fingers but always with warm hearts & a hearty welcome. (Aeronautica, n.p.)

In spite of what Sands says, there does seem to have been a

loosening of the ties. The light, tongue-in-cheek tone of the above Aeronautica extracts seems to indicate that the original, highly serious purposes of self-improvement and literary production had given away to mere friendly socializing. Sands was the only person regularly reading something new and original, and he may have written these without the inspiration of the Confederates. In other words, the group had lost its spirit of collaboration. They were no longer all working toward a common goal, a publishing project.

Another factor that indicates a loosening of ties, was the increasing absence of Manton Eastburn from meetings. As his pastoral duties increased, he evidently found less and less opportunity to meet with the Confederates. A "survey of absences" on 25 July 1823 showed that in a year he had been absent nineteen times, almost three times as much as the next most delinquent member. Less than six weeks before the last meeting recorded, Sands wrote: "After much conversation [with Ward] it was considered that the state of our Institution was upon the decline and that [Brothers] Manton & John were in fault" (Aeronautica, p. 161).

Furthermore, Sands found, about 1824, a new set of friends with which to collaborate: Bryant and Verplanck. Although this friendship was in the early stages of development in 1824, it soon provided the opportunities for collaboration that Sands was beginning to miss among the Confederates. Also, Sands, being as gregarious as he was, probably found more to his liking the environment of the Bread

and Cheese Club and the Sketch Club, in both of which he was a charter member. The old bond of friendship continued among the Confederates, especially between Sands and Neilson, but by 1824 the Literary Confederacy had ceased to function actively.

The heyday of the Confederates was between 1817 and 1821 during which time they filled thirteen volumes of their manuscript periodical The Aeronaut, out of which they published two series of newspaper essays, a magazine, and dozens of contributions to other magazines. The thirteen volumes contain 278 articles, usually running about 1500 words each. Brother Bob, as Sands was known to the Confederates, wrote 107 numbers and collaborated with other nembers on eighteen more; thus Sands was responsible for nearly half of the literary output of the Confederacy.[8] The next most productive member was James Eastburn, who wrote or collaborated on seventy articles before his death in 1819.

The main literary purpose of the Confederates was to improve themselves as essayists, which they proposed to do by imitating the great eighteenth-century English essayists: "We are striving to catch a spark of that etherial flame which plays around the departed glories of our illustrious models [Johnson, Addison, and Steele]. We are setting out upon a career of mental improvement, and why should we not be permitted to indulge in the amusement afforded us by writing a periodical essay?"[9]

In spite of their original intention, the articles varied

widely in literary type as well as in subject matter. There were short stories like Sands's excellent "The Dervishe's Ring,"[10] essays with titles like "On Women" and "On Friendship," and articles on literary opinions and criticism, such as James Eastburn's "The Influence of Scenery." Sands was responsible for most of the classical studies, which combined literary history and translations of representative poems. Original poems by James Eastburn and Sands added variety to the collection. Letters, supposedly written to the Aeronauts by various eccentrics, were popular among the Confederates. Many of these were by Sands and were full of his humor and satire. Ward and Sands, the lawyers of the group, contributed essays on history and law, dealing with such subjects as how the aborigines got to North America, the pros and cons of the new state constitution, and prison reform. Finally, there were serious, philosophical essays like Sands's "State of Nature."

The Aeronaut thus provided a reservoir from which the Confederacy could draw for its publishing projects. Each member could choose, with the approval of the other members, which of his works would be published. Over half of the contents of the Aeronaut were eventually published.

"The Neologist"

James Eastburn in "A Succinct Account of the Origin and Progress of the Literary Confederacy," (1817) explains how the first publishing project came about:

One or two friends of the members having seen their

> productions, suggested the propriety of making them public. When proposed to the society, no opposition was found to arise; and it was at length determined to make a proposal to Theodore Dwight Esq., editor of the New York Daily Advertiser, to publish the papers of the association in his journal. He cheerfully accepted the proposal, and the whole matter was soon settled through the medium of a gentleman who agreed to act as the agent of the society.[11]

Theodore Dwight, brother of the Hartford Wit, Timothy, and newly elected editor of the Daily Advertiser, agreed to publish two essays a week, Wednesday and Saturday. Dwight also agreed to "make no alterations in them [the articles contributed] whatever, but print them according to manuscript."[12] In case the Confederates should ever want to collect their papers and publish them elsewhere, it was agreed that they should be considered proprietors of the copyright. The last article of the agreement provided for the cloak-and-dagger type anonymity that Sands so much enjoyed:

> That an entire secrecy concerning the authors should be observed, and that they should not have personal communication even with the editor, who was to remain alike ignorant of their names; and also, that the manuscripts should be preserved from the inspection of any body unconnected with the newspaper office, and returned to the authors, and that the medium of communication itself should be concealed.[13]

The term Neologist was chosen for the series, which according to James Eastburn, signified "either the wisdom or discourse of young men or a new essayist."[14] However, in the first number of "The Neologist" which was published, in the New York Daily Advertiser on Saturday, 28 June 1817, Eastburn refused to explain the name: "Of the very name we have adopted

for our paper, we shall offer no explanation." Furthermore, in his introductory essay, Eastburn refused to "sketch any plan of our undertaking," which he considered "too common and too glaring a fault in writers of periodical essays." He promised only that the essays would "be confined to no particular subject within the range of general literature [and] that all polemical discussions, and party politics [would] be excluded . . . ."[15]

Sands wrote the next number of "The Neologist," which appeared the following Wednesday, 2 July 1817. It is in many ways typical of all the numbers in the series. For one thing, it was taken verbatim from the Aeronaut as were nearly all of "The Neologist" essays, and, like them, it has an epigraph which sums up the subject: some Latin from Horace precedes an old proverb, "When you have nothing to say, say nothing." The essay itself is on silence. Sands begins with a little, light-hearted satire on the propensity of women to gossip. Silence he says, "never found a place in the canons of the female world, being directly contrary to the nature, design and influence of gynecocracy." The young bachelor, however, excluded the pretty girls: "How sweet is nonsense on a ruby lip! How it can give to insipidity flavour, and extract the venom from the sting of slander!"

This brief passage illustrates two characteristics of Sands's style. First, when he wanted to be light-hearted or humorous, he often combined poetic diction ("ruby lips") and startling, learned words like gynecocracy; although Latinate

diction was a common stylistic feature of the early nineteenth century, Sands used it excessively when having fun, which was most of the time. In serious discussions, Sands used a relatively plain, simple prose style when compared to most essayists of his day. He could overwhelm the reader with learned vocabulary when trying to be amusing or satiric, but when he had a point to make, his prose is generally clear and simple. A Knickerbocker review of Sands's Writings, most likely by the magazine's editor, Lewis Gaylord Clark, verifies this: "A prominent feature in the prose style of Mr. Sands, is its beautiful simplicity."[16]

Second, Sands generally tried to make serious topics more palatable by using humor, satire, wit, light-hearted fun or any combination thereof. In this particular instance, Sands hoped to gain interest and establish rapport with the audience, much as today's speaker might begin with a joke or anecdote.

Getting into the heart of the essay, Sands says that silence can sometimes be more sublime and expressive than any number of words. Than he shows the problems of talking when one has nothing to say: for one thing, it may lead to backbiting and defamation. Next he qualifies his admonitions on silence: "Let us be understood. By silence, we do not mean to convey the idea of want of courtesy. Humanity dictates some kind of response to every courteous interrogatory." The solution to the whole problem is to gain a wide body of knowledge through study and experience so that you will have

something worth saying when the time comes to talk. Though his ideas are not necessarily original, Sands successfully accomplishes the twin goals of the essayist: instruction and entertainment.

The essay on silence, or when to talk and when not to talk, was the first of nineteen essays Sands published in the Neologist series. These essays range from trivial topics, such as the essay on inanimate objects as exemplified by the common shirt which "is our bosom companion from our infancy," to serious literary discussions on allegory, satire, ballads, and drama. The latter are not only inherently interesting for what they say, but as early indications of Sands's developing critical theory.

In a perceptive essay on allegory, Sands startles the reader with a blunt opening: "Of all the orders of fiction, the pure allegory is least capable of exciting interest (Neologist #60, 21 January 1818). This, as he goes on to explain, is because allegory by its nature appeals more to the mind than the emotions. In his essay on drama, Sands quite accurately assesses the quality of drama in the early nineteenth century: "the drama seems, at the present day, to be at its lowest ebb" (Neologist #94, 20 May 1818). He blames the audience's love of the spectacular and bombast; he recommends more realism and a return to the natural. He ends with a patriotic pitch for a drama worthy of the new nation--another indication of Sands's concern for a national literature. Most literary historians would agree with Sands; Alexander Cowie

calls the drama of this period "meager."[17]

One of the most important essays in the Neologist series is Sands's discussion of "Ballad Poetry and Critics." Here he evaluates the literary giants of his day, Scott and Byron, in terms of elite vs. popular literature.[18] The critics, he says, can complain all they like; the people like ballad poetry and the authors will give them what they want:

> A tacit compact appears to have been entered into, between the mass, who read for pleasure, and the few, who read to abuse. The former are contented to be amused, and to take the critic's word, for the illigitimacy of their taste, and of its object; the latter, taking up the tale from each other, in regular subordination . . . chaunt over and over again the same doleful story . . . of the depravity of the public who choose to be entertained in their own way. (Neologist #67, 14 February 1818)

In other words, "The author, owning to the jurisdiction of no tribunal, but that by whose approbation or indifference he must stand or fall, laughs at the whole succession of reviewers . . . ." While Sands never endorses popular literature, he does indicate a possible value in it. "The taste of the times has produced it, and confirmed its growth. We can conveniently imagine no reason why moral instruction cannot be conveyed, sentiment expressed and genuine poetry given birth to, as well in this lower order of the epic, as in any other species of the art."

Satire, which Sands called "a useful medicine," (Neologist #33, 18 October 1817) was used by Sands for other purposes in two essays on the Forum, a popular New York debating society. He used the same florid style in satire as he did in humor:

> The renowned city of Gotham has been illuminated during the gloominess of last winter by a new constellation of worthies. A firm of mental Blacksmiths have wrought for the good of their benighted countrymen, straitened their eccentricities on the anvil of disputation, and erected conductors, to direct to a proper point, the hallucinations of mankind. All this they have done cheap and in the newest style imaginable. (Neologist #6, 17 July 1817)

After giving a few advantages of debating societies, Sands begins to list disadvantages: "the tendancy of public disputation to inflate vanity and increase self sufficiency," and the bad moral training resulting from a willingness to take any side of an issue that comes along. This leaves a man's mind "in a state of vacillation." Sands, who was himself debating regularly at this time in the Peithologian Society, argued more from peronal pique than from any intellectual or moral conviction about the danger of disputation. More likely the satire was a publicity stunt, as least it had the effect of drawing large public notice to the series. After this attack on the Forum, a lively debate was carried on between the Forum and the Literary Confederacy in the newspapers. James Eastburn summed up the affair in his "Succinct Account . . . of the Literary Confederacy":

> The Forum [satire] drew forth an animated invective from one of the offended fraternity, which Mr. Dwight refused to publish, and which, when shorn of its violent abuse, was permitted to appear in the Commercial Advertiser [sic]. It was equally devoid of wit as of candour; and the author of the production instead of injuring the Neologist, only blasoned forth his own infamy.

The result of the stir, whether intended or not, was fortunate for the brothers of the Confederacy, because other papers began running the series. Verplanck says the Neologist series

was "very widely circulated and republished in the newspapers of the day" ("Memoir", p. 9); however, only its republication in the Boston Commercial Gazette can be verified.

Besides the nineteen essays and two numbers of satire, Sands wrote or helped write fifteen other numbers containing everything from short stories to humorous poems. Altogether Sands had a hand in thirty-six of the ninety-five numbers of the Neologist series; in other words, he was responsible for 38% of the articles. Twenty-eight were entirely by Sands. James Eastburn, the next most prolific contributor, wrote or helped write thirty numbers. None of the miscellaneous fifteen articles deserve much notice except as early attempts at the literary forms Sands was later to practice with much more skill.

For example, Sands published two short stories, each in two parts. Strangely enough for the advocate of national literature, both stories are set in the Mediterranean area. The first, a "Narrative of Conloffe," introduces a middle-eastern philosopher who abhors greed. He stumbles across a valuable treasure which in turn ruins his life, causing him to rob, rape, and murder. He finally comes to his senses and destroys the treasure. Far from a notable story, it is most likely an adaptation or translation of something Sands found in his reading.

"The Story of an Athenian Pedagogue, Hippecons," on the other hand, is a much better story, full of Sands's good humor, wit, and big words (Latinate diction). An Athenian

teacher marries a gossip who loses him his pupils and ruins his life. Perplexed by what to do about her, he decides to consult the Delphian Oracle:

> On this wise expedition he set out, with much secret satisfaction at the brilliance of the idea he had started. His poverty was his protection on the journey; and the casual gratuities of the travelling merchants, enabled him to reach the country of the Crisseans. This people were then pursuing that nefarious system of depredation, which afterwards carried them to the commission of sacrilege, and to plunder with undistinguishing rapine; and which drew on them, in the end, the vengeance of the Amphictyons, and with it, the total extermination of their race. (Neologist #87, 25 April 1818)

Sands left the story unfinished. However, the following verses, entitled "Lament of Hippecons," sum up the story:

> I was wry mouthed and bandy legged,
> But no man's charity I begged.
> I didn't care for Nobody.
> Nobody, didn't care for me.
> None I injur'd, none I pleas'd,
> None cried Zen So---, when I sneez'd.
>
> I fell into a vagary
> And took a woman five feet high;
> For three days and nights, me di'
> No one was so blest as I;
> She was kind and I was pleas'd,
> She cried Zen So---, when I sneez'd.
>
> But motley yarn is spun by Fate,
> And this I found and rued too late;
> I us'd to ship, but now I'm whipt,
> And my halter can't be slipt,
> Unless a hempen cord I tie,
> Zen So---, sing, and swing, and die.
> (Neologist #87, 25 April 1818)

Humorous poetry of this type filled two numbers Sands contributed to the Neologist series. Often, humorous verse was added to one of Sands's favorite types of composition, the humorous, facetious letter, supposedly sent to the Confederates by eccentrics with names like Caleb Watchful,

Rachel Bagpipe, Solomon Grig, Bridget Simple and Lemuel Cerator.[19] These letters were the Confederacy's most common vehicle for social satire; for example, Sara Misomusicon complained about how her sensitive ears are bothered by people playing music too loud at night. A few serious, original poems, which will be considered in the next chapter, provided variety for the Neologist series.

The series ended on 23 May 1818 with the ninety-fifth number. No explanation was given; however, the fact that Sands wrote seven of the last nine numbers himself indicates that cooperation and interest in the project was dwindling. Another possible reason may be the return of James Eastburn to New York with the Yamoyden manuscript that he and Sands had been collaborating on at long distance--now they had a chance to work over the details of the poem together, a project Sands would enjoy even more than the newspaper series. In the same week that the last Neologist essay was published, Sands ended his six year connection with the Peithologian Society; perhaps he realized he was spreading himself too thin and decided to concentrate his efforts and talents on fewer projects.

Whatever the reason for the demise of the Neologist, the amazing thing is that it lasted as long as it did. Rarely did a newspaper series of essays last as long as the eleven months the Neologist spanned, and many New York magazines failed to surpass that mark. The brothers of the Confederacy, most of whom were still teen-agers, deserve credit for a

sustained effort of generally excellent prose essays. Their original purpose of pleasing and instructing their readers while improving themselves as authors was ably met with their first publishing project.

"The Amphilogist"

Nine months after publishing the last Neologist, the Literary Confederacy began another series of essays in a different newspaper, the New York Commercial Advertiser. Sands, who wrote the first number, which appeared 27 February 1819, commented on other newspaper essays and the Neologist in particular: "Among them Neologist stands most respectable in point of size and age; and we are inclined to think it rather dangerous, to deny him the palm in other respects; lest we should bring his ghost upon us, in our infancy."[20] From his anonymity, Sands could afford to pat his own back. Not being able to resist a little fun, Sands conjectures on the meaning of "Neologist": "No one was ever able to ascertain, whether his title meant 'the wisdom of children,' 'the wisdom of mush-rooms,' or 'new wisdom.' We think he combined a little of all these qualities; not denying him wisdom, however." In closing, Sands hints that the series might have ended because the public, whose tastes were inclined toward satire, grew tired of semi-formal essays: the Neologist "kept firing all his shot, over the heads of the multitude, though they prayed him to make an occasional discharge upon some of their number, to afford merriment for the rest. He gave up the ghost, it would seem, in a fit of spleen . . . ."

The title of the new series was "The Amphilogist," which probably meant nothing more than essayist number two, in reference to this being the second series of essays produced by the Confederacy. The publishing arrangements and format were the same as the previous series. Two essays were published each week, one on Wednesday, the other on Saturday. One and one-half columns was the standard length. Essays began with an epigraph and ended with an initial representing the member who wrote the number. Sands used the initial "H" for this series.

However, the new series was quite different in content. The scope of the series was briefly stated in the first number: "We intend to treat of all subjects in all styles, compatible with grammar, sense and decency; from general politics to classical criticism; from moral essays to familiar disquisitions on living manners." Sands could just as well have said that these would be the four main categories, for this sums up the fifty-one numbers of the series. In spite of what Sands had said about "firing all his shot over the head of the multitude," this series was much more scholarly and serious than its predecessor. The Neologist had offered a broad range of literary types and topics--short stories, humor, original poetry--along with the essay. The Amphilogist offered only essays.

The major ingredient of the new series was what Sands called "classical criticism." Exactly half of Sands's twenty-eight contributions belong to this category. In a typical

number Sands would take a little known classical author like Mimnermus (a sixth-century b.c. Greek) and quickly sketch the historical setting and the man's biography; the balance of the article would be made up of samples of this author's poetry which Sands had translated into English verse.

The approach is obviously simplistic; the main aim seems to be to popularize the classics. Sands, one of the country's best classical scholars, regretted the general population's lack of interest in our literary heritage, as did Mrs. Trollope a decade later: "Another obvious cause of inferiority in the national literature is the very slight acquaintance with the best models of composition . . . . I think I run no risk of contradiction, when I say that an extremely small proportion of the higher classes in America possess this familiar acquaintance with the classics."[21] In "Amphilogist: No. XLIV," Sands commented on "the sad state of literature" in the country and criticized "the dearth of intelligence." One of the avowed purposes of the Literary Confederacy was "to promote the cause of learning and literature in the United States."[22] He felt that explaining and popularizing the classics was one way of preparing the people for a respectable national literature.

The translated poetry was the most important part of each number. According to Sands, some of these authors had never before been translated into English, and were therefore inaccessible. The New York Literary Journal praised Sands for his translations when they published some of his "classical

criticism": "We cannot but observe here how much more vivid and accurate a conception we are enabled to form of the masterly genius of the ancients when it is embodied and brought before us in our vernacular tongue, and especially when embellished . . . with all the allurements of poetic imagery and melodious rhyme."[23] It is beyond the scope of this paper to judge the merits of Sands's translations; contemporary opinion, however, highly esteemed them, as the Literary Journal's comment implies.

The most ambitious endeavour in the area of "classical criticism" was the translation of Aeschylus' Prometheus Vinctus, on which Manton Eastburn and Sands collaborated. This full-length Greek drama was published in six numbers of the Amphilogist, along with "remarks on the character of Aeschylus." Some of the other classical poets featured were Sappho, Alcaeus, Steischorus, and Simonides.

With Simonides, for example, Sands gave a brief biography, categorizing him as one of the nine Greek lyric poets. Then he translated a satire on Woman which Addison, according to Sands, had done a bad job with in Spectator #209:

> The soul of changeful woman, fated
> To plague or bless us, was created
> Of different elements by heav'n
> Ere her substantial form was giv'n.
> She in whose workmanship combine
> The ingredients of the bristly swine,
> She is a slut; her house behold,
> There all things on the floor are roll'd;
> Sordid and thick with dirt decry 'er.
> Her draggled coats no waters bless,
> And fat she waxes in her grease.
> (Amphilogist #47, 2 October 1819)

Not only did Sands recast it in the modern vernacular, he

usually chose subject matter that would catch the attention of the readers. Sands wisely follows this poem with another from Simonides beginning, "Heaven sends no greater blessing to man / Than a fond and virtuous woman."

The other nine essays Sands contributed to the Amphilogist series, often contain translations of classical poetry or classical allusions. These essays are on modesty, the pleasure of memory, the origin of the American Indians, Fourth of July holidays, and justice. The last introduces a long series of essays by Brother Ward of the Confederacy on controversial points of the new state constitution and prison reform. Ward's essays constitute a major part, nearly one-fourth, of the series.

Four of Sands's contributions are satirical. The most unusual is a two part verse drama called, in its original Aeronaut form, "Apotheosis of the Literati of New York: Progress of Criticism." The setting is a cavern in the middle of a swamp. Ignorance is on a throne supported by Criticism and Oblivion. The setting reminds one of "The Fall of Hyperion," even though Keats's masterpiece was not finished until two months later. Although the drama has no literary value, it shows Sands developing some firm ideas on the nature and purpose of criticism. Criticism is personified as a dwarf, masked, wearing a hairshirt, deformed, and goggle-eyed. At one point the critics explain their origin and calling:

> Poor broken back'd lawyers, without any fees,
> Our stomachs were empty, our cheeks lean and hollow
> But, now we're as fat and as sleek as you please

We are judges and try all suits of Apollo.
We issue all process by Ignorance bid,
For we don't know nothing, and always did.[24]

Sands soon grew tired of composing the verse drama, and finishes the satire by quickly giving a summary of the speech of Criticism "stript of its slang"--another example of Sands failing to execute what he originally planned.

He characterizes his day as "the era of sham criticism." The critics' "pleasure arises from detecting real or imaginary error, and giving full flow to all the peccant humours of the system. No repast is grateful, without the prickles and hot sauce of criticism. Everybody is now qualified to censure, which is the whole of the art" (Amphilogist #37, 21 July 1819). Like most New Yorkers, Sands was against harsh criticism. He preferred constructive criticism by qualified judges. To stimulate a national literature, he believed every literary work with any promise at all ought to be encouraged by the critics.

In the other satirical piece, Sands dreams he wakes up Rip Van Winkle-fashion in early twentieth-century New York City. In the first part Sands criticizes various aspects of the city, such as City Hall, which he says had been replaced in 1899 because the original, early nineteenth-century builders, believing the city would never expand any further north, had left the back of the building rough stone.

In the second part he muses on the mutability of reputation, especially among authors. Sands explains why the average author failed to build a lasting reputation:

> Classical literature, he maintained, was no essential part of Belles Lettres; he trusted to his own creative energies, operating on the crude and indigested chaos of light reading to produce some permanent memorial of himself; he realized even in his own time that of Nothing, Nothing can come; he died; and behold he is forgotten! (Amphilogist #14, 14 April 1819)

Washington Irving, Joseph Dennie, and Joel Barlow are the only authors whose reputations have survived the century. This is effective satire, and Sands quite accurately predicts that those authors most popular with their contemporaries, would fail to achieve lasting reputations. Ironically, Sands himself so often wrote to please "the mob," as he called the public, that he has been one of those forgotten.

But there is very little satire in the Amphilogist series, and Sands explains why in the last number:

> Our essays have been extremely desultory, yet much less diversified than we originally intended. We meant to have mingled satire on living follies and vices, and a greater proportion of numbers on living manners, with the serious essays which we have mostly adhered. But in the first place, there is little or no subject for satire in our manners; which is not common to all generations, and has not been the theme of moralists, till it has become stale. (Amphilogist #51, 17 November 1819)

This, of course, was a frequent complaint of early American writers. Sands goes on to say that New Yorkers have vices, but that they need to be corrected by legislation rather than satire. He further implies that satire is incompatible with democracy. For example, a democracy allows for almost anything to be worn; therefore dress cannot be satirized.

The Amphilogist ceased on 17 November 1819. In the last number Sands announced, "We have completed the number of papers which we contemplated publishing at the commencement

of our course." Conjecture as to why the series was dropped is probably fruitless; however we do know that the close of the year 1819 was a dark period in the Literary Confederacy. James Eastburn, who had been sickly, grew weaker during November. Plans were made for he and Manton to sail for the Carribean islands in hopes of recovering his health. With the Eastburn brothers gone and with the black cloud of James's illness hanging over the Confederacy, Sands could hardly carry on the series alone. He had done the majority of the work as it was, contributing fifty-five percent of the total series.[25] Besides this, Sands was studying for his bar exams --he was admitted to the bar the following year. In the last number of the Amphilogist he also complained of "less time to devote to writing." The combination of these circumstances probably caused the series to end.

Lack of readers or public interest seems not to have been a problem, for Sands modestly remarks in the last number of the series that "The approbation of the wise and good . . . was all we hoped; and we dare to state, that we have not hoped in vain." A decade later, the early literary historian Samuel L. Knapp applauded the series saying it "gave their authors a high rank in the literary world."[26]

If indeed the young authors had earned some reputation among the New York literati, then part of their two-fold objective had been met: to improve themselves as authors and to improve the intellectual-literary climate in the United States. The Amphilogist series shows definite improvement

and maturation of style and the approbation of others confirms this progress. As far as improving the country's literary reputation goes, the next couple of years (1820-1821) saw the first signs of an important American literature with the success of Cooper and Irving. While the Amphilogist series cannot accept credit for this budding of new talent, it obviously is part of the ferment for a national literature which was brewing at this time and which eventually led, in the next two decades, to important literary productions. For Sands and his companions, the series had provided practice in writing and a reputation as promising writers; together these generated a sense of confidence and enthusiasm for other literary projects.

The Literary Journal

James Eastburn died on his trip to the Carribean. To compensate for this severe loss, the Literary Confederacy almost immediately elected John Neilson, Jr. to take his place. Meetings were held more regularly, minutes were kept more conscientiously, and another publishing venture was undertaken. During the winter of 1820-1821, over thirty items signed "L. C." appeared in the New York Literary Journal, an undistinguished, year-old, monthly periodical. The Literary Journal had been almost entirely derivative during its first year, mainly reprinting articles from other journals. However, with the original contributions submitted by the Confederacy, the Literary Journal, in its second year, according to Verplanck "received great increase of reputation."[27]

As one might expect from the Confederates, the contributions were varied. These was an essay on classical literary history similar to those in the Amphilogist series. There were translations of classical poetry as well as Italian and French verse. There were two serious, original poems and one humorous-satirical poem. Several essays and several book reviews and a short story made up the bulk of items published.

Sands's share in this project of collaboration is hard to determine since all the articles were signed "L. C." and since only about half of the items can be tranced to the Confederacy's manuscript periodical Aeronaut. But from what can be determined, Sands was responsible for one-third of the total contributions, and perhaps had a hand in as many as half.

In the short story "Salem Witchcraft," Sands used American material for the first time. He also improved his narrative capabilities in this well-told story in which he had some rollicking good fun at the expense of the Puritans. Lewis Gaylord Clark loved the story and reprinted most of it a quarter-century later in a series of articles on Sands in the Knickerbocker Magazine, where he dubbed Sands "another Salmagundi."[28] And indeed, Sands's humor and satire is directly in the tradition of Irving and Paulding.

The story is about Faithful Handy, a schoolteacher, who comes to Salem during the witchcraft panic with a letter of introduction to Deliverance Hobbes.[29] Sands's description of Mrs. Hobbes's daughter reflects the tone of the whole

story:

> Her head, shaped like a broad-axe, was garnished with a tuft of red wool which 'streamed like a meteor to the troubled air' . . . . Her green eyes were set deep in her head, and seemed affected, like the grass, by the hot weather. A huge hawked nose covered half her face. Her ears were set like a dogs in the back of her head; and her broad concave cheeks were rivelled with seams, stigmatized with scars, and riddled with small pox. Thin skinny lips, and a Bavarian poke of the chin, completed the nomenclature of her charms; and the rest of her person tallied with her face. Such was the dragon that answered in a shrill voice to the parson's inquiries, "Yes, Deliverance Hobbes lives here; and I am her daughter Beautiful!"[30]

After meeting the Hobbes family, Faithful could only moan: "The Lord deliver me from Deliverance Hobbes, and the Gorgon, her beautiful daughter."

The story's complication is based on the well-worn plotting device of misunderstood marriage intentions. Beautiful Hobbes thinks the teacher has fallen for her charms, only to find he has fallen for another. Consequently, Beautiful goes into a fit and charges that her competitor has bewitched her, the perfect solution in Salem in 1692.

Sands's first published short story is one of his better ones. The plot, implausible as it might be, is fully developed--Sands does not abruptly end the action as he did in later stories where he seems not to have had the time or fortitude to finish them. The characters are such gross exaggerations that the piece verges on burlesque, but Sands is careful not to cross that line--the characters always delight, never disgust the reader. These exaggerated characterizations were a chief ingredient of Sands's humor and were to become a trademark of most of his short stories.

In two of the poems by Sands, he still appears to hold rather conservative critical views. In "The Poetical Character" he warns against highly-imaginative, or overly imaginative, literature:

> In fiction's devious wilds the heart misled
> To dull reality ungrateful turns;
> Substantial earth's fair plains untempting spread
> And day's blest beams with light unlovely burns.

Most likely, Sands had the superficial romances of the early nineteenth century in mind.

In another poem, "Daniel Rook," he exhibits uneasiness over Wordsworthian ideas of commonness in diction and subject matter. The poem was published as part of a letter to the editor and was reported to have come from an old almanac; thus we have the first good example of a literary hoax which Sands loved immensely and which soon came to be a favorite device. The brief letter explained the poem:

> The three last numbers of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine contain three cantos of an epic poem, called Daniel O'Rourke. The story, of which this is a new version, is very old . . . . It may have been from the pen of Mr. Wordsworth, as it has much of the characteristic simplicity of Betty Foy, Goody Blake, and Harry Gill.[31]

The action begins when an eagle "very large and very strong" came along and flew Daniel to the moon:

> Said the eagle, Daniel bold,
> Of that there horn you must take hold;
> So the simple Daniel did
> Just as the monstrous eagle bid.
>
> Then away the eagle flew,
> Leaving Daniel looking blue;
> Now I'm sure, said Daniel bold,
> Hanging here I shall take cold.
>
> Then the man in the moon came out,

Picked his teeth, and looked about;
Mr. Daniel Rook, said he,
Good morning, what do you want with me?

Said Daniel, how is your wife to-day?
She is in a family way;
I fear we shan't have room enough,
So I beg, Daniel, you'd be off.

I can't said Daniel--You must, said he--
I won't, said Daniel, it can't be--
Very well, said the man in the moon,
We shall see that very soon.

In he went, and out he strode,
With a crowbar died with blood;
Sure and certain aim he took,
Knocked off the horn and Daniel Rook . . . .

Daniel then tried to decide whether to land on dry land or in the lake.

The poem is amusing enough, in itself, but takes on added significance as a parody of Wordsworth: "It may have been from the pen of Mr. Wordsworth . . . . " "Daniel Rook" is obviously not Sands's usual poetic style; it is especially atypical of his humorous verse where much of the humor depends on the incongruity between florid diction and a common situation. The simple plot and simple hero are also probably part of the parody of Wordsworth. Sands was willing to accept most of Wordsworth's ideas, but he found simplicity of diction hard to accept at first. He loved the classic-inspired diction popular a century earlier. His later association with Bryant eventually brought him to endorse simple diction, even in poetry.

Contributions by the Literary Confederacy to the New York Literary Journal ceased in April of 1821, as suddenly as they had begun nine months earlier. Most likely the

activities of the Confederacy were temporarily suspended during the months of summer vacations and other activities, at least this was the pattern that emerged in the later period of the Confederacy (after James Eastburn's death).

St. Tammany Magazine

"Here is another Magazine--which is nothing to be wondered at," said the publisher's introduction in a new magazine which appeared in New York on November 9, 1821. By the fall of 1821, the Confederates were ready for another publishing project; this time they decided to invest their talents in a periodical of their own, which they called St. Tammany Magazine. The small, sixteen-page magazine sold for twelve and one-half cents and appeared weekly--for five weeks. As Bryant commented, it was "a periodical which had not even the ordinary fortune of lasting to the end of the year."[32]

In the eighty collected pages of this "sort of mock-magazine," as Verplanck called it, the Confederates published some of their lighter, more humorous, pieces. Sands was again the leader, and Verplanck's description of his contributions characterizes the entire magazine: "Here he gave the reins to his most extravagant and happiest humour, indulging in parody, burlesque, and grotesque satire, thrown off in the gayest mood and with the greatest rapidity, but as good-natured as satire and parody could well be."

The parody was evident from the very first page. After saying in the first paragraph that he "is as much in the dark

as the reader" about the proposed contents of the magazine, Sands, pretending to be the publisher, says:

> With this, all preface might be considered as despatched; and why, after so luminous an explanation, the publisher should cudgel his brains to no purpose, he cannot imagine; except, that as this is a magazine, it must have an introduction. "Omne magazinum debet habere praefationem," says Cicero, in his epistle to Atticus, in relation to a quarterly journal which the latter was about commencing; and such high authority ought not to be neglected at this late day. War without a declaration, dinner without grace, or a new theatre without a prologue, would be full as uncivilized, as a new magazine with a precursive dissertation on all things in general and nothing in particular.[34]

The wide range of contents found in contemporary magazines permitted the Confederates a broad field of material to parody. "Stanzas on a Dead Kitten," supposedly by "S. of New Jersey," allowed for a burlesque of sentimental poetry written by female authors. "The Tweaked Nose," by Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.--an obvious imitation of Irving's "The Broken Heart"--was one of the best parodies. Lewis Gaylord Clark felt "the resemblance to the original [was] admirably preserved."[35] Short stories, essays, reviews, literary notices, obituaries--all were parodied by the Confederates.

One of Sands's best parodies was a poem named "The Ocean of Nonsense," which criticized that flamboyant writer John Neal, whom, Lewis Gaylord Clark maintained, "Sands held in due estimation."[36] In the poem, Neal's imagination is portrayed as the "beau ideal of all jack-asses." This ass takes Neal to the sites of his most famous works. Visiting the locale of "Battle of Niagra" (1818), Neal humbly muses:

> Then eagle! then stars! and then rainbows! and all

That I saw at Niagra's tumbling fall,
Where I sung so divinely of them and their glories
While mewed in vile durance, and kept by tories.

The deluded Neal begins to think the ass he rides is an eagle:

"Whence com'st thou," I cried, "and goest whither?"
As I gently detained him by his tail-feather.
He replied, "Mr. N---! Mr. N---, let me loose!
I am not an eagle, but only a goose!--
Your optics are weak, and the weather is hazy--
And excuse the remark, but I think you are crazy."

The ridicule and criticism are obvious and deserved, but this is about as harsh as Sands ever got in St. Tammany.

Sands also parodied Neal's collaborator, Paul Allen, a Philadelphia writer. St. Tammany printed what it claimed was an early "poetical analysis" or outline of Paul Allen's narrative poem, Noah, which was largely revised by John Neal before its publication in 1821. Sands's opinion was that "Ne'er since the ark was set afloat / Was such a curious poem wrote."

It was with efforts like these that Sands established himself as a humorist and Knickerbocker wit. It was with efforts like this that Sands became one of the most popular literary figures of his day. Unfortunately, it was efforts like this which caused Sands's reputation to fade as fast as Paul Allen's. Today this poem is only slightly amusing because of the obscurity of Paul Allen's Noah.

But parody is really a form of imitation, and imitation had been the device long used by the Confederates to improve their compositional skills. One soon gets the feeling from reading St. Tammany that the purpose of its parody was not so much to ridicule or to criticize as it was to provide a

a mask behind which the Confederates could hide as they offered their efforts to the public. Richard Ray Ward, for example, contributed a good Revolutionary War story which parodied nothing as well as a serious essay on the "Abolition of the Punishment of Death." Sands made some sincere observations on Lord Byron's Don Juan, specifically the third canto. He called the hymn or "heroic song" in this canto "one of the very finest things, of its kind, of modern poetry. It is full of vigour, of thought and of expression: a fine classical feeling pervades the whole, and the conclusion is perfectly magnificent."[37] The feeling here is genuine.

After St. Tammany Magazine folded, the Literary Confederacy undertook no further publishing projects as a group; however, they individually contributed to several New York magazines. By 1822 the productive phase of the Confederacy was past, and the organization served mainly social purposes for the next decade. In the six years since its organization, though, it had turned out a surprisingly large quantity of literature. The quality was uneven, but what they published was as good as anything else being published in the newspapers and journals of New York City.

To Sands the Confederacy offered both an opportunity to publish and the encouragement to practice a wide variety of literature, almost every form of which he was later to practice professionally. It also firmly established Sands in the pattern of collaborative writing. Like his previous experience with The Bridal of Vaumond, the Literary

Confederacy served as an apprenticeship for a person seeking to become one of America's first professional authors.

CHAPTER IV

THE POET: YAMOYDEN AND OTHER POETRY

Production of Yamoyden

"Across the foaming waste of waves I came,/ Changed in my country, but in soul the same,"[1] wrote James Eastburn in a versified letter to Sands, late in October of 1816, referring to his leaving New York City in order to attend an Episcopalian seminary under the direction of Rev. A. V. Griswold of Bristol, Rhode Island. Eastburn's absence caused a period of dormancy in the newly formed Literary Confederacy, but eventually proved to be of great importance to the literary reputation of Sands. Eastburn and Sands had become close friends at Columbia; therefore in the series of verse letters they exchanged during the winter of 1816-1817, Eastburn felt free to offer a good deal of pious advice to Sands. For example:

> Oh! may she [Devotion] bless and sanctify thy soul,
> Chase every doubt, and beams of glory roll!
> Oh! May'st thou feel what 'tis to wing on high
> The hymn of praise amid the breezy sky!

Sands contemplated the advice seriously and did his best to "feel what 'tis to wing on high / The hymn of praise" by versifying several Psalms which he exchanged with Eastburn.

But Sands was not by nature religious. Verplanck put it nicely in the one sentence paragraph he devoted to Sands's religion when he said Sands "reverenced religion" ("Memoir",

p. 29). Sands regulated his life by respectable, moral principles, but he never sought refuge, pleasure, or escape in religion.

In response to Eastburn's decision to enter the ministry and his consequent urging of Sands to think more seriously about religion, Sands soberly investigated his values and the world's possible sources of pleasure in a verse letter to Eastburn:

> O, where shall he, on life's wide voyage driven,
> But just begun his march from earth to heaven. . .
> Where shall he seek that fleeting rainbow hue
> The glorious tints to purest pleasure true!
> (Letter, 12 December 1816)

He first reviews some of the worldly sources of pleasure, such as drinking and "The smile that plays around the wanton's lip." But he decides these pleasures are not meant for him: "let me turn from scenes like these afar, / To hold my course beneath a milder star!" The "milder star" is, of course, literature: "Art's magic aid awakes the glowing blaze, / And gilds deformity with glorious rays." He says that Eastburn may have been called by God, but he personally will stay with the muses:

> The nine of Heav'n proclaim the loveliest way;
> Still let me love to linger on the page,
> The golden gleanings of each rolling age.

Eastburn came back strongly pious: "Oh wilt not thou accept the proffered grace, / And seek above thy home and resting place?" (Letter, 14 January 1817).

Sands could see no conflict between literature and religion and wondered why Eastburn could not study religion

as well as write poetry: "But sleeps in sacred shades the cherished lyre / That erst had glow'd with all a prophet's fire?" (Letter, 22 November 1816). Eastburn replied that he was tempted to write poetry:

> Oh! could my trembling hand but dare to trace
> The scenes that smile around in bloom and grace,
> Then might I, borne on Fancy's brightest wing
> The glowing beauties of Bristowa sing,
> Point thee to yonder hill where sad on high
> Arose the Indian hero's funeral cry;
> From HOPE'S proud summit snatch the glowing scene,
> Of lands of bliss and Ocean's distant green,
> Of bleating flocks by every verdant plain,
> And snow-white canvass floating on the main.
> (Letter, 26 November 1816)

Eastburn here refers to the scenery around Bristol, specifically, nearby Mt. Hope and the view from its summit. The Indian hero mentioned is the Wampanoag Indian chief who had led an Indian uprising around 1675, known later as King Philip's War. Mt. Hope had been Philip's hideout and it was near there that Philip was fatally shot by one of his own Indian allies. Eastburn recognized material for poetry in the story of Philip, but did not feel capable of attempting it himself:

> But Oh! in vain my hand the theme would try,
> Confus'd and weak, the strains on air would die;
> Some mightier minstrel must the task assume,
> And paint their scenes in all their native bloom.

Sands may have interpreted this as an invitation to collaboration; at any rate, Eastburn had suggested a topic bound to interest the proponent of a national literature. However, no further mention of the poetical possibilities of Philip is mentioned in the verse letters of 1816-1817.

Eastburn returned to New York City during the seminary's

summer recess in 1817, evidently still enthused over the projected poem about Philip. He sought out information in the library of the Peithologian Society, of which he was an honorary member, and eventually bought their copy of William Hubbard's Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England.[2]

After what Sands called "a hasty glance into a few pages of Hubbard's Narrative," and apparently with little other research, the two friends drew up a plot based on the events surrounding Philip's last battle. For the protagonist they chose one of Philip's allies, a Nipnet chief whom they called Yamoyden. Inserting a fictional character into an historical event allowed them to romanticize the whole story. A love story involving Yamoyden and his formerly Puritan wife heightens the tragic end of Philip and his warriors in the battle of Mt. Hope. Because Yamoyden's wife was a Puritan, it also allowed them to show both sides of the controversy.

As the summer of 1817 drew to a close, Eastburn had to return to the seminary at Bristol. Before leaving New York City, he and Sands drew up an elaborate plan for working on the poem while they were apart. According to the plan, Eastburn would write the first half of a canto while Sands was writing the last half. Eastburn was also to write those passages demanding description of the area, while Sands was to specialize in the Indian lore. As individual parts were finished, they were to be exchanged through the mail.

Though the original idea was Eastburn's, Sands figured

largely in the planning of the tale, even changing aspects of the plot once they were into the composition of the poem. For example, one letter to Eastburn says,

> Dear Jim
> I send you another 100 lines concluding the first canto. I have thought it best not to tell Philips plan [to trick the hesitant Yamoyden into joining him] in it. 1st Because it weakens the concatenation of the story; 2nd The treachery of Philip should break upon the reader, when it does upon Yamoyden, or they can not sympathise together.[3]

A few weeks later he vigorously insisted that the action cover at least forty-eight hours: "But hold--there is no moral or poetical necessity to confine the poem to 24 hours."[4] Evidently, Eastburn was a believer in the classical unities.

