

kans, Turkey and Persia, became a dandy who frequented the court and whose brilliant sarcasm was much appreciated by the boulevardiers. He was intoxicated by the gorgeous society of the Second Empire which he depicted in such a way that it is only with his help that we can visualize these times. He never signed his sketches. Baudelaire was only allowed to describe him as C. G. in his essay, and Guys never forgave Thackeray for once having published an enthusiastic article about him for the whole world to read. Living in a set consisting solely of great artists, he regarded himself as an amateur. But he was more; he was a perfect gentleman. At the outbreak of the Crimean War the publishers of the "Illustrated London News" had a brilliant idea and sent out Guys as a war correspondent. He attacked his task with enthusiasm. Fearless and unafraid, as he had been at the barricades in Paris in 1848, he was always to be found at the very front, sketching in the midst of the horrors of the battlefield. Every evening a dozen sketches were despatched by courier to London. The superhuman adventure of Balaclava, the swamps of the Dobruja, and Sebastopol were all the subjects of his sketches, and these reports caused a sensa-

Auf dem Rückmarsch (Krim)



On the return march (Crimea)

tion. After the conclusion of peace he visited the East once more, and then returned to Paris. In 1870 he was too old to be a soldier or a reporter. A fresh era dawned, and the brilliant fairyland which had evoked his enthusiasm for years when at the height of his powers was gone. The last stage began. Poor and alone, but still thirsting for life, he frequented the most wretched drinking dens and descended to the abyss. At the age of eighty-three, when he spent his time wandering day and night in all parts of Paris, he was run over in 1885 by a fiacre in the rue du Hâvre. It was a carnival night, and it was in the midst of the carnival that both his legs were crushed. He lived seven years longer, a lonely man in a hospital bed, with hardly any visitors, but sketching until the last moment.

His life is wrapped in mystery. Nothing is known of his childhood, his upbringing and many years and changes in his existence. Nothing is known of how he came to take up sketching. He had no teacher—but he had talent. He was a chronicler who wielded the aquarellist's brush as others do the pen. He was a man with a great knowledge of horses, a tireless traveller and an indefatigable observer. His work is more than a documentary report—it is a great work of art.

Translated by W. L. Campbell

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G U Y S