INFLUENCE
ON
ENGLISH LITERATURE
OF THE
"EDINBURGH REVIEW"

"The Influence on English Literature of the 'Edinburgh Review' under Francis Jeffrey."

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A Thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in the Department of Graduate Studies, McGill University.

C O N T E N T S

Chapter 1.

The Role in General of Magazines and Reviews. - A Contrast with Particular Reference to the Older Magazines and Reviews.

Before a proper comparison can be made of the work, the intentions, the methods of the older magazines and reviews, it will be necessary to return to the foundation in 1709 and 1711 of the "Tatler" and "Spectator" papers. Even before that time we know that small newspapers of a kind had existed, but in 1709 the idea occurred to Richard Steele of publishing a paper which should contain not only the political news but also the gossip of the clubs and coffee-houses, with some light essays on the life and manners of the age.

The success of this new combination of news, gossip and essay was instantaneous. Not a club or coffee house in London could afford to be without it and over its pages began the first general interest in English life as expressed in literature. Eventually, however, the "Tatler" was discontinued but the same genius fostered a new publication

which appeared for the first time in March, 1711, the "Spectator". In the new periodical politics and news as such were ignored. It was to be a literary magazine.

In the small newspapers published in the century before the ap earance of the "Tatler" and "Spectator" papers the modern reader looks in vain for formal literary criticism. This does not mean that there was no literary criticism, but although"criticism had become a common ingredient of the social periodical"[1], yet there is manifestly little or no effort made to separate comment on writers from criticism of morals. Indeed, as Dr. Graham in his excellent account of the English Literary Periodicals comments, by 1709, "no periodical criticism of lasting value had appeared."[2]

One possible explanation for this fact might be the comparative scarcity of both books and readers in the seventeenth century. Therefore is it not possible that editors of periodicals (such as they were) did not feel any responsibility in the matter of guiding readers by supplying comments or taking sides in discussions based on the comparatively few books of the time? Nevertheless the roots of the"magazine" may be said to rest in the

(1) "The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals", Walter Graham, Oxford University Press, 1926.P.59
(2) Ibid P. 59

periodicals of the century immediately preceding the "Tatler" and the "Spectator".

Needless to say, in imitation of the "Tatler" and "Spectator" papers, both of which were widely read, countless periodicals sprang up. Yet within fifty years the periodical essay as developed so highly by Steele began to show decided symptoms of decay due probably to the fact that this kind of literary work ceased to attract the same class of intellect as it had in the earlier years of the eighteenth century. The reason for this was the birth of the novel which now drew to itself the more imaginative talent hitherto using the periodical essay as a medium for re-telling dreams, for allegories, short stories and character sketches.

This evolution resulting in the novel was harmful in the extreme to the popularity of the small literary periodicals modelled on the plan of the "Tatler" and "Spectator". These publications with the spread of education might have expected an increased demand, but they could not attract readers of such novels as "Robinson Crusoe", "Pamela" or "Joseph Andrews". These novels had all appeared by

1742 and may be considered with "Tom Jones" (1749) as the culmination of an era of creative activity in this new direction.

The appearance of the English novel almost killed periodical literature in England. Indeed, but for a rather unusual change of fashion in one matter during the second quarter of the eighteenth century any further development in English periodical literature might have been long postponed. This was the gradual disappearance of the old custom of patronage.

In this connection, Goldsmith in 1759 complained how, "when the great Somers was at the helm, patronage was fashionable among our nobility," but now "Since the days of a certain prime minister of inglorious memory, the learned have kept pretty much at a distance. A jockey, or a laced player, supplies the place of the scholar, poet or the man of virtue."(1)

It is certain that Goldsmith was referring to Robert Walpole, who was prime-minister from 1721-1742, and of whom it was said (and this is quite typical of the age in which he lived) that he always opened the

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(1) "The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith". Prof. Masson. Macmillan and Co.Ltd. P. 435.

letters from his game-keeper first, however important his other correspondence might be.

As a result of this change in the attitude of the 'nobility' to letters, aspiring authors were forced into changing their attitude to their vocation. Was it not natural, therefore, that a closer relationship should be formed between writer and publisher?

Is it not fair to assume that a poor author and a crafty publisher might see certain definite advantages in periodical publication of the work of the author? Is it not fair to assume that a publisher would see certain advantages in a quick turn-over of prose or poetry rather than the publication of an author's work at his own stride?

When Robert Walpole was at his height as a financier in 1731, the first magazine, "The Gentleman's Magazine" was produced in England by a printer, Edward Cave. This combined in its pages some of the features of a newspaper with those of the social essays, consisting mainly of translations from classical and foreign literature; but it made no attempt to guide opinion in a definite direction, literary or political.

"The Gentleman's Magazine or Monthly Intelligencer" was, according to a footnote on the front page of the first number, "collected chiefly from the publick Papers by Sylvanus Urban". The magazine certainly was intended to appeal to every kind or class of reader and in its seven sections we have some indication of the scheme of the projector. In the universality of its appeal probably lay the reason for its great success, and not to be forgotten is the fact that just at this time, a new and wider principle of education had vastly increased the number of readers in England who turned naturally for entertainment to the pages of the "Gentleman's".

The first section of the new magazine, "An impartial view of the various Weekly Essays, Controversial, Humorous, and Political, Religious, Moral and Satirical," shows that the editor felt that he might attract a scholarly type of reader, - interested in a digest of the contemporary periodical literature.

Section two, "Selected Pieces of Poetry" was probably included not only to provide leisure reading, but to give the publisher an opportunity to test the

readers' reaction to a man's works. Thus if the reaction was favourable, an opportunity later to publish the collected works of a man might indeed be a profitable task.

The remaining five sections, III - "A Concise Relation of the most remarkable Transactions and Events, Domestic and Foreign", lV - "Deaths, Births, Marriages, Promotions and Casualties", - V - "The Price of Goods and Stocks, Bill of Mortality, Bankrupts Declared," - VI. - "A Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets Published", VII - Observations in Gardening and a List of Fairs" show how the editor hoped in one periodical to have everything that every reader, young or old, rich or poor, in the town or in the country, might want.

The quick success of the new magazine may be judged from a remark made by Johnson to Boswell concerning his coming to London in 1737, that, "when he first saw St. John's Gate, the place where that deservedly popular miscellany was originally printed, he beheld it with reverence."(1)

In the pages of the"Gentleman's Magazine" many a writer as Johnson did,found a place in which to publish his work. Cave certainly encouraged young writers and

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(1) "Boswell's Life of Johnson"; edited by George Birkbeck Hill, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1887. Vol.1. p.111.