The total amount of verse was to be shared quite equally; although, Eastburn ended up doing more than he had originally planned. Sands early fell behind his schedule because of his many activities in New York, principally the inauguration of the Amphilogist series in the Commercial Advertiser which began in February of 1818. About the time negotiations for this series must have been taking place, Sands wrote:

> I wish you would take all the third Canto entirely to yourself[.] You can describe the effects of the Psalm singing--and enter more in the Spirit of the Times . . . because you are on the spot. . . . Besides, you have got far ahead; now if you will do this, I will immediately end the 2nd Canto and then both ends will meet. Answer me immediately. I promise to lose no more time--[5]

It was also Eastburn's task to collate their separate contributions and copy the poem into a manuscript book.

Eastburn finished his seminary course by the summer of 1818 and returned to New York with the nearly completed poem

of 4500 lines. While Eastburn studied to take orders, Sands went over the collated poem which he now saw for the first time. He finished the last part of the sixth canto and made numerous suggestions for revision. After Eastburn was ordained in October,[6] he began transcribing a fair copy of the poem, incorporating in it many of Sands's revisions. He finished the first two cantos and began the third before he left for Virginia to take charge of the Onancock congregation in Accomack county, Virginia. "The labours of his ministry" wrote Sands in the "Advertisement" to Yamoyden, "left him no time, even for his most delightful amusement [poetry]. He had made no further progress in the correction of the work, when he returned to this city, in July, 1819."[7]

Eastburn returned to New York City because of ill health, which "was then so much impaired," according to Sands, "that writing of any kind was too great a labour." Strict rest failed to improve his condition, which was probably consumption. Upon his doctor's recommendation, he made arrangements to spend the winter in the milder climate of the Virgin Islands. On 29 November 1819, Sands and Richard Ray Ward bid farewell to their fellow Literary Confederates, the Eastburn brothers, as they sailed for Santa Cruz (St. Croix). The ailing young minister carried the Yamoyden MSS with him, hoping to finish the second copy while recuperating; however, he was much weaker than he knew. Four days later he died and was buried at sea.

Though Eastburn's death was not unexpected or surprising,

nevertheless, the news must have come as a profound shock to Sands. The extent of his grief over the loss of his best friend will probably never be known, for Sands masked his public expression of grief in the form of an elegy, "Monody on the Rev. J. W. Eastburn" (Aeronaut, XII, 6). One of the most personal statements in the poem refers to their intellectual kinship:

> Mourn ye, whom friendship's silver chain
> Link'd with his soul in bonds refin'd;
> That early had striv'n to burst in vain,--
> The sacred sympathy of mind. (Writings, II, 338)

The Yamoyden MSS were returned to Sands by Manton Eastburn early in 1820 along with a large quantity of Eastburn's poetry. It was hoped by the family, the Literary Confederates, and other friends that Yamoyden might be published as a memorial to Eastburn and that the rest of the poetry might eventually see print as well.[8]

Sands, still smarting from the criticism of his Bridal of Vaumond two years earlier, hesitated to offer any more of his work to the public. Besides the Yamoyden MSS obviously needed much work.

Encouragement to publish Yamoyden came largely from Samuel Farmer Jarvis, a Professor of Biblical Criticism at the (Episcopal) General Theological Seminary in New York. Jarvis, "whose talents and learning," Sands explained, "are universally respected in this community,"[9] was at that time working on a discourse on the religion of the North American Indian tribes. Sands, therefore, highly respected Jarvis's favorable comments on his and Eastburn's Indian poem. The

poem was dedicated to Jarvis, and, according to Sands, it owed "its publication in a great measure to the favourable impression expressed by him of its merits" (Writings, I, 162).

During 1820, then, Sands extensively revised and rearranged the poem for publication. The plot had been hastily planned but Sands could do little with it at this stage, so he left it pretty much as originally written. The basic conflict involves Yamoyden, an Indian who accepts Christianity and marries the daughter of a New England Puritan. When the Indian uprising known as King Philip's War breaks out in 1675, he is torn between his Indian allegiance and his Christian obligations.

Canto I gives the historical background to the uprising, beginning with the Pequot Massacre (1637), where hundreds of Indians "were slain, / On Mystic's banks, in one red night,"[10] and ending with the savage attack by the New England colonists in December of 1675 which wiped out most of the Indian alliance that had been formed by Philip. As the story opens, it is the next spring (1676) and Philip and his few remaining followers are gathered at his hideout on Mt. Hope, near Bristol, R.I. Philip wants his braves to follow him into battle again. Another chief, Agamoun, urges the Indians to be realistic: "The Spirit smiles not on our race" (I xxviii). He suggests moving westward. Philip is incensed, calls Agamoun a traitor, then shoots him. Agamoun's brother, Ahauton, vows revenge--the explanation for many of the story's coincidences. As the scene closes, Philip contemplates the next battle and

realizes he needs the aid of the Nipnet chief Yamoyden, who has married a white girl and settled down in a cabin, and has thus far ignored the plight of the Indians. To regain his allegiance, Philip plots to kill Yamoyden's wife and son and to make it look as if the Puritans have done it in revenge for her eloping with an Indian.

Yamoyden and his wife, Nora, are safe in their island hideaway as Canto II opens. The history of their courtship and marriage precedes Yamoyden's testimony of how much Nora's love and religion has come to mean to him. He interrupts this domestic tranquillity, however, by telling Nora he must meet with Philip. As he leaves, the baby cries and Nora sings "The Green Isle of Lovers," one of Sands most often anthologized poems. Suddenly, four Indians burst into their cabin and kidnap the wife and child. One of the Indians is Ahauton, brother of the warrior slain by Philip. He has warned the English of Philip's plan and the alerted Puritans ambush the kidnappers. Nora is rescued, but one of the Indians escapes with her child.

Canto III shows the Puritans preparing for battle with Philip. They sing hymns, then listen to a sermon showing how Providence has favored them. Old Fitzgerald, who turns out to be Nora's father, then tells his life story, a recital of woes climaxed by his daughter eloping with an Indian. As he ends his story, Nora is brought into camp by her rescuers. A rather cold reconciliation warms when Fitzgerald hears that Nora's child is to be offered as a sacrifice by the Indians.

He slips out of camp, vowing to save the child.

Yamoyden's child is to be sacrificed as part of the night long Indian ceremony which is the subject of Canto IV. The diabolical program begins with songs and prophecies by several Indian oracles. Then a fire is built for the sacrifice, and a satanic Indian priestess appears. The naked old hag has sunken "yellow eyeballs bright with hate," and strange tattoes on her breast (IV, XV). She begins an incantation to all evil spirits and is about to throw the child in the flames when Fitzgerald dashes in and grabs his grandson. His appearance is accompanied with a terrific blast of thunder, lightning and rain which crowns the ceremony.

Meanwhile, in Canto V, Yamoyden returns to his cabin and is stunned to find it empty. As Philip planned, Yamoyden thinks the Puritans have kidnapped Nora and, consequently, decides to join Philip's band of warriors. During the same night, Philip's sleep is disturbed by several foreboding dreams, one of which augurs his death. As the canto closes, Yamoyden offers his help to Philip's cause.

It is that same, eventful, stormy night as Canto VI opens. Nora slips out of the Puritan camp and tries to find her way back to her cabin and Yamoyden. The storm that came when her child was saved causes her to become lost. She runs into Ahauton, and he promises to guide her to her child and husband. They reach Mt. Hope about sunrise. Nora, left alone, sees the ambush set up by the Puritans and their Indian allies. The battle begins and Nora, hearing Yamoyden's cry, speeds

down the mountain to find him. On her way she sees her former guide, Ahauton, kill Philip in revenge for his brother's death. The story climaxes as she spots her father being threatened by an Indian with a tomahawk:

> And, o'er her father's white hairs swung,
> As high a murderous axe was hung,
> She saw Yamoyden stay
> The lifted arm; alas! too late
> To break the blow, impelled by fate!
> Averted from the old man's head,
> On his own faithful breast it fell! (VI, xxiii)

Nora, broken-hearted, dies with Yamoyden. Fitzgerald promises to care for their child as he mourns over the embracing pair.

The first thing Sands did when he decided to edit the poem for publication was to thoroughly research the history of King Philip's War in order to remove as many errors as possible "in point of matter or expression," as he explained in the "Advertisement." He recorded much of his research in the abundant, comprehensive notes accompanying the poem.[11] By so doing, Sands showed his fellow writers not only that the Indian could be used for the purposes of literary romance, but also where information might be found.

Next Sands began the arduous task of revising and rewriting the poem. Statistics on Canto I give us a good idea of how much Sands reworked. Originally, the first canto was just over 600 lines--about 60% by Eastburn, 40% by Sands. Eastburn, as he often did, had used more words to write his portion. Of the original 600 lines, only 350 lines were used in the final version. This means Sands completely rewrote

about 250 of the original 600 lines. Furthermore, he added nearly 300 new lines to make the final version 930 lines long. Or in other words, Canto I, as printed, had 62% new lines. And this refers only to lines changed entirely. About 20% of the 350 original lines printed contained changes ranging from a single word to a whole phrase. Sands showed no partiality to the lines he had written, but reworked them as carefully as he did Eastburn's portion.

Many of the new lines added by Sands were used to summarize the history of the Indians, particularly the events leading up to King Philip's War. At about the point in the fair copy MS where Sands had pencilled in "allude to the wars of the Pequot Nipnets," he inserted 250 new lines of historical background which he supported with pages of extensive notes. He also revised and added to Philip's address to the council by adding historical material explaining why the Indians had to fight one more battle even though the odds against them were overwhelming.

Though Sands offers little explanation for adding the historical information resulting from his research, two reasons are likely. The first is didactic--this was part of the movement to let Americans know they had their own traditions and heritage. Second, this interest in the past was part of the whole romantic pattern of thought which Americans were just beginning to reflect.

While the historical material added little to the poem, other additions did much to improve the plot. Sands expanded

the scene where Philip killed Agamoun for his disagreement in council, thus providing the motivation for his brother's going to the whites with news of where Philip was hiding.

Individual wording changes were made for a variety of reasons. For example, in order to make a stronger, bolder line, he made such changes as "My contrymen, ye see me die!" to "Brothers! behold a warrior die!" (I, xxxi). The line was most likely changed to improve the logic--the Indians were not nationalistic and therefore would have had no concept of "country." But besides being more forceful and dramatic the alliteration made the line more poetic. Alliteration was one of Sands's favorite poetic devices, and he often seemed to revise lines just to add alliteration. For example, a few lines after the above correction, he changed "Is the deep loan of hate!" to "Is the large legacy of hate!" Likewise, in stanza xxi, "Erie's tide" became "torpid tide." There were times, however, when Sands gave up alliteration in order to improve the rhythm, as in stanza xxi where he changed "glorious grave" to "hallowed grave" in order to keep the line strictly iambic.

Many of the dictional changes were, in fact, made to improve either the rhythm or rime. The haste with which the poem was originally composed resulted in many errors of versification. Though Sands disliked detailed revision, he appears to have worked hard at correcting such errors, and he was a skilled craftsman when it came to versification. Bryant explains why: Sands had "an ear for poetic measure

cultivated by a study of the ancient classics, by the reading of the old poets of our own language, and by an examination of the rules of versification adopted in the various modern languages."[12]

Sands, like other Knickerbocker poets, still clung to and admired the eighteenth-century poetic diction, and several of the revisions seem to be nothing more than attempts to preserve that style. For example, "lurking wile" was changed to "mazy wile" (I, xvii). Likewise, "green irrigious channels" became the "pebbly channels" (I,xxv). An extract chosen at random illustrates the type of small changes Sands made throughout the poem. The original words are given in brackets, Sands's substitutions are underlined:

> Her spoiler's dusky brow she scanned,
> Yet struggling from his ruthless hand
> Her wailing [screaming] child to tear,--
> As one would mark the madman's eye,
> When a fearful [awful] precipice was nigh,
> And he had grasped him there.
> She met [read] his glances, stern [fierce] and keen,
> Such might the hungry wolf's have been,
> Whose spoils [skin] now swathed [girt] him round;
>
> [at this point he omitted two lines of original text]
>
> And in his front all bare and bleak,
> And in his high, scar-riven [iron] cheek
> No line of mercy found. (II, xix)

Changes like those involving fearful, met, and stern probably resulted from an effort to be more precise in meaning. The Indian referred to in this passage turns out to be Nora's saviour; therefore stern would be a more accurate adjective to describe his looks than would fierce. The other changes, however, like many Sands made, were probably meant

to make the lines sound more poetic: scar-riven somehow seems more poetic, in the eighteenth-century sense of that special language reserved for poetry, than the mundane word iron. In making the poem more poetic, Sands was only giving his audience what they wanted. He apparently knew their taste well. In an illuminating aside to Eastburn, Sands said in reference to the poetry of Yamoyden: "we must tickle the present age a little."[13]

Canto II, which begins with Yamoyden and Nora in their hut and ends with Nora being kidnapped and rescued, was originally written and then revised on much the same proportion and order as the first canto. Sands rewrote and condensed the long introductory-descriptive passage which had been composed by Eastburn. A major change was the replacing of the pious dialogue between Nora and Yamoyden. Eastburn, the energetic, young seminarian, was anxious to show the power of Christianity on this Indian chief; therefore the dialogue he created between the Indian and his Christian wife smacks of a gospel meeting and even ends with a hymn. Sands retained the Christian flavor, but made their conversation briefer, more restrained and consequently more effective. He also make Yamoyden's decision to join Philip in battle more of a patriotic, historically imperative decision than a complete rejection of his wife and Christianity, which is the feeling one gets from Eastburn's original version. Sands also took the opportunity as editor to insert two beautiful poems of his, which he has Nora sing: "Sleep, child of

love!" (II, vii) and "The Green Isle of Lovers" (II, xvi). It is also interesting to note that in this canto, Sands made considerably fewer changes in his half (the last half) of the poem than he did in Eastburn's.

No changes were made in the first seven stanzas of Canto III, the longest stretch of poetry left untouched by Sands. These were the last verses transcribed by Eastburn before his death, and Sands apparently was too sentimental to touch them.[14] However in the remaining eighty per-cent of the canto which deals with the Puritans in camp, Sands made many major additions and did so much rewriting that this is the most revised of the six cantos. The reason was a difference of emphasis: when it came to historical romance, such as Yamoyden was, Sands emphasized the historical while Eastburn favored the romance or poetic aspect. In other words, what Sands ruthlessly condensed in Canto III was lengthy nature descriptions, sentimental details of how Fitzgerald killed his brother and lost his wife, and the touching reunion of Fitzgerald and Nora. What he added was a lengthy Puritan sermon relating their history, beginning with their persecution in England and running through their stormy voyages and struggles for existence in the New World.

Sands's other major addition to Canto III was in Fitzgerald's telling of how Yamoyden won the heart of Nora. The courtship was obviously borrowed from Shakespeare's Othello:

> And Nora listening long would sit,
> By words and signs while he expressed
> Creation's wonders in the west;

> Or told of foughten field; or showed
> Through woods and wolds the hunter's road. (III, xxviii)

In other words, Fitzgerald says, "by fiendish craft he won her heart" (III, xxviii). Sands explained his additions to this part of the poem in a note:

> I have added three long stanzas, narrating the manner in which the daughter was won and carried off by the Indian. The ideas are probably borrowed from the wooing of Othello. How should they not be?
> (Writings, I, 365)

With all his rewriting, additions, and condensation, Sands changed about eighty-five percent of the last four-fifths of Canto III.

In Canto IV, which deals with the Indians' diabolical rites, Sands not only continued to revise and add new material, but also did some rearranging. "The Prophecy" section, which originally was placed in the middle of the rites, was moved nearer to the beginning of the Canto, so as not to interrupt the sacrificial ceremony. Sands also revised "The Prophecy" to make it more historically accurate. He also revised "The Song of the Pow-wahs," who were participants in the ceremony, to make it seem more like an Indian chant. He accomplished this by making the lines three feet long instead of four and by tying the stanazs together with repeated phrases. Sands further enhanced this canto by adding his poem "To the Manitto of Dreams." Finally, Sands condensed Eastburn's narrative details of how the pyre was made and lighted and how the sacrifice of Yamoyden's child was prepared for and interrupted. Sands's condensation here makes the events of that highly eventful night hard to follow, and

only by reading the original do all the implications of the action become obvious.

"The burthen of the 5th Canto" fell on Sands,[15] which may be why he did less revising here than in previous sections. At any rate, the actual rewriting is minimal, and the main difference between the original manuscript and the printed version are in the many additions by Sands. The most noticeable revision of the canto shows the kind of careful consideration Sands gave to his task. He was not just editing a friend's poem for the press; he was restudying and rewriting the entire poem. At the point near the beginning of the canto where Yamoyden returns to find his hut empty. Sands pencilled in the original, "alter all this." He had been dissatisfied with this section from the first time he had read Eastburn's version. He suggested in a letter to his collaborator: "that the religious consolation Yamoyden draws in line 132 is too premature, being almost instantaneously spoken, after realising his loss."[16] Sands was probably referring to the following lines which Yamoyden uttered upon finding his wife and child kidnapped:

> . . . yet from above
> There comes a voice of grace and love,
> That bids my wearied spirit rise
> To Join them in my Father's skies! (Original MS)

Sands's eloquent elucidation of his concept of Yamoyden's reaction shows him to be a perceptive student of human nature:

> As to Yamoyden's feelings. He had just suffered the severest compound of privations which the heart can feel or the imagination conceive. Now I believe, that any heart commonly organised, would vacillate on such an occasion, at first, either between fury

> and despair, or yield entirely to one or the other. . . . A moral regeneration may command the actions, and a scriptural regeneration alter the tone of the heart; but it is in the power of neither to controul the sudden effects of unforseen, revengeful, irreparable calamity. . . . Our hero was an Indian, whose 'ruling passion' is revenge. He was a new convert moreover; and as his feelings of devotion were warmer, they were more easily diverted from their channel, by such a strong barrier or impediment.[17]

The disagreement between the collaborators over Yamoyden's reaction to his loss also caused a difference in the plotting. Eastburn originally had Yamoyden react piously, complete with prayer, until he meets another Indian who answers his inquiry about Nora by saying that both mother and child were slain "and the English knives were found beside" (Original MS, V, xi). This causes Yamoyden to turn his back on Christianity and his wife and cast his lot with the Indians. Such information, of course, would contradict the original conception of the plot, unless the Indian were lying, for both mother and child were to be alive in the last canto. Sands preferred having Yamoyden think his wife had gone back to the Puritans and nothing was left for him to do but join the Indians. Or as he explained it to Eastburn, "I made him go off at an angle of 45 degrees, to wit between love and hate, religion and revenge, in <u>despair</u>, which, as he took leave for the last time of his cottage was modified by bland and mournful recollections, but finally carried him to battle and to death."[18] And this is exactly what Sands did when he got to this point in the manuscript; he finally had a chance to "alter all this" as he had indicated he wanted to do by

his note in the original MS.

At the beginning of Canto VI, the canto in which Nora travels to Mt. Hope and views the battle, Sands wrote in the original or first collated version of the poem, "Remember to bring Ahauton in this canto, explain how he appeared in Canto 2nd, and make him known as shooting Philip." He explained in the "Advertisement" to the poem that this "alteration was always contemplated by Mr. Eastburn, who had made the heroine perform the journay alone" (Writings, I, 165). Thus the major revision in Canto VI involved this change in plot which required revising or replacing about half the lines. Some of the lines added by Sands were considered by critics as the best lines in the poem.[19] In Canto VI, Sands also cut out a good deal of Eastburn's lengthy description of the setting, and the saving of Fitzgerald's life by Yamoyden.

In summary then, the question is not who wrote what, as it normally is with collaborated works. Instead, because Sands edited the work entirely himself, the question is how much did he change the poem while preparing it for publication. The answer is obvious--he made vast changes. He condensed, he revised, he rewrote, he reorganized, and he made major additions to the manuscript Eastburn had collated. Basically, Sands's revisions greatly improved the poem by condensing it, polishing the versification, and tightening the plot. The additional historical material, however, only slows the poem down and gets in the way of the plot. If his contributions could be stated in fractions, then Sands is responsible for

at least three-fourths of the poem. Verplanck was correct in including it in Sands's Writings, and the American Quarterly Review was correct in saying, "In justice to both, who are now removed from this world's jealousy, it may be stated, that much the greater part of the work belongs to Sands."[20]

Sands finished revising Yamoyden late in 1820; the "Advertisement" which precedes the poem is dated November 20, 1820. The poem was published soon thereafter, just about one year after Eastburn's death. Sands tried to remain anonymous, probably because he was insecure and still smarting from the harsh reception of his previous poem The Bridal of Vaumond and because this was meant to be a memorial to Eastburn. The title page indicated it was "by the late Rev. James Wallis Eastburn, A.M. and his Friend." Throughout the "Advertisement" and notes, Sands claims to be only the editor; nevertheless, the final product was largely his.

Criticism of Yamoyden

In spite of Sands's vast rewriting of Yamoyden, the poem remained a second-rate production. Philadelphia's Literary Gazette was fair in its evaluation: "The poem does not, we think, possess any just claims to eminence, but is respectable."[21] Nevertheless, the poem was widely and enthusiastically hailed across America and was even given honorable mention in Britain. Why did a mediocre poem cause such a stir? Partly because it was one of the first hopeful signs in America's search for a national literature. The Literature and Science Repository for example, thought Yamoyden was "the answer to the taunting

question, 'who reads an American poem?'" [sic][22] C. S. Van Winkle, editor of the New York Literary Journal was even inspired to write a poem, "On Reading Yamoyden," which began:

> Neglected Poesy, that slept erewhile;
> Now wakes her numbers in Yamoyden's lay.[23]

In other words, Yamoyden was enthusiastically welcomed "as an effort towards erecting a national poetical character, of which, as yet, we have not much to boast."[24]

The critical acceptance of Yamoyden, therefore, is best understood in terms of America's concern for a national literature. After the Revolutionary War and political independence, American intellectuals called for "the immediate creation of a native, indigenous, original American art."[25] Many efforts were made by groups like the Hartford Wits and others, but little of importance was produced. Americans still considered England culturally superior. After the War of 1812, however, Americans developed a sense of pride and a confidence in their own superiority, and the campaign for a national literature was stepped up. Sir Walter Scott's popular historical romances showed that a country's history could be used for literature. His success caused American critics to call not only for American authors, but also for literature using American material. In 1815, the North American Review, for example, "began to campaign for Americanism in poetry."[26]

The result of this new inspiration and encouragement was an outburst of literature between 1820 and 1821 that seemed an almost direct answer to Sidney Smith's notorious question

about who reads an American book. Within that time Cooper published The Spy, Irving issued his essays in The Sketch Book, Catherine M. Sedgwick wrote her New England Tale, R.H. Dana, Sr., produced The Idle Man, and James G. Percival and William Cullen Bryant published volumes of poems. The very first manifestation of this new outbreak of literary endeavor, however, was Yamoyden. To many it seemed a direct answer to the great cry for an American romance.

Yamoyden was well received, for one thing, because it was by Americans. The Literature and Science Repository felt that "numberless offences should escape unwhipt from literary justice, rather than that one instance of native genius should pass from before us, without the praise for which it has toiled."[27] Not only was it by Americans, it was by young men of eighteen and twenty years of age, a fact which according to the American Quarterly Review made the poem "a phenomenon in the history of literature." The way these two young men handled untried material "is something more than we could have had reason to expect even from more practised hands, and evinces a precocity of mind which places the writers beside those who, like Pope, have outstripped their race by the vigor of their early productions."[28] Other journals found it equally as easy to attribute the faults of the poem to the youth of the collaborators.[29]

Critics unanimously agreed that the most important aspect of the poem was the use made of the Indian as a source for American romance. A discussion of their success in using

indigenous material made up a large part of the major review J. G. Palfrey wrote for the North American Review, a review Bryant called "one of the most eloquent and delightful articles of literary criticism, that has ever appeared in this country."[30] Palfrey, owner and editor of the North American Review and leader of its campaign for a national literature, felt that "the distinguishing beauty" of the poem was

> . . . the very happy use which the writers have made of their reading in the antiquities of the Indians. Whatever in their customs or superstitions fell within the scope of the plot, is seized on with an admirable tact, and made available for the purposes of poetry.[31]

Palfrey began his eloquent dissertation on the literary potential of the Indian and the Puritan by saying: "We are glad that somebody has at last found out the unequalled fitness of our early history for the purposes of a work of fiction" (NAR, XII, 480). New England not only provided the heroism of the Puritans and the pathos of the Indians, it also contained great natural scenery; the poet must remember "that compared with some of ours, Scottish rivers are but brooks, and Scottish forests mere thickets . . ." (NAR, XII, 484).

Dr. Palfrey felt the strength of the poem was the fourth canto, in which "use is made with great felicity of the customs, rites and superstitions of the Indians" (NAR, XII, 472). He especially liked the diabolical rites of the Indians:

> a pyre is lighted, and the rites begin, which are described with a prodigious aptness for the terrible. We do not remember any thing finer of the semi-infernal sort, except Shakespeare's witches.

> We are at a loss how to praise this part of the poem sufficiently to satisfy ourselves, without seeming extravagant. We think we see in it proof of an imagination equal to a story of the class of the Vampire or the Monk, which should make these horrible fictions seem almost nursery tales.
> (NAR, XII, 474)

Palfrey prophetically summarized the importance of the Indian to future American literature: "Whoever in this country first attains the rank of a first rate writer of fiction, we venture to predict will lay his scene here. The wide field is ripe for the harvest, and scarce a sickle yet has touched it" (NAR, XII, 484-85). The New York Literary Journal summed up the importance of Yamoyden by using the same metaphor: "From its offering so many advantages to the writer of imagination, the history of the Indians will, hereafter, undoubtedly form the classic lore of American literature; and we welcome the poem [Yamoyden] as the first fruits of an abundant harvest."[32]

But what Sands and Eastburn had done was more than just choose a native subject to write about; they had written a poem indigenous in every aspect: "It is thoroughly and peculiarly national," the Knickerbocker recalled in 1834. "The thoughts, the similes, the expressions, are all drawn from the people under description, or from the soil on which the scene is laid."[33] In other words, the collaborators had been successful in making the style appropriate to the subject matter.

The style or poetry was another thing often praised by contemporary critics. The literate English physician, Dr.

Nathan Drake, for example, admired the poetry in general and the "Prophecy" (Canto IV) in particular: "In grandeur of imagery, and sublimity of sentiment, in a rich and sonorous flow of versification, and in a spirit-stirring enthusiasm in the cause of freedom, it exhibits much which has claim to very distinguished and almost unqualified approbation."[34] The fourth Canto's versification was admired by others, as was Sands's "Proem," which Dr. Palfrey called "at once modest and manly" (NAR, XII, 467). "The Green Isle of Lovers" (Canto I) was called "as melodious versification as belongs to the best of Moore's."[35]

But while many critics admired the poetry, they also pointed out that the versification was in imitation of the style of Scott and Byron. The Literary Gazette is typical: "The versification of this poem is modelled on the plan of Walter Scott's metrical romances, but in the style the authors appear rather to have studied the energetic manner of Lord Byron" (LG, I, 52). The obvious imitation of Scott and Byron provoked a comment on imitation from nearly every critic, but surprisingly enough, most were unwilling to condemn it. The American Quarterly Review even defended them: "They not only consulted their ease, but, perhaps, adopted a wise and prudent course, in adhering to the popular form for their poem, especially as they had attempted so much that was novel and untried" (AQR, XV, 408). In other words they were innovative enough in attempting a new subject matter without also trying a new form. American critical opinion at this time

was uncertain about the issue of imitation of the British, which it later condemned.[36]

Another thing often admired in the poem was what the Literary Gazette called "a respectable share of learning" (LG, I, 52). John Paul Pritchard has pointed out that wide reading was one thing New York critics held as a criteria for authors.[37] Verplanck, a typical New York critic, praised the language of the poem which he felt was "enriched by an evident familiarity with Comus, and the minor poems of Milton" (Writings, I, 13). Verplanck also praised the poem for being "rich throughout with historical and antiquarian knowledge of Indian history and tradition" (Writings, I, 13).

But in spite of their enthusiastic welcome of Yamoyden, critics were not blind to its faults, the most obvious of which was its plot. The American Quarterly Review, in perhaps the finest and most perceptive review of Yamoyden, complained about "a want of pervading interest in the story; that connexion and dependence of parts which are necessary in every attempt of the kind, to awaken and retain the feelings of the reader" (AQR, XV, 407). This review pointed specifically to the long passages of description: "in Yamoyden, where the incidents are few, we feel that they are a burden in many cases upon the fable" (AQR, XV, 407). Dr. Palfrey predicted that if the poem were going to be popular, then it "must depend on something besides the attraction of the story. The incidents are neither sufficient for a poem of its length, nor are they artfully disposed" (NAR, XII, 477). Palfrey,

like most of the other critics, excused the collaborator's poor plot on the basis of the circumstances under which it was written.

These criticisms are accurate assessments of what remained a weakness in the poem even after Sands so thoroughly reworked the entire manuscript. Most of the problem stemmed from the original, hasty outlining of the plot, and part of the weak plot resulted from the collaboration. However, almost everything said of the faults of the Yamoyden plot could also have been said about the plot of Sands's Bridal of Vaumond. Creating a viable plot was something Sands had difficulty doing. Both Yamoyden and Vaumond were plotted well originally, and in the letters to Eastburn, most of Sands's comments are in connection with the development of the plot. However, when it came to putting the plans into words or verse, the plot usually became disjointed. This weakness also showed up later, to a lesser degree, in Sands's short stories. Plotting was a low priority item; other things were more important. Like Irving, Sands probably considered the plot mainly a framework on which to display his style, his beautiful descriptions, his great command of language, and his rich portrayal of emotions.

The characters of the poem were poorly drawn, and this too was noted by the critics: "Yamoyden comes so obscurely before the mind of the reader, that he excites little sympathy, and Philip, treacherous in his bravery, still less" (AQR, XV, 410). The plot is obviously meant to glorify the

Indian, especially the problems faced by Philip, but because of his treachery to Yamoyden, we are left disliking Philip, an irony which strains the plot badly.

The intended glorification of the Indian, Palfrey especially disliked. It was all right to use the Indian as material for literature, but to glorify him at the expense of the Puritans he felt was misusing the material. Palfrey complains: "in this particular instance [King Philip's War], where the contest was equally on both sides for existence, it strikes us as no better than sentimentality to represent them [the Puritans] as remorseless oppressors, and the other part as cruelly wronged" (NAR, XII, 486). As far as he was concerned, "The writers have gone out of their way to throw a gauntlet to New England" (NAR, XII, 488). In view of traditional Knickerbocker antipathy toward New Englanders and things New England, such criticism of the Puritans was probably intentional.

American poetry in 1820 attracted little attention in England; if the English read anything American, it was usually our essays or fiction.[38] Therefore the amount of British comment on Yamoyden is surprising. The Investigator gave it "long and extravagant praise," according to W. B. Cairns (p. 170). Then in 1822, Nathan Drake, M.D., devoted two essays to the poem in his collection of essays, Evenings in Autumn. Though he did not know Sands's identity, he obviously was impressed with his share of the poem, especially the proem. In the same year (1822), Samuel Kettell's Specimens

of the American Poets was published in England and was widely reviewed by the British press. Only the best passages of Yamoyden were anthologized in Specimens, and this should be kept in mind when noticing the British comments on the poem, which ranged from "without one gleam of originality"[39] to "Far beyond what the generality of American writers have yet attained command of."[40] All in all, British criticism was fair and accurate, especially the remarks by John Neal in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine: Yamoyden does contain "a deal of newspaper trash," but it also has some "passages of singular beauty," some excellent poetry.[41]

Not only the American critics liked Yamoyden, but also the American reading public. No records exist to indicate the degree or length of its popularity, but we do know that four years after its publication it was "at the height of its brief vogue," according to Bryant's biographer, H. H. Peckham.[42] Verplanck says the poem gave Sands "great literary reputation throughout the United States" (Writings, I, 13). The fine review it received in the North American Review helped to establish his reputation. As a result, Verplanck tells us, "He became personally known to many distinguished literary men, and in a visit to Boston, in particular, received many and most flattering attentions" (Writings, I, 13). In the same year Yamoyden was published, Sands was admitted to the bar. The nation-wide reputation received from the poem most likely was another reason to dampen his enthusiasm for law and turn him in the direction of a literary career.

Sands's success with Yamoyden helped to open up a new source for literary material, and in the next two decades scores of novels, romances, narrative poems, and plays were written about Indians. Van Wyck Brooks, for one, holds Yamoyden responsible for having "started a fashion for Indian stories and plays. Indeed, by 1830, ten years after it was published, and largely owing to the example of this lively poem, almost sixty plays appeared with Indian characters and Indian themes."[43] In the two decades after Yamoyden, Indian themes were used by many of America's better known authors: James Finimore Cooper, James K. Pauling, John Greenleaf Whittier, W. G. Simms, and R. M. Bird. Likewise, the Indian was a favorite theme of the now little remembered, but popular authors of the day: Lydia H. Sigourney, James McHenry, P. W. Sproat, Lydia M. Child, Sarah Josepha Hale, John Augustus Stone, Timothy Flint, William Joseph Snelling, James Hall, John P. Kennedy, C. F. Hoffman, and Seba Smith.[44] Most of the second group wrote for the literary annuals or giftbooks which were in great vogue between 1825 and 1860. Indian stories, lyrics, and engravings were standard fare in these popular anthologies.

This circumstantial evidence only implies that Yamoyden was influential in turning attention toward the Indian as a literary source. However, there is a documented case which shows that the popularity of Yamoyden influenced an author to attempt an Indian novel, and that is the case of Lydia Maria Francis (Child). One Sunday morning in 1824, Miss Francis,

who browsing through her brother's study, came across Palfrey's review of Yamoyden, full of extracts from the poem. That afternoon she wrote the first chapter of Hobomok, a Tale of Early Times (1824).[45] Like Yamoyden, Hobomok is about an Indian chief who marries a white wife.

Albert Keiser, an authority on the Indian in American literature, implies that Cooper wrote The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish with its setting of King Philip's War, as a result of the favorable reception of Yamoyden and its imitators.[46] Another interesting piece of circumstantial evidence involves the Bread and Cheese Club and its founder, Cooper. Sands was a member during the time (1822) when Yamoyden's reputation was at its highest. Cooper started using the Indian the very next year in The Pioneers, and three years later he published his first novel to use Indian material extensively, The Last of the Mohicans (1826). It is almost certain that Cooper read Yamoyden, for he used quotations from the poem as epigraphs in at least one novel.[47]

Therefore, besides being one of the best romances produced up to that time and being one of the first hopeful signs of a national literature, Yamoyden is important for helping to open up what proved to be one of the most useful sources of material for American literature. Furthermore, Sands's work should be recognized as the precursor of what became the first genuinely American vogue in our literature--the Indian tale.

"Papantzin"

Since boyhood, Sands had known Latin, Greek and French. After 1820 and the publication of Yamoyden, he began preparing himself for a career as an author by learning the other romance languages and studying their literature. First he learned Italian, and then he translated or made imitations of Politian (15th C.) and Monti and Metastasio (18th C.). About 1824 he "acquired the Spanish language" along with William Cullen Bryant, who became interested in the language while living with a Spanish family before moving his own family to New York. As Sands and Bryant learned the language, they tried translating Spanish poems, several of which they published in their New York Review of which they were co-editors in 1826.[48]

Bryant and Sands also became acquainted with several Spanish intellectuals who were living at that time in New York City, one of whom was M. Cubi, who Bryant and Sands met at Carvills' bookstore.[49] Cubi became a frequent and amusing visitor to Bryant's office at the Evening Post. In August of 1826, while filling the editor's chair at the Post for the vacationing Bryant, Sands reported on a recent encounter with Cubi he knew the editor would enjoy:

> M. Cubi has been to see me a great deal. I like him very much. I asked him what was the meaning of hicella. He says it is a very antiquated word and means "favour' 'Complexion' & made some attempts at a metaphysical definition of the appearance of a person as abstracted from the person, in which he got swamped.[50]

Sands is having fun here, but the conversation reflects his

keen interest in language. He was beginning to achieve quite a reputation as a linguist--Verplanck considered him the best in the country ("Memoir," pp. 27-28). Consequently, when a group of publishers needed a life of Cortez they asked Sands to prepare one. Sands did wide research into the Spanish sources and wrote the requested biography, which was then translated into Spanish.[51]

While doing research on the history of Mexico, Sands ran across the legend of Papantzin, which had been recorded by the Abbe Calvigero. The following year (1829), as Sands was writing for the second number of the Talisman, he remembered the legend and used it in a poem, which is probably his best piece of verse.

The 436-line, blank verse poem opens by describing Mexico "at its topmost pride" under Montezuma. One evening his sister, the princess Papantzin, is quietly musing when she suddenly has a vision: "It seemed she stood / In an illimitable plain" (ll. 34-35). She wanders on this plain until she comes to the inky waves of a river. As she contemplates swimming across, "A vision stayed her purpose" (l. 62). She finds a young man beside her who is described in angelic terms: "From either shoulder mantled o'er his front / Wings dropping feathery silver" (ll. 87-88). The darkness of the scene is interrupted by a gleam of light which falls on "stately barks" which are coming down the river. These ships, with the cross emblazoned on their sails, bring the Spanish conquerors. The "angel-leader" then says,

> Princess, God wills
> That thou shouldst live, to testify on earth
> What changes are to come. (ll. 34-36)
> . . . . . .
> The white and bearded men whose grim array
> Swept o'er thy sight, are those who are to come,
> And with strong arms and wisdom stronger far,
> Strange beasts obedient to their masters' touch,
> And engines hurling death, with Fate to aid,
> Shall wrest the sceptre from the Azteques line,
> And lay their temples flat. (ll. 202-08)

All this is because of the Mexican's "Prodigious cruelty and waste of life" (l. 181).

In the last half of the poem, the visionary messenger explains how the story of Christianity corresponds to the Mexican legends. Such a comparision allows Sands to work into the story many of the fascinating legends discovered in his research. The result is a brief study in comparative religion. For example, he shows how similar the story of the birth of Mexitili, the founder of the Mexican culture, was to Jesus Christ's.

After the heavenly messenger leaves, Princess Papantzin awakes to find herself "in darkness and solitude" (l. 303). From the costly robes, the mask on her face, and the ceremonial jewelry around her neck and arms, she realizes she has been buried. She throws off the burial trappings and struggles out of the tomb. The beautiful scene which meets her eyes is marred by the "dread gong" which

> . . . announced a victim's heart
> Torn from his breast, and each triumphant clang,
> A mangled corse, down the great temple's stairs
> Hurled headlong . . . . (ll. 405-08)

She is especially sad because this is a part of her burial "rites and royal obsequies." The prophecy, of course, came

true: Mexico was conquered, Papantzin was converted and given a Christian burial when she died.

At first glance, "Papantzin" seems to be vastly different from Yamoyden; however, they are in most respects quite similar. Sands exchanged tetrameter couplets for blank verse, which probably indicates a lessening of Scott's influence. The poetic style, on the other hand, remains the same. The influence of eighteenth-century poetic diction is not so obvious, yet Sands is still a long way from Wordsworthian diction. Sands again appealed to popular taste by including gothic descriptions of the barbarious, bloody, Mexican customs. Also, his placing the setting in a distant country and his telling of ancient legends would appeal to the popular, romantic taste for the remote. His use of legends resembles that of the earlier poem as does his use of native words, a habit which irked some critics of Yamoyden. For example, in "Papantzin" he refers to what is evidently a humming-bird as, "The frequent huitzilin" (l. 383). Likewise, he calls the mocking-bird, "the Centzontli."

Abundant concrete imagery and descriptions caused the American Quarterly Review to say that this poem "furnishes the best testimony of Sands' descriptive powers . . . . The verse is easy flowing, the language itself felicitous and forcible."[52] What makes "Papantzin" much more effective than Yamoyden is its brevity--it is just one-tenth the length of the earlier poem. Sands obviously had much better control of his material in the smaller poem.

The major difference in the two poems seems to to be in Sands's choice of content. It appears that Sands here turned his back on the campaign for a national literature. Sands, however, was not so much deserting the advocates for an American literature as he was expanding his ideas of what American literature should be. Sands apparently feared that in rejecting things English in order to write about America we might become provincial. By his example after writing Yamoyden, he advocated taking the whole New World as the province of American literature. He himself turned away from the Old World to find his subjects in the New World. The many Latin American items in the Talisman series indicate this, as does the essay on the Eskimoes of Greenland which he was working on at the time of his death. In that essay he presented the history and legends of these people and put some of their legends into verse just as he did with the Indian lore in Yamoyden and Mexican legends in "Papantzin".

Translated verse

"Papantzin" illustrates how Sands would come across either an idea or a poem while studying another language or literature and would translate that idea or poem into an English poem. For example, he studied Hebrew and versified psalms, under Eastburn's rather pious influence. During Eastburn's first winter (1816-1817) at the Bristol, R. I., Seminary, he often exhorted Sands to "seek the dearest bliss that heav'n / To trembling, pale mortality has given."[53] Sands responded by studying the Bible in its original Hebrew

and by versifying at least five psalms in the first three months of 1817,[54] before he got involved with finishing his juvenile romance The Bridal of Vaumond.

Like all other translators, versifiers, paraphrasers, and modernizers of the Psalms, Sands found it nearly impossible to capture their power in English verse. He blushed at his efforts:

> My vanity cannot inflate itself so far as to form a favourable opinion of their merits. I never yet however have seen many specimens that pleased me . . . . Moderns would vainly attempt to prolong one echo, however feeble, of those strains which the light of eternity alone could kindle and which it has absorbed in itself. . . . There is a grandeur in the notes of the Sweet Singer of Israel that has ever disdained filtration. It cannot be softened into that melody which meets the ear[,] it cannot be controuled by rhyme. It rather seems like the music of the Spheres as high and as mysterious--[55]

After two months further practice, Sands playfully criticized his continued failure:

> I send you a versification of Psalm XLVI for which I solicit King David's pardon and your indulgence--"Sternhold & Hopkins had great qualms"--but the misfortune is that I have no qualms at all. I cut and slash and when the connexion is not apparent, I have a surprising faculty of making a candle shine through a two bushel basket. This you have no doubt perceived. My versification is very much like one of these cloudy, moonshiny nights, when you can just see the ground sufficiently to step down a bank of some half dozen feet, and break your neck at the bottom; as I have almost done a few nights ago, walking out of town, in silent contemplation.
>
> I am all that may be imagined &c
>
> Robt C Sands

Besides being an accurate assessment of his success in versifying Psalms, these two letters provide a glimpse of the two sides of Sands's character: his serious, contemplative

side, usually expressed in such high-flown language that it almost seems a mask behind which to hide the seriousness of his feelings; and his light-hearted, almost waggish side, full of humor and personal references. The line, "I am all that may be imagined," is a tempting one for a biographer. It is easy to imagine what an enjoyable companion this witty, self-effacing man was.

