

## AMERICA'S GREAT ART COLLECTOR

William Thompson Walters, Known Everywhere for His Devotion to Art,  
Dies in Baltimore.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 22.—William T. Walters, the well-known art collector and capitalist, died at 10:15 o'clock this morning.

William Thompson Walters, in whom American art lovers had a distinctive expression, was born on the Juanita River, Pennsylvania, May 23, 1820. He was of Scotch-Irish ancestry. His father, a banker, sent him to Philadelphia to be educated as a civil engineer. A large smelting establishment of Lycoming County, Penn., was placed in his charge, and he supervised the production of the first iron made in America from mineral coal.

He went to Baltimore in 1841 to engage in business as a commission merchant. Six years later he organized the business of W. T. Walters & Co., as wine merchants, and gained an elevated position. He was elected President of the first line of steamers between Baltimore and Savannah, and became a Director in every line from Baltimore to the South. After the war of secession he aided in the reorganization of the Southern steamship lines, became a Director of the Northern Central Railway, and was prominent in every great Southern company organized for transportation of freight and travel.

In 1861 he lived in Europe, taking an interest in all forms of art and becoming acquainted with the most celebrated artists of the French imperial epoch. He had taste, and was unaffected by the classicism which kept the greater number of European collectors in indifference to new expressions in painting and sculpture. In 1865 he had already founded his admirable collection of art works. It had then only to be developed. There were few errors to be corrected, and there could not be a better judge of these at any time than he soon became.

He was appointed Art Commissioner from the United States to the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867, to that of 1878, and to the Vienna one of 1873. He was a prominent Trustee of the Corcoran Art Gallery, in Washington, and the Chairman of its Purchasing Committee; a Trustee of the Peabody Institute, and the Chairman of its Committee on Art. He was trustee of the estate of the sculptor William H. Rinehart, for whose art education he had spent money and used special influence.

Mr. Walters's gallery of paintings, which is a curiosity of the United States to all educated foreign visitors, has been described by a French critic as "the most complete gallery of French pictures in the world, with a single exception."

His collection of bronzes by Barye is unrivaled; his collection of Oriental porcelains and ceramics, numbering 3,000 or more pieces of exquisite beauty, is marvelous; his other art objects are a magnificent museum.

He opened his house to the public every year for an admission fee, which was devoted to the Poor Association of Baltimore. He gave to the city several bronzes, which ornament the four public squares that adjoin the Washington Monument. One is a lion made by Barye in 1847 for the Tuileries; others are groups of "War," "Peace," "Strength" and "Order." He gave also a reproduction in bronze by Barbedienne of "Military Courage," the sculptor of which was Paul Dubois, for the Lamoricière Monument at Nantes. He gave also a reproduction in bronze of the statue of Chief Justice Taney, the sculptor of which was Rinehart, for Annapolis, Md.

He was interested in Percheron horses, and imported eighteen of them in 1866, that their stock in the United States might be naturalized. He published, with etchings, "The Percheron Horse," from the French of Charles du Hays, in New-York in 1886; "Antoine Louis Barye, from the French of Various Critics," in 1885, and "Notes Upon Certain Masters of the Nineteenth Century," in 1886. His judgment was authoritative on all questions of art; and so it was one day announced that he had paid a fabulous price for a peachblow vase which the critics had adversely noticed. He had not paid the fabulous price, however; for the critics were in the right, and his knowledge was accurate.