Johnson has recorded in his "Life of Cave", how, "he sometimes offered subjects for poems, and proposed prizes for the best performers."(1) This we must believe provided considerable stimulation to the countless young authors, who otherwise, because the custom of patronage had vanished, would have been unable to keep body and soul together by their writing.

In our consideration of literary conditions in England in the half century before the appearance of "Tom Jones" (1749) it would seem that the age was distinctly creative. Thus shortly after the beginning of the century, we have the "Tatler" and "Spectator" papers, surely an evidence of a creative rather than a critical era in literature! Again the evolution and development of the novel into the form which it has preserved until today, is another evidence of a creative spirit!

As one might expect, this age, preeminently a creative period, was followed by an extremely critical epoch, which brought into the field a new type of periodical designed no longer with a view to entertaining, but rather of guiding the reader through the maze of novels now pouring in quick succession from the press. Some idea

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(1) "The Works of Samuel Johnson, D.D." 1816. Vol.XII. p.206.

of the number of authors can be gained from the name which Johnson gave the "present age", (1753), "The Age of Authors". "For", continued Johnson, "perhaps there never was a time in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment were posting with ardour so general to the press."(1)

Sharp publishers soon saw the possibility of supporting a "review" -- a publication offering from time to time anonymous "critiques" based on the latest books. The tragedy was that such "reviews" were prejudiced, interested more in filling the publisher's pocket, if a friend of the editor, or in killing the sale of a rival's publication, than in rendering a sound judgment for the benefit of the reader or the author whose work was under review.

Petty spite seems to have played a great part in the foundation of these new critical reviews. Thus when the oldest, the "Monthly Review", (1749) appeared to neglect the work of the Scotch, an "Edinburgh Review" was projected in 1755, "to supply the rising authors of North Britain with the stimulus of sympathetic criticism."(2) It was felt that though Scotland was at the time stirring with

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(1) "Samuel Johnson: Writer." From "The Adventurer" No.115. P. 84.

(2) Adam Smith: Francis W. Hirst. Macmillan Co.Ltd.London, 1904. P.109.

an important literary movement, the productions of the Scotch press were ignored by the English literary periodicals.

And the petty spirit of the editors of this precursor of the "Edinburgh Review" of 1802 is exemplified by their expressed intention to limit their reviews to those of books published in Scotland only. No wonder only two numbers appeared.

Here, a contrast cannot be avoided between the spirit behind the establishment of the magazine, produced to entertain, to provide leisure reading, surely a legitimate ambition, and that behind the review, first produced as a scheme to sell books, in an age when readers were being offered an ever-increasing number of them. These reviews, with roots buried deep in a sorry mess of petty jealousies and trifling differences, furnished little of any value to the world. Indeed the early "review" tradition clouded the good work of the nineteenth century name-sakes for many years.

Between the review and the magazine, therefore, there was considerable difference, and although there has always been a tendency on the part of each to borrow

occasionally the special characteristics of the other, it has never been wholly left out of sight. The review made it its special business to discuss works of literature, art and science, and in the discussion of these to consider national policy or any other matters which might occupy the public's attention, to enlighten its readers upon these subjects, awarding praise or censure to authors or statesmen.

The magazine, on the other hand, was a miscellany. To its pages authors, poets, scholars might send original contributions. It admitted correspondence from the outside world - even welcomed it, and aimed at the entertainment of its readers rather than at the advocacy of views. An aspiring author, in this way, might and did obtain a hearing without undergoing the risk and expense of publishing a book or pamphlet.

In concluding this chapter these two types of periodicals might be considered from the reader's point of view in more general terms. To the average man the review is comparable to a guide while the magazine may be compared to a companion. These roles are distinct.

Along life's highway man, from time to time, feels the need of a guiding post. At times the sign is scorned; at times the advice, the guidance is jeered at. But nevertheless unmoved the sign-posts stand directing in no uncertain terms the passers-by. Such is the review.

Similarly the wayfarer insists on having by his side a friendly companion, not a guide, not an interpretive counsellor but someone to respond to his moods - to create in him happiness - to make him forget the perils, the pitfalls indicated from time to time by the sign posts. Such is the particular work of the magazine.

Truly, today the distinctive characteristicshave been lost. The magazine has tackled reviewing, the review has tried the work of the magazine. Whether this overlapping is to be regretted or rejoiced at no one can say, but one deduction can certainly be made that this condition undoubtedly indicates the desire of editors of both reviews and magazines to supply their many subscribers with not only some guidance but also with a fair share of entertainment.

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Chapter 11.

The State of Reviewing before the Foundation of the "Edinburgh Review."

At the close of the eighteenth century the periodical review as we understand it cannot be said to have attained a position of any importance in literature. Established to guide readers of books such reviews as did exist were far from fulfilling their purpose.

Nevertheless, those living in England in the last decade of the eighteenth century might recall several publications which had sprung to notice, only to be forgotten when the emergency which had brought them forth had been overcome; or the genius which had mothered them had passed away. Only three of these publications witnessed the meeting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and although they were training ground for more than one man whose name was to bear weight and command respect in the next century, by the general public, and rightly so, they were denied any position of authority.

Of these three periodicals, the oldest, "The Gentleman's

Monthly Magazine", opened its columns freely to original contributions, but devoted only a little space to the reviewing of books. Produced to entertain this publication endured until 1868, but never did it possess any respect based on its literary criticism.

The other two periodicals were reviews, published to guide readers in literary judgments rather than to entertain them. The "Monthly Review" established in 1749 lasted until 1845, while its younger imitator, the "Critical Review" begun in 1756, was maintained only until 1817. But in both cases dotage had preceded death by many years.

Of course between the middle of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, scores of reviews had been started in imitation of these two mentioned, only to go quickly down to the grave, unmourned and in many cases almost unknown.

Neither of these organs made any attempt to give a disinterested review of a book and for this reason, always being one-sided, lavishly so, but little respect was accorded them. Thus the "Monthly" which began first and

lasted longest was always Whiggish in tendency and was the mouth-piece of the Low Church party in England. On the other hand, the Tories and the pillars of the High Church looked to the "Critical" as the upholder of their rights. But both these reviews, like the innumerable short-lived and ill-starred publications of the time, were very feeble and flaccid.