The only Psalm versified by Sands that ever saw print was "Psalm CXXXVII," written 15 November 1821 and published by Verplanck in Sands's Writings (1834). This effort exceeded those contained in letters to Eastburn. For one thing, he used pentameter couplets, rather than the tetrameter couplets of the earlier translations. Also, it was written after Yamoyden, which had apparently sharpened his poetic powers. Exactly what Sands did with a Psalm can be seen by comparing the beginning of his version with that of the King James Version:

> Where mid Babel's proud gardens and palaces glide
> The waves of Euphrates, we sat by the tide;
> Our harps on the willows hung mournful above,
> And we wept as we thought on the land of our love!
>
> For our masters came by, and a song they desired,
> And mirth from the exile the spoiler required;
> With mockery they bade us awake at their nod,
> To please his blasphemers, the hymns of our God.

The seventeenth-century scholars translated it thus:

> 1. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.
> 2. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
> 3. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of Zion. (Psalm 137: 1-3)

Sands had not noticeably improved David's song.

Classical literature surpassed all others as a source of inspiration for Sands, and much of his miscellaneous poetry consisted of translations of ancient authors. Many of his contributions to the Literary Confederacy were selections from the Greeks. A letter to James Eastburn in 1819 illustrates the kind of devotion the Confederates had to the Greek Classics:

> We read Herodotus (in whose style of digression--as we are all creatures of imitation--this epistle is composed), from one to half-past two every day, as a change from poetry. We shall finish Clio this week, then we shall probably attack Aeschylus again. I believe I wrote you that we had finished the translation of Prometheus. I am now translating the Orestes of Euripedes.[56]

The letter goes on to explain why he admires Aeschylus and Euripedes and why he dislikes Sophocles.

Among the Latin authors, Horace was Sands's favorite. He once told Eastburn that "with Horace only for a companion, I could never be quite isolated, quite lonely, in the farthest corner of the earth."[57] His translation-imitations of Horace are probably the best of his classical endeavors, at least Verplanck thought so when he compiled Sands's Writings. Sands's translation of Horace's Epode II, entitled "Pleasures of a Country Life," begins thus:

> Happy the man, remote from toil and care,
> As in the golden age men were;
> Who ploughs his native field with his own team,
> And hath no debts of which to dream!

Sands originally published this and six other translations of Horace in the Atlantic magazine, which he originated and edited.

Sands translated French and Italian poems as he learned modern languages in the latter part of his life. "The Butterfly," translated from the French of De La Martine, is probably the best of Sands's lyrics:

> Born with the spring, and with the roses dying,
> Through the clear sky on Zephyr's pinion sailing,
> On the young floweret's opening bosom lying,
> Perfume and light and the blue air inhaling,
> Shaking the thin dust from its wings, and fleeing,
> And fading like a breath in boundless heaven,--
> Such is the butterfly's enchanted being;
> How like desire, to which no rest is given,
> Which still uneasy, rifling every treasure,
> Returns at last above to seek for purer pleasure.[58]

On at least one occasion, Sands used English literature as the basis for a poem. The prefatory note to "Sleep" explains that he had used "such parts" of Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy" as seemed to the writer fit for versification. Other ideas are introduced, probably not more original," confessed the note.[59]

"Not . . . original" is true of most of Sands's poetry. At least half of Sands's minor poetry consisted of collaborations: he versified Psalms with Eastburn, translated the classics with the rest of the Literary Confederacy, and imitated poems in modern languages, sometimes, with William Cullen Bryant.

Other Original Poetry

The small amount of truly original poetry written by Sands falls into three categories: occasional verse, humorous verse, and serious poetry. Some of the occasional verse was written for the giftbooks and contained suitable subjects--

lovers and ladies. However, Sands's giftbook contributions far exceed the usual drivel found in those annual, sentimental honeypots. Sands slipped enough of his wit and humor into these efforts to make them palatable. One example is "Preface to an Album," written for the first Talisman (1828), a giftbook edited by Sands. Here he rhapsodizes about facing the snowy white, blank pages of a new album:

> Oh! and alas! while on this volume's brink,
> Still a white sea, I stand, and meditate
> Upon the many coloured kinds of ink,
> Whose tortuous currents here must permeate,--
> When on the torture of those brains I think,
> Whose oozings here must be incorporate,--
> Upon the geese that must the quills supply,
> And those that must commit the poetry,--
> I sorrow, that all fair things must decay . . . .[60]

Typical giftbook sentiments, but containing a note of humor through the inflated diction and unusual images.

Sands could hardly have lived in the nineteenth century and have been a poet and a friend of Bryant's without writing nature poetry. Interestingly enough, the first good nature poems written by Sands were done for the Atlantic magazine which brought Sands and Bryant together. Sands's "Wild Geese" hardly reflects Bryant's "To a Waterfowl," however:

> Wild geese! wild geese! I love you well,
> For of the festive board ye tell:
> Of gravies rich, and sauces savoury,
> And tables set out in all their bravery.
> Of soup, of turtle, and dumplings of dough,
> Scenes where the starved soul long to go!

This ought to be classified with the humorous poetry, of course; Sands's nature poems were generally quite serious, reflective descriptions of the Hudson River and landscape around Weehawken and Hoboken, New Jersey.

His poem "Weehawken" was not only one of his best efforts, but was easily his most popular piece. It was anthologized at least four times after his death by such editors as Griswold, C. F. Hoffman, and Longfellow. Its first verses describe the setting, then Sands says,

> Yet should the stranger ask, what lore
> Of by-gone days, this winding shore,
> Yon cliffs and fir-clad steeps could tell,
> If vocal made by Fancy's spell,--
> The varying legend might rehearse
> Fit themes for high, romantic verse.
>
> O'er yon rough heights and moss-clad sod
> Oft hath the stalworth warrior trod; . . .
>
> When the great strife for Freedom rose
> Here scouted oft her friends and foes,
> Alternate, through the changeful war,
> and beacon-fires flashed bright and far;
> And here, when Freedom's strife was won,
> Fell, in sad feud, her favoured son;--

The rest of the poem describes the last sights Hamilton saw as he fell in that fatal duel with Aaron Burr. The promoter of a national literature does not miss the chance to provide American landscape with tradition and historical association.

Another popular nature poem, one in which he criticized contemporary authors for not writing about America, was published by The New York Mirror in an essay, by Sands, on "Hoboken." Robert W. Weir's well-known painting of Hoboken, as engraved by A. B. Durand, accompanied the poem, which began:

> Let Willis tell, in glittering prose,
> Of Paris and its tempting shows;
> Let Irving, while his fancy glows,
> Praise Spain, renowned--romantic!
> Let Cooper write, until it palls,
> Of Venice, and her marble walls,
> Her dungeons, bridges, and canals,

Enough to make one frantic!. . .

For me--who never saw the sun
His course o'er other regions run. . . .
Better I love the river's side,
Where Hudson's sounding waters glide . . . .[61]

Cooper had published a Venetian romance, The Bravo, the year before, and Irving had just written Conquest of Granada and The Alhambra.

Sands promoted a national literature every chance he got. Even in the prefatory verse he wrote for John J. Bailey's romantic drama on the fourth century massacre at Thessalonica, Greece, he slipped in a plea to use indigenous material. Right in the middle of "Prologue to Waldimar, a Tragedy," we find: "Yet, our New World the muse's pencil needs!"[62] He ended the poem by saying that at least we can be proud that Bailey is an American. Sands was fond of the theater and attended it often, but this is as close as he got to writing anything for the stage.

Sands's second category of original poetry, humorous verse, mainly contains satirical literary criticism like "The Ocean of Nonsense," "The Deluge," and "Noah, a Poem. By Paul Allen," which were originally published in the Literary Confederacy's St. Tammany magazine.[63] But Sands also wrote several humorous poems that have no critical intention, the most representative of which is "A Monody Made on the Late Mr. Samuel Patch, by an Admirer of the Bathos." The subtitle contains a play on words which becomes more evident when the circumstances of Patch's death are understood.

During the 1820's, Sam Patch of Passaic, New Jersey,

fascinated crowds throughout New York and New Jersey with his leaps from great heights. Such publicity was given his leaps that he soon became a legend. Sands may have been one of the five hundred spectators on the shore at Hoboken when Sam Patch jumped ninety feet into the Hudson River from a platform erected on the masthead of a sloop.[64] In October of 1829, Patch made his highest jump over Niagra Falls, an event widely heralded in the newspapers, including Sands's Commercial Advertiser. A month later Patch attempted a 125 foot leap into the Genesee Falls at Rochester, New York. His body sagged half way down, and "he struck the water obliquely with arms and legs extended."[65] Witnesses reported that Patch had been drinking, and they presumed he passed out before reaching the water. Sands eloquently explained the cause of Patch's tragedy in these words:

> The fiend that from the infernal rivers stole
> Hell-draughts for man, too much tormented him,
> With nerves unstrung, but steadfast in his soul,
> He stood upon the salient current's brim;
> His head was giddy, and his sight was dim;
> And then he knew this leap would be his last,--
> Saw air, and earth, and water wildly swim,
> With eyes of many multitudes, dense and vast,
> That stared in mockery; none a look of kindness cast.
> (Writings, II, 351)

Sands spoke the truth in the subtitle when he called himself "an Admirer of the Bathos." In fact, much of his humor can be classified as bathos, or the ludicrous attempt to be serious and achieve dignity and pathos for a trivial or insignificant subject. In "Monody" he sprinkles in a liberal dose of classical allusion which also has the effect of bathos. Since bathos is often defined in terms of a "sudden drop" (from the

exalted to the commonplace), its use in the title of a poem about Sam Patch takes on another meaning.

"To American poets and rhymesters of the 1830's, searching for native themes, the heroics, tragedy, and seriocomic aspects of the Last Leap proved magnetic."[66] Sands was only one of the many poets that helped create the Sam Patch legend, which lasted through most of the nineteenth century. His poem was far better than most of the poems about Sam Patch and was popular for years after his death. Unfortunately, this is probably the poem most generally associated with Sands.[67]

The other most often remembered Sands's poem, "The Dead of 1832," falls into the third category of his original poetry, his serious poems. "The Dead of 1832" is not a first-rate poem and is probably remembered only because of the ironic fact that two weeks after it was published in his Commercial Advertiser, Sands himself joined the illustrious list of people who died in 1832: Goethe, Scott, Crabbe, Champollion, Spurzheim, and Jeremy Bentham. The poem ends by saying

> They go--and with them is a crowd,
> For human rights who THOUGHT AND DID,
> We rear to them no temples proud,
> Each hath his mental pyramid.

Little did Sands know when he wrote this, that he would be one of the crowd that went with them. Unfortunately, his fame or "mental pyramid" has deteriorated and disappeared much more quickly than the others mentioned in the poem.

A better poem was written on the occasion of Eastburn's

death. "Monody to the Memory of the Rev. J. W. Eastburn" is a finely wrought elegy full of strong feeling expressed with reserve and impersonal generalization.

The "Monody" contains obvious echoes of Milton's Lycidas: compare, for example, the eighth line of Lycidas--"For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime"--with the second line of the following, rather typical, sample from the "Monody":

> O silent shell! thy chords are riven!
> That heart lies cold before its prime!
> Mute are those lips, that might have given
> One deathless descant to our clime!
> No laurel chaplet twines he now;
> He sweeps a harp of heavenly tone,
> And plucks the amaranth for his brow
> That springs beside the eternal throne.
> (Writings, II, 338)

Like Milton, Sands consigned his departed friend to heaven.

Milton's poetry had often influenced Sands. Sands once confessed to Eastburn: "for language, I find most assistance from Milton's smaller pieces--Comus, Lycidas, Il Penseroso &c which as poetry, I prefer to the Paradise Lost; with the exception of a few parts.[68] While writing Yamoyden, Sands recommended Milton to Eastburn: "It does not follow by any means that the language used by Milton is inapplicable to a tale of the wards of Philip."[69] And in the poem, details of the Indian's pow-wow parallel those in Satan's Council.

Sands built most of the "Monody" around a clever adaptation of the biblical prophet Isaiah's call from God:

> "Proclaim," the Eternal Spirit said,
> "Glad tidings to the meek in heart,

Bind up the wounds that earth has made,
And bid the enfranchis'd slave depart.
Tell the poor captive, chain'd by sin,
'Thy bars are burst, and thou art free!
The year of glory shall begin,
The spring of beauty dawns for thee!'"
(Writings, II, 337)

The poem then shows point by point how Eastburn had answered this call through his ministry. And, like Milton, though more mildly and indirectly, Sands criticizes the contemporary religious situation: ". . . moss o'erspreads / The temples once devote to god." The loss of a promising young minister, however, remains secondary to Sands's disappointment over losing a potentially great poet, a close friend and kindred spirit.

Summary

All in all, Sands was not a great poet, and he would be the first to admit it. He loved poetry, and he was a student of versification, or as Bryant says, he "had an ear for poetic measure cultivated by a study" of classical, English, and European literature.[70] His serious verse is occasionally affecting, often energetic, and usually witty. His descriptive powers were great, and he often won praise from his contempories for his talents in this area. In fact, he defined poetry in terms of affecting descriptions: "I know no other definition of poetry, than that it conveys beautiful or sublime pictures to the mind--and am often tempted to exclude from that title, half the Didactic poetry in the Language."[71] Sands here anticipates by thirty years Edgar Allan Poe's "heresy of the didactic" in The Poetic

Principle. And much like Poe, Sands regarded the music of poetry, "the melody and rhyme" as he called it, as the essence of poetry, not just the "drapery of thought." Consequently Sands's poetry lacks that depth of thought, that universality, that genius, which gives a poet a lasting reputation. Unlike Poe's innovative poetry, Sands's was dated in content and style, and therefore of less influence or appeal to succeeding generations.

He was capable of great poetry, but the distraction of other interests and projects kept him from becoming an important poet. Most of his poetry bears the marks of hasty composition. He once wrote Eastburn: "I have almost made a determination to give up Poetry. For I am convinced that to produce any thing worthy of posterity of any size, all the powers of the mind and all the attention must be devoted to it. . . . Such a determination however is rare."[72] He obviously lacked the determination. "A Sonnet on Sonnets," published in the New York Mirror of 16 October 1830 epitomizes his lack of seriousness about poetry:

> When a memory takes a retrospective gaze
> Upon the bright effusions of my brain,
> She cannot find--I note the fact with pain--
> Mid all that heterogeneous mass of lays,
> A single SONNET! This might blight a fame
> Greater--if greater can be--than the one
> Which now rewards the muses' favourite son--
> I mean myself--and gilds his deathless name.
> This must not be, and so I'll write one now.
> Let's see--it must comprise just fourteen lines,
> Dull flat and heavy--this at least combines
> The requisites alluded to, I trow;
> Two more complete it--now the bard entwines
> The ne plus ultra garland round his laurelled brows!

Hastily composed, just for the fun of it, yet witty and

clever--the sonnet is typical of Sands's attitude toward poetry. It was one of his favorite things in life, but it remained a hobby and never became a serious avocation or vocation. His poetry was popular in his day, but his contemporaries admired him more for his stories and essays, where he found looser reins on his erudite wit.

CHAPTER V

THE CRITIC: SANDS EDITS LITERARY JOURNALS

Coming of Age

The comfortable Sands home at 94 Leonard St., just west of bustling Broadway and only four blocks south of Hudson Square, the city's most fashionable address, was most likely the scene of a party on 11 May 1820. Not only was this Sands's twenty-first birthday, but he had also been admitted to the bar the day before. For five years Sands had studied law in the office of David B. Ogden, a prominent New York attorney. Now that he had passed the bar exams, family and friends celebrated.

The fledgling lawyer was confident and excited about the prospects of his new career. Consequently, he turned down an invitation made by Dr. Mason, a friend and former president of Columbia, to fill the chair of Belles Lettres at Dickenson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Instead he set up an office at 184 Fulton St., just one block from City Hall. New York, in 1820, was crowded and bristling with commercial activity. Immigrants from other states and Europe had helped to double the population in the two decades of Sands's life. The city limits were constantly being pushed northward, and rows of red brick houses stood where there had been marshes a few

years earlier. Sands, realizing the limitless opportunities offered by his native city, was confident of a successful career in law.[1] As Dr. Neilson, a Literary Confederate, once said concerning Sands and his profession, "Bob is of a sanguine temperament & is always counting his chickens before they are hatched."[2]

The high hopes were deflated, however, by his first experience before a jury. No details of the case remain, but Verplanck reports that "His first attempt as an advocate, without being a failure, fell far short of his own proposed standard and expectations" ("Memoir," p. 14). As a result, Sands evidently became disheartened and gradually withdrew from the legal profession. He maintained an office for the next seven years (at five different addresses), but he never again took a case of any consequence before the court. To support himself, he took care of just enough minor matters (wills and petty disputes) such as the one which interrupted a meeting of the Literary Confederacy: "a messenger arrived in a great hurry for B. Sands to go over into the Bowery, & help a poor devil of a printer out of some difficulties into which he had fallen."[3]

Verplanck was puzzled over Sands's lack of success at law and enumerated reasons why he should have succeeded: (1) he needed the income; (2) he liked the study of law; (3) he was industrious; (4) he had the best legal training; (5) he was eloquent; and (6) he was a shrewd judge of character and (7) a tireless investigator. Verplanck finally decided

that "nothing but a resolute will appears to have been wanting to have secured him a highly respectable standing at the bar."[4]

Verplanck seems to have forgotten that Sands had always been uneasy about splitting his interests between law and literature. When he first decided to study law, he wrote:

> Farewell, delusive dreams! I ask not now
> The wreath that crowns the immortal poet's brow.
> ("Memoir," p. 16)

However, Sands was never really able to say "farewell" to literature.

Since the age of fifteen he had been involved in some literary project each year. One of the first things he did after being admitted to the bar was to edit Yamoyden. The fame resulting from America's enthusiastic acceptance of that poem must have coincided closely with his disappointing first taste of law. Suddenly literature seemed much more appealing. It was about this time (1820) that he began a program of rereading and widening his acquaintance with the classical poets and authors of other literatures.[5] During the next year, 1821, the Literary Confederacy published the St. Tammany Magazine; then during 1822 and 1823 they contributed a good deal to the New York Literary Journal. Certainly, the variety of literary projects he attacked with relish indicates that he did not lack a "resolute will." Rather, he personally found literature more rewarding than law. In retrospect, it almost seems as if Sands decided to prepare himself during these years for a career as a writer while he supported himself

with law.

During the seven years Sands maintained a law office, his daily routine of life was made up of three ingredients: law, literature, and socializing. These ingredients are illustrated in the "Journal of a Day" written by Sands and read to the Literary Confederates in 1822. Accounts of a day's activities were popular among the Confederates in the final years of their productivity. Sands wrote:

> Read Mr. Burke's speech on conciliation with America until half-past one. Mended the fire, made castles, and looked at Saint Paul's to see what o'clock it was. Finished the speech, which I take to comprehand as much wit, eloquence, and argument, as any parliamentary harrangue that was ever made in the House, or written for the newspapers. . . . Read four pages of Thucydides . . . . Having a particular aversion to the speeches in Thucydides, because the Greek is so bloody hard, left off reading at six, and went to tea.

Disappointed at not finding any of the Literary Confederates present upon his return from tea, Sands amused himself by drawing a pen-and-ink sketch of his room, which Lewis Gaylord Clark claims "evinces no small skill in pictorial delineation."[6]

Most of Sands's socializing and writing and studying of literature was done with the Literary Confederates. The nature of their association is reflected in one of the most fascinating extant accounts of Sands, found in Dr. John Neilson's "Journal of a Day":

> April 18. 1822 Was roused this morning at about a quarter past six, by a person who knocked at the street door & afterwards departed. As we are in the habit, John Campbell, Bob Sands, & myself, of meeting early each morning at Bobs office to read & digest

> a certain portion of Cornelius Tacitus; I concluded that this had been John Campbell who had stopped for me on his way thither. When I arrived at this said office, however, I found nobody there but Bob, who told me that it was he who had called for me, to tell me that he was engaged to eat breakfast at Sam Wards; & that he should not have time to read with us that morning. I thought it was very sagacious in Bob to wake me from my sleep, merely to inform me that there was no occasion for my getting up. But I kept my reflections to myself.[7]

The John Campbell mentioned was a lawyer and sometimes a partner of Sands. Though Sands never mentions him during this period, there are frequent references indicating that they were good friends. Neilson continues:

> Just as the clock struck seven, & we were leaving the office, up comes John Campbell. Bob stated the circumstances of the case, & put John in a good humour by telling him that he was going to be busy all the morning making somebody's will for which he expected to get atleast fifty dollars.

Before separating, Sands reminded Neilson of their engagement that afternoon to take Manton Eastburn and his wife, Sands's sister Julia, and Samuel Glover and his two daughters to meet Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell and to see his collection of curiosities. That afternoon, Neilson dutifully went to the college of Physicians and Surgeons and introduced the guests to Dr. Mitchell, who showed them "his curiosities in a very fascinating manner, putting on a huge bullrush hat from the river Amason [sic] which made him cut a curious figure" (p. 285). It began to "rain like blazes" and Neilson said, "I began to wish Bob to the devil . . . for thus lugging me into a scrape, & then shirking me" (p. 290). Later, "when I asked Bob why he had not come to the Doctor's, & told him that we had all been there, [he] flatly told me [he] did not believe me, &

offered to bet me half a dollar on the same" (p. 281).

That evening, Literary Confederate Richard Ward showed up in Sands's office where Neilson was visiting. Ward and Sands invited Neilson to go out with them for the evening. Neilson replied:

> I told them I could not very well, as I had taken a dose of salts about an hour since . . . & besides that I wanted shaving & had my old coat on; they became more urgent in their solicitations, & told me by the way of inducement that they were going to Harry Wards where there were two pretty girls, & that I need not mind my old coat. (P. 293)

Neilson ended up walking as far as the hospital with them. The sketch is written from Neilson's victimized-friend point of view, thus coloring some of the facts; nevertheless, it gives us a glimpse of Sands's personality.

The reference to the "two pretty girls" indicates, as do several other references, that Sands enjoyed women and was a favorite among them. Sands never married and perhaps never would have, but his death at the early age of 33 precludes our ever knowing. Verplanck implies that Sands never married because of his deep attachment to his family. He was the last and youngest son of elderly parents and felt an obligation to care for them. He moved back home after giving up his residence and law office in Manhattan.

Another reason why Sands never married is perhaps to be found in the facetious Aeronaut letter to Robert Walsh, the Philadelphia critic thoroughly despised by Sands. The letter refers to one of the Literary Confederates, quite obviously Sands:

> He looks for an ideal which we fear he will never see realized. He expects to unite his destinies with a woman economical without parsimony, intellectual without affectation, and beautiful without vanity. He has lately formed his conceptions of her person from something he saw in your paper. He insists on the lady having "English head, neck and bust; French waist; Dutch hips; American legs and arms; and Spanish feet and hands."[8]

There may also be an element of truth in a newspaper note published after Sands's death:

> Price of a Broken Heart.--The late Robert C. Sands sued for damages in a case of breach of promise of marriage. He was offered two hundred pounds to heal his broken heart. "Two hundred! he exclaimed; "two hundred for ruined hopes, a blasted life! Two hundred for all this? No--never! Make it three hundred, and it's a bargain!"[9]

While typical of Sands's sense of humor, not a shred of evidence exists to substantiate this alleged love affair. It sounds more like an inside joke popular among lawyers. If Sands did suffer a broken heart, he certainly never showed any of the symptoms popular in the fiction of his day.

Sands's best and closest friends were in the Literary Confederacy; however, he had a wide circle of friends from every social level. Verplanck calls Sands "Social in his temperament," and claims "he enjoyed the acquaintance and high esteem of the elite of the scholars, and men of talents of all classes, and especially the artists of New-York and its vicinity" ("Memoir," p. 26).

Just a few doors down Fulton street from Sands's first office was the Shakespeare Tavern, a massive, low, old-fashioned building which was, according to historian W. H. Bayles, "the resort of actors, poets and critics, as well as the rendezvous of the wits and literary men of the period."[10]

Every account of the tavern, which was the equivalent of the London coffeehouses, lists Sands as one of the frequent, prominent visitors. Some of the men Sands met there over a quiet supper and excellent wine were James K. Paulding, Willis Gaylord Clark, James G. Percival, and Fitz-Greene Halleck, all Knickerbocker authors. And it was most likely here that Sands became acquainted with William L. Stone, the editor of the Commercial Advertiser and his future employer. It was here that Sands deepened his friendship with Gulian C. Verplanck.

Verplanck, once described as uncompanionable, cold, and "too much of a frog to appreciate the Knickerbocker spirit,"[11] seems an unlikely friend for the warm, convivial, gregarious Sands. However, Sands had earlier chosen a steady, somewhat pious intellectual for his closest friend, James Eastburn. The fledgling Knickerbocker author would naturally have appreciated the war of words between Verplanck and Mayor DeWitt Clinton which culminated with the masterful satire, Bucktail Bards (1819). But he probably did not meet Verplanck until the early 1820's when Verplanck taught at General Theological Seminary in New York City. Sands had friends among the faculty, especially Professor Jarvis to whom he dedicated Yamoyden, so Sands most likely cultivated a friendship with Verplanck during this period before the professor was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives in 1824.

Verplanck and Sands had much in common. Both were lawyers who favored literature as their avocation. They shared

the same cultural interests and found friends among the New York artists. Both campaigned for a national literature. Both were intellectuals and classical scholars who admired each other's erudition. Yet the nature of their friendship is difficult to trace. Sands's letters to Verplanck range in tone from proper and business-like to friendly, witty, and light-hearted, but an undefinable reserve is usually present. The letters indicate a public friendship--the two enjoyed writing together and discussing New York political activities--not a private relationship in which personal ideas, aspirations, and feelings are shared. A maturity and reserve lurks between the lines of their correspondence. Perhaps this occurs naturally when writing to a congressman; nevertheless, there is a difference in tone from the letters of the obviously kindred spirits of Eastburn and Sands. Yet when the friends of Sands looked for a suitable biographer after his death, they immediately and unanimously turned to Verplanck as the one who knew him best, or "on account of your intimacy with him" as Bryant put it in a letter to Verplanck (24 December 1832, NYPL).

The casual meetings of New York literati at the Shakespare Tavern were organized into a club soon after James Fenimore Cooper came to town in 1822. The thirty-five members of the Bread and Cheese Club included most of the leading professional men, statesmen, lawyers, physicians, and writers of New York City. Sands was probably a charter member of this organization devoted to stimulating conversation and good food. The

convivial times had there reflect the spirit of Knickerbocker literature. Literary critic Nelson F. Adkins calls the Club "a happy symbol of all that was youthful and bouyant in this school--of the spirit in literature of hearty good fellowship which made New York during these years the literary center of America."[12] In this respect, Sands is a representative Knickerbocker, because he thoroughly personified this "hearty good fellowship." He loved the social life which was a prominent aspect of the New York City literary scene.

The Bread and Cheese Club began to disintegrate in 1827, the year after Cooper left for Europe, and was completely dead by 1831. Various reasons for the decline have been given, such as the diversity of the membership and the formation of the Sketch Club.[13] However Frederick DePeyster, who wrote a brief sketch of Sands that remains unpublished, claims the club's demise resulted from a duel between two members of the Club. Sands had frequently urged DePeyster, a Columbia classmate, to join, but, on the night he planned to become a member, he was prevented from doing so by a last-minute business matter. After that he had no further opportunity of doing so because "of the breaking up of the club," as a result of the duel. The New York Mirror of 1 December 1827 reported:

> William G. Graham, extensively known as assistant editor of the Enquirer, and a gentleman of splendid talents and large acquirements, was shot dead, on Wednesday last, in an affair of honour, (what a misapplication of the term!) at Hoboken. The name of his antagonist, as we understand, is Barton.

Sands also mentioned the duel in a letter to Verplanck a week later. DePeyster claims "The melancholy result of this duel,

tended to abate the interest felt by the members in the success of the club, and shortly afterwards it was broken up."[14] Neither of the parties to the duel has ever been listed as a Club member; however, in the later years of the Club, membership changed so much that it is possible these men were members and not listed. At any rate, the episode provides another plausible cause for the disintegration of the Bread and Cheese Club. After its demise, the gregarious Sands helped form its successor, the Sketch Club (see Chapter VIII).

The Atlantic Magazine

The first hint of the Atlantic Magazine, which according to William Charvat was to become "the best New York critical journal of the period,"[15] came in the 5 December 1823 meeting of the Literary Confederacy:

> Talked about our literary prospects & impressed that this must be a good time to start a magazine inasmuch as there is nothing in the city at present which deserves the name. Came to no conclusion as the means or plan of conducting one but agree that it ought to be entirely original as to matter and thought that we might easily find sufficient numbers of contributors and obtain a liberal patronage.[16]

The minutes of the Confederacy make no further mention of the magazine, but from this reference it appears that the magazine was to be another project by the Confederacy, even though it would be open to other contributors, and that it was a magazine, not a review, a subtle but important distinction (magazines contained more original, entertaining material).

The above-mentioned meeting was one of the last of the

Literary Confederacy, which quit meeting on a regular basis about the time the Atlantic started. That there might be some cause and effect relationship here is a tempting but implausible thesis. Increased absences and a general lack of interest are indicated in the minutes of the Confederacy even before the plans for the Atlantic were mentioned.

After the suggestion at the December meeting, Sands arranged to have a magazine published by the firm of Bliss and White. Sands was to edit the new publication for a salary of $500 and was given another $500 a year for expenses. Elam Bliss, the senior partner of the publishing firm, was noted for his eagerness to sponsor new publishing projects; but while he was adventurous, he also bungled most of his affairs. Sands later referred to him as "obfuscated," and Bryant complained to R. H. Dana, Jr.: "Bliss is the most unenterprising and unlucky of all publishers--his name is a proverb among the trade for infelicity and ill-luck in the publishing line."[17] Part of Bliss's reputation was earned by his handling of the Atlantic, which only managed to struggle through one year.

However in May of 1824, when the first issue appeared, Sands and the publishers of the Atlantic were confident of success. This is not to say that Sands walked into the venture with blind optimism. In fact, the "Conversation between the Publishers and the Editor," which served as an introduction, quite candidly pointed out the "innumberable difficulties in the way of our success."[18] Each difficulty mentioned by the editor was eloquently countered by the publishers.

In response to the editor's complaint that the market was flooded with too many magazines and newspapers which left "their readers neither taste to appreciate, nor time to peruse, nor money to pay for literary publications," the publishers said, "These are no alarming impediments to our success. Our plan differs materially from that of any other contemporary domestic journal; and your contributors must correct the public appetite for reading advertisements, by furnishing them more instructive or amusing matter" (Atlantic, I, 1-2).

The founding of magazines and reviews was one of the main manifestations of early nineteenth-century literary nationalism, and the improvement of American literature by discreet criticism was one of the goals Sands mentions in the introductory "Conversation":

> We are asked, "Where is our literature?" and God knows, we have little to exhibit, in reply to the sneering interrogation. But instead of creating it, by regular labour and discreet encouragement, talent has been wasted in virulent retorts on the inquirers, and idle abuse of the productions of their countrymen. (P. 5)

Sands promises none of this type of critical review, which causes the publishers to ask:

> Pub. Do you mean to exclude reviews entirely?
>
> Ed. By no means. I am only sick of the name and the manner. We will notice works of genius or talent; and endeavor to point out their excellencies,--perhaps defects; taking care, however, not to run against snaggs, and expose our own conceit and ignorance, under the notion of triumphant superiority, as some of our predecessors have done before us, and some of our contemporaries do now. Works that are good for nothing we shall not notice at all; unless some of us choose to indulge in harmless merriment, at the expense of fair game. We live in an age of quackery; and quacks of all kinds ought to be exposed. So

> also we must not hesitate to repel all attacks upon morality, or correct principle, when there is talent enough to render them dangerous. (Pp. 5-6)

This is about as succinctly as Sands ever summed up his critical philosophy: all criticism would be constructive; poor productions would be put down through humor and ridicule; and moral guidelines would be used.

As the dialogue continued, the publisher tries to further define the magazine's proposed content:

> Pub. Then you will admit essays on all subjects connected with general literature, manners, and morals. Tales--
>
> Ed. If they be not sentimental.
>
> Pub. Satire--
>
> Ed. If it be not personal.
>
> Pub. Letters from your numerous correspondents--
>
> Ed. Yes--we must immediately open a correspondence with all great authors dead and alive. We will publish posthumous works of some great geniuses who never existed; and, of course, we shall be favored with communications from some imaginary correspondents. The last will be good contributors, as they will never ask for compensation. (P. 6)

Readers of previous productions by the Literary Confederacy knew that the letter to the editor was Sands's favorite form of humor.

The dialogue closes by mentioning two other things that could be expected in the new magazine:

> Pub. You will also insert scientific communications.
>
> Ed. If we can get them: they will make good ballast.
>
> Pub. And poetry--
>
> Ed. Yes, alas! we must have some good poetry . . . .

> As for magazine poetry, however, it is generally mere slops. I can make it myself, on a pinch, if it is absolutely necessary to stop up a hiatus. My verses fill up a gap, as well as Falstaff's soldiers did a pit, full as well as any others of the same length. (P. 6)

Reviews, essays, tales, satires, letters, and poetry, then, was what readers could expect from the Atlantic, and the promise was made good to them in the course of the next year, oftentimes from the pen of the editor himself who made contributions in each category.

Only two reviews can definitely be attributed to Sands; although he most likely was the author of six or seven others.[19] As he promised, the serious reviews make only positive comments on the value of the book or lecture. The review of Ira Hill's Theory of the World is one which exposes quackery through humor. Hill theorized that heat in the center of the earth, pushed up land areas above the sea. Sands calls Hill unpatriotic for having America be the last land area to appear. He blames Hill for the nation's sectional problems because his theory has the middle and northern states rising after the South. The review ends by saying:

> Every idea is original, every illustration apposite, every argument unanswerable. But praise is superfluous. The author will make his own way, and after having formed two continents with such apparent ease, it will be hard indeed if he does not stand his own ground. (Atlantic, I, 48)

Sands's moral judgments of literature are illustrated, as might be expected, in a review of Lord Byron. Speaking of his "The Deformed Transformed," Sands says,

> I do not, however, uphold the propriety of writing such books . . . . It is therefore hoped that many,

> even of those who are capable of relishing fine poetry, will not read this drama. The moral sense very soon becomes dull, by the familiarity of the mind with images and sentiments, at first strange and revolting. (Atlantic, I,65)

Other specific critical ideas of Sands will be examined in section IV of this chapter.

One of the most noteworthy items Sands wrote for his own magazine was an essay on "Domestic Literature," which was published in the second issue. The essay is a vigorous rebuttal of an article, "Modern Literature," by Thatcher Payne in the first issue. In his essay, Payne sounds like a conservative critic who dislikes the new, romantic, or what he calls "modern," trend in literature; however, he feels that national associations are too few to produce any literature yet:

> It is the magic of association that fits everything for the poet's hand and at this moment, and it will perhaps be the case for years to come, more poetry is to be made out of the humblest hillock upon the surface of the long inhabited regions of the other continent, than out of the whole American chain of Apalaches, Alleganies [sic], and Andes. (Atlantic, I, 22)

Sands was willing to concede that our national associations were few, but, he says, "I insist that the local associations are many, and of deep interest" (Writings, I, 104).

A main point of contention was over the Indian, of whom, Payne says, "nothing can be made." The author of Yamoyden was, of course, quick to disagree:

> The creative faculty is wanting; not the materials to be wrought upon. If scenes of unparalleled torture and indefatigable endurance, perservering vengeance, and unfailing friendship, hair-breadth escapes, and sudden ambush,--if the horrors of gloomy forests and unexplored caverns, tenanted by the most

> terrible banditti,--if faith in wild predictions, and entire submission of the soul to the power of ancient legends and visionary prophecies, are useful to the poet or romancer, here they may be found in abundance and endless variety. (Writings, I,107)

Sands feels the Indians might well be material for an epic. Their mythology and metaphoric speech, he believes, are pure poetry.

Sands also disagrees with Payne's statement "that of traditionary history we have hardly any that is of a romantic character" (Atlantic, I, 21). In defense, Sands recommends that Payne read what Palfrey, in his review of Yamoyden, had said about New England as a fertile source for romance. Sands also points out how Irving and Cooper had used New York history for romance.

Why Sands allowed such an uncharacteristic article in the first number of his new magazine can only be conjectured. Perhaps it was something Bliss and White had arranged to have written for the inaugural issue; at least it was written specifically for the first issue. Perhaps Sands put in an opposing view in order to be objective. Most likely he put it in with the intention of giving it a strong answer. It was probably an effort by Sands to stir up some controversy and thereby arouse interest in the new journal. Sands had effectively aroused just such a controversy with his criticism of The Forum at the beginning of his Neologist series of essays.

Payne and Sands, however, agree on Payne's final point: the necessity for a prospective author to gain a wide

knowledge of literature, past and present, English, American and foreign. This, Payne hopes, will "awaken the curiosity and excite the emulation of the few among us, who are, or may become, aspirants to similar distinctions" (Atlantic, I, 23). This was quite obviously the course Sands would pursue in the Atlantic, which includes articles on Greek, Italian, Spanish, Latin American, German, Arabian, Egyptian, and French literature and culture.

A good example of how Sands introduced Americans to foreign literature is his "The Caio Gracco of Monti," in the Atlantic's fifth number. Vincenzo Monti was a contemporary Italian dramatist, and his "Caio Gracco" was about twenty years old. Sands briefly introduced Monti, then paraphrases the drama, inserting translations of key passages. His only criticial comment is that Monti observes the unities and draws consistent characters. The main purpose was to put into the hands of Americans the works of one of the best contemporary dramatists. The fact that Sands wrote this eleven page (printed) paraphrase, which contained nearly 400 lines of translation, in a single evening, was, as Verplanck says, "a remarkable example of the facility of Mr. Sands in composition" (Writings, I, 138).

This effort to broaden the Americans' literary heritage prompted Sands to publish in the Atlantic six of his imitations of Horace and one translation from the poetry of Jean de Gresset, the eighteenth-century French poet. Nearly all of the rest of Sands's poetry in the Atlantic was humorous. Sands

intended that a magazine should entertain as well as instruct, and he did his best with "The Elegy on Henry Slender," "Wild Geese," and "Michael Hildesheim," a versified tale about a man who found it impossible to quit swearing.

Sands's favorite vehicle of humor was the letter to the editor from some fictitious country bumpkin. One of the best examples of this genre is found in the fourth issue of the Atlantic. In "A Letter from Orange County," Rip Van Boskerk reports that his life was one of contentment until he was placed on the building committee for a new church. Since then, all the talk of "symmetry, and proportion, and effects, or . . . pedestals, and cornices, and pediments, and basements and columns," has gotten him "clean addled." Since the Atlantic had mentioned architecture in an article on the fine arts, Rip wants the editor to advise him on the best type of church to build. This light-hearted satire on the Dutch love of creature comforts and lack of esthetic good taste was popular among the Knickerbockers and was a common ingredient of their humorous writings.

Sands wrote a short story for almost every issue of the Atlantic he edited.[20] The best was called variously "A Story from a Correspondent in Virginia" when it was published in the Atlantic, "The Man Who Burnt John Rogers" when Verplanck included it in Sands's Writings, and The Executioner when it was illegally republished by William Beastall in Philadelphia. This romantic-gothic tale, set during one of Sir Walter Raleigh's voyages to America, remained popular in anthologies

until 1889.[21] It is the psychological study of the effects of a guilty conscience, and is thus of literary interest as a predecessor of similar studies by Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville. The unnamed protagonist is quite obviously suffering physical and mental torture over some hidden secret, and is therefore shunned by the ship's passengers and crew: "this wretched exile found himself the focal object of aversion, hatred, and disgust" (Writings, II, 31).

One young man named Rogers, however, befriended him and drew his oppressing story from him. During the days of Bloody Mary in England, the protagonist had thrived on watching the executions of Protestants and even took part in one by lighting the fire to burn a kind parson named John Rogers. The face of the preacher and his distressed family haunted him from that moment on. He was going to America to try to escape reminders of his moral, but not illegal, transgression.

The story is left unresolved. One naturally expects there to be some connection between the John Rogers who was burned and the Rogers who befriends the distraught executioner on Raleigh's ship. However, the story abruptly ends with the editorial note, "Here there is a large defect in the manuscript." It is left ambiguous as to whether the defect was in the manuscript from the Virginia correspondent or in the manuscript from which the correspondent had taken his information. The whole idea that the story is being taken from an old manuscript is not mentioned in the beginning, and probably is used in the end to finish a story of which Sands had

no clear conception. In other words, the tale has its affecting parts, but there seems to have been no overall plan for it. The portrait of a man suffering from a guilty conscience is well drawn. The attempt by the crew to throw the protagonist overboard during a storm obviously parallels the Biblical story of Jonah, but for no apparent purpose. And the story of his life is compelling. But the overall impression is disappointing, especially in light of the obvious possibilities for the resolution of the plot.

