

Sir James Thornhill.

Some — years after the destruction of St. Paul's Cathedral by the great fire of 1666, the citizens of London who had ~~they~~ determined to replace the old venerable building with a new structure, succeeded at last in carrying out this plan. Nearly all the artists of fame at that time, were engaged in the work. Sir James Thornhill whose name as a painter then stood foremost among them, was employed in decorating the interior of the dome. One day while he was engaged in his work, he thought it advisable ~~for him~~ to get a distant view of his painting. So having left for a while his work, though still gazing at it, he retreated along the scaffolding. With his eyes still intent upon the painting, he now reached the very edge of the scaffolding, apparently unconscious of the imminent danger of falling over & being dashed to pieces on the pavement below. Had he ~~taken~~ ^{moved} one step further, ^{back} he would certainly ^{have} been ~~lost~~ ^{lost} forever. But ~~as~~ ere he took that fatal step, his servant who had observed this for some time, now determined to save his life at the expense of the painting ~~of~~ which he took so much pains. Well aware that a sudden warning at the top of his voice, might cause his master to start back & thereby only precipitate the dreaded ~~accident~~ consequence, this servant took a pot of paint near him & threw it at the half-finished painting. The beautiful picture was miserably blurred by the dark spots of the paint, beyond any hope of remedy. Flushed with exasperation, the master rushed forward to seize his servant who had destroyed before his presence ~~his~~ ^{his} long the object of his constant care. But when he learned, to his great surprise, it was only ~~for~~ his servant that he owed his life, he found himself bound to express his thanks towards