The reason for this is probably found in the fact that since the writers were unpaid, those who did submit articles were the very lowest type of hack-worker interested either in seeing his reviews in print or in catching the eye of author or public for some ulterior object. Dissatisfaction with these reviews had been felt as early as 1774, when Goldsmith wrote, "We have two literary reviews in London, with critical reviews and magazines without number." But the critic adds in the next sentence, "The compilers of these resemble the Commoners of Rome: they are all for levelling property, not by increasing their own, but by diminishing that of others."(1)

The reviews in these organs were tedious and often even inane - entirely lacking in vigour and decidedly biased because of the financial backing of booksellers.

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(1) "A History of English Poetry": W.J.Courthope, Macmillan and Co.Ltd. 1910. Vol. VI. p.90.

Thus, the articles on current publications are heavily-padded "puffs" or vicious "slatings".

In the beginning, what might be termed "literary expediency" generally controlled the reviewer. Thus an unmerited "slating" might be attributed to the interests of the critic's backer being endangered by the book supposed to be under review.

"But", says Prof. Courthope in his "History of English Poetry", "as opinions became heated at the outbreak of the French Revolution, the political atmosphere gradually penetrated the minds of the Reviewers, and long-suppressed partisanship began to find expression in their literary judgments."(1) Thus "political expediency" was added to"literary", and, in addition, before long, the influence of the church was apparent in the columns of the rival reviews.

Indeed, five years after the beginning of the nineteenth century, Dr. Nathan Drake, an industrious essayist, concluded that it would have been fortunate, "for the interests of general literature had the swarm of imitators strictly confinded themselves to the plan of the Spectator, to a laudable attempt at reforming the morals and manners of

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(1) A History of English Poetry: W.J.Courthope, Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 1910. Vol.Vl. P. 90.

the age."[1] While we may not agree with Drake, his statement certainly indicates that at the time, not a sign existed that would lead an observer to believe a new review then very recently established would have the career that it did.

As one turns over the pages of the "Critical" and the "Monthly", and notes the contemptible humour, the acrid irony, the accumulated invective with which so-called literary judgments were promulgated, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the critic's pen was too often dipped in wormwood. The intention would almost seem to be to produce a smart article, to titillate a special reading public who must be pleased rather than to pass a sound literary judgment. Johnson's "Rambler" advice seems to have been ignored and reviewers forgot "The duty of criticism is neither to depreciate nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out to the light of reason, whatever it may discover."[2]

Nevertheless, lest a distorted view of criticism of the time be here presented, it must be stated that there were then a few men whose opinions had gained respect. Such were Johnson, Goldsmith and Pope. But

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(1) Essays, Biographical, Critical and Historical, Illustrative of the Tatler, Spectator and Guardian. Nathan Drake. C. Whittingham. 1805. Vol.111. p. 390.

(2) "British Essayists". Samuel Johnson. L.T.Berguer. Vol. XX. p.205. "Rambler", Feb.5,1751.No.93

it is noticeable that these men before being recognized as critics had carved out for themselves careers in other branches of literature.

The reviewers who were not known as poets or dramatists were nothing better than "hack writers" producing articles alleged to be criticisms of works of art or of science, but in reality prejudiced one-sided attempts to promote sectional or party objects, determined by the bookseller who controlled the review.

Yet, in the last decade particularly we can observe indications of the rise of a class of men ideally fitted for work as critics, as distinct from work in any other department of literature; and this in an age of great turmoil due to the French Revolution. These men all young and confident had made it their business to discuss works of literature, art and science, to consider national policy and public events, and in an age which saw the spread of education and the birth of a new school of political economy, it was only natural that they should feel a general upheaval within themselves, a realization that momentous changes were taking place, of which they might be observers or in which they might be actors.

Thus, the closing years of the eighteenth century mark the end of the old periodical review, fettered and handicapped by outside powers and unable, if willing, to pronounce a sound judgment on a contemporary work of art.

Chapter 111

The Conception of a new Review, "The Edinburgh".

The opening years of the nineteenth century found all England inflamed by the first French Revolution. Recent events on the Continent were the subjects of discussion by Englishmen who up until that time had not taken any great interest in continental affairs. Almost immediately in literature a distinct change was perceptible.

This was especially so in the city of Edinburgh, at that time a provincial centre of intellectual activity having considerable difficulty in maintaining itself against metropolitan attractions or distractions in age of road-building and improved means of travel and communication which tended to fill the very large cities and empty the smaller ones. At that time, too, the University of Edinburgh was singularly blessed in having a brilliant and famous group of professors; and this in a period when Oxford and Cambridge did not enjoy the reputation which was to be theirs later.

A new intellectual era was beginning in Edinburgh as the nineteenth century opened. In the decade following the death of Principal Robertson in 1793, three celebrated historians had passed away. The renowned historian of Rome, Adam Ferguson, had been replaced by Dugald Stewart as Professor of Moral Philosophy, and the last of a trio of famous historians passed away in the last year of the century in Dr. Henry. Definitely marking the commencement of a new school of philosophy in 1801, Dugald Stewart began his course of lectures on political economy. "Hitherto all public favour had been on the side of the Tories, and independence of thought was a sure way to incur discouragement from the Bench, in the church, and from every government functionary."(1) To these lectures on political economy we may attribute the birth of the spirit which was behind the establishment of the new review.

Either teaching, or studying in the university were a group of young men dissatisfied with many things in the capital of Scotland, not the least of which was the entire absence there of any critical journal. In England, as has been stated, there existed two reviews, the "Monthly" and the "Critical", filled with spurious criticism, and

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(1) The Wits and Beaux of Society". Grace and Philip Wharton. 2nd Edition. James Hogg and Sons. p.530.

notoriously kept alive by publishers to promote the sale of their own books, but totally abstaining from the discussion of matters not purely literary. One can imagine how, thrown together by fate, a group of young men might consider the state of affairs, and if conditions were in the least way suitable, might hazard an attempt to express themselves through the medium of a review.

Just such a set did exist composed of men of varying talents and ages, with back-grounds considerably different. It is not supposed that these young men had any idea of their own future importance, but it is certain that the wish to express themselves was burning within them.

In this set could be found men as different as Sydney Smith, the witty parson, and Thomas Brown who, in later life, became eminent as the vigorous representative of the Scotch metaphysical school and the colleague of Dugald Stewart in the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh. Barristers such as Francis Jeffrey, Henry Brougham and Francis Horner, found companionship in young physicians such as John Allen and John Thomson, afterwards Professor of Pathology in Edinburgh.