The American Quarterly Review critic may have had this story in mind when he said of Sands's prose fiction: "He does not arrange well the materials of his story. We admire each particular part, but are dissatisfied with the general effect" (XV, 419). We are left with the impression that Sands had to meet a deadline before he had time to finish the story. We know from Verplanck that most of his works were hastily composed, and this seems to have been one of them. But perhaps it is unfair to judge this tale by criteria developed since Sands wrote. In a time when the short story was still considered just an abbreviated novel and was often more of a vehicle to display fine writing than some unified impression, "The Man Who Burnt John Rogers" stands out as a powerful story. As Frank Luther Mott says, "it is a notable tale for the times."[22]

"Joseph," another of Sands's Atlantic stories, has a more unified but duller plot which is saved only by flashes of Sands's wit and humor. The most important thing about the

story is the fine picture it gives of Sands, only slightly disguised as the narrator, during the disastrous Yellow Fever epidemic of 1822. Sands, like most New Yorkers, fled the quarantined lower city to find temporary quarters in Greenwich Village. As narrator of "Joseph," he drew a graphic picture of the life of a refugee in Greenwich:

> To get a miserable breakfast, in a negro's cellar, at eight a.m. for which four shillings were demanded; to saunter about,--in dry weather, through dust and horses and cars and stages, and their drivers, in wet weather, through mud and water, and swine and men--until noon; when in the midst of the crowd, I must stretch my neck and strain my eyes, in order to read the anxiously expected "Report of the Board of Health," affixed, like the laws of Caligula, to a lofty pillar, and written in a cramped and almost illegible hand; to waste three hours more in listless inaction, waiting for the dinner bell of Sykes or Niblo; then to squeeze one's self between two fat, hungry citizens, regardless of every one's wants but their own; . . . to rise from the table, despairing of dinner, and pay for what has not been eaten; to waste the interval between dinner and supper in walking ten miles to find a friend; . . . and then, to sum up all, to throw yourself with eternal thanks for good fortune, on a straw pallet, in a wretched garret, sufficiently heated to roast turkies' eggs, where you toss and tumble until morning, when you arise to a repitition of the self-same pleasant recreation: These are a few of the comforts which were enjoyed by myself, during the months of July and August, 1822; and by other tenants of Greenwich Village, for a much longer time. (Atlantic, I, 264)

The rest of the story deals with how he finally sought refuge with friends in a country mansion, only to hire a servant who brought in Yellow Fever from the city.

The wide variety of material Sands wrote for his own magazine is indicative of the Atlantic's contents, which ranged from commentary on current events to new, original literature; from extracts of popular books or collections of

letters of letters to reviews of books and cultural events. Its contents were not unlike that of its namesake of a century and a half later.

Even though the Atlantic's articles were anonymous, some important contributors can be determined. Naturally, the Literary Confederacy, out of whose meetings the idea for the magazine came, was well represented. Stories by Neilson and poetry by Manton Eastburn can be identified, and most likely Ward wrote some of the articles on law. However, Confederate participation was not as great as the first issue, nearly half of which was written by them, seemed to forecast. Other contributors were Dr. James DeKay (brother-in-law of Joseph Rodman Drake), Dr. David Hosack and Dr. L. M. Peixotto (all well-known New York physicians), William Sampson (an eminent lawyer), the poets Halleck and Bryant, and professor Henry J. Anderson. Most of the above were members of the Bread and Cheese Club, which evidently proved to be an ideal place to solicit contributions.

In spite of the help from contributors, Sands still had to write a large share of the 80 pages a month himself. This he did on top of all the editorial work. Meanwhile, subscribers to the magazine never ran more than a few hundred at the most. In October of 1824, Sands sought help from Henry Anderson, a professor of mathematics and astronomy at Columbia. In November, when the first issue of Volume II was published, Anderson was listed as co-editor of the slightly enlarged magazine. Thereafter, contributions by Sands quickly

diminished, and early in 1825 he completely faded out of the picture, evidently discouraged with the difficulties of magazine journalism in the young country.

The second and last volume of the Atlantic, which was edited mostly by Anderson, differs noticeably from the first volume. In the hands of Anderson, the tone of the magazine became more serious, original literature was kept to a minimum, and most of the space was devoted to book reviews, primarily of English and American literature. There was less of a cosmopolitan interest than when Sands ran the magazine; originally the magazine was characterized by a wide variety of subject matter from many different countries.

Although Sands seems to have grown discouraged with the magazine business almost too quickly, he still deserves credit for sensing the need in New York for a journal of literature and criticism and for starting what proved to be an excellent journal. He also helped set the tone for New York criticism (see section IV of this chapter).

The New-York Review and Athenaeum Magazine

One of the people who watched the precarious existence of the Atlantic most closely was William Cullen Bryant. The up-state Massachusetts lawyer had come to New York in April of 1824, seeking a position as an editor. While there, he met Sands in the home of his host, Robert Sedgwick. Bryant mentioned the dinner party in a letter to his wife back in Great Barrington:

I dined yesterday at Mr. Robert Sedgwick's in company

> of authors--Mr. Cooper, the novelist; Mr. Halleck, the author of 'Fanny'; Mr. Sands, author of 'Yamoyden'; Mr. Johnson, the reporter (of the Court of Appeals), and some other literary gentlemen. Mr. Cooper engrossed the whole conversation, and seems a little giddy with the great success his works have met with.[23]

Out of this meeting grew an intimate friendship between Sands and Bryant, who had much in common with each other. Their love of literature had caused disenchantment with law, and both were attempting to combine their vocation and avocation in a career of editorial writing. Bryant, like Sands, had woven Indian legends into his verse, and both were strong advocates of a national literature which used native subjects and settings.

Bryant returned to Massachusetts without finding work as an editor; meanwhile he closely followed the fortunes of Sands's new magazine, even contributing a poem or two. Naturally Bryant was interested when Henry Sedgwick told him that Bliss and White were looking for a competent editor to replace Sands and help Anderson. Sedgwick wrote Bryant: "I should think it likely, by remodeling the Atlantic, connecting it in some way with the 'Atheneum," & adding your name as one of the Editors, a great circulation might be obtained."[24] Bryant came to New York the following month to investigate the situation.

He found that the Atlantic was beginning to revive under the direction of Anderson, largely due to a new interest in literature sparked by the newly formed Athenaeum. He also found that the Athenaeum was considering establishing a journal

of their own which would combine the functions of a literary review and a magazine--Sands's original plan for the Atlantic. Henry and Robert Sedgwick and Verplanck were urging the Athenaeum to do so and to make Bryant one of the editors of the new magazine. The plan Henry Sedgwick had originally mentioned was finally worked out: the Athenaeum agreed to take over the Atlantic and change its name to the New York Review and Athenaeum Magazine. They would keep Anderson on as editor and hire Bryant to help him.

Bryant returned to Great Barrington much pleased at the prospect of becoming an editor in New York. By the end of March he had worked out a prospectus and come back to New York to promote the new magazine. The April issue of the Atlantic completed volume II. By the end of May, the first (June) issue of the New York Review was ready to be distributed to six hundred subscribers. Though neither magazine mentioned it, the fact that both magazines had the same editor and publisher made it obvious that the New York Review was intended to be the successor of the Atlantic.

Sands was evidently connected with the new magazine in some minor capacity at first, most likely handling editorial and circulation duties, as suggested by William Cullen Bryant II.[25] Sands gradually replaced Professor Anderson, whose contributions dwindled after the first few issues to an occasional notice of some work in his field. Evidently there was some question at the end of the first six months as to whether or not Sands had replaced Anderson, for a note at the

end of the December 1825 issue says: "The subscribers to the New-York Review and Athenaeum Magazine are informed that the Senior Editor [Anderson] of the Journal still continues to conduct it, in conjunction with his former Associate" (NYR, II, 83). From that time on, however, Sands contributed up to one-fourth of each issue, or about the same amount of material as Bryant. Two months later (February, 1826), Sands was evidently handling enough of the editorial work that he could insert, unbeknowns to the senior editors, an essay which slyly and cleverly attacked the pompous dissertations of political scientists. This attack embarassed Anderson and Bryant when they found it in print, and the next month they printed a signed apology:

> It has been found necessary to state to the readers of the New York Review and Atheneum Magazine, that the article in the last number, entitled, "An Apology for an Essay," was inserted without the knowledge of the responsible editors, who, it is well known, have always entertained a high opinion of the importance of those studies against which the pleasantry of the article appears to be directed. H.J.A.
> W.C.B. (P. 324)

By the end of the first year of publication, it appears that Sands had completely displaced Anderson as a co-editor.

Although Anderson had the title of senior editor, Bryant held the reins and did most of the editorial work; as a result, the tone and format of the magazine remained consistent. The first half, or "review" portion, of the eighty-four pages were devoted to reviews of new publications, while the last half, the "athenaeum" or "magazine" part, offered poetry and fiction interspersed with notices and articles

on opera and the fine arts. The two parts were distinctly divided by separate title pages and different formats.

Among the reviews, there was a nice balance between American and foreign titles. Sands and Bryant were not going to let their interest in promoting a national literature lower their level of taste; therefore, we find reviews on Byron, Scott, Thomas Moore, and lesser English writers among those on such Americans as Paulding, Cooper, Percival, Hillhouse, Catherine Sedgwick, Lydia Sigourney, Daniel Webster, and Edward Everett. Travel narratives and accounts of exploration found a place among the reviews. Also, books in foreign languages were reviewed by the editors, who, between them, understood most of the modern European languages.

The eight reviews by Sands reflect the diversity of new publications which were noticed by the Review. He dealt fairly with biographies on Richard Henry Lee and John Paul Jones, praising the first and damning the latter. Biographies of famous Americans were compatible with his espousal of a national literature: "The past presents to him [an American] on its roll of renown, a list of statesmen, soldiers, and philosophers, on the wealth of whose fame other nations might have quietly reposed for centuries (NYR, II, 24).

Sands reviewed at least ten books of original poetry and two translations. His poetry criticism is sound and appreciative, but sometimes uneven, and he generally uses a chatty, familiar, slightly satirical tone: "But here is our old friend Doctor M'Henry come again, twaddling in heroics about the

Pleasures of Friendship. . . . What will he do next? . . . Bye-the-bye, the Doctor has got out a new novel lately, as we have understood" (NYR, II, 132). Reviewing Byron's Works, he suggests that readers need not let the man's life spoil their enjoyment of his work: "Because the genius of an individual has made his name familiar in men's mouths as household words, are his domestic miseries, his private habits, to be subjected to the scrutiny of each unit in the universal rabble?" (NYR, II, 330)

In reviewing The Last of the Mohicans, he points out that if Cooper had one weakness, it was in his treatment of female characters. Then he accurately summarizes the narrative action: "There is power, and a fearful interest in these descriptions, which, it needs no prophet to predict, will excite the feelings, and entrance the attention of generations that are to come long after our own" (NYR, II, 292). Sands also reviewed A New & Improved Spanish Grammar, which he recommends as a basis for studying Spanish, a language he felt was vital in view of America's commercial and political ties to Latin America.

Sands's most interesting review is on Mornings at Bow-Street, an English compilation of humorous newspaper reports about criminals being arraigned, or, as Sands describes them,

> . . .those who have been out a-larking, after the solemn noon of night; who have been fatigued by their peripatetic exercises; who have, perhaps, stimulated a little beyond the measure of prudence, and have been compelled to invoke 'nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,' in an attitude almost anyhow--on a bench, or in a dark corner--what an awkward squad

> they compose! They have been very naughty, and we ought to be sorry and ashamed for them. But they cut such a droll figure, from crown to toe, that we feel, for the moment, as if it were more natural to laugh than to shed tears. (Writings, II, 311)

He then goes on, with high-flown diction and classical allusions, to summarize some of the situations reported by the newspaper. He ends on a serious note, explaining why America has no literature of this type:

> But we are too patriotic not to be willing to ascribe the dullness of our own police literature to another cause than the obtuseness of our reporters. We would fain believe that the morality of our nation is too strong to approve and cultivate, as yet, this habit [of] turning the solemn drama of Justice into a farce. We hope it may long continue to be the case . . . . (Writings, II, 315)

To the "Athenaeum" or original literature section of the magazine, Sands contributed only four verse translations and the controversial "Apology for an Essay," which satirized political writers. Three of the poems were translated from the Spanish verse of Lope de Vega and have little merit. The fourth poem, a translation of Politan's verse (fifteenth-century Italian), is a pastoral piece which Sands called "The Garden of Venus." The stanza describing and personifying the spring flowers typifies this fragment of heroic verse:

> Dawn rears fresh violets still, with tender care,
> Of white, of yellow, and of purple dies;
> Sad Hyacinthus shows his legend there;
> Narcissus in the lymph of his image spies;
> In vestal robe, with purple border fair,
> Pale Clytic to the sun still turns her eyes
> Adonis of his woes the tale resumes;
> Crocus his three tongues shows: Acanthus joyous blooms.
> (Writings, I, 160)

The temptation to comment on the poem is stifled by Sands's warning in the letter which preceded the verses: "If you are disposed to criticise my verses, I advise you to try your own hands at a translation of the original, before you express any unqualified sentence of condemnation" (Writings, I, 156).

The poetry published in the Athenaeum section included some of the best work of Bryant, Longfellow, Halleck, Dana (Sr.), Willis, and George Bancroft. In fact, Parke Godwin claimed the New York Review far surpassed all its competitors in this department.[27] Contributors to other sections of the journal included such prominent New Yorkers as Verplanck, Henry Sedgwick, Professor James Renwick, Anthony Bleecker, and J. K. Paulding.

The Review's "notices" of the fine arts, which included a sympathetic essay on the controversial founding of the National Academy, made it the first American journal to show an interest in art, according to art and literary historian, James T. Callow.[26] Both Bryant and Sands had close friends among the rebellious artist who formed the National Academy and both had a deep appreciation of art. Their journalistic interest in art was one of the things that helped arouse support for America's struggling artists. The operatic notices were done largely by Anderson, the son-in-law of Lorenzo da Ponte, the distinguished Venetian and professor of Italian, who helped bring the first Italian Opera Troupe to New York in 1825.

But in spite of the wide variety of excellent material written by some of the nation's best authors, the Review never

got off the ground. By the end of the first year of publishing it was in financial trouble. Subscriptions, the only source of income in the days before magazine advertising, never reached much more than a thousand and were difficult to collect, due to the same world-wide financial crisis that ruined Sir Walter Scott. Furthermore, its sponsor, the New York Athenaeum, was in decline again and soon lost interest in the magazine. There were also justifiable complaints that the magazine was too serious and offered too little amusement.

Bryant responded to these problems by arranging a merger with Boston's U. S. Literary Gazette. According to the agreement reached with James G. Carter, the Review's staff would become the New York branch of the Gazette in July of 1826. Anderson was to withdraw entirely, leaving Bryant as the New York editor and Sands as his assistant. In October the name would be changed to The U. S. Review and Literary Gazette. Actually, Bryant's duties with the new magazine never amounted to any more than recruiting reviewers for books published in New York and heading the department called Original Poetry. Sands had no editorial duties with the new magazine, but did contribute at least two translations of French verse and two brief critical notices.[28]

Bryant and Sands's share in the new magazine was hardly sufficient to keep them busy and well paid. Therefore, when Bryant was asked to take over the Evening Post in June, he jumped at the chance and began what turned out to be a career that lasted nearly half a century. Sands, who appears to

have worked closely with Bryant in whatever he did during this period, temporarily ran the Post during the late summer of 1826 while Bryant was on vacation. This fact, which has been unnoted by historians of the Post and biographers of Bryant, is substantiated by a delightful letter from Sands to Bryant during the latter's absence from the city:

> I sat down to answer your letter in the office of the Post, at length; but being interrupted seventeen times for two successive days, I gave it up in despair. . . .
>
> I have not found it unpleasant to officiate as your successor, though it occupies much more time than I had anticipated. There has been a great want of elasticity in the air, and a disagreeable closeness, worse than intense heat, which has made me feel sometimes as if my brains were stewed and seething.[29]

As a result of his connection with the Evening Post, Sands was offered a share in the paper at the same time Bryant was made one of its prpprietors, in 1827. He nearly decided to join Bryant as an assistant, but finally declined in favor of a similar position at the New York Commerical Advertiser.

Thus Sands, like Bryant, finally found a stable vocation from which he could practice his avocation, literature. After realizing that law and literature were not compatible, Sands had tried to marry his vocation and avocation by starting, editing, and writing critical journals, but like others who had gone that route before him, he found the magazine business, at best, a precarious source of income. Determined to write in an age and country that supported few professional authors, Sands finally had to rely on journalism for financial support.

Sands's Philosophy of Literary Criticism

Literary criticism in New York has often been considered timid and sterile; however, Kendall B. Taft claims it is probably more extensive and influential than usual thought.[31] William Charvat, authoritative historian of early American literary criticism, lists both Bryant and Sands among the ten most important American critics and editors of the period and states that the Atlantic and Review pretty much set the tone for Knickerbocker literary criticism.

In assessing Sands's critical position, we could examine the total content and critical stance of both magazines, since, as editor or co-editor, he would be responsible for the views therein. However, because of Sands's on-again-off-again involvement in the two journals, it is safer to use only the reviews and articles written by Sands to illustrate his ideas on literature.

One of the most surprising elements in the criticism of the worldly, witty founder of the Atlantic is his ubiquitous morality. In the Atlantic's introductory article, the editor pledged himself "to repel all attacks upon morality, or correct principle, when there is talent enough to render them dangerous" (I, 6). In the next two years Sands was always certain to point out the moral worth of the work being reviewed. Of the novel Redwood, Sands comments: "the vein of pure moral feeling which runs through it, and the instructive lesson it is designed to teach, demand for the authoress [Catherine M. Sedgwick] no common place among writers of this

class" (Atlantic, I, 239). Reviewing nine collections of "Recent Poetry" (NYR, II, 181-94), he spoke of the moral quality of nearly every one.

The poetry of Lord Byron, which Sands loved and knew thoroughly, tested his convictions that the critic's duty was to repress anything immoral. Generally he condemned Byron's work as morally worthless. For instance, he "hoped that many, even those who [were] capable of relishing fine poetry," would not read Byron's "The Deformed Transformed." He explains why: "The moral sense very soon becomes dull, by the familiarity of the mind with images and sentiments, at first strange and revolting" (Atlantic, I, 65). Reviewing a book which tried to excuse Byron's moral character because he was a genius, Sands has to disagree: "though mankind are willing to forget the frailties of those who have left them a rich intellectual legacy, it is vain to endeavor to make them excuse moral, on the ground of mental obliquity. And so it should be . . ." (Atlantic, II, 98). One of Sands's best reviews was a long one on Byron in the New York Review, in which he calls Don Juan "an exceedingly improper book" (II, 329). In this review, however, Sands does his best to justify Byron's work. "Don Juan" he thinks is useful because "it proves the boundless capabilities of the English language, in its present state, for every variety of metre, every tone of feeling in poetry; its fertility of rhyme; and its elasticity, if we may so speak, in adapting its syllables to the fancy or necessity of the composer" (II, 329). Sands also

excuses Byron as a victim of circumstances and says his private life should be none of our business. Sands finally asserts that Byron is the greatest poet of the nineteenth century (none in the eighteenth century come near him) and ranks him with Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton.

Sands gave his definition of poetry in a review on Byron. He says the thing that distinguishes poetry from prose is "a certain measure, necessarily leading to a certain inversion of phraseology, the use of certain words in a peculiar sense, and the coinage of others, by which every language soon comes to possess a distinct poetical dialect" (Atlantic, II, 102). The stylistic devices mentioned here coupled with Sands's earlier comment on the effect of poetry--"that it conveys beautiful or sublime pictures to the mind"[33]--pretty much sums up his idea of poetry. Unlike other Knickerbocker critics, Sands was as much or more concerned with poetic techniques as with the subject matter of poetry. Poetry should use imaginative language--"the moment description becomes technically accurate, it ceases to be poetry at all" (Atlantic, II, 103), yet he criticizes the imagination "running riot" (NYR, II, 183). He censures Edward C. Pinkney because "he is too much on the stretch for metaphor, and wings his flight to too remote regions in his quest" (NYR, II, 190).

Both the Atlantic and Review advocated Wordsworthian ideas of simplicity in diction, which is only reasonable when one considers that Bryant was one of Wordsworth's first American disciples. Sands's strongest statement on the

subject is found in his essay on "Domestic Literature":

> The ornate, overloaded, obviously artificial, and often dissolute style of the lighter literature of the day, with its endless redundance, useless verbiage, and unmeaning allusions, affords no precedent for our primitial classics. It ought not to, and it is pleasant to observe that it does not, suit the genius of our nation; for those writers who have been most successful among ourselves have been most distinguished for cultivated simplicity. The affected parade of superficial acquirements, and the actual possession of sound and general knowledge, are not easily confounded. (Writings, I, 112-13)

Sands is referring to prose here, but he had come to feel the same way about poetic diction.

Sands's comments on poetry often reflect the Scottish common sense school of criticism, especially Archibald Alison's ideas on association as the basis of poetry. Sands called Byron's poetry great because it "awakened . . . a thousand associations" (NYR, II, 329). The Atlantic and Review were among the first American journals to accept Alison's principle of association, which eventually provided the transition between classical and romantic ideas of literature. The principle of association requires that the poet have a wide range of experience. Sands also believed a poet "who would acquire any permanent celebrity" must have "a liberal acquaintance with the past history and present state of the literary world" (Writings, I, 112). In his reviews, Sands often rued American poets' lack of classical background.

The Atlantic and Review were among the first New York journals to establish any critical position on the novel, an area pretty much neglected before 1825.[34] Broadly stated, their position demanded realism and probability.

Sands, in his reviews, calls for unified, realistic plots. In a critically effective understatement, he proposes that James McHenry's O'Halloran must "have been composed . . . at the type fount. The plot seems to be made as it goes along; which is indeed the most natural way; and the same in which events usually turn up in the world we live in. The only objection we can perceive to this mode of doing business, is, that it may sometimes give rise to inconsistencies in character or incident" (Atlantic, I, 210). He criticizes the plot of Hobomok as unnatural, improbable and unsatisfactory. Miss Sedgwick's Redwood, he feels, is a better novel because in its incidents "we recognize what we all have seen and heard and observed" (Atlantic, I, 236).

In his most important review of a piece of fiction, Sands asks of Cooper's Last of the Mohicans: "are there not some things unaccounted for, and many pushed beyond the verge of probability?" (NYR, II, 291) One thing Sands feels is particularly improbable is the motivation for having two young girls travel through such hostile country: "Filial piety had urged these maidens to penetrate the wilderness, to visit a father whom they adored; but the motive is scarcely sufficient to justify their leaving the safer quarters of Webb, for a beseiged and ill-provided fortress" (NYR, II, 289). But Sands treats his colleague gently and lets him off the hook: "In a high wrought romance, we have no right to find fault with the extraordinary nature of circumstances, which, however startling and unexpected, are possible" (II, 291).

When it came to characterization, Sands took a firmer stand on realism and probability. Like most of his contemporaries, he was aware of the Aristotelian distinction between possibility and probability.[35] He disliked a large number of characters in a plot[36] and wanted all characters to be realistic and fully drawn. He liked Mohegan [Chingachgook] in Cooper's Pioneers and felt he was "drawn by one who observes accurately, and describes what he sees faithfully" (Writings, I, 105). On the other hand, Sands calls characters like the singing master in Mohicans "bores" because they "stick too close to their own peculiarity, with want of variety, which we do not find even in real bores; and which is sometimes tiresome, and by no means ingenious" (NYR, II, 289). Sands also demanded that characters talk like real people.[37] Someone looking for realistic character portrayal would naturally dislike the women in Cooper's novels: "If he fails any where, it is in the management of his female personages" (NYR, II, 292).

Naturally, the advocate of literary nationalism had high praise for an author who used American material. In "Domestic Literature" he declared that American writers should devote themselves to subjects of domestic interest. Sands probably wrote the review on The Witch of New England which says, "The author of this story has borrowed materials from the annals of New England, and has furnished additional proof of their peculiar fitness for the purposes of a writer of fiction" (Atlantic, I, 392). Of course, Sands was particularly

delighted with Cooper's use of the Indian and American material: The Last of the Mohicans "has proved the capabilities of our history and varying manners, for all the purposes of high or pleasing fiction" (NYR, II, 292).

Part of Sands's program for promoting an American literature included an attempt to arouse public support and interest in our literature. Sands most likely wrote the Atlantic essay on "Public Spirit," which reflected

> . . . the longing desire that public spirit may spring up among us, and spread itself, like other blessings of freedom, over our city. Then may the Goddess of Commerce, with her benignant smile, cheer the labours of the artist, and crown his works with golden rewards; and then may stately public edifices, magnificent and tasteful, be reared amidst us, proudly attesting the blessings of wealth. (Atlantic, I, 185)

All in all, Sands probably did as much as any American to create an indigenous literature and esthetic appreciation.

Sands's method of literary criticism was gentle. He believed one of the ways to establish a national literature was to carefully nurture every new literary prospect. He quite fairly points out the defects of a work, but spends more time lauding the good points and the effort made by an author. He opened a review of nine books of poetry with a mock-heroic invocation which not only sums up his method of criticism but provides a delightful glimpse of Sands's humor and personality:

> Phoebus Apollo! Look down, not upon a poet, but upon a distressed reviewer, who has dared to summon for inspection, a small platoon of thy votaries. May he handle their laurels tenderly; and discompose no single chaplet, in endeavoring to ascertain whether it be real or artificial! May he crack no chords of any

> individual lyre, in examining whether it be strung after the fashion of thine own! He bears no malice against the tuneful tribe; for their strains have made many an hour glide away happily, and innocently, and unregretted. He knows the morbid (or rather the sacred) sensibility of the bard; for he committed poetry once, and was cut up delightfully. The dog of a reviewer who worried him, did his business in a workmanlike manner; but, unfortunately, showed so much abominable ignorance, as to make his brutal castigation ineffectual in the way of improvement.
>
> Fate never wounds so deep the generous heart,
> As when a blockhead's venom points the dart.
>
> (NYR, II, 181)

Evidently, as a result of the harsh review of his Bridal of Vaumond, Sands determined that criticism should be gentle, judicial and constructive. And this was the course he followed as reviewer for the Atlantic and New York Review. In cases where other reviewers might have thought harsh criticism was warranted, Sands used satire. Paul Allen and James McHenry were two victims of Sands's satire, which is always good natured and seldom attacks the person, but rather what they stand for or produce. It was on this basis that Sands criticized Byron's satire on the "English Bards." Attacks on people, Sands felt, were despicable and soon out of date.[38]

Though Sands only worked as a literary critic for two years, the quality and nature of his criticism provided precedent and set the direction for later New York magazines.[39] His constructive analysis encouraged and pointed the way for America's fledgling literature during its first and most impressionable decade. His judicial, gentle, and moralistic criticism set the tone for Knickerbocker criticism during the next decade.

CHAPTER VI

THE JOURNALIST: SANDS FINDS SECURE EMPLOYMENT

When Colonel William L. Stone, editor of the New York Commercial Advertiser, offered the unemployed, former editor of the Atlantic and New York Review the position of assistant editor at a "liberal salary," Sands immediately accepted.[1] He left his virtually non-existent legal career, moved out of his office and residence at 35 Cedar Street, and went to live with his aging parents in Hoboken. For the next six years, he commuted to New York daily via the Hoboken ferry.

These changes marked the beginning of a new phase in his career. With secure employment, he played an even more active part in the social affairs of the New York literati and artists where he was loved for his congeniality, wit, and humor. He continued his love affair with literature, but with a slight change in attitude: literature became more a pleasant diversion than a serious avocation. Literary projects were just as plentiful, but more and more they reflected Sands's joy at creating something with convivial associates and for the approval and enjoyment of others. Though still an advocate of a national literature, he seemed to become less concerned himself about producing important literature. Between 1827 and 1832 Sands earned the reputation of a

Knickerbocker wit. This might have been Sands's life style for many years, as it was Bryant's, had notdeath cut him off in 1832.

It was not unusual at this time for aspiring writers to turn to journalism for financial security (few in the country actually made a living from magazine publication or writing books.[2]) Newspapers were much more in demand than books or magazines, especially in a commercial center like New York City. Francis Trollope was partially correct in blaming newspapers for the poor quality of belles-lettres among the Americans: "Where newspapers are the principle vehicles of the wit and wisdom of a people the higher graces of composition can hardly be looked for." She probably had writers like Sands in mind when she said, "That there are many among them who can write well, is most certain; but it is at least equally so, that they have little encouragement to exercise the power in any manner more dignified than becoming the editor of a newspaper or a magazine."[3]

Historian Allan Nevins calls journalism in New York at this time (1827) "stagnant and undistinguished."[4] Even the city's two best papers the Commercial Advertiser and the Evening Post, both evening papers, were primarily mercantile sheets containing little more than shipping notices and advertisements.

The Commercial Advertiser, the first New York daily of any permanence, was originally called the Minerva when Noah Webster started it in 1793. Stone, a successful publisher

and editor in Albany, New York came to New York City in 1820 to run this evening daily. He most likely met Sands at the Bread and Cheese club where they were both members. He evidently made Sands quite an attractive offer in order to entice Sands to join the Commercial Advertiser, for concurrently, Sands was offered a position and a share of the Evening Post at the same time Bryant was made editor and partner in that paper. Sands, who had been editor of the Evening Post while Bryant was on vacation (August-October, 1826), "entertained it [the Post's offer] favorably at first, but finally declined it."[5] Sands would have enjoyed working with this good friend, but Stone probably offered more money.

There has been some disagreement over Sands's official position with the paper. Many sources, including The Oxford Companion to American Literature, list Sands as the editor of the Commercial Advertiser; on the other hand, Stone's son, an historian of New York journalism, asserts that Sands was "for some years a regular contributor to the paper, though not . . . holding the position of associate editor."[6] Sands's friends and the Commercial Advertiser itself make it clear that Sands was an assistant editor. Sands's obituary began: "It has become our painful duty to announce the sudden death of Robert C. Sands, Esq. engaged for a few years past as an Assistant in the editor-ship of this Journal" (NYCA, Dec. 17, 1832). Sands was probably one of several assistants in charge of various sections of the paper. Another assistant, apparently of the same rank as Sands, was John Inman, brother of artist

Henry Inman.

Just when Sands joined the staff of the Commercial Advertiser is uncertain; most likely it was about the middle of February, 1827, when quite a few book reviews began to appear. In fact, these reviews may have been Sands's first assignments. At any rate, there seems to have been a good deal more attention paid to literature, the fine arts, and cultural affairs after February of 1827. It is a safe assumption that Sands was involved in this new emphasis, perhaps in charge of this section.

Due to the traditional anonymity of journalism, it is difficult to determine what Sands wrote for the paper. Most likely he wrote many of the reviews, which are really more notices than reviews. The brief criticism to be found in the notices or reviews of new books is fair, usually encouraging and patriotic, and aims to arouse enthusiasm for American literary productions. A sampling shows a NYCA critic (most likely Sands) lamenting that the British recognized the worth of Charles Brockden Brown before the Americans did: "Indeed, we ought to have led the way" (NYCA, 30 Mar. 1827).

Sands's concern for a national literature shows through in the review of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's Hope Leslie which applauds her use of historical incidents, names, and manners. The reviewer claims the Puritan era is an almost exhaustless source and "we hope, for the amusement and instruction of our countrymen, the character of our own literature, and the illustration of our past annals, that she does

not intend to abandon it" (NYCA, 11 July 1827). The criticism of Cooper's unrealistic coincidences in Red Rover sounds exactly like Sands: "the account of the mysterious relationships of consanguinity between the several personages is (to us at least) utterly unintelligible" (NYCA, 15 Jan. 1828).

Sands almost certainly wrote the notice of Irving's Life of Columbus, which mentions Mr. Rich's catalogue and collection of rare Spanish documents. The comments were by an authority on colonial Spanish manuscripts, and Sands was at the same time corresponding with Verplanck about Mr. Rich's catalogue and doing research in the same area. The gist of the article is that the Life of Columbus will raise Irving's reputation because "it is more worthy stuff than the Sketch Book" (NYCA, 1 Apr. 1828). Such a remark reflects the high priority Knickerbocker authors gave to biography. And the comment on a biography raising an author's reputation takes on added significance coming from a man beginning to write a similar biography; perhaps Sands hoped the Cortez biography might enhance his own reputation.

Mixed in among these legitimate reviews, Sands frequently inserted a review of a non-existent novel, complete with long extracts. Verplanck explains: "It was his sport to excite public curiosity by giving extracts highly spiced with fashionable allusions and satire, 'from the forth-coming novel;' which novel in truth, was, and is yet to be written" ("Memoir," p. 17). These fake reviews sometimes aimed at correcting a literary fault and were generally written in a

satirical tone. The following extract from a non-existant novel criticizes the affectation by novelists and others who think all knowledge consists of an acquaintance with foreign languages:

> Miss Grimes was a little embarrassee, and not a little mortifiee that her mamma had so soon removed her from Mademoiselle de la Jambonne, before she had acquired a clear conception of the nice difference between the modern cognate dialects of the ancient Roman tongue. She was also a little emue when she anticipated the various feelings with which the marked attentions of Colonel Stanhope might be viewed and spoken of by the brilliant circle around her. But she was tout a fait discomboblificata, when she beheld an elegant calvalier observing the tete a tete with a peculiar expression of his neckloth, which indicated he was digoute with the interruption, etc. etc.[7]

In this extract, Sands even went so far as to make up a word which sounded French--discomboblificata--from the English slang term, discombobulated.

Sands loved this kind of mischievious word play. He often drew unsuspecting readers into a controversy over classical minutia involving Greek or Latin words or topics and then overwhelmed them with authorities made up by himself. One instance involved a discussion via letters to the editor by some recent college graduates about the material of the Grecian crown of victory, a topic stirred up by American sympathy for the revolution in Greece. These men exhausted their college learning and quoted all the classical authorities in the printed debate. Sands finally ended the controversy with a well-written essay, full of quotations in Greek, all made up by himself. The graduates, overwhelmed with the massive evidence against them, dropped the subject. Another

series of letters debated the meaning of the Latin signature of a letter written to the Commercial Advertiser.

Two of the best of examples of Sands's learned spoofing have been preserved by Verplanck in the collection of Sands's Writings. The first was a letter from a John Brown to the editors of the Commercial Advertiser, written by Sands "in conjunction with several of his literary friends" (Writings, II, 292, n.). Among the friends most likely were Bryant, who usually had a hand in this type of fun, and Verplanck, who is implicated by the line saying these facts "were communicated to me by a member of Congress, who will not volunteer his name; but if called upon by the proper authority, will state all he knows about it" (Writings, II, 293). The letter begins by poking some fun at the content of daily newspapers:

> . . . I shall be gratified with your present insertion of my article, although you should have to leave out some terrible accidents, horrible massacres, and dreadful specimens of human depravity and elemental carelessness until the next day. Let Mr. Smith's barn be burnt, insured or uninsured; Mr. Brown's house be stricken with thunder and lightning, killing two canary birds, a guinea-pig, and a Muscovy goose, value $7 89½. Let Mr. Johnson be assaulted and battered to any amount his attorney chooses to estimate in his writ, and Mr. Jackson be slandered to any extent, beyond his namesake the general, Mr. Clay, or any other great man; but put in my article by all means, because there is no time to lose. (NYCA, 4 Aug. 1827)

One gets the feeling that the new assistant editor found journalism too serious and too trivial for his rampaging sense of humor and love of life. This may account for his brightening up the paper with intellectual fun.

The John Brown letter then gets down to the problem at hand: "The solemn conviction of my mature judgment is, that

the motto devised for the ticket at the next ensuing commencement of Columbia College, is, to say the least of it, very suspicious Latin indeed--and highly dangerous to the literary character of the institution" (NYCA, 4 Aug. 1827). The offending Latin quotation is followed by nine different translations by some well known authors including Cooper, Byron, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, none of whom would have recognized the lines of verse with which they were credited--and less well known authors like Lionel Lingo, N.Y.H.L.S.F.L.-P.S.N.Y. and one of the counsellors of the American Academy of Languages. Cooper, for example, "who was formerly attached to the navy, where, as his masterly descriptions of naval maneuvers show, he had all his eyes open, promptly furnished the following version:

> This is the path; though rough and full of rubbers,
> Climb up, my lands, and don't be lazy lubbers."

The letter concludes with a Dutch version of the quotation which is worthy of Irving's History of New York; in fact the whole letter is much in the tradition of the strain of satire which began with that book.

A similar letter three weeks later by John Smith, an alleged cousin of John Brown, explained why Brown had written his letter: "He wants to be president of a college in Kentucky, where the terms are, five hundred dollars a year salary, and grass enough for a young cow" (NYCA, 27 Aug. 1827). The most interesting thing about this letter is the pitch Sands makes for the gift book he was beginning to prepare: "My communication may seem too long delayed, though I intended to keep it

till next New-Year's, for Doctor Bliss's Souvenir. I have other things, however, of a more generally interesting nature, to put into that work" (NYCA, 27 Aug. 1827). Thus the letters were probably written by Sands in collaboration with Bryant and Verplanck for the gift book they were writing that summer. As that took shape, the letters were not needed and so were published by the Commercial Advertiser.

A second John Smith letter, and the second letter Verplanck published in Sands's writings, appeared in the Evening Post early in 1829, and was written primarily by Sands and Bryant with help in the translations by Columbia professors Anderson, Paine and Da Ponte. The fictitious Smith reported on and analyzed a French inscription found over the door of a gambling house by giving Enlgish versions as well as translations from nine other languages. Several of the clumsy English renditions of the verse were supposed to have been done by Editor Stone of the Commercial Advertiser, which allowed for some well-tempered ridicule of his poetry.

This was only the first of several "learned Jeu d'espirit," as Bryant was fond of calling them, aimed at Stone. And this public teasing of Editor Stone by Editor Bryant was only a surface signal of the deeper rift between the two, caused largely by politics: Stone was an ardent opponent of Jacksonian democrats, while the Evening Post under Bryant gradually became an organ for the Jacksonians. Sands was a National Republican at heart, but was never very partisan. (Today he would probably register as an Independent.) He admired some

of Jackson's programs, but was too much of an aristocrat to like Jackson personally or to approve of the glorification of the common man. Sitting on the political fence, he managed to get along well with both sides.

He often joined Bryant in needling Stone, not out of malice towards his employer, but out of sheer delight with intellectual controversy. For example, Stone on one occasion pointed out a mistake in the Latin of one of Sands's jeu d'espirit, published in the Post. Sands and Bryant in a collaborated reply told Stone to "consult the work entitled Vivorum Illustrium Reliquiae" where he would "find that the words, as we have quoted them were addressed by Pope Alexander VI to his son Caesar Borgia" (Evening Post, 5 Feb. 1829). Such a book, of course, did not exist. A few days later Bryant gleefully wrote to Verplanck: "He [Stone] has not been able as yet, I believe, to find the 'Vivorum Illustrium Reliquiae,' though he says Da Ponte has a great many queer old Latin books, and he has an indistinct remembrance of a work that has vivorum clarorum on the title page!"[8]

Controversies between the two papers were all right as long as they stayed friendly, but when a serious dispute arose, Sands was put in a ticklish position by having his best friend the editor of a rival paper. The most embarrassing dispute for Sands was when Bryant ambushed and attempted to horse whip Stone on Broadway. It all began the first of April, 1831, with a story by the Commercial Advertiser on a testimonal dinner put on by the National Republicans for Senator

Tristram Burgess of Rhode Island. The Commercial printed the full text of the Senator's speech, which prompted a jocose editorial from Bryant. The Commercial also printed a toast made at the dinner which accused the Post of "stupidity and vulgarity," but failed to name the proposer of the toast. Sands evidently wrote this article, but Bryant thought Stone had done it. Stone denied writing the article, but Bryant would not believe him. Matters quickly became heated. In an exchange of editorials Stone called Bryant names which would blister "the forehead of William C. Bryant if a blister [could] be raised on brass."[9] At this, Bryant took the law into his own hands and attacked Stone with a horse whip.

Why Sands chose to remain silent about his part in the fracase will never be known, but most likely he was afraid to jeopardize a valuable friendship. On the other hand, Stone never betrayed Sands to Bryant, an indication of some loyalty between the two men.

The only hint that Sands might have written the offending story is a note by Stone's son, William L. Stone Jr., written sixty years later:

> A few years since, shortly before Mr. Bryant's death, the writer [Stone, Jr.] discovered among his father's (Colonel Stone's) papers the true circumstances under which the objectionable article which led to the encounter was written. Not wishing that Colonel Stone--though long dead--should be unjustly blamed for what he did not write, he wrote to Mr. Bryant the true state of the case, showing that his (Bryant's) friend Sands was the author of the article in question, at the same time submitting his proofs.[10]

According to the younger Stone, Bryant accepted the explanation as being very possible. But Stone has been known to err

in facts and is obviously trying to make his father and Bryant look good by providing a scapegoat; however the whole affair is so characteristic of Sands that it seems quite plausible. If there is any truth to the accusation by Stone, it makes Sands responsible for one of the most violent incidents in America's journalistic history.

Most of Sands's journalism was less explosive. He probably wrote a great many dull and factual stories and editorials, but his authorship of these can seldom be substantiated. One can, however, see Sands at work in the many humorous essays and editorials which lightened the dreary columns of advertisements and shipping notices. Sands's palatable combination of wit, humor, and learning crops up time and again in the pages of the Commercial Advertiser between 1827 and 1832. The learned spoofing or jeu d'esprit mentioned above are typical. Sands also may have had a hand in a series of essays called "Touchstone" which began in mid 1827 and closely resembled the Literary Confederacy's newspaper series of a decade earlier. One humorous essay most likely penned by Sands asserted that Orpheus was an American:

> He lived, we believe, in the musical town of Taunton, and married the daughter of a respectable fish-monger, in the poetical island of Nantucket. Her name was Hepzibah, not Eurydice; and she died honestly at home, instead of being bit by a serpent while flying from Aristaeus, or any other heathen. The story of Orpheus' going to the internal regions, stopping the wheel of Ixion, melting the furies, and all that, merely arose from the fact of his having once sailed through Hell Gate to New-York, to play at great ball given by Governor Van Dorn, which commenced at 1 o'clock P.M., and broke up at sundown, in season to have the cows milked by the fair dancers.

Sands concluded the essay by repeating his thesis:

> Orpheus was a full blooded Yankee. But the same spirit of jealousy which prompted the arrogant question: --"who reads an American Book?" Would induce our unyielding rivals to ask likewise: --"Who dances to an American Fiddler." (NYCA, 23 Jan. 1828)

Sidney Smith's sneering question evidently still rankled Americans eight years later.

One editorial Sands wrote was probably done while Stone was on summer vacation in August of 1828. It has some fun with the presidential campaign and that popular jumper, Sam Patch. The editorial begins by twitting all the people going over to the Jackson camp, but centers on some alleged correspondence between Mr. Clay and Sam Patch. In one letter, Clay told Sam:

> You will make two or three jumps from the Patterson rocks, to keep public attention directed towards you. In the mean time, make the little boys in the factories at Paterson, kick up a row--say it is a Jackson riot; and get the Commercial Advertiser to denounce it as such. After this, Mr. Sam Patch, you will go to Jersey City, or to Hoboken, and jump there. (NYCA, 8 August 1828)

While this implies criticism of the Commercial's partisan reporting of the news, the editorial ends characteristically by telling how some Adams men supposedly stopped the whole scheme.

Sands spent a good deal of his time reading other newspapers and journals to find interesting material for his own paper. This was common procedure at that time. Original newswriting was at a minimum. There were no wire services, so news from other places was gleaned from other papers. This was no doubt a tedious duty to someone of Sands's exuberant

temperament, who wearily used it once as an excuse for not having read a certain book, saying he would read it "some day when I have not been reading newspapers."[11]

The only verifiable pieces of original journalism done by Sands are two stories on Francis Wright, the controversial feminist, who lectured in New York City during January of 1829. Sands's first story is, even today, a good piece of interpretive reporting. Due to the nature of the topic (a public performance) Sands acted as a critic, giving his impressions and reactions to the lecture as well as an objective and detailed report using concrete, simple diction, and a good lead. Sands was quite impressed by Miss Wright's first performance: "We went like the most of those we met, out of pure curiosity; and received too much gratification from the charms of the speaker's manner, to quarrel with much of her matter" (NYCA, 5 January 1829).

But in Sands's report of the second lecture, the tone had turned from awe to impatience. Perhaps Sands was offended by Miss Wright's increasing boldness. The second lecture was on equal education for girls, whereas the first night it was on the abstract topic of "Knowledge." He reported that the first night she had dressed in dark colors and stood behind the podium. The second night she stood beside a table in "full view," wearing a white dress with a pink bodice. Sands said, with a touch of satire in his voice, "We note these peculiarities of costume, both for the purpose of gratifying general curiosity, and for that of informing such

ladies as wish to harangue in public, on secular topics, in what sort of regimentals they should indue themselves." (NYCA, 6 Jan. 1829). Then Sands gave his reaction to the second lecture:

> Miss Wright's delivery was as good on this occasion, as on Saturday evening; but to us it had lost the charm of novelty; and the incongruity and inpropriety of the exhibition was more striking. Her discourse was a rigmarole, which . . . was unworthy of the actual intellect of the speaker; unless she had formed a very contemptuous opinion of her hearers. . . . She seemed to want to make the world a universal soup house. She wanted girls to be instructed as boys are. (NYCA, 6 Jan. 1829)

Sands was not only impatient with her ideas, but his fascination at seeing a woman lecture had faded. New things intrigued him deeply, but as soon as he had taken their measure, he lost interest in them. This may explain why most of his works are better in their conception than in their execution. He had great fun writing certain short stories, but suddenly the whole plot is wound up in a hurried couple of paragraphs. Sands had enjoyed Miss Wright at first, but he soon "turned her over to Stone;"[12] whose reports on succeeding lectures were harsher than Sands's had been. In fact, on January 20 the Commercial Advertiser had to justify its criticism of Miss Wright by saying that anyone who performs in public is open to criticism whether they be women or not. Yet there were many who enjoyed the Sands-Stone reports on Miss Wright. Hundreds of requests for back issues prompted the following notice:

> Our office has been thronged for the last week, by applicants for the papers containing our notices of

> Miss Wright's Lectures. If we had printed a thousand copies extra, all would have been taken up. We regret to say, however, that all the copies we have been able to muster, have been disposed of. (NYCA, 17 Jan. 1829).

This kind of popular response speaks well of Sands's journalistic skills.

Sands's contributions to the Commercial Advertiser, whether they were satiric, humorous, witty, learned, or serious, earned for their author a popularity and reputation as a wit. The learned spoofing especially, like the letters of John Smith and John Brown, was well received. Sands wrote Verplanck: "in relation to our friend John Smith . . . it seems to have tickled some of the Philadelphia editors," which indicates that Sands's reputation was not confined to New York City.[13] The American Quarterly Review admired the same letters "for their erudite whimsicality" and saw "a merit which should preserve them from the oblivion destined for the ephemeral effusions with which they [were] connected."[14]

Unfortunately for Sands, the popularity gained as a Knickerbocker wit was based upon dated, topical, ephemeral subjects which were soon forgotten. Sands has since become a victim of that great irony of literary history: some of the authors most popular in their own day are never heard of again, while some of those who suffer abuse in their lifetime obtain a permanent reputation in future generations.

CHAPTER VII

THE BIOGRAPHER:
THE LIVES OF CORTES AND JOHN PAUL JONES

Twice during his life, Sands turned from literature and journalism to the quasi-literary field of biography. Why he did so is pretty much a matter of conjecture. The only verifiable reason is that he was asked to do so. Both biographies were written at the request of someone, a fact which fits well into the collaborative pattern of Sands's literary endeavors. Most of the things he wrote were at the request or suggestion or expectation of someone else. He relied on others for the spark of an idea, which he would then become excited about and kindle until it was either a cozy, comfortable, enjoyable fire or, as sometimes happened, just a fire to prove he could kindle a fire from a spark. The requests to write the biographies of Cortes and John Paul Jones sparked the latter kind of fire. Sands was initially excited about both projects, but ended up writing them in great haste just to fulfill his obligation. Thus they lack the full involvement of the author with his subject that produces important insights and pleasing style and raises biography to the level of great literature.

These requests for Sands to become a biographer were accompanied by certain contractual agreements which presumably

were financially rewarding. Sands had a modest, steady income from the Commercial Advertiser, but this was hardly sufficient to finance the social life of a Knickerbocker Wit. He apparently did need extra money about the same time he was in the biography business, for in the only extant reference to his personal finances he mentions to Verplanck that he is trying to sell some lots in Washington, D. C. He wants "to get any money for them that they will sell for."[1]

Another reason Sands may have turned to biography is that it was a popular form of Knickerbocker literature. According to one estimate, nearly half the prose works of this period were devoted to history and biography.[2] In fact, Sands probably deserves credit for helping start this literary trend, since he was one of the first Knickerbockers to write biography. Nearly every Knickerbocker after Sands wrote up the life of someone: Irving and Paulding both did Washington, Cooper did naval heroes, Colonel Stone told the story of the Indian chief, Red Jacket, Theodore Sedgwick wrote on William Livingston, Henry Wheaton told the History of the Northmen, and the list seems endless. Besides the general romantic interest in the past, the primary motivation for biography was patriotic. It was all part of the attempt to build an American heritage.

"Historical Notice of Hernan Cortes"

Early in 1828, the year after Sands turned from literary criticism to journalism as a more certain source of income, Sands was asked to write a biography of Cortes. He explained

the situation in a letter to Congressman Verplanck, then in Washington for the first session of the 20th Congress:

> White Gallagher & White of this City are republishing for the market of Mexico, the letters of Cortes to Charles Vth. . . I have undertaken to write a biographical notice of the Conquistador, with such reflexions on his character and career as may be summarily suggested by the accounts of conflicting historians and the state of his age. . . . I have barely two months to write the notice in, which must be translated into Spanish in that time. If I find I can make any thing useful or interesting out of the subject, I will not throw away the chips, but make an English life of Cortes of it.[3]

Sands attacked the project with characteristic vigor. He read not only the English accounts of Cortes, but also the Spanish biographies and histories dealing with the conquest of Mexico. Sands had recently studied the Spanish language and had quite obviously mastered it. His correspondence with Verplanck indicates his thorough research:

> I am very much troubled for want of books. I have read Robertson & Clavigero together, and am getting through De Solis. I want Guevara, Bernal Dias del Castillo, and Herrera; the two former especially, as the latter is only a compiler. I found the second and third letters of Cortes in the N. Y. Library, edited by an old fool of an Archbishop in Mexico, in 1770. The Archbishop's notes and commentaries are of no value. . . .[4] You will do me a great kindness if you can put me in the way of finding them.[5]

Sands eventually found the books he needed at the New York Historical Society, but he ran into the same problems a modern scholar has when it comes to using rare books. This elicited sharp criticism of the Society:

> In the collection of the Historical Society there are some [books], which I have found, but cannot get out without committing a trespass, or telling a wopper, until that miserable affair takes place, which is denominated a meeting of the Society. Why cannot some two or three dozen decent individuals

> originate a new Historical Society;--cooperate with the creditors of the present dirty & insolvent one, to force sale of the things;--and buy all that is actually worth having, as strictly belong to a Historical Library?[6]

One of the books the impetuous scholar found at the Society library was an eye-witness account of the conquest of Mexico by one of Cortes's lieutenants, Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who, as Sands said, "left a plain and unvarnished narrative" (Writings, I, 26). He relied heavily on Diaz who he felt gave as objective an account as anyone.

Sands carefully collated all the facts and tried to determine the most likely version of each incident. His thoroughness and the fact that he went back to the earliest original accounts made the biography important. As the American Quarterly Review says:

> This work is not a mere compilation from English historians. Sands derived his materials from the very fountain head, industriously searching into and collating the accounts of the old Spanish authorities; and this was the more necessary, inasmuch as Mexico has been not only a mine of wealth, but of the most extravagant fiction.[7]

Sands planned only "to give a brief outline of the life of Cortes." He estimated that it would "not be more than 30, 40 or 50 pages at most."[8] It turned out to be a hundred or more pages in both the English and Spanish versions. He finished the biography on June 29th, 1828, about three months late.

Sands's manuscript was immediately translated by the Spanish scholar, Manuel Dominguez, whose translation of The Vicar of Wakefield two years earlier the New York Review had

pronounced excellent. Sands's biography was called "Noticia historica de Hernan Cortes, conquistador de Mejico" and served as a preface to the three letters of Cortes printed in Historia de Mejico: Cortes, Marquis del Vallo de Oaxaca (New York, 1828). "A large edition was printed and extensively circulated in Mexico, South America, and the Spanish West Indies," notes Verplanck (Writings, I, 2). The English version was not printed until after Sands's death, when Verplanck collected and edited Sands's Writings. "Thus," Verplanck says, "his work had the singular fortune of being read throughout Spanish America, in another language, while it was totally unknown in its own country and native tongue" (Writings, I, 20).

When analyzing the "Historical Notice of Hernan Cortes," one has to keep in mind that it was a preface, a fact which dictated the form and content of the "Notice." Cortes wrote three letters to Charles V of Spain between 1520 and 1524. In these letters, which were more like reports or even white papers, Cortes reported and defended his procedures during the conquest of Mexico. Sands's intention was to let the letters speak for themselves; his preface would merely fill in necessary background information. Or as he put it:

> . . . besides the necessity of connecting these letters together so as to make them intelligible, by supplying references to the preceding and intermediate links in the chain of events, it is proper that the reader should have some means of estimating the real character of the man [Cortes] . . . It would be also proper, that he who reads these letters should have an opportunity of ascertaining their truth, by comparing, throughout, the testimony of contemporary narrators . . . . (Writings, I, 3)

Sands gave only supplemental information about Cortes and the conquest which would be helpful to the reader of the letters.

He began by sketching the early years of Cortes, up to the time he embarked for the New World. Logically, Sands next gave a brief history of the exploration, settlement, and politics of the New World from 1492 until Cortes sailed for Mexico in 1518. Though Sands seldom editorialized, he did make a few comments on the nature of colonization. He defended the colonial conquerors on the basis of survival of the fittest: "It was in the necessary course of things, that the strong should prevail against the weak" (Writings, I, 6). Throughout the biography, he defended the brutal subjugation of the natives by the Spaniards, a partiality which has disturbed its many American readers.[9] However, Sands's defense of the conquerors does not so much indicate a militant or brutal side of Sands, but more likely shows that he learned well the principles of rhetoric. Sands was writing for a Spanish (Latin-American) audience, and this fact was ever before him as he explained the conquest of Mexico.

The sympathy of newly independent Americans with the Latin American revolutions and wars for independence during the 1820's probably prompted this comment on the nature of colonization:

> . . . all history proves that the feelings of mother countries for their colonies, are not maternal, but those of a step-mother; and the event has hitherto uniformly shown, that our incipient jealousy was not without foundation. The branch will fall off when the tree can no longer support its weight. Gratitude is not hereditary; and colonies will not long

> consent to be taxed for the benefit of what is to them a foreign country. (Writings, I, 25)

The summary of New World exploration ended with the account of the first two expeditions to Mexico before Cortes, which were lead by Hernandez de Cordova and Juan de Grijalva.

A large part of the middle of the "Notice" summarizes the history of Mexico, beginning with the southward migration of the Tolteques around 550 a.d. The Tolteques settled near the present site of Mexico City along with two other groups, the Chichimecos and the Acolhua, who came during the next two centuries. The Acolhua consisted of seven tribes, the most important of which was the Mexican. Sands traced Mexican history up to the time Montezuma ascended the throne in 1508. The account is complicated by intermarriages between tribes, intertribal warfare, and four to six syllable names for which Sands insisted using the original (Indian) spellings, all of which make this section extremely difficult to comprehend.

The spelling of words according to the original language rather than English style had long been a habit of Sands, or as the American Monthly Magazine called it, "an affectation."[10] Verplanck had complained about archaisms in Yamoyden, such as spelling Connecticut, Quunihticut. The American Quarterly Review said Sands may have used the unanglicized forms because the "Notice" was "merely for the use of the Spanish reader."[11] The American Monthly Magazine suspected a different reason: "We suppose, from the laughter-loving character of the man, that real literary frolic may have been at the

bottom of this."[12] Judging from some of Sands's newspaper "literary frolics" this may have seemed true, but more likely it came from his scrupulousness in research: the conqueror of Mexico spelled his name Cortes, so why change it to Cortez just because most of the English historians had done so? For the same reason, why not leave Montezuma's name as it was in the original documents--Motenczoma? When it came to research and scholarship, Sands was a stickler for detail.

The last half of the "Notice" traces the early stages of Cortes's expediton. Cortes is pictured as an honest, pious, courageous soldier, who is inexorably drawn into conquering Mexico for God and country. Coincidences and circumstances snowball, opening up for the Spaniard unimagined wealth and power. He gains footholds and sees evidences of possible wealth and comes to feel it is his duty to finish the task, in spite of official demands that he return. He operates by ingratiating himself with leaders of small, dissident factions and tribes. On the other hand, Montezuma is made to look like a vacillating, weak king, unable to control the diverse elements of his kingdom and unwilling to take decisive action. Sands's account of the conquest fades out just as the narrative approaches the climax. The siege and battle for Mexico City is told in the letters of Cortes, so Sands quickly skips over this and winds up his biography of the conqueror by relating the main events of the last years of Cortes, who died, like Columbus, virtually stripped of honor.

The name of Cortes has often been associated with great

cruelty. Ten years earlier, in 1818, the name had this connotation for Sands when he wrote the "Story of a Dogkiller," whose name was Cortes, for the Literary Confederacy's Aeronaut. This dogkiller was "not unworthy of his great name sake: for he was notorious for his savage delight in torturing animals, his bold ferocity, licentiousness and blasphemy" (X, 10). In his biography of Cortes, however, whether due to the intended audience or to contrary evidence, Sands carefully excuses his severity toward the poor idolators of Mexico by saying this cruelty was necessary under the circumstances and, furthermore, that it was considered acceptable at that time. Sands explains its necessity under the circumstances:

> The severity of his discipline was required from his perilous position; and if he had not treated the rebellious or treacherous chiefs who had become subjects of Spain with the same rigour, his own soldiers would not have submitted to the sternness of his rule. (Writings, I, 85)

In other words, in this kind of ticklish situation Cortes had to rule with an iron hand or things could easily have gotten out of hand. Sands also shows that Cortes was no more cruel than other Christian conquerors, from the crusaders to the New England Puritans. At the end of the biography, Sands commented on why he had attempted to ameliorate the reputation of Cortes:

> It has not been sought in this Notice to justify his actions; but simply to offer what may be suggested in palliation of some of them. Heroes have all had their foibles and their vices; and so essential does a certain portion of them seem in the composition of their character, that they are gratuitously given to them by all the great epic

> poets. Try Cortes by a comparison with other great conquerors, and it will appear that while few of them have rivalled his exploits, many have left darker stains on their reputation, admitting of no palliation.

Thus Sands ends his apology and biography of Cortes.

Bryant called Sands's work "unquestionably the best biographical account of Cortes in the English language--perhaps the best that has been written."[13] Less biased reviewers judged the biography more fairly, yet pretty much agreed that it was "entitled to the highest praise."[14] They admired his thorough research, accurancy of detail, and graceful, objective style. They disliked the afore-mentioned archaisms, the skipping of material narrated by Cortes, and the palliation of the conquistador's reputation. These are quite obviously the most glaring faults of the biography, especially when judged by today's standards of historiography.

While it is not classic historical writing, it is well written. A vivid portrait of Cortes is painted, and a good deal of complicated background information is logically organized and clearly presented. The Knickerbocker reviewer accurately summarizes Sands's style:

> The language. . . is throughout simple, chaste, and subdued; the incidental reflections, when introduced, are in point, and in many places he narrates events with a terseness and brevity which is more effective than the most laboured diffusion. His subject never betrays him into extravagance of language, or even enthusiasm of sentiment; he is uniformly grave and correct, and sums up the character of Cortes with singular temperance and ability. (III, 166).

For a decade, or until William H. Prescott published his History of the Conquest of Mexico in 1843, Sands's "Notice," once it was published in English in his Writings, was the

best American life of Cortes. But more important to Sands than the post-mortem reputation of his biography, was the vast source of material discovered in his research. Besides a good deal of miscellaneous facts and material which he later used, Sands turned material from his research into his best original poem, "The Dream of Papantzin," and one of his best pieces of short fiction, "Boyuca."

John Paul Jones

Two years later, in 1830, the fast-talking niece of John Paul Jones engaged Sands to write a biography of the famous admiral. Miss Jeanette Taylor had come to America from Scotland to press for the claims owed to her uncle by the U. S. Government. The biography was part of her campaign. She turned over to Sands many of Jones's papers, some of which had never been used or seen before. Some of these original letters and documents left with Sands soon vanished and have never been traced. Thus Sands's work is important for preserving original material not found elsewhere as well as being what Don Seitz, Jones's bibliographer, calls "the first complete and authentic biography" of Jones.[15]

Sands had long been interested in Jones, which probably explains as well as anything why he accepted Miss Taylor's request. As a boy, Sands most likely heard stories about how Comfort Sands in 1785 had supported a scheme by Jones and John Ledyard (a Sands family relative[16]) to establish fur factories on the north-west coast of America and trade with the Orient. Young Bob Sands had been intrigued by

cartoon-like pictures of Jones on tavern signs and in children's books such as the "shilling pamphlet, exhibited in the windows of the New York retail bookstores, in which was a frontispiece, representing Paul Jones as large as the frigate he bestrode, shooting a Lieutenant Grubb with a horse-pistol, more grand in its dimensions than any piece of artillery introduced into the picture."[17] At age 13, Bob had probably been awed by the magnificent banquet for 500 men given at the City Hotel to honor the naval victories of Admirals Jones, Decatur, and Hull. Twelve years later, as editor of the Atlantic, he showed his continuing fascination by publishing two Jones letters which he thought would "be found interesting."[18] As a critic, he reviewed any newly published literature dealing with Jones.[19]

But besides any personal interest Sands might have in John Paul Jones, he also felt the country needed a good biography of one of its most important heroes. In the preface to Jones, he pointed out that

> there was no single work of a proper and satisfactory character, from which Americans might gather for themselves what is to be known of the private and public life of one, who must or ever be chronicled as among the first in courage and ability, as well as in point of time, of the heroes who have made the stars and stripes respected upon the ocean (Jones, 7).

Worse than the fact that no good biography existed were the many erroneous tales and rumors that had been circulated about the captain of the Bonhomme Richard. Because of these, Sands said, "it is evident that an unvarnished and full account of the rear admiral's life ought to be circulated, in regions

where such fabulous and monstrous legends obtain, in this age of light, admission into public prints" (Jones, 4).

In spite of the popular interest in Jones, it was more than thirty years after his death (1792) before any factual assessment of his life had been undertaken. Not until John Henry Sherburne, Register of the U. S. Navy, happened to discover a packet of Jones letters in a bake shop window and published them (1825) with a jumble of other documents, was any attempt made to discover the facts of the admiral's life. In the New York Review, Sands called Sherburne's work "a dull collection of disjointed documents" (I, 457), and promised to correct Sherburne's many omissions: "This we must defer until some future period, and we do so with less reluctance, as we hope then to have it in our power to have access to some valuable manuscripts, with the existence of which, it would seem, the editor of the work before us is entirely unacquainted" (NYR, II, 455). From this it appears that Sands had some tenative arrangement to use Miss Taylor's documents on Jones nearly four years before he actually received the manuscripts in early 1830.

In the meantime, Miss Taylor turned over the long disregarded papers of the famous admiral to the Scottish Sir John Malcom. By early 1830, Sir Malcom had prepared a biography based on Jones's journals and correspondence which was published in Edinburgh. Malcom's biography was the best on Jones that had yet appeared, but it was decidedly British and thus, "uncongenial to the feelings and intellectual

associations of the people of this country," as Sands pointed out. "His remarks of a political character are often ridiculous in fact, and always unphilosophical in spirit" (Jones, 7). As a result, Sands devoted considerable energy to correcting Malcom's prejudices and justifying Jones's actions as patriotic. Sands also discounted the Malcom biography because it omitted much of the text of important documents and letters. Also, Malcom had given many of Jones's remarks out of context and had translated badly those documents in French. Thus, when the precise and scholarly Sands was given a chance to use the same documents Malcom had used, he readily accepted the chance to set the record straight for Americans.

Sands tackled the new assignment with characteristic gusto and planned to write a first-rate, original biography. But as publishing details were worked out and subscriptions were sold, it became apparent that Miss Taylor wanted all rights to the book; therefore Sands decided to merely edit the primary sources she had given him. He explained his predicament in a delightful letter to his friend Verplanck in Washington:

> I find no reason to take any pains with Paul Jones, and shall upset the English duodecimo [Malcom's biography] into an American Octavo without worrying myself any further about it, though I had some idea at first of making a new book of it. Paul Jones' niece is a more terrific live woman than the ghost of her uncle the Admiral would be. She talks like a steam-engine, and threatened the other day to come and board over at Hoboken; but I scared her out of that. She had the inflammatory rhuematism, but I am sorry to say she has been recovering lately. I mean to discharge her & her defunct uncle, as soon

> as possible, and wish to have some more elegant employment and amusement.[20]

"To discharge" his obligation quickly, he decided to write only enough to tie the letters and various documents together; consequently, Sands referred to himself again and again as only a compiler.

As it turned out, however, he put a good deal more of himself into the work than he originally intended, or as Verplanck put it: "In spite of the author's own intention, there will be found, scattered throughout the volume, ingenious though rapid investigations of doubtful or disputed facts, and some passages of animated and patriotic eloquence" ("Memoir," p. 24). In fact, a tally of the amount of material from primary sources and the amount of narrative and commentary by Sands shows he contributed about half of the main part of the biography. Counting all the material in the book, which includes the seventy page "Journal of the Campaign of the Liman" and appendices, Sands was responsible for about one-third of the total. So while Sands did just tie the Jones documents together, there is much more of him in the biography than he was willing to admit. Technically he was merely a compiler, but he was a compiler with a good deal to say.

Claiming to be only the compiler often provided an easy excuse for not doing more research into the subject. In connection with a character sketch of M. Le Ray de Chaumont, for example, Sands avoids having to be critical by saying, "it would be improper in a mere compilation of this nature,

to draw inferences affecting the character of persons who are dead" (Jones, 142). Commenting on the mix-up and delay of paying the crews of the squadron with Jones when he captured the Serapis, he sighs with relief: "Happily for the compiler, it is unnecessary to explore the reasons, or their merits, for these distinctions, or enter into calculations of dollars and cents" (Jones, 255). Also, as a compiler, he could escape judgment on his work. He closed the preface by saying, "This work had no literary pretensions; and cannot legitimately come, as a literary production, under the examination of critics" (Jones, 8).

Sands worked on the Jones biography throughout the summer of 1830 and finished the book late in September (the preface is dated September 23). It was published later the same year, without Sands's name, as Life and Correspondence of John Paul Jones, including his Narrative of the Campaign of the Liman, from Original Letters and Manuscripts in the Possession of Miss Janette Taylor. Despite the fact that the project was hastily done, it turned out rather well. Sands may have merely strung letters together, yet he produced a readable, fascinating account of Jones's life.

The most obvious fault in the book is its lack of objectivity, but Sands can be excused for this on two counts: first, he relied heavily on Jones's letters which are naturally biased in favor of the egocentric admiral, and, second, he wanted to make Jones look like a patriot, interested more in the good of his country than in any financial gain. The

biography was commissioned, after all, to ameliorate Jones's reputation. The justification for Jones's raid on Whitehaven, the English port in which he had grown up, is typical of Sands's defense of Jones and provides a good example of the editor's florid prose:

> It would be a piece of supererogation to offer any vindication of Jones, for doing his adopted country such good service, by the retaliatory descent upon Whitehaven. It was one which he alone could properly execute, from his thorough acquaintance with the localities. The sentimental disgust of those who censured him for availing himself of that very knowledge, and of 'stifling his early associations,' is natural enough. But war is not waged upon sentimental principles. A notion prevailed at that time that Jones' vessel was a privateer. He was in command of a United States vessel of war, fully commissioned; and if in performing his duty to the utmost, he conquered the repugnance he might have felt at making a hostile entry among the scenes of his infancy, the merit of his victories is but the more enhanced when he is considered as an officer (Jones, 88).

Thus Sands directly answers British criticism of Jones by such people as Sir Malcom. Elsewhere, he defends Jones on much the same basis as he did Cortes, by saying he was only human: "We are much mistaken if it will not appear, that in most cases where he was petulant, it was scarcely in human nature to be otherwise" (Jones, 97).

Theoretically, Sands believed in simplicity of style. He advocated this in his critical journals and tried to practice it in most of his writing. His sentence structure is usually short and simple. But his scholarly propensities and wish to be intellectually impressive sometimes caused him to use the Latinate three or four syllable word where he could have used one or two syllables. Also his training in

the classics and poetry often show up in his diction, as when he refers to Jones's boyhood on the Scottish coast: "His daily intercourse with seamen here, tended of course to strengthen and confirm his nascent passion" (Jones, p. 14). It can not just be "love of the sea," it has to be "nascent passion." And in the section dealing with Jones's service to the Russian navy, he again is scrupulous in using the unanglicized Russian and Turkish names for men, places, and naval terms.

The Jones biography by Sands was undoubtedly the best account Americans had of the father of their navy, and it remained the best account of Jones for eleven years, or until Alexander Slidell Mackenzie published The Life of John Paul Jones (1841). Sands's biography will always be important to Jones' scholarship because it contains the only recording of material which has since disappeared. But as far as the literary career of Sands goes, it has almost no importance. Published without his name, it did nothing to enhance his reputation. In the two years he lived after its publication, he made no use of the material in any other way; chances are he would have made nothing of it had he lived longer.

It has the distinction of being the longest production by Sands (555 pages), yet reflects his impetuousity. Once again Sands failed to carry out his first intention. Instead of a valuable, new study of the Admiral which he had originally contemplated, we have a hastily prepared patchwork of letters, finished only out of obligation to the subscribers and Miss

Taylor. Once again the idea outshone the execution. Once again Sands's reach exceeded his grasp.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KNICKERBOCKER WIT: SHORT STORIES AND THE SKETCH CLUB

Collaboration on The Talisman

Several months after joining the Commercial Advertiser, Sands "became accidently engaged"[1] in a publishing project that proved to be the most rewarding of his abbreviated life: The Talisman increased Sands's reputation as a Knickerbocker wit; brought him better money than any previous literary venture; and above all, allowed him to indulge his collaborative propensity to the fullest. Verplanck said Sands never intended to edit anything like the popular gift books with their reputation as repositories of inferior literature.

Literary annuals, or gift books as they have since been known, were annual collections of didactic or sentimental poetry, essays, stories, and engravings, all beautifully bound. They reached America in 1825, after having proved popular in Germany, France, and England. For two years Elam Bliss, the publisher of the by then (1827) defunct Atlantic and New York Review, had enviously watched the success of The Atlantic Souvenir, published by those enterprising Philadelphia publishers, Carey and Lea. Bliss repeatedly urged his former editor to begin an annual in New York City, but

Sands declined.

Meanwhile the friendship between Sands and Bryant had deepened and expanded to include Congressman Verplanck. During the summer of 1827 the three writers spent a great deal of time together, and, in the course of one conversation, they expressed regret that collaborative miscellanies of the type written in the eighteenth century by Pope, Swift, and others (the Scriblerus papers, for example) had passed out of favor. These miscellanies "had the advantage," the trio decided, "over our ordinary magazines, of being more select and distinctive in the characters and subjects, and yet did not impose upon the authors the toil or responsibility of a regular and separate work" ("Memoir," p. 20). Bryant, free from any extra-professional publishing project now that the United States Review and Literary Gazette had folded, proposed that the three of them "publish a little volume of their own miscellanies, in humble imitation of the English wits of the last century" ("Memoir," pp. 20-21). Sands remembered Bliss's desire to publish a gift book and recommended combining their idea of a miscellany with the format and decoration of the literary annuals.

Much of the work, especially the more humorous pieces, was done in collaboration, as described in the sketch of Bryant and Verplanck visiting Sands (see the Introduction). "This joint-stock authorship," as Verplanck calls it, was "not the simply putting together in one whole, parts prepared separately, nor the correcting and enriching by a second

hand the rough materials of the first author, but the literally writing in company" ("Memoir," p. 22).

When it came to collaboration, the talents of the three authors complemented each other nicely. Verplanck, a descendant of one of the oldest Dutch families and an antiquarian by avocation, was full of anecdotes of past and present New Yorkers. Sands, who wrote faster than his two companions, usually composed the stories as the others dictated. He would become so excited and enthused about the story that he would pour forth a steady stream of ridiculous details, humorous twistings of the plot, and big words. Verplanck says that in these composing sessions "his talent for ludicrous description and character and incident, rioted and revelled, so that it generally became more the business of his coadjutor to chasten and sober his thick-coming fancies, than to furnish any thing like an equal contingent of thought or invention" ("Memoir," p. 22). It is for this reason that Verplanck included most of the stories written in this manner in Sands's Writings. He felt they belonged more to Sands than any one else; Sands's exuberance dominated the collaboration. The steadier and more sober Bryant acted as referee or editor, deciding which detail should be included and which was too ludicrous or in poor taste.

Not all the pieces in the Talisman were written jointly, but even original compositions were sometimes built around an idea suggested by another member of the trio. Sands, when planning the third Talisman (1830), wrote to Verplanck, who

was in Washington for the Congressional session: "If you can suggest any [subject] that you think I can handle profitably, I wish you would, [as (manuscript torn)] I have now long evenings in which I want either occupation or amusement."[2]

Because of the short time they had in which to gather material for the first volume, previously published works were dusted off and revised. Thus Bryant's "The Death of Flowers" was reworked and printed in the Talisman as "The Close of Autumn." This may also be why a poem each by Samuel F. B. Morse and Dr. John Neilson was allowed in the triumvirate's miscellany. Of course, both Morse and Neilson furnished a picture for the book, and publishing one of their poems may have been just part of their reward.

All the Talisman's literary content was attributed to Francis Herbert, a fictional character like the previous century's Issac Bickerstaff and Martinus Scriblerus. Francis Herbert was a man of the world: he spoke nearly every language, he had been everywhere, he knew everybody worth knowing, he had tried everything, he could do anything and knew everything. By creating such a talented person, the editors could claim that the extremely varied contents of the annual were the product of this one remarkable man. As William Cullen Bryant II has said, the editors gave Francis Herbert "a hypothetical personality urbane enough to comprehend their varied talents, and pompous enough to allow their poking sly fun at their creature" (p. 129). Using the cover of an invented character, a dignified Congressman and

two of New York's leading journalists could indulge their wit, satire and learning freely.

If all this sounds like the three New Yorkers who had written under pen-names in Salmagundi twenty years earlier, it is no mere coincident. Bryant wrote to Jared Sparks that the Talisman was "meant to be such a thing as the Sketch Book would be if published in that shape [a literary annual], or rather like the Salmagundi, for that written by three, or like the Scriblerus papers put into a neat little volume and embellished with plates."[3] But even more than the two above-mentioned works by Irving, the Talisman resembles a loosely constructed novel like Bracebridge Hall. All the stories are tied together because Francis Herbert is the first person narrator of each and is often a participant in the action. Thus the Talisman has a unity that most gift books with their miscellaneous collection of letterpress lack.

Each story or poem in the book adds another dimension to the character of Francis Herbert which Sands began to paint in the Preface to the first volume. There Herbert explains that he is not an author, but has always kept journals and written poetry. He even claims that some of his poetry has been published in the works of other people, obviously an attempt to explain why some of Bryant's already published poetry was to be found in the Talisman.

Herbert's foibles begin to show as he explains the title of the book. He claims that he does not believe in astronomy or magic, yet he has been careful to do everything about this

book according to the most favorable position of the stars. Thus he feels it should have some magic or be a talisman like Othello's handkerchief, and the line from Othello is quoted as the motto for the title page: "there's magic in the web of it. . . / To lose or give't away were such perdition."

The Preface closes with a choice bit of irony that is pure Sands:

> I detest all quackery, and the examples of great men do not sanctify it in my eyes. The trick of Junius and Walter Scott to attract the public attention to their writing by making their real names a subject of mystery, always disgusted me. I therefore subscribe my name without reserve. Francis Herbert.

Many were satisfied in believing that the Talisman was indeed written by Mr. Herbert; in fact, historians of New York City have been known to quote Francis Herbert as an authority on the city because of his "Reminiscences of New York" in the Talisman for 1829 and 1830.[4]

Among the nation's critics and reviewers, it seems to have been a poorly kept secret that Herbert was actually three New Yorkers, but guesses as to who they were ranged widely. Bryant was generally presumed to be one of them because of his republished poems, and this led to the speculation as to which of his friends were involved. Verplanck and Sands were sometimes mentioned as possible collaborators, but reviewers more often guessed Halleck and Paulding.

Sands, of course, loved this kind of intrigue and he egged the critics on. After the 1829 Talisman, a note in the Commercial Advertiser entitled "Guessing" quoted a New

England paper who guessed the authors to be Bryant, Paulding, and Halleck, to which Sands replied: "A pretty editor for a Yankee this! His readers will disown him, if he does not guess right oftener than once in three" (NYCA, 2 Jan. 1829).

Reviewers who discovered the true identity of the trio inclined to play along with the pseudonym game. In one of the best reviews of a Talisman, William Cox described their personalities and looks, but never named the authors; of course, the literarati of New York would know who Cox was describing. His description of Sands is probably the best extant:

> a man of slim and graceful proportions, with a mild and courteous expression of countenance. . . more calculated for the haunts of men, and the meridian of noise, smoke, and newspapers, yet perhaps better adapted to walk with an observant eye through the din and turmoil, than mix in them himself; a humorist, who can get "a jest out of a nutshell;" a scholar who has more hard words and less pedantry in his compositions, than any writer extant; and a keen observer of absurdity in every variety of shape and degree; one who displays a laudable inveteracy against pertness and pretension, arrogance, affectation, and flippancy, and possesses both the will and the power to render them contemptible; whose humor is broad, but never vulgar, and one reason of which is, that the writer is never afraid of being so.[5]

Sands was pleased with the thumbnail sketch of himself, but most surprised with the timing of the unsolicited review which was printed three months before the 1830 Talisman was released. Verplanck reports that "On inquiring for the name of his good-natured and able critic, Sands was surprised to learn that he was a young journeyman printer in the office, the compositor who had himself set up the whole of the manuscript, and who knew the book only in that way" ("Memoir,"

p. 23). After this Cox became a regular contributor to the Mirror and three years later published his own witty miscellany, Crayon Sketches.

The reason Cox's unsolicited review so surprised Sands was that each Talisman was accompanied by a carefully organized publicity campaign, planned by Sands with the help of Bryant. During December of 1827, their letters to Verplanck, who was back in Washington for a session of Congress, were full of plans for publicizing the first issue. Thatcher Payne was given an advanced copy in order to write an article for the North American Review. Jared Sparks, the editor, was "much pleased" with Payne's article, but since it would come out weeks after the Talisman had been published, Sands wondered whether the notice "might be better smothered; as it is only casting pearls before swine, to bury it in the quarterly dulness of that exemplary journal, when it can do no good."[6] Dr. John Neilson wrote up a review which Sands sent via Verplanck for use in the Southern Review. Of this, Bryant wrote: "It is pretty well done, but owes I suspect all the touches of liveliness that are to be found in it to the active fancy of our friend who forwarded it."[7]

Bliss received the 1828 Talisman from the printer on Friday, 14 December 1827. Sands told him "to put them away until [he and Bryant] had made all the organs of public opinion wind one general and simultaneous blast and roar of admiration."[8] In the next two weeks Sands waged a thorough publicity campaign, which Bryant summarized for Verplanck:

> The work was quite cordially noticed in the Courier. I did what I could for it in the Post--Stone puffed it in the Commercial, Maxwell in the Journal of Commerce, Morris in the Mirror--and besides this Dwight spoke of it as favorably as could be expected from him--and the Statesman said something about it in the same article in which it noticed the Token. The Albion gave a notice of it which I did not see, and the extracts from it. . . . You think that Noah did not blow the horn loud enough--two gentlemen of your acquaintance [Sands and Bryant] thought so too and therefore furnished him with another article on the subject which appeared last Monday. On the whole if the Talisman should not succeed [sic.] it must be because puffing does not help a book on.[9]

The Talisman was a success, though it is hard to determine whether it was because of the puffing or because of its own merits--it was the first gift book published in New York and proved to be one of the best of the American annuals.[10] Sands called the New York sales "decidedly good, for the price asked."[11] More importantly to its success as a gift book, it was "on the whole a favorite with the ladies," according to Bryant.[12]

About the only person who did not like the Talisman--besides Sands's father who fell asleep reading it and "slept four hours beyond his normal time" the next morning and besides "Mr. Vermilyea, who was obliged to read proof, and [was] confined to his bed for two days, in consequence"[13] --was Robert Walsh, the Philadelphia critic who was often at odds with New York literati. Sands particularly disliked him and several times considered trying to destroy him in print. In the middle of the publicity campaign for the 1828 Talisman, Sands complained to Verplanck:

> What shall we do with Mr. Walsh? His remarks on the Talisman are in perfect accordance with the whole of

> his miserable literary diplomacy. We shall embrace every opportunity of having him described in Noah's paper, as he truly is, a hack of Mr. Carey, hired to puff only his own bookseller's publications, including his own magazine [the American Quarterly Review].

Basically, what Sands disliked about Walsh was his critical dishonesty, his "damning with faint praise" everything not printed in Philadelphia or England. Besides this, he felt Walsh had no critical acumen. He related two examples to Verplanck:

> He always deals in general and flippant assertations, which there is no means of bringing him to an issue upon. While Cooper's novels were published here, he spoke of them in that equivocal tone, which is the lightest laud any American writer can extort from him, unless he (Walsh) is paid for it: Now that Carey and Lea are the publishers, he deals in extravagant panegyric, which, I almost believe, would make Cooper himself sick. Dr. McHenry is the only individual whom Walsh has gratuitously puffed; and I cannot account for it on any other principle . . . than that he is as crooked and ugly in body, as Walsh is in mind, and that they have a common sympathy in conceit.[14]

This was pretty harsh and uncharacteristic criticism from the well-tempered collaborator. He went ahead to outline a series of satirical articles on Walsh to be published in M. M. Noah's Enquirer. He warned Verplanck about what to expect:

> I want to hold him up as a man of nasty mind, and superficial education, and mean temperament; . . . who has been a laborious drudge in the collection of documents, which he had neither the ink to criticise, nor the credit to embalm. . . . But chiefly I wish to dwell on his abominable manner of damning with faint praise, or trying to do so, everything published out of the City of Philadelphia, which had never had any literary men, or literary character for some thirty years.[15]

But Sands's good-nature recovered and the Cortes biography

diverted him. A month later he told Verplanck, "I took a small crack at Walsh, but begin to despise the subject too heartily to proceed."[16] Sands was not vindictive by nature.

At the first sign of success for the 1828 Talisman, Sands started promoting another. He turned his attention first to subjects for illustration; otherwise, getting the artwork might throw them "too far into the bowels of the year, again."[17] The artists of the newly formed National Academy all wanted to help with the book and even planned to hold a competition to decide who would illustrate New York's only gift book.

Sands, also anxious to keep alive the collaboration that had produced the previous Talisman, wrote to Verplanck in the doldrums of the winter: "I cannot forget the individuality of Mr. Herbert's trinity, the 'tria juncta in uno,' still floats in my mind, not as a reminiscence but a present idea."[18] He shortly became preoccupied with the Cortes biography, but when Bliss announced near the end of March that he had "made himself whole," both Bryant and Sands urged Verplanck to join them in plans for another Talisman.[19] Verplanck was apparently too busy with congressional matters and put off doing anything about the gift book until the summer.

In New York Sands and Bryant went ahead with plans for their letterpress and the art work. Sands wrote "The Dream of Princess Papatzin" from which H. J. Morton drew a sketch that Peter Maverick engraved. Neilson made a sketch of the landscape around Weehawken to accompany Sands's poem of the

same name. The rest of the artwork was done by Robert W. Weir and Henry Inman, who evidently won the National Academy's contest. Stories were planned around characters used in the first volume, and the charming Mr. Herbert was kept to provide continuity and to stimulate sales of the remaining 1828 Talisman. They reasoned that readers who enjoyed the second volume would buy the first.

The Preface to the 1829 Talisman indicates that many unsolicited contributions had descended upon the editors. Francis Herbert explains that these were rejected because this is no ordinary gift book. However, works by three outsiders did get in. One was a well told story about "The Little Old Man of Coblentz," written by John Inman, Sands's friend and associate at the Commercial Advertiser. Another was a sonnet by Bryant's brother, John Howard Bryant. These were both people the editors could not comfortably turn down. The third non-regular contributor was Fitz-Greene Halleck whose poem "Red Jacket" described the Indian chief who fascinated New Yorkers during his visit to the city in 1828. Wier, who had made the best portrait of the chief, allowed his painting to be engraved for the Talisman. Sands knew public opinion well enough to know this popular subject would help sales. Otherwise the 1829 Talisman was again the product of the most famous Knickerbocker trio since the Irvings and Paulding wrote Salmagundi.

In spite of the early start, the book came out late. It was already December 2 when Sands wrote: "Bryant has finished

the Talisman very finely, and brought Mr. H. up, like a good horse, without flagging at the end of his career."[20] He was referring to the final selection, "Reminiscences of New York," a collaboration by Bryant and Verplanck. In fact the book barely got out in time for Christmas, being released December 24, 1828. This, of course, caused problems for the advertising campaign. Sands was unable to get articles in the major quarterlies, and barely managed to get notices in most of the New York papers.