Truly, this was a mixed if not motley set. Yet a common characteristic is distinguishable in each - the desire to occupy a position of eminence based on a record not of wealth amassed nor power accumulated but on service accomplished.

From this set came the "Edinburgh Review". Various accounts have been written describing the foundation of this new organ, and although the facts mentioned in these are, in the main, similar, slight differences do exist. In some cases the accounts were given almost half a century after the fact, so that allowances must be made for the "evident fiction of a reminiscent age."(1)

Sydney Smith, who was in Edinburgh at the turn of the century as a tutor, forced to stay in that "energetic and infragrant city"(2), by the fortunes of politics, has left an account of how "in that garret of the earth - that knuckle-end of England - that land of Calvin, oak-cakes and sulphur,"(3) the Edinburgh Review" was established. Smith, later in life, recalled how "One day we happened to meet in eighth or ninth story or flat in Buccleuch Place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed

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(1) "Literary Studies": Walter Bagehot. Longman and Co.Vol.1.P.6

(2) "The Maclise Portrait Gallery". William Bates, Chatto and Windus. 1883. P.420.

(3) Ibid. P.420

that we should set up a review; this was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed editor and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the Edinburgh Review."(1)

Lord Brougham, however, found fault with this account, and called it "somewhat inaccurate and even fanciful". "Nothing can be more imaginary", says Brougham, "for first there never was a house eight or nine stories high in Buccleuch Place, or in any of that portion of the new town of Edinburgh. No house at that time exceeded three stories. In the second place Smith never was appointed editor. He read over the articles, and so far may be said to have edited the first number - but regularly constituted editor, he never was."(2) It is noticeable, however, that Brougham gives Smith - an Englishman - credit for having first suggested the need for such a Review as the Edinburgh. He says, "I can never forget Buccleuch Place, for it was there one stormy night in March 1802, that Sydney Smith first announced to me his idea of establishing a critical periodical, or review of works of literature and science. I believe he had already mentioned this to Jeffrey and

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(1) "Life of Francis Jeffrey". Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black, 1874. p.120.
(2) "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Lord Brougham", written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol.1. p.245.

and Horner; but on that night the project was for the first time seriously discussed by Smith, Jeffrey and me." (1)

Lord Jeffrey in 1846, almost forty-five years after the event, gave to Dr. Robert Chambers the following account of what took place. " I cannot say exactly where the project of the Edinburgh Review was first talked of among the projectors. But the first serious consultations about - and which led to our application to a publisher - were held in a small house where I then lived in Buccleuch Place." (2)

"The merit of first having suggested the foundation is undoubtedly due to Sydney Smith. He himself claimed it in the preceding words, and Jeffrey himself admitted it by dedicating his collection of "Contributions to the Edinburgh Review", first published in 1843, to Sydney Smith as "The Original Projector of the Edinburgh Review." And Lord Cockburn, who has left us a life of Jeffrey, records how "No other person has ever come forward to dispute the fact." (3)

Thus we have, early in 1802, a movement afoot to establish a review in Edinburgh, a city without such a publication. Of course it is almost certain that even

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(1) "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Lord Brougham", written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol. 1. P. 251

(2) Chambers Cyclopaedia of English Literature. Vol. 11. P, 544 W.R. Chambers, Ltd. Edinburgh.

(3) "Life of Francis Jeffrey". Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black, 1874. p. 121.

the most optimistic of the group who were most closely acquainted with the foundation, did not foresee the brilliant future of the periodical "to be published quarterly". Indeed, the British Isles were strewn with wrecks of reviews founded to advance party and sectional objects, only to come to grief within a short time of launching.

As to the expected duration of the publication and its anticipated success, we have a letter written by Jeffrey to a very dear friend of his in May,1802, after the first number had been postponed: "Our review has been postponed till September, and I am afraid will not go on with much spirit even then. Perhaps we have omitted the tide that was in our favour. We are bound for a year to the book-sellers and shall drag through that, I suppose, for our own indemnification; but I foresee the likelihood of our being all scattered before another year shall be over, and, of course, the impossibility of going on, on the footing upon which we have begun. "(1)

Another cause for Jeffrey's apprehensions may have been his knowledge of his colleagues lack of experience in a task of this kind. In addition, although he had "already

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(1 "Life of Francis Jeffrey": Lord Cockburn. Adams and Charles Black, 1874. P.419. Letter to Mr. Robert Morehead, Edinburgh, 24th May, 1802.

got several papers published in the existing journals,"[1] he realized that none of the others contemplated letters although naturally desirous of distinction in their respective callings.

Of course, Jeffrey was always very pessimistic, but it is to be remembered that at this time he was in his thirtieth year, had spent eight years at the bar, had just taken unto himself a wife, and in the preceding year had made in his professional practice less than £100. Is it any wonder that the tone of his letter is pessimistic?

Concerning the youth of the founders of the "Edinburgh", much has been written and the impression has been conveyed that, in the beginning, this creation was nothing better than a school-boy's dream. This is erroneous. The men were not old, it is granted, but even the youngest had reached an age of discretion.

In 1802, of the principals, Smith was thirty-one; Jeffrey thirty; Horner twenty-four; Brougham twenty-three, and if the ages of Allen who was thirty-two and Brown who was twenty-four are considered, the average age of the early reviewers will be discovered to be twenty-eight. This is an ideal time in a man's career for such a venture; and, in addition, ample leisure, perchance undesirable, enabled these young men to

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(1) "Life of Francis Jeffrey"; Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black, 1874. p.123.

devote themselves to the new review.

The name chosen for the contemplated organ was not new. As early as 1755 there had been established in the capital of Scotland, an "Edinburgh Review", to appear semi-annually, which had survived only for a single year, its second number being also its last. Since that time then there had been no critical journal in Scotland whatsoever. The editors of the earlier review intended to give some account of all books published in Scotland during the previous half-year, and of the most remarkable publications in England and elsewhere, during the same period; but the liberal tone of its anonymous pages, in matters of philosophy, and in matters considered to trench on theology, proved distasteful to the narrow orthodoxy of its day. Yet, in its columns, many men of later eminence first made their appearance in print, and very oddly, two of them, Robertson, afterwards Principal Robertson, and Adam Smith, had even lived until the last decade of the eighteenth century. Indeed the founders of the "Edinburgh Review" of 1802 were, it is certain, aware of the earlier "Edinburgh" and not unacquainted with the ability of its contributors . Indeed, it is not unlikely that Jeffrey's qualms referred to earlier, may have been due

to the knowledge of the failure of the "Edinburgh Review" of 1755.