Sands used the Commercial Advertiser to run a series of preliminary notices of the Talisman from the middle of December until its publication. On December 17 he explained:

> Mr. Herbert having probably made a voyage to India and back since he gave us the first number of The Talisman, he is rather late with the second. It will be published, however, in a few days. Mean time we are enabled to give a "Simple Tale," from the forthcoming pages in anticipation.

Sands himself had written the "Simple Tale" and it was one of his best. Two days later there was a long, front-page review of the rest of the book, which also pointed out how gift books contributed to a national literature: "They serve to concentrate talent and encourage effort." It is well known that literary annuals provided one of the few opportunities of publication for American authors, including Hawthorne, Emerson, and Longfellow.

Bliss and Sands were so confident of the success of the second Talisman, which the public generally agreed was better than the first, that they began to plan a third volume before the second even went on sale. Sands laid the proposition

before Verplanck in a letter:

> Dr. Bliss wishes to publish another Talisman. He proposes to print an edition of 5000 to pay an artist for superintending the engravers &c and take all the trouble from the writers & to pay Mr. Herbert $1200 or $1500 if he can have manuscript by the first of July or August. He says he can afford to do so, and make a profit, if we will agree to this proposition. Bryant assents to it, and I am disposed to.[21]

In other words, Bliss was going the route of other gift books, viz. making them bigger and better every year. Consequently he planned a bigger printing and promised to pay the editors more. The picture department would also be expanded and put under the management of John Neilson, thus freeing the original threesome to concentrate on the letterpress. Above all, it had to be finished by mid-summer so that it could be a stronger competitor on the holiday gift market. Verplanck agreed to the proposal in January, and the Talisman for 1830 was under way.

By February 1, Neilson had made arrangements to have twelve paintings engraved for the book, twice as many embellishments as in previous editions. The time consuming engraving process meant the artwork had to be in hand before the letterpress was composed. This usually caused problems for writers who then had to fashion their products around the pictures and thus produced horribly trite poems or didactic essays. Sands, Bryant, and Verplanck, however, avoided this by making only passing reference to the painting before letting their imaginations soar in whatever direction they chose.

Art historian James T. Callow has documented "at least seven instances [in the Talisman series] of letterpress

composed to match pictures."[22] Five of these are Bryant's and, while not his best poems, they are many times better than the usual gift book letterpress written for a picture. Sands relates one incident when the artist and writer took the inspiration from a common source: "I have been hammering at old Aeschilus [sic], to see what I could make of the raising of the Ghost of Darius by the Magi, as Inman thinks he can make a good picture of it, à la Martin."[23]

Even though the editorial triumvirate had more space to fill, they must have met their August 1 deadline, for the 1830 Talisman was issued on November 10, 1829. The work was well reviewed, but there does not seem to have been quite the concerted advertising campaign that accompanied previous editions. Sales were no better than previous years, which was disappointing since such a large printing had been ordered. Bliss was worried, but by the end of year he had hopes of breaking even. Good sales in March raised his spirits to the place where he wanted to try a fourth edition, but Sands, Bryant, and Verplanck decided not to continue. The original excitement and amusement had worn off; production of this much letterpress yearly had become drudgery. Above all, it had lost its original character. It was no longer a quaint miscellany in the old style but a full-blown gift book. Asher B. Durand and other New York artists wanted Francis Herbert to write for a Landscape Annual they were publishing, but to this the collaborators also said no. "Mr. Herbert," Verplanck reports, "was suffered to die a natural death, as many better

men of the same unreal family had done before him, from the time of Issac Bickerstaff downwards," ("Memoir," p. 21).

Actually the decision to drop the Talisman was made shortly after the release of the third volume. During December Sands negotiated with several publishers, including their Philadelphia rival, Henry C. Carey, to have all three Talismans published in a single volume. Sands asked $2000. for the copyright. Carey received the idea favorably at first, but then turned it down. It was finally decided to let Bliss publish the miscellany, which he failed to get around to until after Sands's death. In 1833 he issued Miscellanies First Published under the Name of the Talisman, using the name of the three authors instead of the pseudonym. Thus it became the first publication to carry Sands's name since his juvenile Bridal of Vaumond.

While negotiations for selling the Talisman were going on, news reached New York of "the most impudent literary larceny that was ever committed," as Sands put it. An Englishman by the name of Jones, a foreign correspondent for the Commercial Advertiser, published a book called Tales of an Indian Camp. Sands says:

> As I was casting my eyes over the three volumes, I thought I saw something which looked like stolen goods, and a few rags and tatters of my own property. But great was my surprise, when "The Cascade of Melsingah" [written by Bryant for the 1828 Talisman] tumbled before my sight. Knowing that the name and the tradition originated both with Francis Herbert, I proceeded to examine the legend and found that it was cribbed bodily, with a few literal alterations and additions for the worse, from Brother Bryant. He was somewhat indignant when I showed him his own matter thus appropriated and improved.[24]

As it turned out, Mr. Jones had also plagiarized material written by Verplanck. At the same time, Verplanck had just renewed his friendship with Washington Irving who was then in England, so he took care of "the piratical depredation on Mr. Herbert's property" by asking Irving "to have this literary pirate taken up and pilloried by his friend Campbell or some other officer of the London central police."[25] Irving cooperated, but without copyright laws little could be done. The next year Verplanck helped push improved copyright legislation through Congress, and one can not help but wonder if this incident caused him to redouble his efforts to get the bill passed.

The combined letterpress of the three Talisman volumes was comprised of 23 essays or sketches, 33 poems including eight translations, and 12 short stories. The essays and sketches were first-person accounts relating the ideas and activities of Francis Herbert and thus resembled those in Irving's Sketch Book. The Talisman content was balanced and resembled the ratio found in most other gift books.

Verplanck wrote less than Bryant and Sands, yet he collaborated on and suggested many of the works credited solely to them. The three men each contributed to all three categories. Sands wrote more sketches and short stories and Bryant wrote the most poetry (nearly two-thirds of it, 19 out of 33). Taking into consideration the extensive collaboration, which makes it impossible to determine how much credit each author deserves, each writer was responsible for

about one-third of the total letterpress. Verplanck estimated that "about one-fourth was entirely from Sands's pen, and about as much or more was his joint work with one or other of his friends ("Memoir," p. 21). This estimate seems compatible with the fraction of one-third estimated to be Sands's share of the total effort.

But while the quantity and proportion of letterpress were the same as other gift books, its quality was markedly superior. Written by three professional authors, the letterpress was naturally better than that of the ordinary gift book which accepted contributions from any and every amateur. Besides the unity brought to the book by the single narrator, Francis Herbert, it was witty and full of humor with a certain masculine appeal. Other gift books were blatantly sentimental and were aimed rather exclusively at the female audience.

American gift books also tended to be patriotic, preferring stories and pictures with American subjects. One would naturally expect the Talisman to be just as patriotic, since all three collaborators were known exponents of a national literature. Surprisingly, at least one-third of the letterpress is non-American and three-fourths of the 25 engravings are of foreign subjects. In fact, reviewers even remarked about the lack of "patriotic incident."[26] There were tales of India, Persia, Greece, and Cuba. There were essays on Spanish, Provencal, and Greek poetry. And there were translations from half a dozen languages. One-fourth of the 1829 Talisman, for example, was devoted to articles and poems on

Spanish culture; this accounted for nearly two-thirds of Bryant's individual share for that year. Naturally Sands, who was working on the Cortes biography at the same time, shared Bryant's interest, and wrote "The Dream of the Princess Papantzin." Articles on Greece are easily accounted for by intense sympathy and interest Americans were showing in the Greek War for Independence; the Commercial Advertiser was one of the main organs for promoting the various relief efforts carried out by the citizens of New York. Commentary and translations of Classical Greek literature were consistent with Sands's perpetual interest in promoting classical scholarship.

The editors evidently came to feel that a word of explanation was necessary to justify their large non-American content; therefore in the "Preface" to the last Talisman, Francis Herbert says:

> When I have attempted to describe what I have seen of foreign regions, and their manners and customs, I have done so with simple home-bred feelings; and that in delineating foreign objects, whether accurately or erroneously, I have still described them as they appeared to an American eye, expressing only those associated ideas naturally suggested to me as a native of this happy country (1830 Talisman, p. vi).

Sands's ideas on a national literature were Catholic, not provincial. He wanted American authors to write richly and variedly and originally, instead of mimicking the style and subject of British authors.

The embellishments were probably the most important item in a gift book, which was more often bought for its looks than what it said, and the artwork in the Talisman was the

best to be found in gift books at that time. The authoritative gift book historian, Ralph Thompson, says the Talisman embellishments "probably represent the best work of their sort then obtainable in America."[27] America's artists, like her authors, were migrating to New York; paintings by these artists were used for the Talisman's embellishments. Henry Inman contributed six paintings, Robert W. Weir five, John Neilson, Jr. three, T. S. Cummings two, Samuel F. B. Morse, two, and Thomas Cole, J. L. Morton, and H. J. Morton each contributed one. Due to the small (4" x 6") size of the annual, the engravings, done mostly by A. B. Durand, G. W. Hatch, and Peter Maverick, are of little significance in the history of American art. The engravings coupled with the beautifully embossed leather covers and the fine quality, ragged-edge paper made the Talisman a beautiful literary annual, especially the 1830 edition which won first prize in the book awards given by the American Institute of the City of New York.

All the artists that contributed pictures or designs to the Talisman belonged to the Sketch Club, as did Sands, Bryant, and Verplanck. Some historians have tried to show a connection between the Sketch Club and the Talisman, saying either that the book was a product of the club or that the club grew out of the collaboration on the book. It appears, however, that the book was pretty much the creation of three men who just happened to belong to the Sketch Club, and who, when looking for artwork, went to their club friends. The

"production of an annual," which is mentioned as one of the purposes of the club in the 1829 revision of the constitution more likely refers to The American Landscape (1830), a collection of engravings in the form of a gift book.

The Sketch Club

The Sketch Club, of which Sands was a charter member, owed its origin more to the breaking up of Cooper's Lunch or Bread and Cheese Club than to any collaboration on the Talisman by the artists and authors. In its heyday, the Bread and Cheese Club had included most of the artists, authors, intellectuals, and professional men of the city. With Cooper out of the country, it began to break up in the summer of 1827; however Sands wrote to Verplanck as late as December of 1828 that he and Bryant were going to a meeting to try to save "the old lunch," which was "in danger of going to the dogs."[28]

In a meeting of artists belonging to the National Academy of Design, C. C. Ingham proposed a new club for artists and their friends. All in attendance agreed, and thus the Sketch Club was born.[29] The Club's main purpose was social; however, only light refreshments were allowed by the host, who was a different member each week. The second purpose was to improve artistic talent, so the host was to provide paper and pencils for sketching during the first hour. Non-artists worked on impromptu compositions. A third aim of the club was the above-mentioned "production of an annual." This may have been another reason why non-artists were included in

the Sketch Club.

The gregarious young journalist from Hoboken thoroughly enjoyed his associations in the Sketch Club. Sometimes the club went on excursions, a favorite spot being the Sands home in Hoboken. Sometimes they planned exhibitions, or showed or read their own works. Sometimes they watched demonstrations of phrenology or a magic show. But always there was a good deal of singing and lively conversation, which was to be expected "where so many of the speech-gifted race were gathered together." At meetings there "was quite a hubbub, but then it was none of your fierce, braggadocio, hurly burly hubbubs," wrote William Emerson the club's secretary, "but a peaceful, social, laughing, chatting hubbub."[30]

The meeting held 13 February 1829 was typical. Because it was "a most abominable night, prolific only in wind, snow, coughs, colds and frozen ears," attendance was light.

> For such as did come, however, there was some philosophy and plenty of fun. Grave discussions upon the nature and operations of clouds between Messrs. Cole and Ingham; stories from Messrs. Cole, Ingham, Sands, and Henry and John Inman; lots of laughter from Mr. Cummings. Sandwiches, prime and well attended to; crackers and cheese rather neglected. Wine, mulled, and in naturablis, abundant; also porter. No drawing, but of corks. ("Minutes for 1829")

Much of the time, however, the group did draw. It was the host's decision as to the subject. Bryant, at the meeting in his house 24 April 1829, asked the artists to portray "the discomfiture of a party of pleasure, upon an island which was overflowed by the tide, their boat having thought

proper to travel off without leave or license" ("Minutes for 1829"). More often they tried to illustrate literary topics, like Celadon and Amelia from James Thomsen's "Seasons."

While the artists sketched, the writers tried extemperaneous versification, usually on the same subject the artists were working on. Sands apparently lead out in these enterprises, for he invariably wrote the first stanzas. For example, at the meeting on 4 February 1830, Bryant, Sands, and John Inman (secretary), wrote on "The Sublime". Sands began

Sands: Ye everlasting hills that tower sublime
Grand as eternity and old as time
The greatest objects to be seen in nature--

Sec: Your glories in my soul are deeply graven
Since that blest day when first in old New Haven
I learned your qualities and nomenclature.

Bryant: Ye piles of granite, basalt & grey wacke [soacke?]
That bear the umbrageous forests on your back
And carry clouds and tempests on your forehead.

Sands: Gypsum & slate, asbestos, pudding stone,
Whoever fall your flinty ribs upon
Are very likely to come off with soreheads--

But as usual, the sublime soon degenerated into the ridiculous:

Sands: Oh Chimborazo, Pyrenees and Alps
That into heaven thrust up y^{r} daring scalps
Cloud kissing Pyramids--Ye Breasts of Isis.

Sands: And oh ye great volcanos spitting coal
Pumping Earths entrails from the lowest hole
Vesuvius [,] Stromboli & might Etna--

Sec: If twixt two of you I could raise a wedding
And be permitted to behold the bedding
I'd pay the expense of y^{r} jaunt to Gretna.
("Minutes for 1830")

A little of this doggerel goes a long way, to be sure, but it does show another side to one of America's leading poets, the reserved William Cullen Bryant. Of Sands, such trivia

can be expected when he is having fun. Some of Bryant's biographers accuse Sands of tainting Bryant's muse by this kind of collaboration during their years together. The above poem is below the quality of John Keats's and James Leigh Hunt's poems on the grasshopper and the cricket, but it does show a certain skill in rhyming, because each member had to match the sound given by the preceding person, then furnish a new sound for the next verse.

At times the verses were coarse, which surprises no one who remembers these were stag parties. The ground rules were sometimes so difficult that nothing coherent was produced, as when a topic was known by all, but the person whose turn it was to contribute a stanza knew only the rime of the preceding line and nothing about its content. Another pretty tough assignment was in the form of "a penance [which] was imposed on Mr. Sands, Dr. Nielson and the Secretary (John Inman), for certain contempts. Their task was to construct doggrell [sic] verses, each verse to contain the word "Extract" and Extract to be the subject. Their united labors produced the following sublime effusion:

Sands
Many elegant Extracts there be
Such as Syrup of Sassaparilla:

Inman
A sort of shrub or tree
That is found in the Isles of Manilla.

Inman
Now though Extracts are potent, they say
There's no faith in the word of a woman;

Sands
That the Extracts she makes, every way
Are doubtful, is unknown to no man.

Dr. Neilson went for a different meaning of extract:

Neilson
Extracting a grinder they say
May be done with both profit and pleasure;

Sands
But yet there's the devil to pay
If your gum-bone is cracked beyond measure.

The only thing poetic about these lines is that they are arranged with rimes. With an eye on the future, and perhaps, a slight twinge of conscience, Sands closed by saying:

Sands
Whenever these lines shall be heard
They can only be taken in one sense

Sands
That is they are very ridiculous
So let us sing, glory to gibberish-- ("Minutes for 1830")

This was nonsense and Sands knew it, as his closing lines show. Yet all this practice in collaboration must have paid off when the more serious collaboration on the Talisman took place.

Meetings of the Sketch Club were announced in the newspaper in a single line like the one appearing in Evening Post (14 January, 1830): "S.C., H.I. 49 Vesey Street." This meant that the Sketch Club would be held that evening at Henry Inman's house on Vesey Street. These cryptic announcements amused Sands, and he tried to stir up some public controversy with letters to the editor of the New York Standard, insinuating that the coded line summoned together a gambling club. When a curiosity was sufficiently aroused, Sands wrote another letter to the Standard, saying:

> We. S.C.'s are not gamblers, and we entertain as virtuous and laudable a horror of such iniquities

> as any sort of our fellow countrymen. How should it be otherwise? Are we not Sober Citizens and Sincere Christians? Do we not Sleep Coundly, Sing Cheerfully, Separate Coberly, Speak Censibly, Suffer Courageously and Sup Comfortably? You seem to think we Shuffle Cards, too; but upon the Spotless Character of an S.C. it is not so; and the man who says it utters a Scandalous Calumny.
>
> Since you manifest so much anxiety on the subject, however, I will tell you the honest truth; we are, in fact, a Secret Combination of Sworn Conspirators; and Social Conviviality is but a Simulated Cover for the Sacred Cerecy of our Solemn Cabal.
>
> Your Sensible Correspondent, S.C.[31]

One can easily imagine the delight this sort of fun brought Sands and the other members.

Sands, whose address in the 1830 roster is listed as "fugitive--Com. Adv.," sometimes had to entertain the club at a hotel. On one such occassion, April 3rd, 1829, Sands planned to host a meeting of the club at the American Hotel; however there was a mix-up in reservations for a room. "The long and short of the matter was that to put an end to the controversy Mr. Sands put himself at the head of the club, and forthwith absconded to Washington Hall. . . but without beat of drum" ("Minutes for 1829"). This was obviously a tense and embarrassing moment, but Sands seems to have been the master of every situation.

In nicer weather the club was welcome at the Sands home in Hoboken where, on 13 June 1829, for instance, they were "patronized by Miss Sands [with] Tea and Toast" ("Minutes for 1829"). Sands's sister Julia has been called by New York City historian J. G. Wilson, "the only lady member" of the Sketch Club;[32] however, there is no such evidence in the club records.

In April of 1830, James Hillhouse broke the rule against simple entertaining by throwing open the doors of his dining room for an elegant supper. An uproar resulted, but, as T. S. Cummings recorded, "It was decided that the supper should be eaten, but that it should be eaten 'standing'. 'Sitting down' to supper, it was said, was prohibited by 'The rules.' The distinction was a very nice one; so was the supper" (p. 111). Members of the club agreed, however, that things had gotten out of hand and that they appeared to be going the route of the Bread and Cheese club. Therefore no more meetings were held until 17 December 1830, at which time the old Sketch Club was abolished and a new one formed, with all old members except Hillhouse considered members of the new club. Meetings were to be held in the council room of the National Academy and refreshments were to be kept minimal. Besides becoming more spartan, the club also seems to have become more serious at that time. There was less frivolity and more attempts at self improvement. This may be why Sands, who did request to remain a member, quit coming for two years. Not until 28 September 1832 does Sands's name again appear in the minutes, at which time the "Sketch Club met by invitation of Mr. Sands at his residence in Hoboken."[33] They started meeting at the homes of the members again in 1832 and some of the old spirit was breathed back into the club.

In the two years Sands was absent from the club, there were several proposals that the club publish an annual, but

nothing ever came of it. However, soon after rejoining the club, the "Minutes" record that

> Mr. Sands then proceeded to address the chair in favor of the execution of some literary work by the club, to be published by the artists of our number. It is needless to enlarge upon the eloquence of the speech, or the singular impressiveness of the orator's manner. Suffice it to say; that there was but one mind on the subject.

With a veteran editor sponsoring such a project, it most likely would have been accomplished. Unfortunately, Sands died unexpectedly eleven days later, and nothing ever became of the proposal.

At the meeting three weeks later, 27 December 1832,

> The following resolution was unanimously adopted at the suggestion of Brother Ward;
> Resolved--That the club have heard with grief of the death of their late valued brother Robert C. Sands, Esq. whose genius, moral worth, & social qualities they ever held in high estimation, & that, in testimony of their respect for his memory, this resolution be entered in the minutes. ("Minutes for 1830-1833")

The using of the word "brother" is reminiscent of the Literary Confederacy days, and it should be noted that both Neilson and Ward were members of the Sketch Club. In Sand's social-literary activites, the Sketch Club had taken the place of the Literary Confederacy. Actually the Sketch Club combined the Literary Confederates with his new collaborators, Bryant and Verplanck, who were also members of the Sketch Club.

Tales of Glauber Spa

During the two year period Sands absented himself from the Sketch Club, his activities are more difficult to trace. He continued his work at the Commercial Advertiser and

contributed a few articles to journals such as the New York Mirror. His greatest literary effort was in the production of a two volume miscellany called Tales of Glauber Spa which he wrote with four other Knickerbocker authors. A rough sketch of his work on this project can be pieced together from his letters.

Shortly after the constituent identities which made up Francis Herbert decided to publish no more miscellanies in the gift book format and agreed to let Bliss publish the three Talisman volumes in a single edition, Sands agreed to write the biography of John Paul Jones for the admiral's agressive niece, Janette Taylor. This 500-plus page book kept Sands busy from spring, throughout the summer, and into the fall of 1830. When he did manage to get together with Bryant and Verplanck there was probably a certain relief at not being under the pressure to finish another Talisman. It was agreed, however, that Francis Herbert ought to publish another volume of miscellaneous literature in the future.

Little seems to have been done on the project during the winter of 1830-1831; although, Sands did write to Verplanck, in Washington, about it:

> I sincerely wish, if you have any appropriate notions for Francis Herbert to work upon, you would give them to me. I am not well and rather low in spirits-- I have no inclination for regular study in the evenings, and read miscellaneously, to no great profit. I am alone; which I would notbe, if you would suggest some idea which might be worked up for our projected volume.[34]

When the trio got together again during the summer of 1831, no more writing was done, but firm plans for publishing a

miscellany were made upon Verplanck's suggestion to do so. Sands took their plans to the publishing house of the Harper brothers, who, according to Sands, were "tickled with it" and thought they could "make it sell."[35]

The idea of the new series was to have Francis Herbert act as a patron of the arts and publish a volume of what he thought was the best in American literature every six months. This would allow Sands, Verplanck, and Bryant to publish what they wanted and include other well known contributors. Like the gift book idea which was borrowed from England, "The idea of this sort of partnership in story-telling," as the New York Mirror explained, "seems to have been caught from the recent fashion of England and France, in the Club Book and the Sister's Budget, of the one country, and was followed by the Livre des Cent et Un, of the other."[36]

Many authors had already come to dislike the idea of gift books because they were seldom read. They had soon become nothing more than a status symbol which indicated you had a friend interested enough in you to buy a rather expensive momento. It was also a sign that you had some culture. Therefore the books soon became a necessary part of Victorian interior decorating--each proper parlor had to have a round table, usually marble topped, upon which was a gift book. Sands mentioned a typical instance to Verplanck in connection with the Sketch Club's A. B. Durand's landscape book for which Bryant had done the letterpress: "The Miss Dennings. . . pronounce the description of Fort Putnam to be one of the

best productions of the age. This is now one of the things they have in their heads; and they have put the book at one end of the room, with flowers at the other, to correspond."[37] So liking the idea of a book by several authors, but wanting at the same time to have their work read, (not just used to balance a flower arrangement) authors around 1830 began to favor a type of gift book without the engravings and fancy production.

Sands explained his and James K. Paulding's idea for the format like this: "Francis Herbert being a patron of literature offered a reward for the best story &c. Ten, or whatever the number might be, were sent in, and as many judges were appointed to decide upon them. Each judge having his own opinion of their several merits, Mr. Herbert determined to publish them all."[38] Bryant got his assistant at the Post, William Leggett, and long-time family friend, Catherine Maria Sedgwick, to help with the project; Sands contacted Paulding, who evidently helped set up plans for the series, which was to be called The Hexade, because of the six authors involved.

During January and February of 1832 the collaborating authors went to work on stories which were to be done by the first of March. As press time drew near, it became more and more obvious that Verplanck, still in Washington, was not going to contribute anything. Bryant and Sands panicked and sent a flurry of appeals to their old collaborator. Sands even sounded irritated: "you must not, after originating

the project leave me and them."[39] A few days later Bryant urged, "I hope you will find time ere long to do something for the book. Your name we must have, if you cannot give us a long article give us a short one, and if you cannot give us a story let us have something else. Beside, if the rest of us are not on the look out Paulding will fill the whole book."[40]

But Verplanck never came through with a contribution, so the whole concept was modified. Francis Herbert was dropped from the picture, and plans for a series were scratched. A new framework for the stories was provided by Sands's introduction, which told the woeful tale of Mr. Sharon Clapp. For many years Mr. Clapp had contentedly run his farm near Sheep's Neck in up-state New York. But once his daughters returned from finishing school his idyllic life was upset forever. They first demanded he build a new house, since the old one was in "bad taste." Then they made the acquaintance of a young doctor who analyzed the water of their spring and found "It had saline and gaseous properties, and was made out of different kinds of stuff, in which there was plenty of oxhides and gin, as far as I can understand it, with a good deal of sulphur and soda."[41] Soon people came from all over to drink the waters of the spa. Clapp's house was enlarged and he himself was run out to make room for more boarders. It soon became a favorite spot of "Congress-people and Nullyflyers," but they all cleared out when one of Clapp's servants died of Cholera. He was left bankrupt, so he

combed the house to see what the guests had left that might be of value: "on looking about the rooms, and at the various rubbish which had been left, I found, in one where the reading-party used to meet by themselves, a great pile of papers, making, I should say, many quires of foolscap" (TGS, I, 19). He thought they might bring some money, so he sent them "To the Misters Harpers, at their store in New-York City."

The "Advertisement" by the Harpers carried on with the fictional source of the manuscripts. Trying to determine who wrote them, they

> . . . submitted the whole to a select committee of five gentlemen, distinguished in private for their critical acumen. Their report was a singular one; inasmuch as each one unequivocally condemned, as un-typeworthy, four-fifths of the whole; but the single and separate fifths which separately pleased each of them, and on which each bestowed high commendations (no two of them agreeing), made up the entire fardel which Mr. Clapp wished to dispose of. (TGS, I, 5)

Since the committee offered no clues about the authorship of the manuscripts, the publishers did a bit of detective work and inspected the register and books kept at the spa. There they discovered the names of "Miss Sedgwick, Messrs. Paulding, Bryant, Sands, and Leggett" (TGS, I, 5). Thus was fulfilled one of the wishes of the Harper brothers which Sands had earlier explained to Verplanck: "The Harpers will, I suppose, want the names alluded to in the introduction. If so it should be done quaintly, and à la F. H. [Francis Herbert]."[42]

Immediately after the line hinting who the authors were, came the following sentence: "The name of G. C. Verplanck had been written, but a line was drawn through it, as

if the entry had been made by mistake." This loaded line is best explained by Bryant's letter to Verplanck, warning that "The authors of the 'Book' are suitably vexed and disappointed that you should write nothing for it--and there are loud threats of lugging your name into the preface or some other part of the book, en revanche."[43] It can only be conjectured that the reason Verplanck changed his mind about contributing to the book was that he was just too involved with his work in Washington. At any rate, the book was published in June (1832) without further reference to Verplanck.

Bryant was responsible for two of the eight stories in the collection. His first, "The Skeleton's Cave," describes three people stranded for three days in a cave when a storm caused a huge rock to cover the entrance temporarily. In "Medfield" the protagonist promises his dying wife he will reform and be more gentle. After her death he feels a grip on his arm, restraining him when he is tempted to do something cruel.

Catherine Sedgwick contributed a gothic-sentimental tale about the court of Charlemagne, "Le Bossu." Hers is a fairly good story, but Miss Sedgwick does not seem at home on foreign soil. The setting of "The Block House," William Legget's story, is the Ohio River. A suave, mysterious stranger drops into town and promptly falls in love with the local paragon of beauty, virtue, and money. Her former suitor, a rascally riverman named Ned Overton, provides the third part of the eternal triangle. This one ends violently but happily. Even

though this story is strictly sentimental, poorly plotted, and full of stock characters, including a Yankee peddler, it is a well told, captivating tale.

"Selim: The Benefactor of Mankind," by James K. Paulding, is a middle Eastern tale of a man who is so concerned with helping others that he ruins himself, destroys his family, and hurts most of those with whom he comes in contact. The result is a bad combination of blatent moralizing and travel narrative. Paulding redeemed himself with "Childe Roeliffe's Pilgrimage," a humorous satire on the American newly rich. The story also stresses the superiority of genuine American values over shallow foreign manners, half a century before Henry James. It moves along quickly with enough wit and humor to keep it sparkling. Except for the standard nineteenth-century digressions to describe the wonders of the American landscape, it is a good tale.

Besides the introduction about poor Sharon Clapp and the woes of Glauber Spa, Sands contributed two stories: "Mr. Green" and "Boyuca."

Sands's Short Fiction

The seven short stories Sands wrote for the Talisman series and for Tales of Glauber Spa are among his best literary efforts and increased his reputation as a Knickerbocker Wit. They are also among the best short stories written in America between Irving and Hawthorne. Thus they are an important span in the bridge between the essay and the short story which began with Irving's Sketch Book (1819-1820).

It was only ten years after the Sketch Book that Hawthorne published his first short story; in that decade Sands and other practitioners of short fiction helped shape this new genre.

"Mr. De Viellecour and His Neighbours," published in the first Talisman, was undoubtedly Sands's most popular story and one of his best. Sands matter-of-factly mentioned its popularity when he wrote to Verplanck that "the prevailing opinion among competent judges, [is] that the second volume of the Talisman is better than the first, always excepting the story of Mr. De Viellecour."[44] The Southern Review also thought it was "the best story in the volume."[45]

Much of the success of the story is because of the sympathetic characterization of the title character. Mr. De Viellecour is a friend of Francis Herbert and he appears in several other episodes of the Talisman series along with Mr. Herbert. Adam Adrian De Viellecour is a bachelor country gentleman of French extraction living near New Rochelle, New York. His farm is a horticulturalist's dream, his manners are impeccable:

> His habitual temperance, gayety of disposition, and innocence of life, had been rewarded with a healthy and vigorous old age. His light and slender figure was unbent by years; his step firm and active; and the smoothe, boyish ruddiness of his cheek, and the quick sparkle of his black eye, contrasted oddly enough with his gray hairs, sharp features, and wrinkled brow; while the brisk vivacity of his manner formed just as whimsical an incongruity with the elaborate formality of his politeness. (Writings, II, 116.)

Life for Mr. De Viellecour is a medley of good deeds and good living until a literal peck of trouble settles near his farm.

These Yankee invaders are led by the indomitable Aunt Peck and include the ego-maniac Plutarch Peck, her nephew, and Abishag Peck, her daughter. The aggressive Miss Peck--"Exactly five feet, eleven inches, and eleven lines high, when unhosed, unbuskined, and unbonneted"--considers herself an authority on folk medicine. Completing the Peck household is an exconvict masquerading as a nobleman incognito, named Terence Mountjoy. Sands described him as "real, pure, natural, unlicked, unlettered, unequivocal, unadorned, unadulterated, unsophisticated, unaccommodated humbug," (Writings, II, 125).

Sands painted his characters with detailed, nearly Dickensian strokes, so that they almost become caricatures. Consequently, he had to insert the following defense of his realism:

> Gentle Reader! If these outlines are coarse, they are graphic. If the portrait is vulgar, the original is one of God's creatures, and none of mine. I know, and I love, nay, where it is unaffected, I adore, the fastidiousness of this exquisite age. But if we are to paint only beautiful forms, I wish the Harrisburgh Convention would contrive some protection against time and the elements, and the perpetuation of those ugly family likenesses, which do so play the mischief with the line of beauty. (Writings, II, 122-23).

Mr. De Viellecour's tragic flaw is poor penmanship; consequently a routine thank-you note "became transformed in the eyes of the fond fair [Abishag Peck] and her kindred into a fervent tender of 'heart and hand.'" Miss Peck, of course, jumps at the chance and answers in the first of many letters that completely bewilder the French gentleman.

Character revealing letters were Sands's forte, and he is superlative here. Uncle Epaphroditus X. Peck's erudite,

florid style characterizes him as a pseudo-intellectual. Terence had planned to marry Miss Peck, so he challenges Mr. De Viellecour to a duel in a revealing letter:

> Sir,
>
> To come to the point, without making any daytoor, and, as we military men say, to make a riglar dayploy ay at once, soor le shom, youre no better than a neegur, and therefore I ask you for the satisfaction of a gintleman. (Writings, II, 137)

Miss Adelle Huggins, a waif who the kind old man had set up in the millinery business, feels she has been jilted; she calls him a "False and perfidious yet still too fassenating man," and threatens to "commit sooicide!" (Writings, II, 142-43). Sands's development of her background and character is an enjoyable digression, but an obvious flaw in the development of the plot. Mr. De Viellecour is next hit with a $5000 breach of promise suit from a lawyer friend who thought Mr. De Viellecour would marry his daughter.

Overwhelmed by this uproar, Mr. De Viellecour abruptly and quietly disappears from New Rochelle until the trouble has quieted down. Subplots have Plutarch Peck being sent to the state legislature for the remainder of someone's term and Terence Mountjoy being arrested for having robbed a Canadian officer and winding up in Sing Sing. The rest of the Pecks flee to the West to avoid creditors.

The story was popular because Sands managed to satirize types of people everyone knew. The critic for the American Quarterly Review admitted that the story throws "some of our domestic manners and social personages in striking, though

amusing lights." The characters "are not such caricatures, but that their originals may be found in every village in our country."[46] Plutarch Peck, who edited the "Cataract of Freedom" among his other activities, was a common target of satire in the days of universal suffrage. In fact there is a striking resemblance between him and Cooper's editor, Steadfast Dodge, of a decade later (Home as Found, 1838).

The types satirized by Sands pretty much reflect the increasing importance and glorification of common people during the period of Jacksonian democracy: the aggressive Yankee, the stuff-shirt preacher, the know-it-all editor become state legislator, and the upstart businessman, and the litigious lawyer. Like Cooper and Irving who were disappointed with home as found when they returned from Europe, Sands's sympathy quite obviously lies with the urbane, aristocracic, long established inhabitants of New York. When the upstart commoners become too much for Mr. De Viellecour he quietly handles the situation with dignity by taking his sword and Bible and leaving the insurgents to destroy each other. Apparently Sands hoped that through satire or time, the upstart commoners would disappear as they did for Mr. De Viellecour.

The representative types were modelled on originals widely known in New York City, thus increasing the effectiveness of the humor and satire. Two especially, the milliner and the watchmaker, were so well known that Sands had to end his story with the following apology: "As I have made

very free use of the names of certain individuals in this story, let me, with my parting bow, beg their pardon if they are offended and do them all the services in my power" (Writings, II, 157). There was also an editor near New York who, like Plutarch, was jealous for the rights of the people, and who was forced to flee to Ohio for similar reasons. Evidently this zealot managed to get elected to Congress while Verplanck was in office. Sands told his friend, "I always knew that Wright was Plutarch Peck, but did not like to mention it, because the family is litigious?"[47]

The con-man Terence may also have had an original, but most of the gossip Sands shared with Verplanck about the man must have been invented. For example, shortly before the first Talisman was released, Sands reported:

> Terence has actually got out of the State Prison; and has applied for an injunction to prevent the publication of the Talisman. He now calls himself Earl of Tipperary; which title he got by reason of a bog's Swimming out of the County Connaught into the County of Ulster, one day, (with a castle and two pigs on it, belonging to his maternal aunt,) where it staid. He accuses you of having found his trunk, and carried off his title deeds and jewels.[48]

During the 1827 elections, Sands reported "that Terence voted the Jackson ticket twice, in every ward, on one day; making 28 times; and at each time he drank a pint of beer, which amounts to three gallons and a half."[49]

Congressman Verplanck, who had furnished some of the characters and incidents of "Mr. De Viellecour and His Neighbors," supplied Sands with the material for a satire on Washington society, which was printed in two parts in the 1829 and

1830 Talisman. In order to provide a unity in the annuals, some of Mr. De Viellecour's neighbors, namely Plutarch Peck and Terence Mountjoy, reappear in Washington.

The setting for both the "Scenes at Washington" is a boarding house, which gives Sands and Verplanck a nice cross section of the Washington population to satirize. Besides the Congressmen, there are bustling businessmen in Washington to lobby for interests back home, unemployed French sculptors hoping for work on the Capitol, third-rate poets, harebrained clergymen, fortune hunters (both male and female), faded Southern Belles, and phoney foreigners.

Miss Violet Lilly--the leading lady of "Scenes at Washington, I"--is one of the female fortune hunters. Miss Lilly, one of Sands's greatest creations, is "a strapping, able-bodied woman, with a well fed person, and red cheeks," weighing two hundred fifty pounds. Her dress epitomizes her personality:

> She wore a turban, with a very complicated fold, and set somewhat awry, with a huge artificial rose stuck in front of it. The upper part of her portly bust was a little too ostentatiously exposed; and her masculine red arms did not appear to much advantage through their gauze integuments, which were confined at the wrists with monstrous bracelets, set with imitation cornelian cameos of a fat Brutus and a lean Cassius. Her girdle was fastened in front with a massive shining clasp of Berlin ware, on which was the ill-favoured effigy of Oliver Cromwell. All over her bust hung a variety of chains, attached to watches, quizzing glasses, and other paraphernalia. Her full person was invested in white, so as to lose none of the effect produced on the beholder by its ample dimensions. (Writings, II, 162-63)

This amazon created a spectacle wherever she went by quoting French and English verse to illustrate each comment and by

eating and drinking everything within reach.

The self-manufactured rumor that Miss Lily is an heiress attracts three other fortune hunters: a verbose congressman, Colonel Mansfield; a poet named Halfmoon; and a Paraguayan diplomat, Don Pedro. The three pursue Miss Lily and her fortune at a Washington party, which provides another venue for Sands's satire on Washington types. The most easily recognizable person at the party is Davy Crockett, whom Sands describes as "a raw-boned, manly, bold, blunt, sagacious, and withall superb-looking speciman of the hunter state of civilization. He had his arms akimbo, with no lady hanging on either" (Writings, II, 175). Colonel Mansfield finally wins the hand of Miss Lily after impressing her with a six hour harrangue in Congress in favor of paving Tennessee Avenue. Sands's report of the speech contains some of his best satire; the New York Mirror calls it "glorious."[50]

Colonel Mansfield and Miss Lily hurriedly marry and head for New York with Don Pedro as escort. There poetic justice catches up with them. The newlyweds both find they were mistaken in thinking the other had a fortune. Mansfield turns out to be Plutarch Peck, who skipped town without paying his bills in the story about "Mr. De Viellecour." In a lively finale, the high costable marches in, snatches the black wig off Don Pedro's head, and takes the red-headed Terence, con-man of the earlier story, back to Sing-Sing.

The choice satire and vivid characterizations of this story are marred by ridiculous and unrealistic incidences.

Sands's rampaging humor and love of the ludicrous plainly carry him too far in some spots, as when the clumsy dancing of Miss Lily sets off chain-reaction accidents that nearly cause the destruction of a house. Sands thumbs his nose at the fastidiousness of his age and claims to be picturing things as they were; but he goes beyond the limits of probability and strains the limits of possibility, thus damaging the credibility of his realistic rationale. Overstatement and exaggeration are big weapons for the satirist, but their overuse causes satire to degenerate into farce. Sands apologizes for and explains his extravagance at the end of the story: "The characters of this story are a little fantastic, and I must also own, a little coarse; but it was precisely because they were out of the beaten track of society, that they struck me as worthy of commemoration" (Writings, II, 207).

The story is also weak in its plot. Besides attempting to satirize too many aspects of Washington society, it is too long, actually two stories in one: the part set in Washington is primarily satire, the New York segment provides poetic justice and, with its surprise ending, ties the story to "Mr. De Viellecour."

Most of the story's saving pleasure derives from Sands's masterful use of the language. Part of the humor in the story, as usual, comes from "the happy and curious phraseology employed in describing the most common occurence," as the New York Mirror put it.[51] The sheriff serving the warrant

on Mr. Mansfield, for example,

> fumbled under a bilious looking, weather-beaten, tavern-stained plaid cloak, and the breast of a body coat of no colour at all, until he had hauled out a vast greasy pocket-book, whose original and existing hues were equally unimaginable and unascertainable. From this he produced an oblong piece of paper, and said, "I've got a warrant agin you, squire." (Writings, II, 202)

His characterizations are unforgettable, and his rendering of dialogue shows an ear for the individual nuances of speech.

Sands handled "Scenes at Washington II" better. Though longer, its plot is more unified. The satire is aimed at fewer subjects--the decoration of the House of Representatives, the Sunday praching services then being held in the House chamber, and the problems of congressmen who are constantly pestered by quacks and eccentrics.

The story opens with several such pests arriving to plague the distinguished Congressman Moreton. One is a rather ostentatious but seedy looking minister with big plans for a national university with himself as president. The other, a female fortune hunter named Mrs. Montagu, wants Congress to establish a seminary under her direction for young ladies and has brought two samples of her "finishing" with her. Miss Ann Fin, reputed heiress of a land speculator, is "some six feet two, with a figure all alike." Her companion, but antithesis in looks, is Miss Adelgitha Longchild, who is just over four feet and is "chuncky" (Writings, II, 221). Her father is supposedly a banker. Mr. Moreton shows the sagacity which put him in congress by telling each party the other has a fortune. The rest of the plot hinges on mistaken

identities and fortune hunters marrying penniless fortune hunters.

Most of the action outside the boarding house takes place in the House chamber which Sands criticizes as "utterly unfit for any earthly purpose to which it can ever be applied; where people can neither see nor hear one another. . . uncomfortable to sit in, unhealthy to stay in, and dangerous to legislate in, alike for the people and the law-makers" (Writings, II, 225). These sentiments are most likely Verplanck's. Sands also has fun with the prolix parsons who preached in the chamber on Sundays.

Although the surprise denouement depends heavily on coincidence, the plot is much more probable and the satire more in check than the previous story on Washington. Much of the humor again comes from the exaggerated portraits and from the inflated diction, expecially from the verbose legislators and humbug lobbyists. One congressman, finding that Dr. Perkins, who wants to start a national university, is really named Firkins, says, "Firkins is certainly an improvement; it is more euphonic and sonorous, and suggests divers pleasing bucolical and pastoral associations" (Writings, II, 257). Sands excelled at making a character reveal his true nature as soon as he opened his mouth.

The theme of both stories, which Sands comments on at the end of each à la Francis Herbert, is humility and modesty. Sands hated vanity and "those who parade their sensibilities and eccentricities before the public eye, or claim exemption

from the approved forms of society and the rules of prudence, on the score of genius and originality." He much preferred "plain good sense, straight forward conduct, quiet modesty, every-day economy and prudence, and those other unpretending humble virtues, in man or woman--but most in woman--which makes life's daily burdens light, and its ways pleasant and easy" (Writings, II, 207-08). A better summary of Sands's personality is hard to find.