Frances Jeffrey has been described as a born critic. Certainly he had trained himself in that line of literature, from his earliest days, for not only had he been accustomed at the early age of fifteen or sixteen to write essays on various subjects, but he had gone further and practised whilst still a boy, his critical faculties on his own productions. Lord Cockburn is the authority for this statement that "If the rest who first planned this work had been left to their own inexperience, they would probably have been at a loss how to proceed. But they plainly leant upon Jeffrey."(1) Yet, and there seems to be no reason for this, except it be on account of his age, or his calling, Smith, although not officially editor - there was no official editor of the first number edited the first number. This was probably a most informal process, if we are to believe the account given by Jeffrey, how "proofs of our own articles were read over and remarked upon, and attempts made also to sit in judgment on the few manuscripts which were then offered by strangers."(2)

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(1) "Life of Lord Jeffrey": Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black, 1874. P.123.

(2) "Chambers Cyclopaedia of English Literature": Vol.11.P.545

As would be expected, this soon proved too slow and tedious, and as Jeffrey told Robert Chambers "the office was pressed upon me."[1]

This, however, was after Sydney Smith had let his intentions become known, of returning to England, and after Francis Horner had made preparations for exchanging the Scottish for the English law. Jeffrey's fears for the review's success seem to have been well founded, for within nine months of the first number, two of the four principal contributors had quitted Edinburgh, and the burden of undivided responsibility had fallen upon his own shoulders. And, in addition, it is certain that Jeffrey was by no means certain of the amount of support which the remaining colleague, Henry Brougham, might give him or the "Edinburgh". It would appear that when the arrangements for the periodical had been originally discussed, Brougham had not been considered, except as a contributor, possibly because of petty jealousy among the projectors of the new review, and a fear that he might usurp power or authority because of his connection with the periodical, or use it to further his own progress". "A proposal that he should

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(1) Chambers Cyclopaedia of English Literature:" Vol.II. P. 545.

be invited to join the association was long resisted by Sydney Smith from a strong impression of Brougham's indiscretion and rashness. At last there was a vote in his favour, partly from the hope of his vigorous cooperation, and partly from dread of his enmity if he should be excluded. But he soon caused regrets and misgivings by his waywardness. In a letter dated the 9th of April, 1802, Jeffrey writes to Horner, respecting the new association.

"I proposed two or three books that I thought would suit him: he answered with a perfect good humour that he had changed his view of our plan a little, and rather thought now that he should decline to have any connection with it."

Nevertheless he soon again changed his mind and Horner in a letter dated the 1st of September, 1802, respecting the expected appearance of the first number says:

"Jeffrey has written three or four excellent papers, and Brougham' is now an efficient and zealous member of the party."(1)

Such was the lone colleague in Edinburgh, with whom Jeffrey was left to carry on the work, on which he himself

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(1) "Lives of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham," Lord Campbell, John Murray, 1869. P. 244-245

had so timidly entered. Is it no wonder that, later, Jeffrey should have erroneously written, "Brougham did not come in till after our third number and our assured success."(1)

At last, not without many misgivings, as is apparent, on the 10th of October, 1802, the first number of the "Edinburgh Review" appeared. The effect on the public mind of the first number has been frequently described as 'electrical'. In its 252 pages there are no fewer than twenty-nine articles, some of them running to only one, two or three pages, and forming, therefore, rather notices of books, than what are now considered formal reviews. Of these articles, nine were written by Sydney Smith, six by Jeffrey, five by Francis Horner, three by Brougham, and two each by Dr. John Thomson, Murray, and Hamilton. The number opened with an article by Jeffrey upon a book on the causes of the French Revolution, just published by Mounier, late president of the First National Assembly, in which the reviewer at once entered upon a discussion of events which had done more than anything else in the preceding years to decide the political bias of Englishmen. The views expressed were moderately liberal, at a time when men found

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(1) Selected Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier, edited by his son. Macmillan and Co. 1879. Letter from Lord Jeffrey to Napier, Sept.30,1843.P.433.

it almost impossible to be either moderate or liberal in treating of the French Revolution. Jeffrey's review of Southey's "Thalaba" in the same number was a strong protest against the doctrines and performances of a new "sect of poets," of which Southey was held to be one of the chief "champions and apostles". The first skirmish in what was to become a prolonged war with the " Lakers " had begun. Jeffrey seemed anxious to show that the stern motto of the Edinburgh "Iudex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur" (1) - had a real meaning.

If the founders of the "Edinburgh Review" were fortunate in the time chosen for the appearance of the new review, they were equally fortunate in the choice of their publisher, Mr. Constable, who was wise enough to know that in the "Edinburgh" he had a veritable gold mine. Yet even he seems at one time to have been doubtful of the permanent success of the work, a work, at that time, merely the recreation of its editors, and not undertaken for profit. A letter, (undated) from Sydney Smith to Constable seems to be a reply to a query about the review's future, and also makes it evident that the English divine, although only in Edinburgh for the

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(1) A motto was thought a matter of some importance, and Smith suggested part of a line from Vergil, "Tenui Musam meditamur avena", in the vernacular, "We cultivate the muse on a little oatmeal."

appearance of the first number, was yet alive to the correct method for making a success of the new periodical.

"Sir, you ask me for my opinion about the continuation of the Edinburgh Review. I have the greatest confidence in giving it to you, as I find everybody here (who is capable of forming an opinion upon the subject), unanimous in the idea of its success, and in the hope of its continuation. It is notorious that all the reviews are the organs either of party or of booksellers. I have no manner of doubt than an able, intrepid and independent review would be as useful to the public as it would be profitable to those who are engaged in it. If you will give £200. per annum to your editor, and ten guineas a sheet, you will soon have the best review in Europe. This town, I am convinced, is preferable to all others for such an undertaking, from the abundance of literary men it contains, and from the freedom which, at this distance, they can exercise towards the wits of the South. The gentlemen who first engaged in this review will find it too laborious for pleasure; as labour, I am sure they will not meddle with it for a less valuable offer."(1)

(1) Life of Lord Jeffrey". Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black. 1874. P. 129,130.

Foot note: But objections were made to this, and finally the sentence from Publius Syrus - "Index damnatur cum nocens absolvitur" - an author whum the junto confessed never to have read was adopted. "The Maclise Portrait Gallery".William Bates Chatto and Windus. 1883. P.420.

Smith's suggestion to Constable seems to have been made without the knowledge of his colleagues, and must have been made before the first contract with the publisher was finished for early in May 1803, Jeffrey wrote to Horner in London, "In consequence of a negotiation conducted by Smith during my absence, Constable and Longman have agreed to give £50 a number to the editor, and to pay £10. a sheet for all the contributions which the said editor shall think worth the money." (1)

If the"Edinburgh Review" by its contents attracted readers, by its remuneration it attracted contributors and, in this respect, the Edinburgh Review's prices mark a distinct advance in the character and abilities of its contributors. Of course, the projectors of the "Edinburgh Review" had never intended that the new periodical should be the outstanding success that it was: in their minds, it was to be nothing more than another review, in which it should be, "all gentlemen and no pay."

The review was to be kept absolutely independent of party, or bookseller, and the new conception of reviewing, as practised by the writers in the "Edinburgh", insisted that in no degree

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(1) Life of Lord Jeffrey. Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black. 1874. P. 421.

was a review to be an advertisement, or the reverse; but should be the unbiased critical opinion of a group of friends who gave the first three numbers, as Jeffrey told Robert Chambers, in 1846, to the publisher for taking the risk and defraying the charges.

Chapter IV.

Biographical Sketches of the Founders of, and Early Contributors to, the "Edinburgh Review".

This Chapter is included to enable the student of the "Edinburgh Review" to know something of the background of the young men who were responsible for the establishment of the "Edinburgh", and, if possible, explain the later work of these men by their early training.

Concerning some of these men, much has been written, but so far their work as reviewers has been neglected and in most cases they have been considered primarily as lawyers, clergymen or physicians. Therefore, a brief account will be given here of their early training especially as it throws light on their later work on the "Edinburgh". The other work of these critics will hardly be referred to, for it is beyond the limits of this study, and, in addition, satisfactory biographies and autobiographies have paid ample tribute to their careers.

The "Edinburgh" critics may be considered in two

groups. First, those who were originators as well as contributors to the new organ; second, those who wrote articles after the "Edinburgh" had become established. Cockburn, in discussing the founders of the new review and the early contributors has said, "the most important of these were Jeffrey, Smith, Brougham and Horner."(1) Brougham, in referring to the foundation of the "Edinburgh" has recorded in his autobiography, "I find that the writers in the early numbers were Sydney Smith, Jeffrey, Horner, Murray, Thomas Brown (Successor to Dugald Stewart). Hamilton (afterwards Professor of Oriental Languages at the East India College, Hertfordshire), John Thomson (afterwards Professor of Surgery in the University of Edinburgh) and myself."(2) From these accounts it is apparent that the four mentioned by Cockburn are almost in a group by themselves and as such will they be treated here. They were more than ordinary reviewers. They set the style for the second group of early contributors to the "Edinburgh".

In this second group are put the names of John Allen, Walter Scott, John Thomson, Thomas Thomson, Thomas Brown. These men have been referred to as early contributors, by

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(1) "Life of Francis Jeffrey". Lord Cockburn. Adam and Charles Black. Edinburgh, 1874. P.122.

(2) "The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham" written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol.1.P.182,183.

the various authorities such as Lord Brougham, but they were in no sense projectors of the "Edinburgh".

Francis Jeffrey (1773 - 1850)

Francis Jeffrey was born in Edinburgh on the 23rd of October, 1773, the son of George Jeffrey and Henrietta Boudoun. While he was still a boy the loss of his mother seems to have cast a long shadow over his life which was not removed until his marriage.

Francis learned his mere letters at home, until in October, 1781, (when at the age of eight) he was sent to the High School of Edinburgh where he continued for the next six years. In the beginning of the winter of 1787, he was sent to Glasgow College, in his fourteenth year.

He remained at Glasgow for two sessions, that is, from October 1787 to May 1788, and from October 1788 to May 1789. In his first session the classes were the Greek, taught by Professor John Young, and the Logic by Professor George Jardine. Both professors were admirable, and years later, when made rector, Jeffrey spoke of Jardine who was there as, "the most revered, the most justly valued,

of all my instructors, -- the individual of whom I must be allowed to say here, what I have never omitted to say in every other place, that it is to him, and his most judicious instructions, that I owe my taste for letters, and any little literary distinction I may since have been enabled to attain."(1)

Professor Jardine used to require his pupils to write an exercise, and then to make them give in written remarks on each other's work. To this custom may be traced, Jeffrey's first adventures in criticism. Certainly in this class, Jeffrey made his first semi-public criticism. In 1852, after Jeffrey's death, a fellow under-graduate of his, Rev.Dr. Haldane, then principal of the College of St.Mary's, St. Andrews, gave the critic's biographer, Lord Cockburn, the following very interesting information.

"My exercise (says the Principal) fell into the hands of Jeffrey, and sorely did I repent that I did not preserve the essay with his remarks upon it. For although they were unmercifully severe, they gave early promise of that critical acumen, which was afterwards fully developed in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review". In returning my

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(1) "Life of Francis Jeffrey. Lord Cockburn. . . Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1874. P. 9.

essay to me, the good Professor, willing to save my feelings, read some of the remarks at the beginning of the criticism, but the remainder he read in suppressed tone of voice, muttering something as if he thought it too severe."(1)

Concerning Jeffrey's literary efforts of the Glasgow days, Lord Cockburn has written: "Nearly the whole of his original prose writings are of a critical character."(2) And Jeffrey had gone to Glasgow at the age of fourteen! Probably no critic has, at an earlier period in his career, begun the practice of his calling. Jeffrey, too, we would believe, had ample opportunity to engage in informal criticism in the two years following his graduation from Glasgow -- years without any definite employment. "No period of his youth was passed more usefully than this; when he was left to his own thoughts and his own occupations. He adhered so steadily, in what he calls the 'Dear, retired, adored, little window' of his Lawnmarket garret, to his system of self-working, that, though leading a very cheerful and open-air life, the papers of his composition that remain, deducting articles

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(1) Ibid. P. 13.

(2) Ibid. P. 19.

of only a sheet or two, are about sixty in number."[1] "Besides various lighter pages, there are among these exercises, numerous translations and essays on subjects as different as "Happiness" and Physiognomy."