Though each story ends with an obvious moral, Sands insists that his stories were "not written according to the Edgeworth pattern, regularly cut out to the measure of some given morality" (Writings, II, 206). His only aim was to draw characters true to life. If he succeeded, then "The instruction to be derived from them is, of course, of the same sort with that which may be drawn from the observation of life itself" (Writings, II, 207).

One of Sands's best and most popular stories was "A Simple Tale," and it is good precisely because it is so simple. It is short and beautifully told; humor and satire are used as seasoning, not the main flavor. The setting is a New York village "pleasant enough to behold, as you ride or walk through it, but abominably unpleasant to remain in on account of the unconquerable propensity of its inhabitants for scandal and tittle-tattle, which prevails to a degree infectious even among decent people" (Writings, II, 44).

A plain, little old man and his equally ordinary wife (the Tompkins) come to this village to board with Widow

Wilkins. The couple is congenial but not gregarious and inclined only to brief answers; consequently the town is extremely aggitated "to ascertain who they were, where they came from, what they had in view, and whither they were going next" (Writings, II, 45). Rumors about Mr. Tompkins range from his being a man from Alabama who had been hanged but resuscitated months before, to his being Napoleon himself in disguise. Some villagers believe them to be counterfeiters, since they never receive any mail or have any dealings with the bank yet manage to have just the right funds for everything. The Tompkins both die after being the central object of the town's curiosity for five years, leaving just enough money (to the penny) to bury them. No one is ever able to ascertain any more than that they had travelled widely.

Sands ends the story by saying "It can possess no interest save from the mystery which hangs over its subjects; no pathos, except from their loneliness on earth" (Writings, II, 61). In tone the whole tale reminds one strongly of an Irving sketch, very lightly and nicely done, with a little less sentimentality, perhaps. It reminded contemporary critics more of Laurence Sterne. The American Monthly Magazine felt it was something like "Sterne might have written. . . in his younger days, and need not have been ashamed to own it at any period of his life."[52] And like Corporal Trim's history of the king of Bohemia and his seven castles, you know little more at the end of the story than you did at the beginning,

except a man and his wife lived and died in a nosey little town. The overly curious and rumor-mongers are effectively dealt with, and we are left feeling we have actually known Mr. and Mrs. Tompkins, even though we know no more about them than the townsfolk. Sands created here, without the help of his fellow collaborators, a beautiful tale for the 1829 Talisman.

The story most typical of the Knickerbocker strain of humor and satire is "Mr. Green," written for Tales of Glauber Spa. The satire here is better handled; it manages not to degenerate into burlesque. It is more humorous than ludicrous. Furthermore, Sands seems better in control of the satire because, unlike his exposure of Washington Society, it is aimed at objects he is better acquainted with, thus it is more pointed and effective.

Mr. Green, the title character, is the most nonchalant person on earth, "totally indifferent" (his phrase) about everything. He always wears green, because he is indifferent about colors. When asked why he is drinking terrible coffee, he replies that he is indifferent to the taste of what he drinks. Mr. Green is to inherit his father's fortune by carrying out the following stipulations: travel around the world, then marry one of his cousin's three beautiful daughters within a certain time. At the time of the story he is back in New York after his travel. He is indifferent about marriage, and thus tarries around New York where he meets some local authors, attends literary parties, and finally

gets involved in a duel, which he is indifferent about, over a girl he is indifferent about. He kills his opponent and has to flee the country. Meanwhile the time expires and his father's fortune is divided among other members of the family.

Much of the humor again comes from Sands's inflated diction in describing trivial things: "he arose with a resolute effort, and indued himself drowsily in his morning vestimental gear." A wonderful description of early morning New York street life is brightened by the diction. A pair of lovers were still strolling the streets when,

> A dingy wench, whose early rising certified to by the Society for the supply of good and useful servants, dissolved the dream, and adjourned the interesting meeting, by discharging into a cross-gutter, from behind an iron-railed area, a quantity of liquid miscellanies, which lubricated their soles, and gave them an immediate idea of separation. (TGS, II, 108)

A major theme of the story is Sands's dislike of the equanimity of Mr. Green. The author's opinion of an indifferent attitude is probably given by the suitor of one of the cousin's daughters, who rhetorically asks:

> Is not the moss on those old rocks newer and brighter? The power that governs all the economy of creation is not indifferent even to the falling of a sparrow. How can man be so, who is but a little lower than the angels, and for whose companion WOMAN was made? Nature teaches us to love, and to love in the proper season, after her own examples. (TGS, II, 124)

He goes on to list examples from nature which prove that things are not all the same and that man must be perceptive enough to appreciate these differences.

An obvious target of Sands's satire in the story is his

old nemesis, the Philadelphia editor and critic, Robert Walsh. Mr. Green, passing the time with certain New York literati in a coffee house, unthinkingly joins the conversation: "'What is poetry?' said Mr. Green, yawning" (TGS, II, 132). Robert Walsh, only thinly disguised as "Mr. Green-Bice--one of the most distinguished poets and literary characters alive" proceeds to tell Mr. Green that the stuff just quoted is not poetry: "why the poor fellow that made it doesn't understand how to count his fingers. He belongs to the Lake school of poetry!" (TGS, II, 132,134)

Mr. Green is, of course, indifferent to the Lake school, but the poet goes on to explain: "It is a school, sir, in which the prosody of the language is scarificed." He then quotes some verse, for which he asks Mr. Green to "mark the regularity of the rhythm--the tum-ti, tum-ti, the flowing and majestic and classical tum-ti, which pervades it" (TGS, II, 134-35).

Sands had said nearly the same thing several years earlier in a letter to Verplanck:

> Walsh's idea of poetry is exhibited in this paradigm.
>
> Tum ti, tum ti,--tum ti, tum ti, tum ti;
>
> Tum ti tum, titum,--ti tum, ti tum ti!
>
> And he sincerely believes his two pets, old Mr. Tappan and James McHenry to be the most classical poets of this country. He is a very poor devil.[53]

Clearly, Sands was a disciple of Wordsworth's more natural rhythms in poetry while Walsh held out for classical regularity. He was one of those "who consider metrical harmony as identical

with monotony," as Verplanck put it ("Memoir," p. 23).

Mr. Green, who is "really indifferent about it," continually knocks the wind out of Mr. Bice's sails, who finally exclaims in exasperation, "Do you really not know, Mr. Green, that the friends of Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Shelley and the whole tribe of intellectual poets have never succeeded in making any of their works popular?" (TGS, II, 137) Mr. Green responds by blowing "a volume of smoke right up into what the fancy call the 'smellers' of Mr. Bice, which made him sneeze, according to no rhythmus, tum-ti, or Lake school that ever was heard of, or attempted to be defined" (TGS, II, 138). Mr. Green's action symbolizes Sands's contempt for Robert Walsh and his critical theories.

Sands deals only briefly with the literary soiree and the ensuing duel, though both appear in a ridiculous light. He complains that the former is hard to satirize because "there are no broad outlines which mark them always distinctly," because "the phases of such circles change as to their minor characteristics with the changes of fashion" (TGS, II, 139). The latter, a fruitful topic for satire, Sands openly admits has to be skipped over lightly because he is running out of space. The story ends abruptly, which is characteristic of Sands, especially in the humorous stories where only the page limits of the assignment cause him to stop the fun.

The story of Mr. Green was a favorite in England as well as in America. The Atheneaum said it had found "few so amusing as our transatlantic philosopher and the London

Literary Gazette mentioned "Mr. Green" as among their favorites in Tales of Glauber Spa.[54] The New York Mirror loved the story's "pungent drollery," but especially appreciated the satire on Robert Walsh, "whose works are believed to excel all of his day in the readiness with which they are forgotten."[55]

The least popular story by Sands and his least characteristic, was "The German's Story," published in the 1830 Talisman. It was preceded, as many of the stories under the pseudonym of Francis Herbert were, by an introductory essay. "Mr. De Viellecour and his Neighbors" had been appropriately introduced by "Thoughts on Hand-Writing." "Association," which precedes "The German's Story," ruminates on the theory of association espoused by the eighteenth-century Scottish critics. Mr. Herbert then remembers a time when he discussed associations with a German visiting a Kaatskill, mountain-top resort. The German had told a story about having "been suddenly perplexed by a strange sensation that what was passing at the identical moment happened before" (Writings, II, 20). The German had then offered Mr. Herbert a manuscript containing the story.

"The German's Story" recounts a two-minute daydream in which an earlier traumatic experience is most vividly recalled and relived. The experience which he relives had happened just before he was to marry a beautiful girl who, with her cousin, swindled him out of a large note he held from her father. As he relives the earlier experience, he determines not to be taken advantage of again, so, as he recounts it,

"I aimed a blow at the vanishing shadow [the cousin], as my own wife, my dear Aretine, entered with a candle, which she had left the room to seek" two minutes earlier (Writings, II, 28). The daydream is over.

The lack of humor, wit, and satire, all of which have been replaced by sentiment in this romantic, almost gothic tale, makes this most uncharacteristic. Perhaps Sands was trying to imitate Irving's sketches more closely or perhaps he was trying to satisfy the tastes of his lady readers more than usual. It may also be that he intended the piece to be satiric, that what he was really doing here was making fun of the romantic tales which were common fare in gift books. Perhaps he was groaning as much when he wrote the following lines as we are when we read them:

> I only felt, strong as the consciousness of my own existence, that we loved. I saw my own miniature in each of those wondrous orbs; and did they not open into her heart?
> "Beatrice!"--I murmured.
> "Hierome!"--she whispered.
> "Why is not to-morrow, the day after to-morrow?"
> (Writings, II, 23-23)

This hardly reflects the masculine tone that usually pervaded the Talisman, and one can not help but feel Sands was writing with tongue in cheek when he wrote "The German's Story."

Another uncharacteristic tale by Sands, but one generally considered his best by his contemporaries, was "Boyuca," his only serious contribution to the Tales of Glauber Spa. "Boyuca" imaginatively recreates Ponce de Leon's search for the fountain of youth, or Boyuca. Sands followed the historical record, even footnoting his sources, which

incidentally were much the same as those used by Irving for his account of Ponce de Leon (History of. . . Columbus, 1828). Sands had probably come across the story in his research for the Cortes biography.

"Boyuca" opens with a long, philosophical discussion between Ponce de Leon and his lieutenant, Don Perez, about the advantage of finding a fountain of youth. The skeptical Perez points out that it could cause over-population and would not insure success in life. Most likely it would only prolong the sorrows of life. To this, Ponce de Leon replies: "I still sigh for the fountain of life" (Writings, II, 75). Their debate, which fills most of the story's first of six chapters, makes for a sluggish beginning; however, it likely reflects the element in the story which most interested Sands: what would be the consequences of discovering a fountain of youth?

The question is dealt with further in the second chapter, which fills in the background of their guide, an old Indian woman. When she claims to have seen Bimini (another name for the fountain), the young lieutenant playfully says, "She certainly has not tried it herself." He then asks her why she refused to drink of the magic fountain and conjectures that she "must have been a good-looking girl a hundred years ago" (Writings, II, 76). This light-hearted teasing is the only humor in an otherwise serious story. The Indian's reply ends the fun. She explains that she looks forward to death and the opportunity to join all her friends who have already

gone to their version of the happy hunting ground. The rest of the story maintains a somber, eerie tone and implies that the search for the fountain displeases whatever supernatural force it is that governs the world.

The satirical stories show Sands to be an accomplished creator of character; here he proves he can produce a setting and atmosphere as effective as Poe's. He masterfully creates an atmosphere of terror, as the explorers hack their way through the jungle. They first encounter a red tiger which one soldier suggests is "Satanas himself." The tiger foams at the mouth and is "quaintly streaked. . . with black and fallow stripes [and] spots that looked like eyes" (Writings, II, 86).

As the adventurers near their goal, nature threatens ominously. They notice:

> that the sun was of a dusky red hue; and that a dimness had come over the pure depths of ether. Dull was the light in which they beheld the haughty and superb, but baleful manchineel [poisonous tropical tree], uplifting its stubborn and symmetrical limbs, and exhibiting among the dark foiliage its golden but poisonous apples, like the King of Terrors, masked and clothed in purple; or some trunk that, from the nature of the crevice from which it had forced itself in its infant wantonness, had grown along the surface with its sinuous and massive folds, even like the "leviathan, that crooked serpent" of the prophet Isaiah! . . .
>
> They were soon mounting or scrambling over oddly piled and inconveniently angular fragments of stone, covered with the common, perplexing, tough, and deceitful net-work of vines; and not without shuddering they saw, in the tangled and wide interstices beneath, coiled snakes that thrust up their crests, with revengefully red eyes, and hissed as they seemed unfolding their slimy convolutions; or flat-headed gray lizards, whose gripe [sic] they dreaded as being fatal. (Writings, II, 92-94)

In context, these details create an effective atmosphere of gothic terror.

The fountain itself lay at the base of an old volcano, which seems to be coming to life, judging from the trembling earth. Just as the explorers are about to dip from the fountain, a small hurricane strikes, tearing up everything in its path and causing a landslide which obliterates the long sought for pool. The old Indian woman is killed and the Spaniards retreat in disappointment.

Sands's interest in the topic of what discovery of the fountain would have meant surfaces again near the end of the story when he digresses from the action,

> . . . to guess what were the feelings of a hitherto-disappointed, but still superbly ambitious adventurer, when the "amereeta cup" was thus, possibly, within his immediate grasp. Is it not to be feared that judgment yielded to imagination--and faith-built hopes of spiritual happiness, to dreams of earthly fruition? (Writings, II, 90)

Sands imagines that Ponce de Leon dreamed of "wealth, pomp, and splendour; . . . pleasure. . . progeny [and] glory" (Writings, II, 90). The ramifications of immortality on this earth intrigued Sands much as it still fascinates science fiction writers today. Or, to put it another way, Ponce de Leon was to Sands what Dr. Faustus was to Marlowe. How would a person react to endless youth? What dreams would it fulfill? Would the gift improve mankind? To the last question Sands decided, no. At the end of the story he calls Ponce de Leon's quest of the fountain an "unholy dream," and hints that his quest of Boyuca will be realized only in heaven, as is best.

The American Quarterly Review called the story "the most perfect of his [Sands's] works of prose fiction," probably

because it was well constructed and nicely finished, something Sands often failed to do.[56] Perhaps the plot is better because it was based on historical fact. However, Sands lifts from the historical record just the most dramatic incident and avoids getting bogged down in background information or conclusions. The characters in the story never come to life and remain nothing more than wooden figures out of a history book; Sands was here more interested in ideas than people.

Throughout "Boyuca" there is a certain seriousness and dignity which puts this in sharp contrast with his other stories. Sands worried about the gravity of the story as he was writing it. He told Verplanck, "I cannot make it a 'story,' and I know not whether it will be readable or not, being entirely grave in its character. I must find matter for mirth in another. . . ."[57] He found "matter for mirth," of course, in "Mr. Green." Sands was apparently uncomfortable with a serious, dramatic tale; his genius preferred humor and satire.

The seven stories mentioned above and the stories he wrote earlier for the Atlantic were well received among the readers of his day. The stories about Mr. De Viellecour and Washington social life were the favorites in the Talisman series. Mary Russel Mitford, an English essayist and editor, thought they were among the best in America at the time and included them in her Stories of American Life (London, 1830). American critics applauded his efforts. The Knickerbocker Magazine said of Sands, "no author in our living literature

has given the lighter species of fiction greater attractions, or higher or more delicate finish."[58] Bryant called his short fiction "among the best of his writings," and another Knickerbocker critic said that from them "we can form the best estimate of his talents and peculiar genius."[59]

Today Sands's short stories strike us as quaint when judged by our sophisticated taste, yet there is much in them to admire and enjoy. The plots lack unity and evenness in their development. They are built on stock devices like mistaken identity or a misunderstood word, yet Sands tells the story with such zest that we hardly mind.

The objects of his satire are pretty much lost in the oblivion of the past, yet his themes have universal appeal. We still enjoy seeing humbugs and con-men exposed, the aggressive and obstreperous person put down, and consuming ambition contained.

Sands's greatest talent and most important contribution to the development of the short story was his ability to paint vivid characters and settings. We can actually feel the oppressive and ominous ambience of the jungles in "Boyuca." We can see the pleasant, snug farm of Mr. De Vielle-cour. Sands's carefully drawn settings always enhance the effectiveness of the story. Likewise, the characters are vividly drawn, often with such damning or exaggerated detail that they are unforgettable. He was especially skillful in using speeches, conversation, or letters to reveal character.

Both the strengths and weaknesses of his short stories

were the result of a personality trait best described as exuberance. Composition excited Sands and he characteristically tackled each literary project with gusto. If he were describing the setting he would do it with as many vivid details as possible. If he were creating characters, he again used every device to make this person unforgettable. Because of his exaggeration of certain details, many of his characters become caricatures, but this was compatible with the aims of satire. As objects of criticism they were meant to illustrate not only individuals but types.

It was in plotting that this exuberance most often got out of hand and caused problems. He would start writing with the germ of an idea or plot, but as his richly inventive mind became inflammed, it started generating more and more humorous incidents until the plot was soon out of control. This uncontrolled inventiveness usually led to digressions from the plot and to winding up the plot much more quickly than the reader is ready for. The American Quarterly Review spoke metaphorically of this problem in connection with "The Simple Tale" and "Mr. De Viellecour":

> There is a fullness and ease in these humorous stories that confirm us in the opinion, that such were the most ready productions of Sands' pen. His wit flows almost without thought. It appears to us while we read, as the stream,
>
> "That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on;"
>
> And, when we reach the end of the tale, there is a sense of abruptness and dissatisfaction that generates the belief, that the author has consulted the prescribed limits,--the quantum suff. of a tale for an annual, rather than the inclination and powers of his genius.[60]

In other words, only the predetermined page limits of the story caused Sands to quit inventing and conclude the story.

Much the same thing happened with a story's humor or satire: once started, he just got carried away. A critic for the American Monthly Magazine complained that:

> The principal fault of his prose compositions is, throughout, an exaggeration of whatever may be the characteristic vein of each article. The humor is far fetched, and the paintings of scenes, which are intended to be more than usually vivid, sometimes fantastic and overwrought.[61]

Of course, writing in association with others intensified this problem. His original compositions are often more restrained, but when collaborating, his exuberant creativity intensified.

If death had not abruptly ended his career, experience and maturity would probably have brought his exuberance under control. Most likely, he would have mastered the short story form, and, like Hawthorne, might have gone from writing short stories for gift books to writing novels. The novel, at least, would seem to be a form more compatible to his unbounded inventiveness. One cannot help but feel that in writing for the Talisman and Tales of Glauber Spa that Sands was serving an apprenticeship which could have led to a career as a novelist had death not intervened.

He certainly had the prerequisites to be a great writer of fiction: he was acutely perceptive and had a talent for pointing out the ludicrous; he was witty; he had a brilliant mind richly stored with a variety of learning; he had an unquenchable sense of humor; he had a national pride unmarred

by vanity; he was a master of English diction; and above all, he loved to write. A Knickerbocker critic said his short stories "evenice talent of such high and rare excellence, that we may fairly presume. . . he might have commanded abundant success in any walk of fiction."[60] One only wishes he had had the chance to try.

CHAPTER IX

"THE DEAD OF 1832":
SANDS'S DEATH AND REPUTATION

On 30 November 1832, the Commercial Advertiser published a poem celebrating the many important men who had died so far that year: Goethe, Scott, Champollion, Bentham, and others. The poem reminded readers that death is no respecter of persons.

> Oh Time and Death! with certain pace,
> Though still unequal, hurrying on,
> O'erturning in your awful race,
> The cot, the palace, and the throne!

Little did Sands realize that two weeks after writing these opening lines he too would be overturned by death, as were the other men celebrated in the poem. At the time of writing, there was no indication that Sands would be one of "The Dead of 1832." He had had a productive and enjoyable year, with no sign of any sickness or physical problem.

Back in May (1832), all the material for Tales of the Glauber Spa had been turned over to the publisher, and Bryant had headed for Illinois to visit his brother. Soon after his return to New York in June, the City's worst cholera epidemic broke out. By mid-July there were nearly one hundred deaths a day reported by the Board of Health. As a result, nearly half of the city's quarter million inhabitants

fled the city.[1] Bryant, who had contemplated moving back in May, moved his family into the house next door to the Comfort Sands home in Hoboken, New Jersey. Thus began a period of what could have been an even more intimate friendship and rewarding collaboration between the two.

Besides working for the Commercial Advertiser, Sands kept busy during the summer with occasional articles for magazines. For the New York Mirror he wrote an essay on Hoboken to accompany an engraving of Weir's painting of the well known Hoboken walk. The editors claimed to be much pleased with the article and chided Sands in print for not writing more often: "Although one of our most accomplished writers, he is quite sparing of his compositions, and we received the annexed as an especial favor."[2]

In the essay Sands combined a genuine reverence for the beauty of the place with satire on the way people had exploited it:

> There is at present a superb promenade along the margin of the river, under the high banks and magnesia rocks which overlook it, of more than a mile in length, on which it is intended to lay rails, for the edification of our domestic cockneys and others, who might not else have a chance of seeing a locomotive in operations, and who may be whisked to the Elysian Fields before they will find time to comb their whiskers, or count the seconds.[3]

He concluded with some original poetry that again combined a love for the river scenery with criticism of those who search the world over looking for something better.

In September, as the cholera epidemic subsided, young William Gilmore Simms arrived in New York and soon became

friends with Sands and Bryant. Simms's first meeting with Sands is probably referred to in the obituary of Sands written by T. S. Fay for his New York Mirror:

> We remember well, on a rich and mellow afternoon . . . we passed over with a friend [probably Simms] to the shores of Hoboken, to visit him whose benevolent heart and amiable manners made him as universally an object of affection, as his highly cultivated mind, his offerings to the muses, and his general and well known ability as a writer rendered him one of curiosity and interest. Our companion was a stranger to the scene as well as to the man whom we were about to meet, and if this hasty sketch meet his eyes, he will find no difficulty in recalling the unusual gratification he derived from both. . . .

Fay reiterates the beauties of the Hoboken landscape, then, recalls the meeting with Sands:

> In the midst of our admiration of this fine mood of nature, the subject of these observations [Sands] joined us, and with him, as our guide, we threaded the winding labyrinths of the place--enjoyed the fine prospects--visited the interesting parts, and so well beguiled the time, that the broad heavens were full of large, trembling stars, and the moon was hanging beautifully over the city, ere we turned our steps homeward. At such a time as this, Mr. Sands unfolded his true mind, so that the gazer might behold the rich things treasured within.[5]

One of the "things" on his mind that Sands probably shared with Simms was the large potential for imaginative literature to be found in Indian lore. Sands was the first to show the possibilities of using Indian history in Yamoyden (1820), and since then Cooper and others had been turning out works nearly every year based on the Indian and the frontier. It is known that Simms began writing novels as a result of his visit to New York, and three years later wrote The Yemassee, his first of many novels dealing with the Indian. It is possible that Sands turned Simms in a direction he

himself might have gone, had he lived.

In November, Tales of Glauber Spa was released. About the same time Sands began working on an article for his young friend Charles Fenno Hoffman's new periodical, the Knickerbocker Magazine. Sands agreed to write an essay on "Poetry of the Esquimaux" (Eskimo). He intended it to be entertaining, even humorous; nevertheless, he did thorough research on Icelandic literature and culture. The article purports to be a review of a book of Esquimaux poetry collected by Dr. Thorlief Glum Skallagrimston. From this typical Knickerbocker appelation, one can imagine the string of ludicrous credentials Sands gave Dr. S. The rest of the review gave samples of Esquimaux poetry, most of which was written by Sands. Bryant helped by writing "The Artic Lover to His Mistress." Sands started writing some poetry, such as the following verse which was intended as part of an introduction to a heroic poem about the ancient settlement of Greenland by the Esquimaux:

> Wonderful are thy doings, Witch of Cold!
> The frozen gossamer web that cuts the skin,
> The hoar frost piled fantastic on the old
> Substantial hills, the sea that boils within
> And steams from all its waters manifold,
> Until the frost-smoke clears, and first the thin
> And then the solid ice spreads, white and strong,
> These are thy works--to thee I wake the song.[6]

But he was temporarily stalled until he could get some more information on the culture of Greenland.

On Saturday, December 15, he procured David Crantz's comprehensive history of Greenland and immediately sat down to study it thoroughly. He read intensely for several hours

Saturday night, and again on Sunday. About four o'clock in the afternoon, he sat down to compose some more verse based on Greenland mythology. It is one of those haunting coincidences of history that he wrote in pencil only the following line: "Oh think not my spirit among you abides." Before he could think of another line, he grew dizzy and felt pressure in his head. He staggared across his study, opened the door, but fainted on the threshhold. Bryant was called from next door to help the by then revived Sands to his bed. It was soon apparent that he had suffered an apoplectic stroke. His right side was paralyzed, and as he raised his powerless right arm with his left, he shed tears, Bryant records.[7] A few minutes later Sands went into a coma from which he never recovered. He died peacefully about 8 p.m., December 16.[8] He was thirty three years old.

Cause of death was given as apoplexy. Modern medicine would probably say he had an aneurysm which caused a hemorrhage of the brain and consequent paralysis. William Dunlap claimed in his diary that Sands was "a victim of intemperance."[9] Aneurysms are often caused by diseases like syphillis, but there is no other evidence that Sands suffered from any social disease. Dunlap could have meant drinking and Sands did love to drink, but again there is no evidence that he did any excessive drinking. The only intemperance Sands was probably guilty of was intellectual.

The funeral, held on Tuesday, December 18, brought together "a numerous crowd, comprising much of the talent and

learning of the city; and a more impressive moment than that which consigned to the earth one so universally beloved, can scarcely be imagined. There assembled men of various parties and characters--but there were no animosities to be sacrificed--no wrongs to be forgotten--no one came to forgive over the dead, the unkindness he would have resented against the living." T. S. Fay goes on to quote in his obituary notice what was probably part of the eulogy read at the grave by that old Literary Confederate, Reverend Manton Eastburn: "He who was laid in his last sleeping-place, was remembered in every bosom only as one gentle and kind--one whose voice had been heard with pleasure--whose lips breathed no slanders--whose pen dropped no gall--who was just, not insolent--and superior, without being presuming."[9]

Sands was evidently buried in the small graveyard given by the Stevens family to the people of Hoboken. His friends erected a small (6') obelisk of white marble. In 1867, his remains, along with those of his father and mother, were moved to their present location in the hoboken Cemetery, New Durham, New Jersey.[10] Today his obelisk stands flanked by two tombstones belonging to his parents and his aunts but otherwise alone in a yet unused portion of the cemetery. As one anonymous visitor put it, "There is something shocking in the loneliness of the place,--genius should repose in the full congregation of the dead, and his epitaph should be written for all to read."[11] The neglect of Sands's grave epitomizes the obscurity of his contributions to the literature

of the nation.

Sands's friends, many of whom felt his works had never been justly appreciated by the public, feared that now he was headed for obscurity; consequently, plans for the publication of his works were immediately set in motion. His obituary in the Commercial Advertiser, most likely written by his friend and colleague John Inman within hours of his death, suggested a collection of his works: "Yet it is hoped, that some one of his literary friends will do for him what he did for his friend Eastburn--wreathe a garland to hang upon his tomb."[12]

Within a week of Sands's funeral, Bryant, writing for the two remaining active Literary Confederates, Richard Ray Ward and John Neilson, informed Congressman Verplanck in Washington that,

> Mr. Sands's friends are desirous that a collection should be made of such of his works as are most worthy of preservation accompanied with some notice of his life. They know of no person to whom they would so willingly entrust the task of making the selection and writing the memoir as yourself; and none whom, on account of your intimacy with him and your respect for his talent, they could with more propriety solicit to undertake it.[13]

Bryant planned "to publish the work by subscription for the benefit of the family whom Mr. Sands's death has left in a needy situation." Both men agreed "that something should be done for the memory of our friend who during his life time was not known as his talents and his writings deserved to make him." Sands had written so many things anonymously or under a pseudonym that many of the people who enjoyed his

work knew nothing of the author. The city's literati, however, knew Sands and missed him greatly. Bryant reported in the same letter to Verplanck: "Mr. Sands's death has made a great vacuum in the literary world here, and, numerous as his friends were has occasioned a deeper and more general feeling of regret than you would have imagined."

While Verplanck was making up his mind about undertaking to edit Sands's works, Ward went ahead and made plans for its production. He arranged for the Harpers to publish it and circulated subscription lists. Bryant explained their haste to Verplanck: "The subscription papers have been issued this early in order to take advantage of the feeling of regret produced by Mr. Sands's sudden death, which I assure you is much more general than I had anticipated."[14]

Near the end of January, Verplanck agreed to write the memoir if Bryant would help him gather material and information. Bryant promised to do so and reported that the subscriptions were pouring in. Of special interest to him was the fact that "A subscription paper is circulating among the ladies with great success."[15] Later Ward sent subscription agents to Boston and Philadelphia. By September 10 he had received 1250 subscriptions, which was enough to satisfy the Harpers who began publishing in two octavo volumes, The Writings of Robert Charles Sands.[16]

Verplanck's "Memoir" was based on an earlier "Memoir" by Bryant published in the first number of the Knickerbocker Magazine and on his own experiences with Sands. Verplanck's

biography is primarily valuable for its observations on Sands's character and personality; he frequently erred in dates and other biographical details. To accompany the "Memoir," he selected what he considered Sands's more important "original literary compositions and his poetical translations; and of course excluding his writings on political subjects and passing events, and his numerous reviews and other publications of a temporary character" ("Memoir," p. 30). Sands's friend in the Sketch Club, Robert W. Weir, drew a portrait of Sands from memory, and A. B. Durand engraved it for the frontispiece of the Writings.

The Writings were released in February of 1834. Only about six hundred of the 1250 copies printed were actually purchased by the subscribers. The proceeds, according to Julia Sands, were "barely sufficient to pay the expenses of the whole Edition."[17] The Harpers offered to buy the remaining volumes and the rights to the book for two thousand dollars. They then distributed the remaining books to booksellers throughout the country and found enough demand to justify two more editions, in 1835 and 1836.

It was hoped by Sands's friends and the Knickerbocker Magazine that his Writings would provide "the foundation on which to base the solid superstructure of his fame."[18] To a certain extent the Writings did help preserve his reputation; if scholars were forced to go to the original, obscure sources, then probably even less attention would have been paid to Sands. Nearly all biographical information extant is based

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on Verplanck's "Memoir." Consequently the Writings did provide somewhat of a "foundation" for his fame.

But the same people who hoped Sands would not soon be forgotten were amazingly perceptive in naming the obstacles to a lasting reputation. The American Monthly Magazine pointed out "two obstacles to his attaining to a very lofty eminence; firstly, that his productions are, for the most part, of that light and fugitive nature, which is more apt to engross the popular eye for the moment, than to retain its fixed attention during a longer space of years."[19] Most of Sands's satirical and humorous writings were effective and funny because they dealt with obvious exceptions to the social rule, but when those exceptions passed, so did the interest in the satire. A lasting reputation can seldom be made by topical writing. The second obstacle the American Monthly Magazine pointed to was the collaboration: "owing to his having almost invariably written in connexion with others, it is hardly possible to assign to him his proper share of credit" (pp. 2-3). The newspaper essay series, Yamoyden, and Talisman are cases in point--without the manuscripts for these best products of his genius, it is impossible to tell what he should be credited with. It usually turned out that he was responsible for the greatest portion of the works written in collaboration. But one can never confidently say Sands wrote this, and thus his love of collaboration was another major obstacle to the fame he so much desired.

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But the same people who hoped Sands would not soon be forgotten were amazingly perceptive in naming the obstacles to a lasting reputation. The American Monthly Magazine pointed out "two obstacles to his attaining to a very lofty eminence: firstly, that his productions are, for the most part, of that light and fugitive nature, which is more apt to engage the popular eye for the moment, than to retain the fixed attention during a longer space of years."[19] Most of Sands's satirical and humorous writings were effective and funny because they dealt with obvious exceptions to the social rule, but when those exceptions passed, so did the interest in the satire. A lasting reputation can seldom be made by topical writing. The second obstacle the American Monthly Magazine pointed to was the collaboration: "owing to his having almost invariably written in connexion with others, it is hardly possible to assign to him his proper share of credit" (pp. 2-3). The newspaper essay series, Yamoyden, and Talisman are cases in point--without the manuscripts for these best products of his genius, it is impossible to tell what he should be credited with. It usually turned out that he was responsible for the greatest portion of the works written in collaboration. But one can never confidently say Sands wrote this, and thus his love of collaboration was another major obstacle to the fame he so much desired.

Verplanck pointed out another problem with Sands's works

which would keep him from permanent fame: "All of his, too, were composed with singular rapidity, and most of them published without the opportunity of correction or revision" ("Memoir," p. 30). Sands wrote for sport, and he very seldom bothered with rewriting or polishing a work, Yamoyden being about the only exception. He could compose, prose or poetry, nearly as fast as he could write and he enjoyed doing so, especially if feedback from others was readily available. If it was good and well accepted, he was pleased, if not, he had wasted but little time on it.

Yet another obstacle to maintaining his popularity, a subtle but interesting point, was mentioned by a critic for the Knickerbocker Magazine: "Whatever fame he enjoyed in his lifetime, and that was not little, was based more upon his talents and acquirements, than upon the fleeting and varied pieces of which he was author" (III, 162). In other words, Sands was popular more for his personality, his spirit, his zest, his keen mind, than for what he wrote. His fellows judged his ability by what they knew he was capable of rather than what he had actually produced. And the universal note sounded in all the notices of his death was regret that he should be so tragically cut off before he had produced anything of lasting importance. Everyone presumed that someday he would. This situation caused Kendall B. Taft, in his study of Minor Knickerbockers, to applaude Sands not for what he wrote, but for bringing "a quickening, vital force into Knickerbocker letters."[20] Sands was an important catalyst

which helped bring about the high-water mark of Knickerbocker literature. Even at the time his Writings were published, the Knickerbocker Magazine realized the high-water mark had been passed:

> We allude to the higher intellectual tone which distinguished its society a few years back in the time of the early reputation of Sands. All the bright memorials of mind or talent which New-York possesses, belong to that period, when the high-raised appetite for a graceful and fascinating literature, which the rich indigenous wit and quaint excellence of the memorable Salmagundi papers first created, was fostered and excited by a number of powerful and original writers belonging to the period, and vieing with each other in a generous rivalry of soul. (III, 163).

The period referred to was the time when Cooper, Irving, Halleck, Drake, Bryant, Paulding, and Sands were all writing in New York. The question is then asked, "What has broken up that charm?" Thus when evaluating Sands, it should be remembered that he was important to American literature as much for his efforts to stimulate it as for what he produced.

Because of the obvious obstacles to fame, Sands's memory slipped fast from the public mind. Just ten years after his death, Lewis Gaylord Clark treated Sands as a novelty from the past in a series of articles for the Knickerbocker Magazine.[21] Clark, of course, was referring to Sands's "Early Writings," or those manuscripts belonging to the Literary Confederacy, but he still presented Sands as something of an unknown. Throughout the nineteenth century, various of Sands's works found their way into anthologies of American literature, but with the exception of one master's essay,[22] not one bit of scholarship has been done on Sands. He is

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mentioned only in passing in studies of the groups of which he was a member or in studies of other Knickerbocker personalities.

Sands deserves better than this. Many of his productions are still readable and entertaining, certainly on a par with anything else produced in the country to that time. His satiric humor, in poetry and prose, rivals that of the Connecticut Wits and is nearly as engaging as Twain's. His biographies are as fascinating, readable, and accurate as any produced in early America. And, while not to the modern taste, his romances pleased his contemporaries, Yamoyden most likely being one of the best romances before Cooper, certainly one of the best in verse. His satire, though often dated, criticizes such universal human foibles as pride, greed, and curiosity; his keep-to-the-middle-of-the-road philosophy is still timely today. His characters are truly unforgettable and show their creator to be a man of great imagination and a careful observer of human nature. His descriptive powers were uncanny. And his mental achievements and intellectual excitement still inspire the scholar.

But equally as important as judging him by what he produced, is judging him by his efforts to stimulate a national literature. From his college days on, Sands constantly and strongly promoted a national literature. As a critic and editor, he encouraged young writers and pointed to native materials they could use. But he did more than talk. He was willing to lead the way himself, often in new and untrod

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ways. In Yamoyden he showed Americans that the Indian could be a fine source for imaginative literature. He accepted any new challenge he thought might enhance American letters: he established critical journals; he published gift books and miscellanies; he helped form the Literary Confederacy, the Bread and Cheese Club, and the Sketch Club for the purposes of stimulating literature. He practiced and encouraged the short story in the publications he edited, and with his humor on the one hand and his psychological-morbid interest on the other, he anticipated the two primary branches of the American short story. He led the way in exploring the literature of South America, Mexico, Greenland, and other non-European areas in order to show that Americans need not be dependent on European literature. As the American Quarterly Review said, "He appears to have devoted the whole of his literary labour to the exclusive object of the illustration of American history and American manners." He was truly "a young pioneer in American literature."[23]

Therefore Sands must be enshrined with the other Knickerbockers who together produced a body of writing which first demonstrated to the world America's ability to foster talent and produce literature, and second, which provided a foundation for the rest of American literature. Perhaps Sands's contributions to American literature can best be compared to the blossoms of a fruit tree--light, beautiful, delicate, and enjoyable, but only lasting for a short time--yet necessary for the production of fruit.

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N O T E S

1930

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1]William Cullen Bryant testified that Sands "was particularly kind to those whom fortune had placed in an inferior station, and seemed to study to make up by the gentleness and generosity of his conduct, for the inequalities of accident." "Memoir of the Late Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 1 (Jan. 1833), 55.

[2]These quotations are taken from the actual story Sands wrote for the Talisman of 1828 and are found in the Writings of Robert C. Sands (2 vols.; New York; Harpers, 1835), II, 114-58. Future references to this collection will use the abbreviated title, Writings.

[3]This episode is a composite, imaginative reconstruction based on actual biographical facts. The city of Hoboken as dominated by Col. Stevens is a matter of historical record, the best materials of which are in the New York Public Library, Local History and Genealogy Section (vertical files). Verplanck's "Memoir" in the Writings of Robert C. Sands mentions "their rambles and excursions together" (p. 27). Description of the Devil's Pulpit comes from Bryant's "The Legend of the Devil's Pulpit," Talisman (1828). The Sands-Verplanck correspondence (NYHS) indicates that the story of Mr. DeViellecour was based on actual acquaintances of the trio. The walk and the writing in the house are taken from Julia Sands's account to Bryant's biographer, Parke Godwin, as recorded in A Biography of William Cullen Bryant (2 vols.; New York: Appleton, 1883), I, 237-39.

[4]"Memoir," pp. 21-22. Since the "Memoir," which opens the first volume, is paginated separately, future references will be just to the "Memoir," and not to the Writings of Sands.

[5]The Literary History of the United States, ed. Robert E. Spiller et al., 3rd ed., rev. (New York: Macmillan, 1963), for example, makes no mention of Sands. Hereafter cited as LHUS.

[6]LHUS, p. 728.

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CHAPTER I

[1]Benjamin F. Thompson, History of Long Island (New York: Dodd, 1918), IV, 388.

[2]William Shakespeare, "Henry VIII," in The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, ed. William A. Wright (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1936), p. 1336.

[3]Verplanck, "Memoir," pp. 26-27.

[4]LHUS, p. 40.

[5]I say "probably" because genealogical sources disagree concerning the early dates of Capt. James Sands's life. I have made a reasonable composite of the various sources.

[6]Thompson, IV, 390, reports that James Sands's brother Henry "was admitted freeman of Boston [in] 1640."

[7]Temple Prime, Descent of Comfort Sands (New York: n.p., 1892). This is the most thorough, and probably the most accurate, genealogy of the Sands family.

[8]Thompson, IV, 391.

[9]W. Oakley Cagney, "Sands Family Gave Name to Point," Long Island Press, 14 June 1970, n.p.

[10]Most of this information comes from Prime, see Note 7.

[11]The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford, 1965), p. 176.

[12]Arthur Sands, "Records of the Sands Family," Vertical File, New York Historical Society, henceforth NYHS.

[13]This interesting battle with Congress can be traced in letters and documents found in the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The Continental Congress approved the claim but dispersed before it could be paid. When Congress was formed it made a law refusing payment to parties that owed money to the government. A partner of Sands, Duer, owed money and evidently would not pay, so Comfort Sands was caught. By a special act, Congress finally paid most of his claims in 1802.

[14]"The Death of Julia Sands," New York Commercial Advertiser, 10 December, 1888, n.p.

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[15]Peter Rose, A History of Long Island (New York: Lewis, 1905), I, 98.

[16]The Memorial History of the City of New York, ed. James G. Wilson (New York: N.Y. History, 1893), III, 15.

[17]Wilson (see note 16), III, 150-52, lists the house at £2500.

[18]Edward R. Ellis, The Epic of New York City (New York: Coward-McMann, 1966), pp. 193-94.

[19]Van Wyck Brooks, The World of Washington Irving (New York: Dutton, 1944), p. 27.

[20]Ellis, p. 194. Most of the details in this paragraph are borrowed from Ellis.

[21]Brooks, p. 27.

[22]Allan Nevins, The Evening Post: A Century of Journalism (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), p. 65.

[23]Rufus R. Wilson, New York: Old and New (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1902), II, 59.

[24]Nevins, p. 64.

[25]Travels through Canada, and the United States (London: Craddock and Jay, 1814), II, 64.

[26]Taft, Minor Knickerbockers (New York: American Book, 1947), p. xix n.

[27]Ellis, p. 193.

[28]Taft, p. xxvi.

[29]Pierre Irving, The Life and Letters of Washington Irving (New York: Putnam, 1864), I, 209.

[30]De Peyster, "Introduction: Sketch of the Life of Robert Sands," Aeronaut MS, NYHS.

[31]John W. Francis, "Reminiscences of Printers, Authors, and Booksellers in New York," International Magazine, 5 (Feb. 1852), 263.

[32]"Neologist No. LXII," New York Daily Advertiser, 28 January 1818, n.p.

[33]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker Magazine, 1 (1833), 49.

[34]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 3.

[35]Quoted by I. Stokes, New York Past and Present (New York: Plantin, 1939), p. 76.