Towards the end of September, 1791, Jeffrey left Edinburgh for Oxford, where he continued until June, 1792. This, if we are to believe extracts from his correspondence, was a comparatively unhappy period of his existence -- disappointing, but certainly not wasted. "This indeed is implied in the fact, that during these nine months he wrote a great many papers, of which eighteen happen to have been preserved."[2]

Six months after his return from Oxford, Jeffrey entered the Speculative Society -- an organization instituted in 1764, and which had raised itself above all similar establishments in the country. This was the means by which Jeffrey became acquainted with the leading Scotch literary lights of his day. Records show that to the Society Jeffrey read five papers. "But it was the debates that he chiefly shone in."[3]

Approximately two years later, December 16th, 1794, he

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(1) Ibid. P. 20
(2) Ibid. P. 39
(3) Ibid. P. 53

was admitted to practise at the bar. However, financial success did not come quickly, for seven years later, when on the 1st of November, 1801, he married Catherine, one of the daughters of the Reverend Dr. Wilson, Professor of Church History at St. Andrews, he had written that he had never made more than £100. a year.

It was shortly after this that the youthful lawyer, along with a set of friends, launched the "Edinburgh Review" in the manner described in Chapter 111. Into the details of the establishment of that journal we must not enter now -- everything necessary has been said -- except to add that the men behind the journal were also all members of a club organized shortly after, in 1803, named the "Friday Club".

"There can be no question that Jeffrey worked in season and out for the Review, and did more than any other man to bring and keep it to the front of the best thought of the day. He possessed a calm confidence in himself and in the infallibility of his own literary and social judgments which sufficed to shield him from many an anxious hour."

"During the first seven years of his connection with the Review, Jeffrey contributed, on an average, no less than three or four articles to each number; and during the

entire seven-and-twenty years to which his editorship extended, he may be said to have written an article for it every five weeks."(1)

"Jeffrey's value as editor was incalculable. He had not only to arrange and revise each number after its parts were brought together, but before he got this length, he, like any other person in that situation, had much difficult and delicate work to perform. He had to discover, and to train, authors; to discern what truth and the public mind required; to suggest subjects; to reject, and, more offensive still, to improve contributions; to keep down absurdities; to infuse spirit; to excite the timid; to repress violence; to soothe jealousies; to quell mutinies, to watch times; and all this in the morning of the reviewing day before experience had taught editors conciliatory firmness, and contributors reasonable submission."

Jeffrey's was the outstanding personality behind the "Edinburgh" -- ever keeping within bounds and under control the immense forces with which he dealt. When one for a moment considers the many and great differences between the founders, their back-grounds, their callings and their training, and

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(1) "Life and Time of Sydney Smith." P.66. Stuart J. Reid. Sampson Low and Co. London, 1884.

(2) "Life of Francis Jeffrey" Lord Cockburn. P. 296. Adam & Charles Black. Edinburgh, 1874.

yet recalls that Jeffrey was ever able to handle them - surely one's appreciation of his ability must increase. Similarly, when personal ambitions - hatreds and views of not only founders but contributors, are to be considered, and how Jeffrey during a quarter of a century was able to mould them into a distinct and unified whole, one's appreciation for Jeffrey's skill must be increased.

During the long period of Jeffrey's editorship of the "Edinburgh", his reputation as a lawyer was growing steadily until June 1829, when he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. This honour was the occasion of his severing his formal connection with the "Edinburgh".

During the next twenty years of his life he worked at the same high pressure as he had during his early manhood, and successfully contested, in 1832, a seat in Parliament. He sat in the House, however, for only a short time, until in 1834, he accepted a judgeship in the Court of Sessions. This was a fitting termination to his long and honourable career at the bar, and he remained on the Bench until his death on January 26th, 1850, in his seventy-seventh year.

Henry Brougham (1778-1868)

Henry Brougham was born in Edinburgh, five years after the birth of Jeffrey, on the 19th of September, 1778. Like Jeffrey, he was taught his early letters by his father, and then proceeded to the High School of Edinburgh, where he continued from the Fall of 1785 to the Spring of 1791. Training at the University of Edinburgh, followed by study on the continent, handsomely fitted him for a legal career and he was admitted to the bar early in 1800.

It was shortly after this that Brougham became associated with Jeffrey and Smith, old friends of his, in the establishment of the "Edinburgh". Versatile, efficient, scintillating, he wrote some eighty articles in the first twenty numbers. When it is recalled how, in the same time, "Jeffrey wrote seventy-five articles, Smith twenty-three, Horner fourteen,"(1) some conception of Brougham's activity can be gathered. The work which he mastered, when in the fulness of his fame and strength, dazzled his contemporaries, and seemed to justify the bold paradox that the more busy a man is, the more leisure he possesses.

There seemed no bounds to his energy, and scarcely any

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(1) "The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham, written by himself." Harper and Brothers, New York, 1871. Vol.1. P. 185.

to the half-savage impetuosity of his spirit. Lord Holland once assured Brougham that he believed that if a new language was discovered in the morning, he would be able to talk it before night; and his rival, Lord Campbell, was accustomed to declare that if Harry Brougham was locked up in the Tower for a year without a single book, the twelve months would not roll past, ere he had written an encyclopaedia.

Concerning the speed and versatality of Brougham, Lord Campbell has, in his biography, the following anecdote, which Lord Cockburn told him, and for the truth of which Jeffrey's biographer would vouch. "Brougham, after he came to reside in London, wrote to Jeffrey, saying that he had immediate occasion for £1,000, which must be remitted to him by return of post, and for which there should be value delivered for the "blue and buff". The £1,000 was duly remitted, and in the course of six weeks, Brougham sent down articles on a vast variety of subjects, which made up an entire number of the "Edinburgh Review", one of these being on a "New Mode of performing the operation of Lithotomy," another upon "The Dispute as to Light between the Emissionists and Undulationists," and a third on the "Music of the Chinese."[1] The event just related occurred shortly

(1) "Lives of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham", by the late John Lord Campbell LL.D.F.R.S.E. John Murray, London 1869. Vol. 1. P. 251.

after Brougham's removal to London, where his ability as a barrister was soon acknowledged, and within five years, a seat had been found for him in the House of Commons.

Here for many years he continued, and before his retirement from official life, he had received the great seal of the Chancellorship, and had been elevated to the peerage. In the years of his retirement, he devoted himself chiefly to legal and social reforms, maintaining his hostile attitude to slavery, and continuing his labours in the cause of popular education. Towards the end of his life, he resided much in the South of France, which he "discovered" as a wintering resort. Here he died on the 7th of May, 1868.