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[26] Carr, Minor Knickerbockers (New York: American Book, 1947), p. xix n.

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CHAPTER II

[1]Coon, Columbia: Colossus on the Hudson (New York: Dutton, 1947), p. 60.

[2]From the Trustee's Committee as reported in A History of Columbia University (New York: Macmillan, 1904), p. 90.

[3]Coon, p. 65.

[4]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 4.

[5]"Life and Writings of Robert C. Sands," American Quarterly Review, 15 (1834), 403.

[6]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 50.

[7]A History of Columbia University, p. 91.

[8]Sands probably graduated at the head of his class, but the records for 1815 are curiously missing from Columbia University's Columbiana Collection "due to irregularities caused by the war," according to the librarian there.

[9]Letter, Sands (henceforth RCS) to James Eastburn (henceforth JWE), 20 April 1817, NYHS.

[10]Sands, The Bridal of Vaumond (New York: Eastburn, 1817), p. 9.

[11]Constitution and Bylaws of the Columbian Peithologian Society (New York: Gray, 1861), Columbiana Collection, Columbia University.

[12]Constitution, see note 11.

[13]See above, p. 27.

[14]Tiquin, "The Life and Works of Robert Charles Sands" (unpublished masters thesis, Columbia University, 1936), p. 22.

[15][Sands,] "Address, Introductory," Academic Recreations, 1 (1815), 3, Columbiana Collection, Columbia University.

[16]I'm thinking particularly of Freneau and Bryant, but the problem was greater among lesser poets of their time.

[17]Letter, RCS to JWE, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[18]An address delivered June 13, 1817, before the Columbia Peithologian Society of Columbia College, on the

CHAPTER 11

[1]Coon, Columbia: Colossus on the Hudson (New York: Dutton, 1947), p. 80.

[2]From the Trustee's Committee as reported in A History of Columbia University (New York: Macmillan, 1904), p. 70.

[3]Coon, p. 85.

[4]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 4.

[5]"Life and Writings of Robert C. Sands," American Quarterly Review, IS (1834), 103.

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[19]"Minutes of the Columbian Peithologian Society, 1817-1819," Columbiana MS, Columbia University.

[20]Columbia University Alumni Register, 1754-1931 (New York: Committee on General Catalog, 1932), p. 763.

[21]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 27.

[22]Letter, RCS to JWE, 26 January 1817, NYHS.

[23]Letter, RCS to JWE, 5 January 1817, NYHS.

[24]Letter, RCS to JWE, 16 February 1817, NYHS.

[25]Letter, RCS to JWE, 21 March 1817, NYHS.

[26]Letter, RCS to JWE, 21 March 1817, NYHS.

[27]See Sands's Letter to Eastburn, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[28]Tiquin, p. 10. The only known copy of Pickersgill's The Three Brothers is in the Bodelian Library at Oxford, so most likely Ms. Tiquin did not compare the Bridal with it. More likely she is basing her remarks on Verplanck's vague statement of possible influence: "I know not whether both of these poems [Bridal and Byron's "The Deformed Transformed" which was advertized as being based on "The Three Brothers"] do not owe their origin to Pickersgill's spirited Romance of the Three Brothers" ("Memoir," p. 7). According to a synopsis of the plot of The Three Brothers, the only thing the two stories have in common is the transformation of a hunchback.

[29]While Sands never publicly commented on Irving, he probably shared his colleagues admiration. Irving was praised by another Literary Confederate in Aeronaut IX, and by Professor Anderson in the Atlantic, II (Nov. 1824), 59ff.

[30]Irving, in a letter to his London publisher John Murray, quoted in Washington Irving and the House of Murray, ed. Harris McClary (Knoxville: Univ. of Tenn., 1969), p. 34.

[31]Stanley T. Williams, The Life of Washington Irving (New York: Oxford, 1935), II, 32.

[32]"Review of the Bridal of Vaumond," Analectic Magazine, 11 (Feb. 1818), 121.

[33]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 51.

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[19]"Minutes of the Columbian Philological Society, 1817-1819," Columbia MS, Columbia University.

[20]Columbia University Alumni Register, 1754-1931 (New York: Committee on General Catalog, 1932), p. 783.

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[33]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, I (1833), 31.

[34]"On the State of Learning in the United States of America," Blackwood's Magazine, 4 (1819), 647.

CHAPTER III

[1]Scott, "Early Literary Clubs in New York City," AL, 5 (1933), 16.

[2]See p. 36.

[3][James Eastburn,] "A Succinct Account of the Origin and Progress of the Literary Confederacy" (New York, 1817), MS of the NYHS. This is the only mention of the preceding organization. Succeeding unidentified quotations on the early history of the Literary Confederacy are taken from Eastburn's "Account." No editing of MS material has been done--each is reproduced as nearly as is possible to do in type.

[4]It is interesting to note that Columbia University Library's Rare Book and Manuscript Division classified Aeronaut and Aeronautica in the science section under aeronautics, an easily understandable error.

[5]Eastburn, "Account."

[6]De Peyster, "Aeronaut," unpublished anthology of poems, NYHS.

[7]A rough draft of this document is among the Aeronaut MSS collected by Frederick DePeyster, NYHS.

[8]Sands had part in 125 articles out of the 278, or 45% of the total.

[9]Eastburn, Aeronaut MS, I, 6.

[10]Lewis Leary and Charles Bennett plan to publish "The Dervishe's Ring" in an anthology of American short stories before Washington Irving, according to a letter from Bennet to me on 2 August 1970.

[11]Some have implied this agent was Verplanck, one critic even called Verplanck one of the Literary Confederates, but Verplanck was still in Europe during the summer of 1817.

[12]Eastburn, "Account."

[13]Eastburn, "Account."

[14]Eastburn, "Account."

[14]"On the State of Learning in the United States of America," Blackwood's Magazine, 4 (1819), 647.

CHAPTER III

[1]Scott, "Early Literary Clubs in New York City," NA, 5 (1933), 16.

[2]See p. 36.

[3][James Eastburn,] "A Succinct Account of the Origin and Progress of the Literary Confederacy" (New York, 1817), MS of the NYHS. This is the only mention of the previous organization. Succeeding undentified quotations on the early history of the Literary Confederacy are taken from Eastburn's "Account." No editing of MS material has been done--text is reproduced as nearly as is possible to do in type.

[4]It is interesting to note that Columbia University Library's Rare Book and Manuscript Division classified Aeronaut and Aeronautica in the science section under aeronautics, an easily understandable error.

[5]Eastburn, "Account."

[6]De Peyster, "Aeronaut," unpublished anthology of poems, NYHS.

[7]A rough draft of this document is among the Aeronaut MSS collected by Frederick DePeyster, NYHS.

[8]Eastburn had part in 125 articles out of the 278, or 45% of the total.

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[14]Eastburn, "Account."

[15]References to "The Neologist" essays are taken from the Commercial Advertiser for 1817-1818 found at the New York Historical Society and the University of Chicago Library (biweekly, country edition). Further references will cite the number of the essay and the date printed--newspapers at that time were not paginated.

[16]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker Magazine, 3 (1834), 385.

[17]LHUS, p. 91.

[18]By elite literature, I mean that literature which is motivated or inspired by a creative urge for self-expression and evaluated by the usual critical standards; by popular literature I mean that "low-brow" literature which is generally ignored by the academic world, which is impossible to analyze by ordinary literary, critical standards, which is generally motivated or inspired by financial profit or the law of supply and demand, and which meets the literary needs of the mass population. For example, T. S. Eliot wrote elite literature, Rod McKuen writes popular literature.

[19]Notice the initials of the last two are B.S. and L.C. (Literary Confederacy). Incidentally, while on the subject, the initials used by the four members of the Confederacy are N. E. W. S. Perhaps a case could be made that as their initials represented the four points of the compass, so the four came from different walks of life: ministry, law, medicine, and literature.

[20]"The Amphilogist: No. I," New York Commercial Advertiser, 1819, NYHS. Further reference to this series will give the number of the essay and the date it appeared (no pagination).

[21]Frances Trollope, The Domestic Manners of the Americans (New York: Vintage, 1949), p. 312.

[22]See above, p. 5.

[23]"Greek Hymns," New York Literary Journal, 3 (1820), 269.

[24]Aeronaut MS., X, 97; later published in Amphilogist #33, 3 July 1819.

[25]Sands had a hand in twenty-eight of the fifty-one articles; sixteen of the twenty-eight Sands wrote by himself, the other twelve he wrote with the Eastburn brothers.

[26]Knapp, as quoted probably by T. S. Fay, in "Robert C. Sands," New York Mirror, 10 (29 Dec. 1832), 206.

[27]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 16.

[18] Reference to "The Mocloplet" essays are taken from the Commercial Advertiser for 1817-1818 found at the New York Historical Society and the University of Chicago Library (biweekly, country edition). Further references will cite the number of the essay and the date printed--newspapers at that time were not paginated.

[19] "Literary Notices," Knickerbocker Magazine, 3 (1834), 385.

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[22] Notice the initials of the last two are U.S. and U.C. (Literary Confederacy). Incidentally, while on the subject, the initials used by the four members of the Confederacy are H. E. W. S. Perhaps a case could be made that as their initials represented the four points of the compass, so the four came from different walks of life: ministry, law, medicine, and literature.

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[24] Prances Trollope, The Domestic Manners of the Americans (New York: Vintage, 1949), p. 312.

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[29] Knapp, as quoted probably by T. S. Fay, in "Robert C. Sands," New York Mirror, 10 (29 Dec. 1832), 206.

[30] Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 16.

[28]Clark, "Early Writings of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 21 (1843), 69.

[29]Cotton Mather mentioned a Deliverance Hobbs, a confessed witch in his account of "The Trial of Bridget Bishop," The Wonders of the Invisible World (London, 1693).

[30]Clark, see note 28.

[31]The text used is that found in Sands's Writings, II, 253-55. It was originally in the Literary Journal, 4 (1821), 276-78.

[32]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 52.

[33]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 17.

[34]Sands, ["Preface,"] St. Tammany Magazine, 1 (1821), 1. The only extant copy is in the rare book room of the New York Public Library.

[35]Clark, p. 185.

[36]Clark, p. 186.

[37]Sands, "Lord Byron," St. Tammany Magazine, 1 (1821), 42.

CHAPTER IV

[1]Letter, James Eastburn (henceforth JWE) to Robert Sands (henceforth RCS), 30 October 1816, Aeronaut Collection. There are six verse letters in this collection, three by Sands and three by Eastburn. Future references will merely cite the date of the letter.

[2]He paid 75¢ for the book on 2 August 1817. This transaction is recorded in the "Minutes of the Columbian Peithologian Society," Columbiana Collection, Columbia University.

[3]Letter, RCS to JWE, 11 January 1818, NYHS.

[4]Letter, RCS to JWE, 25 January 1818, NYHS.

[5]Letter, RCS to JWE, 11 January 1818, NYHS.

[6]James Eastburn was ordained 20 October 1818 as a deacon of the Protestant Episcopal Church; the ceremony performed by Rev. John Henry Hobart, Bishop of the Diocese of New York.

[7]Sands, Writings, I, 164.

[28]Clark, "Early Writings of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 21 (1843), 69.

[29]Cotton Mather mentioned a deliverance Hobbs, a confessed witch in his account of "The Trial of Bridget Bishop," The Wonders of the Invisible World (London, 1693).

[30]Clark, see note 28.

[31]The text used is that found in Sands's Writings, II, 253-55. It was originally in the Literary Journal, 4 (1821), 276-78.

[32]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 57.

[33]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 17.

[34]Sands, ["Preface,"] St. Tammany Magazine, 1 (1821), 1. The only extant copy is in the rare book room of the New York Public Library.

[35]Clark, p. 185.

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[6]James Eastburn was ordained 20 October 1818 as a deacon of the Protestant Episcopal Church by the ceremony performed by Rev. John Henry Hobart, Bishop of the diocese of New York.

[7]Sands, Writings, I, 164.

[8]Though Yamoyden was edited and published by Sands in 1820, the rest of the poetry remained unnoticed until 1877, when Frederick De Peyster, an old classmate of Eastburn's, came across several MSS of his poems in the library of Rev. John J. Robertson, another of three surviving members of the class of 1816. De Peyster was impressed by the poems and consulted William Cullen Bryant who concurred with him. De Peyster determined to publish the poems at his own expense, but before he could, he ran across the Aeronaut MSS recently (1878) acquired by Columbia University from Manton Eastburn's estate. De Peyster then, encouraged by Bryant, expanded his plans to include specimens from each of the Confederates and prepared a manuscript which only De Peyster's death prevented from being published. Thus Eastburn's life and works still remain a topic ripe for investigation.

[9]Sands, Writings, I, 165.

[10]"Yamoyden," I, iv, Writings, I, 177. Subsequent references to the poem will use only the Canto number and stanza number. All references will be taken from the poem as reprinted in Sands's Writings.

[11]The notes, in fine print, fill 70 pages, while the poem itself, in larger type, fills 160 pages. To many, the notes were of major importance. For example, the reviewer for the Knickerbocker magazine feels they "say much for the diligence and the extensive reading of Sands. They form, in fact, a body of invaluable collectonea relative to aboriginal history and manner, where the desultory inquirer will find all the facts bearing upon the subject, which are scattered not only through our scarce and early annalists, but through the long roll of travellers and historians who have had occasion to speak of them. "Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker, III (1834), 174.

[12]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 53.

[13]Letter, RCS to JWE, 11 January 1818, NYHS.

[14]Sands, Writings, I, 228.

[15]Letter, RCS to JWE, 28 February 1818, NYHS.

[16]Letter, RCS to JWE, 20 March 1818, NYHS.

[17]Letter, RCS to JWE, 20 March 1818, NYHS.

[18]Letter, RCS to JWE, 20 March 1818, NYHS.

[19]See "Life and Writings of Robert C. Sands," American Quarterly Review, 15 (1834), 400-25.

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[21]"Yamoyden," Literary Gazette, 1 (1821), 52.

[22]"Yamoyden," Literature and Science Repository, 2 (1821), 53.

[23]Literary Journal, 4 (1820), 270.

[24]"Yamoyden," Literary Gazette, 1 (1821), 53.

[25]Russel B. Nye, The Cultural Life of the New Nation, 1776-1830, The New American Nation Series (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 239.

[26]William Charvat, The Origins of American Critical Thought, 1810-1835, (Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn., 1936), p. 66.

[27]"Yamoyden," LSR, 2 (1821), 52.

[28]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 404-05.

[29]"Yamoyden," Literary Gazette, 1 (1821), 52.

[30]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 51.

[31]Palfrey, North American Review, 12 (1821), 477.

[32]"Yamoyden," New York Literary Journal and Belles Letters Repository, 4 (1820), 101.

[33]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 174.

[34]Nathan Drake, M.D. Evenings in Autumn (2 vols.; London: Longman, 1822), I, 280.

[35]"Yamoyden," LSR, 2 (1821), 62.

[36]Pritchard, Literary Wise Men of Gotham (Baton Rouge: La. State Univ., 1963), p. 112.

[37]Pritchard, pp. 17-18.

[38]William B. Carins, British Criticism of American Writings, 1815-1833, University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, #14 (Madison: Univ. of Wis., 1922), p. 158.

[39]"Specimens of American Poets," Monthly Review Enlarged, 100 (1823), 28.

[40]"New Publications and Critical Remarks," Colburne's New Monthly Magazine, 6 (1822), 260.

21"Yamoyden," Literary Gazette, 1 (1821), 52.

22"Yamoyden," Literature and Science Repository, 2 (1821), 53.

23Literary Journal, 4 (1820), 270.

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26William Charvat, The Origins of American Critical Thought, 1810-1835, (Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn., 1936), p. 86.

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[41]John Neal, American Writers, ed F. L. Pattee (Durham, N.C.: Duke, 1937), p. 89.

[42]Peckham, Gotham Yankee: A Biography of William Cullen Bryant (New York: Vantage, 1950), p. 78.

[43]Brooks, The World of Washington Irving (New York: Dutton, 1944), p. 192.

[44]See Fred Lewis Pattee, First Century of American Literature, 1770-1870 (New York: Cooper Square, 1966), pp. 358-59.

[45]Albert Keiser, The Indian in American Literature (New York: Oxford, 1923), p. 44.

[46]Keiser, p. 108.

[47]Cooper quotes from Yamoyden in Wyandotte, and uses other Sands poetry in Redskins and Jack Tier.

[48]See, for example, New York Review, for February 1826 (vol. II), which contains translations by both Bryant and Sands. Sands also reviewed a Spanish grammar in the Review's May issue.

[49]William Cullen Bryant II, "Bryant: The Middle Years: A Study in Cultural Fellowship" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1954), p. 51.

[50]Letter, RCS to WCB, 27 August 1826, NYPL.

[51]For further information, see Chapter VII.

[52]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 416-17.

[53]Verse letter, JWE to RCS, 19 January 1817, NYHS.

[54]Sands sent Psalms 29 and 50 to Eastburn in his letter of 26 January 1817. Sands's letter on 25 March 1817 contained Psalm 46. Frederick De Peyster found two others, Psalm 18 and 69, which De Peyster planned to publish with the writings of the Aeronauts. De Peyster also recorded versification by Sands of Daniel III: 19-25 and Genesis II: 23-24.

[55]Letter, RCS to JWE, 26 January 1817, NYHS.

[56]Letter, RCS to JWE, 1819, recorded in Verplanck's "Memoir," p. 10.

[57]Letter, RCS to JWE, 20 April 1817, NYHS.

[58]Writings, II, 372. This beautiful, brief poem was later anthologized by Charles Fenno Hoffman in The New-York Book of Poetry (New York: Dearborn, 1837), p. 254.

[41]John Neal, American Writers, ed F. L. Pattee (Durham, N.C.: Duke, 1937), p. 89.

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[58]*Writings*, II, 272. This beautiful, brief poem was later mutilated by Charles Fenno Hoffman in The New-York Book of Poetry (New York: Dearborn, 1837), p. 251.

[59]Writings, II, 340.

[60]Writings, II, 382-83.

[61]"Hoboken," The New York Mirror, 10 (7 July 1832), 1.

[62]Writings, II, 364. It is uncertain what the connection was between Sands and Bailey. Even though A. H. Quinn, A History of American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (New York: Harper, 1943), calls the play "one of the best," "fine," and "distinguished," it only lasted four nights in New York after it opened 1 November 1831 at the Park Theatre. Charles Kean played the title role.

[63]These poems are discussed in Chapter III of this paper, pp. 88-89.

[64]Most of my information of Sam Patch comes from Richard M. Dorson, "The Wonderful Leaps of Sam Patch," American Heritage, December, 1966, pp. 12-19.

[65]Dorson, [note 64], p. 18.

[66]Dorson, p. 18.

[67]This is one of the few samples of Sands's work given by Kendall B. Taft in Minor Knickerbockers (New York: American Book, 1947). It has also been anthologized many times--see for example Griswold's The Poets and Poetry of America (Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1858) and American Wit and Humor (4 vols.; New York: Review of Reviews Co., 1909).

[68]Letter, RCS to JWE, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[69]Letter, RCS to JWE, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[70]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 53.

[71]Letter, RCS to JWE, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[72]Letter, RCS to JWE, 5 January 1817, NYHS.

CHAPTER V

[1]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 14.

[2]Neilson, "Journal of a Day," Aeronaut MS. (19 April 1822), Columbia University Library.

[3]Aeronautica MS. II (11 October 1822), 96, Columbia.

[59]*Writings*, IX, 340.

[60]*Writings*, II, 382-83.

[61]"Hobokem," *The New York Mirror*, 10 (7 July 1832), 1.

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[70]Bryant, "Memoir," *Knickerbocker*, I (1833), 33.

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[1]*Aeronautica* MS, II (11 October 1823), 96, Columbia.

[2]Neilson, "Journal of a Day," *Aeronaut* MS. (19 April 1822), Columbia University Library.

[3]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 14.

[4]Verplanck, "Memoir," pp. 14-15.

[5]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 52.

[6]This account is recorded by Lewis G. Clark from a missing Aeronaut MS which he used for the article, "Early Writings of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 21 (1843), 280.

[7]Neilson, "Journal," pp. 275-79.

[8]This letter is another of the items used by Lewis G. Clark from the missing Aeronaut MS. See note 6. Knickerbocker, 21 (1843), 278.

[9]An anonymous newspaper clipping found pasted to the fly leaf of Michigan State University's copy of Sands's Writings.

[10]Bayles, Old Taverns of New York (New York: Frank Allaben, 1915), p. 428.

[11]Quoted by Taft, p. ci.

[12]Adkins, "James Fenimore Cooper and the Bread and Cheese Club," Modern Language Notes, 47 (1932), 79.

[13]Markwardt, Albert H. "The Chronology and Personnel of the Bread and Cheese Club," AL, 6 (1935), 389-99.

[14]De Peyster, Aeronaut MSS, NYHS.

[15]Charvat, The Origins of American Critical Thought 1810-1835 (Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn., 1936), p. 202.

[16]Aeronautica MSS, Columbia University Library, pp. 155-56.

[17]Letter, Bryant to R. H. Dana, Jr., 2 October 1833, Goddard-Roslyn Collection, NYPL.

[18]Sands, "Conversation," Atlantic, 1 (1824), 1.

[19]The Library of Congress's copy of the Atlantic has pencilled notations crediting Sands with "The Dr. McHenry School of Romance," and "Redwood." Others probably by Sands are "Theory of the World," "The Deformed Transformed," "Lectures of Chancellor Kent," "The Fine Arts," "The Witch of New England," "An Inquiry into the Moral Character of Lord Byron." William Charvat also gives Sands credit for the fine review of "The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth."

[20]Three short stories can definitely be attributed to

[4] Verplanck, "Memoir," pp. 14-15.

[5] Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, I (1833), 52.

[6] This account is recorded by Lewis G. Clark from a missing Aeronaut MS which he used for the article, "Early Writings of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 21 (1843), 280.

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[14] De Peyster, Aeronaut MSS, NYHS.

[15] Charvat, The Origins of American Critical Thought 1810-1835 (Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn., 1936), p. 202.

[16] Aeronautica MSS, Columbia University Library, pp. 155-56.

[17] Letter, Bryant to R. H. Dana, Jr., 2 October 1833, Goddard-Roslyn Collection, NYPL.

[18] Sands, "Conversation," Atlantic, I (1824), 1.

[19] The Library of Congress's copy of the Atlantic has pencilled notations crediting Sands with "The Dr. McNary School of Romance," and "Redwood." Others probably by Sands are "Theory of the World," "The Deformed Transformed," "Lectures of Chancellor Kent," "The Fine Arts," "The Witch of New England," "An Inquiry into the Moral Character of Lord Byron." William Charvat also gives Sands credit for the fine review of "The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth."

[20] These short stories can definitely be attributed to

Sands: "Joseph" (I, 264-78), "The Man Who Burnt John Rogers" (I, 452-63), and "Tristan the Grave" (II, 50-55, 234-40). Internal evidence and the fact that Sands wrote the verse which is part of the story indicates that Sands also wrote "Job Cook" (I, 174-79), "Paunch Hogabout" (I, 339-51), and "Henry Slender" (I, 378-86).

[21]At that time it was published in A Library of American Literature, ed. Edmund C. Stedman and Ellen Hutchinson (11 vols.; New York: Webster, 1889), V, 482-92.

[22]Mott, A History of American Magazines, 1741-1850 (New York: Harvard, 1930), p. 334.

[23]Quoted in Parke Godwin's, A Biography of William Cullen Bryant (2 vols.; New York: Appleton, 1883), I, 189.

[24]Letter, Henry Sedgwick to W. C. Bryant, 25 January 1825, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[25]Bryant II, "Bryant: The Middle Years: A Study in Cultural Fellowship" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1954), p. 18. I am indebted to Professor Bryant for many of my details regarding the New York Review.

[26]Callow, Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855 (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1967), pp. 93-94.

[27]Godwin, I, 22.

[28]Poems: "The Stars," USR, 1 (March, 1827), 445-49; and "The Butterfly," USR, 2 (July, 1827), 302. Reviews: "Almack's; A Novel," NYR, 1 (April, 1827), 64-66; and "Paul Jones; a Romance," USR, 1 (April, 1927), 66-68.

[29]Letter, RCS to WCB, 27 August 1826, Manuscript Division, NYPL.

[30]John Bigelow records Bryant's "Reminiscences of the 'Evening Post'" in William Cullen Bryant (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1890), p. 325.

[31]Taft, p. xliv.

[32]Charvat, pp. 6, 202.

[33]Letter, RCS to JWE, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[34]See Pritchard, p. 123 ff.

[35]Charvat, p. 144.

[36]See Sands's review of Almack's, USR, 2 (1827), 65.

Sands: "Joseph" (I, 264-78), "The Man Who Burnt John Rogers" (I, 452-63), and "Tristan the Crave" (II, 50-65, 234-40). Internal evidence and the fact that Sands wrote the verse which is part of the story indicates that Sands also wrote "Job Cook" (I, 174-79), "Launch Hopdown" (I, 239-51), and "Henry Bleeder" (I, 378-86).

[21] At that time it was published in A Library of American Literature, ed. Edmund C. Stedman and Ellen Hutchinson (11 vols.; New York: Webster, 1889), V, 482-92.

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[29] Letter, RCB to WCB, 27 August 1826, Manuscript Division, NYPL.

[30] John Bigelow records Bryant's "Reminiscences of the Evening Post" in William Cullen Bryant (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1890), p. 323.

[31] Taft, p. xiiv.

[32] Charvat, pp. 6, 202.

[33] Letter, RCB to UWB, 23 April 1818, NYHS.

[34] See Pritchard, p. 123 ff.

[35] Charvat, p. 144.

[36] See Sands's review of Almack's, USR, 2 (1827), 65.

[37]Sands was "dissatisfied with some of the conversations" of C. M. Sedgwick's Redwood, Atlantic, 1 (1824), 236.

[38]NYR, 2 (1826), 329.

[39]See the many examples provided in the studies by Pritchard and Charvat.

CHAPTER VI

[1]Verplanck, "Memoir," p. 17.

[2]Eleanor B. Scott, "Literary Tendencies, and Activities in New York, 1789-1840" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1925), p. 56.

[3]Trollope, The Domestic Manners of the Americans (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), p. 311.

[4]"The Newspapers of New York State, 1783-1900," History of the State of New York, ed. A. C. Flick (10 vols.; New York: Columbia Univ., 1934), IX, 279.

[5]Bigelow, Bryant, p. 325.

[6]Wm. L. Stone, II. "Newspapers and Magazines," The Memorial History of the City of New York, ed. James G. Wilson (4 vols.; New York: Cooke, 1892-1893), IV, 142.

[7]This extract from an undetermined newspaper is quoted by Lewis G. Clark, "Early Writings of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine, 21 (1843), 279.

[8]Quoted by Bryant II, "Bryant: The Middle Years" (Diss. Columbia University, 1954).

[9]See the account of the incident by Charles H. Brown, William Cullen Bryant (New York: Scribners, 1971), p. 186.

[10]Stone II, IV, 149, n.

[11]Letter, RCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

[12]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[13]Letter, RCS to GCV, 1 February 1829, NYHS.

[14]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 415.

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[10]Stone II, IV, 149, no.

[11]Letter, RCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

[12]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[13]Letter, RCS to GCV, 1 February 1829, NYHS.

[14]"Sands," NCAB, 13 (1934), 413.

CHAPTER VII

[1]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 December 1828, NYHS.

[2]Scott, Eleanor B. Literary Tendencies and Activities in New York, 1789-1840 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1925), p. 220.

[3]Letter, RCS to GCV, 10 February 1828, NYHS.

[4]In an interesting digression, Sands gives the Archbishop credit for a plausible explanation of where the inhabitants of Mexico came from: "I beg the Archbishop's pardon for calling him an old fool, ut supra, for he gives the most philosophical solution of the peopling of American I ever read, and throws Carver, Judge Bondinot and Washington Irving, to say nothing of the learned explorers of the subject, completely into the shade. I translate him literally for your edification, as it is easier to do so than to copyhis obsolete orthography. 'There is no use,' quoth the Most Illustrious Lord Don Francisco Antonio Lorensana, 'there is no use' says he, 'in fatiguing yourself about the ancestors' (of these people:). . . 'For, from the tower of Babel, people straggled all over the world. And clear up to the North Pole, no end has been found to land in this America. Wherefore, at this day, it is a useless question, how they came by sea; because by land they might come from other parts of the world. And nobody can assert the contrary, because the end of New Spain has never been found at the North.'" Letter, RCS to GCV, 10 February 1828, NYHS.

[5]Letter, RCS to GCV, 10 February 1828, NYHS.

[6]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 March 1828, NYHS. Of course, the NYHS still does not allow rare books to be taken out, but they are most helpful in finding and letting you use the tremendous resources they have and to which this paper is heavily indebted. Sands may not have complained so bitterly had the NYHS been equipped with Xerox and microfilm facilities as it is now.

[7]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 416.

[8]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 March 1828, NYHS.

[9]See for example, "Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 416.

[10]"Writings of Robert C. Sands," AMM, 3 (1834), 4.

[11]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 416.

[12]"Sands," 3 (1834), 4.

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[2]Scott, Eleanor B. Literary Tendencies and Activities in New York, 1783-1840 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Univ versity of Wisconsin, 1925), p. 220.

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[7]"Sands," ADR, 15 (1834), 416.

[8]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 March 1829, NYHS.

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[10]"Writings of Robert C. Sands," AMM, 3 (1834), 4.

[11]"Sands," ADR, 15 (1834), 416.

[12]"Sands," 3 (1834), 4.

[13]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 53.

[14]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 166.

[15]Seitz, Paul Jones. . . with a Complete Bibliography (New York: Dutton, 1917), p. 222.

[16]Robert Sands's uncle, Richardson Sands, married Lucretia Ledyard, daughter of John Ledyard, according to Martha J. Lamb, History of the City of New York (2 vols.; New York: Barnes, 1877-1880), I, 412.

[17]Sands, in preface to biography of Jones (New York: Fanshaw, 1830), p. 3. See also Sands's review, "Paul Jones: A Romance," U.S. Review, 1 (April, 1827), 66-68.

[18]Atlantic, 1 (August, 1824), 318.

[19]In the NYR (I, 445-58) he reviewed Sherburne's biography of Jones and in the U.S. Review he reviewed Allen Cunningham's Paul Jones: A Romance (I, 66-68).

[20]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 May 1830, NYHS.

CHAPTER VIII

[1]As Verplanck puts it in his "Memoir," p. 20.

[2]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[3]Quoted in Bryant II, p. 120, from a Bryant letter to Jared Sparks, 16 November 1827, Harvard Col. Library.

[4]See, for example, "The Talisman MDCCCXXIX," The Critic, 1 (1828), 113-16. One historian who quotes Herbert is William L. Stone II, The Centenniel History of New York City, (New York: Cooke, 1876), IV, 203 ff.

[5]Cox, "The Talisman for 1830," The New York Mirror, 7 (26 Sept. 1829), 94-95.

[6]Letter, RCS to GCV, 7 December 1827, NYHS.

[7]Letter, WCB to GCV, 28 December 1827, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[8]Letter, RCS to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

[9]Letter, WCB to GCV, 28 December 1827, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[1]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, I (1833), 33.

[2]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 166.

[3]Smith, Paul Jones, . . . with a Complete Bibliography (New York: Dutton, 1917), pp. 422.

[4]Robert Sands's uncle, Richardson Sands, married Lucretia Ledyard, daughter of John Ledyard, according to Martha J. Lamb, History of the City of New York (2 vols.; New York: Barnes, 1877-1880), I, 412.

[5]Sands, in preface to biography of Jones (New York: Peabody, 1830), p. 3. See also Sands's review, "Paul Jones: A Romance," U.S. Review, I (April, 1827), 56-69.

[6]Atlantic, I (August, 1924), 330.

[7]In the NYH (I, 445-58) he reviewed Sherburne's biography of Jones and in the U.S. Review he reviewed Allen Cunningham's Paul Jones: A Romance (I, 68-88).

[8]Letter, MCB to GCV, 11 May 1830, VAHC.

CHAPTER VIII

[1]As Verplanck puts it in his "Memoir," p. 20.

[2]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[3]Quoted in Bryant II, p. 130, from a Bryant letter to Jared Sparks, 16 November 1827, Harvard Col. Library.

[4]See, for example, "The Talisman MDCCCXXIX," The Critic, I (1838), 113-16. One Nieuwerkerk who spoke Herbert Ye William D. Boone II, The Centennial History of New York City, (New York: Cooke, 1876), IV, 203 ff.

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[6]Letter, RCS to GCV, 7 December 1827, NYHS.

[7]Letter, MCB to GCV, 28 December 1827, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[8]Letter, RCS to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

[9]Letter, MCB to GCV, 28 December 1827, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[10]Giftbook historian Ralph Thompson calls Talisman "in some ways the best of American gift books, and on all counts one of the most interesting." He also says "The literary and artistic quality of The Talisman was clearly high." American Literary Annuals and Giftbooks, 1825-1865 (New York: Wilson, 1936), pp. 56,59.

[11]Letter, RCS to GCV, 10 February 1828, NYHS.

[12]Letter, WCB to GCV, 28 December 1827, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[13]Letter, RCS to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

[14]Letter, RCS to GCV, 23 December 1827, NYHS.

[15]Letter, RSS to GCV, 15 January 1828, NYHS.

[16]Letter, RCS to GCV, 12 February 1828, NYHS.

[17]Letter, RCS to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

[18]Letter, RCS to GCV, 15 January 1828, NYHS.

[19]Letters, RCS to GCV, 25 March 1828, NYHS; WCB to GCV, 24 March 1828, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[20]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 December 1828, NYHS.

[21]Letter, RCS to GCV, 18 December 1828, NYHS.

[22]Callow, Kindred Spirits (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1967), p. 181.

[23]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[24]Letter, RCS to GCV, 27 December 1829, NYHS.

[25]Letter, GCV to WCB, 30 December 1829, Bryant-Godwin Collection, NYPL.

[26]See the North American Review, 29 (April, 1829), 488.

[27]Thompson, p. 63. [See note 10]

[28]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 December 1828, NYHS.

[29]T. S. Cummings, Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design (Philadelphia: Childs, 1867), p. 110.

[30]Emerson, quoted in Callow's Kindred Spirits, p. 28.

[31]Quoted from John Durand, Prehistoric Notes of the Century Club (New York: Century Club, 1882), p. 10.

[10]Giftbook historian Ralph Thompson calls Tallman "in some ways the best of American gift book, and on all counts one of the most interesting." He also says "The literary and artistic quality of The Tallman was clearly high." American Literary Annuals and Giftbooks, 1825-1865 (New York: Wilson, 1936), pp. 56,59.

[11]Letter, RCB to GCV, 10 February 1829, NYHS.

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[16]Letter, RCB to GCV, 12 February 1828, NYHS.

[17]Letter, RCB to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

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[19]Letters, RCB to GCV, 25 March 1828, NYHS; WCB to GCV, 24 March 1828, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[20]Letter, RCB to GCV, 2 December 1828, NYHS.

[21]Letter, RCB to GCV, 18 December 1828, NYHS.

[22]Callow, Kindred Spirits (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1967), p. 181.

[23]Letter, RCB to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

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[25]Letter, GCV to WCB, 30 December 1829, Bryant-Godwin Collection, NYPL.

[26]See the North American Review, 29 (April, 1829), 488.

[27]Thompson, p. 63. [See note 10]

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[29a]S. Cummings, Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design (Philadelphia: Childs, 1867), p. 110.

[30]Emerson, quoted in Callow's Kindred Spirits, p. 29.

[31]Quoted from John Durand, Prehistoric Nooks of the Century Club (New York: Century Club, 1887), p. 10.

[32]Wilson, ed. The Memorial History of the City of New York (4 vols.; New York: N. Y. History Co., 1892-1893), III, 428 n. Also see Wilson, Bryant and His Friends (New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 1886), p. 400.

[33]"Minutes of the Sketch Club, 27 Dec. 1830 to 4 April 1833," also on microfilm at the Archives of American Art, Detroit.

[34]Letter, RCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

[35]Letter, RCS to GCV, 23 February 1832, NYHS.

[36]"Tales of Glauber Spa," New York Mirror, 10 (10 Nov. 1832), 148.

[37]Letter, RCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

[38]Letter, RCS to GCV, 15 February 1832, NYHS.

[39]Letter, RCS to GCV, 23 February 1832, NYHS.

[40]Letter, WCB to GCV, 28 February 1837, NYHS.

[41]Sands, Tales of Glauber Spa (2 vols.; New York: Harpers, 1832), I, 8. Henceforth this work will be cited in the text as TGS.

[42]Letter, RCS to GCV, 15 February 1832, NYHS.

[43]Letter, WCB to GCV, 30 March 1832, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[44]Letter, RCS to GCV, 11 January 1829, NYHS.

[45]"The Talisman," Southern Review, 1 (Feb. 1828), 265.

[46]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 421.

[47]Letter, RCS to GCV, 25 March 1828, NYHS.

[48]Letter, RCS to GCV, 7 December 1827, NYHS.

[49]Letter, RCS to GCV, 14 December 1827, NYHS.

[50]"The Talisman," NYM, 6 (13 Dec. 1828), 180.

[51]"The Talisman," NYM, p. 180.

[52]"Sands," AMM, 3 (1834), 7.

[53]Letter, RCS to GCV, 2 March 1828, NYHS.

[32]Wilson, ed. The Memorial History of the City of New York (4 vols.; New York: N. Y. History Co., 1892-1893), III, 428 n. Also see Wilson, Mysgt and Mls Tinglis (New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 1888), n. 400.

[33]Minutes of the Sketch Club, 27 Dec. 1830 to 4 April 1833," also on microfilm at the Archives of American Arts, Detroit.

[34]Letter, MCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

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[36]"Tales of Glauber Spa," New York Mirror, 10 (30 Nov. 1833), 148.

[37]Letter, MCS to GCV, 30 December 1830, NYHS.

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[46]Sands," AQM, 15 (1834), 121.

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[51]"The Talisman," NYM, p. 180.

[52]"Sands," AMM, 3 (1834), 7.

[53]Letter, MCS to GCV, 2 March 1828, NYHS.

[54]"Tales of Glauber Spa," Athenaeum (London), 20 July 1833, p. 472; "Tales of Glauber Spa," Literary Gazette, 17 (1833), 549.

[55]"Tales of Glauber Spa," NYM, 10 (10 November 1832), 151.

[56]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 423.

[57]Letter, RCS to GCV, 15 February 1832, NYHS.

[58]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 175.

[59]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 53 and "Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 175.

[60]"Sands," AQR, p. 422.

[61]"Writings," AMM, 3 (1834), 7.

[62]"Literary Notices," Knickerbocker, 3 (1834), 175.

CHAPTER IX

[1]Edward R. Ellis, The Epic of New York City (New York: Coward-McMann, 1966), pp. 239-40.

[2]"Hoboken," NYM, 10 (7 July 1832), n.p.

[3]"Hoboken," NYM, n.p.

[4]William P. Trent, William Gilmore Simms (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1892), pp. 69-70.

[5]Fay, "Robert C. Sands," NYM, 10 (29 December 1832), 206.

[6]Bryant included the fragment Sands had written in his article on Sands in the Knickerbocker Magazine, 1 (1833), 58.

[7]Bryant, "Memoir," Knickerbocker, 1 (1833), 54.

[8]Verplanck erroneously claims in his "Memoir" that Sands died on Monday, 17 December 1832, but Sands's tombstone and other records indicate it was December 16.

[9]Fay, p. 206.

[10]Prime, Descent of Comfort Sands and of His Children (New York: n.p., 1892), pp. 10n. 27.

54"Tales of Glauber Spa," *Athenaeum* (London), 20 July 1833, p. 472; "Tales of Glauber Spa," *Literary Gazette*, 17 (1833), 549.

55"Tales of Glauber Spa," *NYM*, 10 (10 November 1832), 151.

56"Sands," *AQR*, 15 (1834), 423.

57Letter, RCS to GCV, 15 February 1832, MWHC.

58"Literary Notices," *Knickerbocker*, 3 (1834), 175.

59Bryant, "Memoir," *Knickerbocker*, 1 (1833), 53 and "Literary Notices," *Knickerbocker*, 3 (1834), 175.

60"Sands," *AQR*, p. 422.

61"Writings," *AMM*, 3 (1834), 7.

62"Literary Notices," *Knickerbocker*, 3 (1834), 178.

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1Edward H. Hall, *The Epic of New York City* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1966), pp. 239-40.

2"Hoboken," *NYM*, 10 (7 July 1832), n.p.

3"Hoboken," *NYM*, n.p.

4William P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1892), pp. 69-70.

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8Pray, p. 206.

9*Prime, Descent of Comfort Sands and of His Children* (New York: n.p., 1892), pp. 10n. 27.

[11]From an unidentified clipping found in the front of the Michigan State University Library's copy of Sands's Writings.

[12]"Obituary," New York Commercial Advertiser, 17 December 1832.

[13]Letter, WCB to GCV, 24 December 1832, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[14]Letter, WCB to GCV, 11 January 1833, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[15]Letter, WCB to GCV, 25 January 1833, Berg Collection, NYPL.

[16]Letter, WCB to GCV, 10 September 1833, Berg Collection, NYPL.

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[18]"The Literary Reputation and Remains of Robert C. Sands," Knickerbocker Magazine 3 (1834), 161.

[19]"Writings of Robert C. Sands," AMM, 3 (1834), 2.

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[22]See Jane M. Tiquin, "The Life and Works of Robert Charles Sands" (unpublished master's thesis, Columbia University, 1936).

[23]"Sands," AQR, 15 (1834), 401-02, 418.

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313a

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"Evening Hymn"
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"Ode on the Invasion of Spain by the Moors, from the Spanish"
"Hymn to Peace"
"Sunset"

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"Introductory Address"
"Petition of the Carrier"
"Essay on Female Talent"
"On the Contemplation of the Beauties of Nature"
"Essay on the Origin, Progress and Perfection of Romantic Fiction"

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"No. XVIII" (Aug. 27), narrative of Conloffe, concluded
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"No. XXIV" (Sept. 17), on Chaldean manuscripts and the Babylonian people
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"No. XXVI" (Sept. 24), with James Eastburn, poetry from correspondents
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"No. XXIX" (June 19), on the origin of the Indians, concluded
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PROSE

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*"Monody, To the Memory of the Rev. J. W. Eastburn," II, 336-39.
*"Parting," II, 344-46.
*"Prologue to Waldimar, A Tragedy," II, 363-65.
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*"Sleep," II, 340-43.
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