Sydney Smith (1771-1845)

Sydney Smith was born at Woodford in Essex on the 3rd of June, 1771. After some time at a preparatory school in Southampton, he was sent to Winchester School, where he continued from 1782 until 1789, when he was admitted into New College, Oxford. At the end of the second year of residence, he obtained a fellowship, which he held for nine years, and which he relinquished upon his marriage in 1800.

"Curiously enough, Francis Jeffrey was at Queens College, Oxford, during part of the time that Sydney Smith was studying at New, but the future collaborateurs appear never to have met until they were thrown together, a few years later, in Edinburgh."(1) In 1794 he received the appointment to the curacy of Nether, Avon, where he remained until March, 1797.

The Squire of Nether, Avon, was Mr. Hicks-Beach, who soon saw the sterling qualities of the young clergyman, and who when he decided to send his son to the University, under a tutor, offered the appointment to Sydney Smith, who accepted it. Young Beach and his tutor arrived in Edinburgh in the middle of June, 1798. Two years later, in June, 1800,

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(1) "The Life and Times of Sydney Smith": Stuart J. Reid, Sampson Low, Marston & Co.Ltd. 1901, P.17.

he was married.

This event was followed two years later by the establishment of the "Edinburgh", in which, as has been recorded, Smith was a leading spirit. ""It is interesting," says Stuart Reid in his "Life and Times of Sydney Smith," "to learn, on the authority of Lord Brougham, that Sydney Smith contributed eighteen articles to the first four numbers, whilst Jeffrey was represented by sixteen, Horner by seven, and Brougham himself by twenty-one."(1)

Sydney Smith did not possess the analytical skill of Jeffrey, nor the philosophic grasp of Horner, but in his own way, he was inimitable. Jeffrey was certainly his superior in literary and worldly knowledge, and probably both Brougham and Horner were his masters in these matters, but, nevertheless, Smith possessed certain compensatory qualities."If it is the perfection of art", says Stuart Reid, the critic's biographer, "to conceal art, the art of Sydney Smith approached very nearly to that climax."(2) With a clear style, Smith brilliantly brought home great truths in a serious, humourous manner.

He was unflinchingly assiduous in his exposure of wrongs and abuses of all kinds. In a whole-hearted, vigorous

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(1) Ibid P. 56

(2) Ibid P. 71

manner, he attacked bigotry, hypocrisy and superstition with never-ceasing application. Frank almost to a fault, never did he leave the reader in doubt as to his meaning.

However, at times, the great man erred and, to-day, one can hardly comprehend his stand on the movements of Methodism and missions. The explanation can probably be found in his dislike of enthusiasm, and his refusal (or inability) to separate the chaff of fanaticism from the wheat of self-sacrifice. To his credit, however, must it be said, that not once did he treat these subjects with ridicule, the weapon which he could so easily handle, until the supporters of these movements drew his fire by ill-considered references to the editors of the "Edinburgh".

The year following the foundation of the "Edinburgh", Smith removed to London where he soon became a popular preacher. In 1806 during the reign of the Whig Party, he was presented to the living of Fosbrooke, near York, where he resided until 1828, when he was given a prebend at Bristol.

His contributions to the "Edinburgh" ceased at this time, for he felt that such work was no longer becoming a dignitary of the church. Three years later he was made

Canon residentiary of Saint Paul's, London, and would, it is believed, soon have attained a bishopric but for his Whig views.

In London, he spent the last years of his life, until his death, on the 22nd of February, 1845.

Francis Horner, (1778-1817)

Francis Horner, the son of an Edinburgh merchant, was born in that City on 12th August, 1778. Like most boys of the same rank, he was sent to the High School, and proceeded as a mere boy to the University where he remained until he was seventeen. As he was ambitious to follow the law, his father placed him under the care of a private tutor in Middlesex, but after a residence of two years in England, he returned home in 1797; and when Sydney Smith arrived in Edinburgh, Horner was already regarded "as a man of singular promise."(1)

Horner, disgusted with the Scottish Court, moved to London in the Spring of 1803. Three years later, in 1806, he became a member of the House of Commons. Year by year his influence increased, and his death, at the early age of thirty-eight, robbed the House of one who, undoubtedly, showed more than the usual promise.

As a contributor to the "Edinburgh" Horner could never dash off an Article with the bold vigour of Jeffrey, or the brilliant ease of Smith. "He worked with great deliberation; he bent over his sentences with patient

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(1) "The Life and Times of Sydney Smith"; Stuart J. Reid, Sampson Low, Marston & Co. Ltd. 1901. P.63.

care; he selected his words with painstaking and often fastidious nicety; his disquisitions smell of the lamp, and suggest the effort they are known to have cost."(1)

Amongst the most important articles in the opening number was one by Horner based on "An Enquiry Into the Nature and Effects of the Paper Credit of Great Britain". Many such followed, and a deal of sober intellectual power was added to the "Edinburgh" because of his statesman-like contributions on economic matters, based on reviews of books on political science.

In 1806, three years after his transfer to England, he secured a seat in the House of Commons. Here he soon was accorded the respect due him, and acknowledged as an authority in the House on matters economic. He died on the 8th of February, 1817, universally mourned.

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(1) Ibid. P. 65

Walter Scott (1771-1832)

Walter Scott, the great novelist, whose critical career with the "Edinburgh" only, will be considered here, was born in Edinburgh, on the 5th of August, 1771. Educated at the High School in Edinburgh, and at the University of Edinburgh, he had just entered on a legal career when the "Edinburgh" was established.

Scott, who was a friend of Jeffrey's, wrote several reviews for the "Edinburgh" until he became dissatisfied with its political views. He brought to his criticisms a sound knowledge of literature, and a keen grasp of values. Indeed, the guess may be hazarded, that if Scott had not turned to the writing of poetry and novels, he would have made a name for himself as a reviewer of books. This energy and gift of his would have been directed against the "Edinburgh", it is safe to assume, and therefore the whole course of periodical criticism might easily have been altered.

But such was not to be! Scott continued to write occasional criticisms, but poetry and prose occupied the greater part of his attention until his death at Abbotsford,

on the 21st of September, 1831.

John Allen (1771-1843)

John Allen was born at Edinburgh, where his father was a writer to the Signet. After studying at Edinburgh, where he later lectured on philosophy, he became family physician to Lord Holland, and went abroad with Lord Holland, As a result of these trips, especially in the South, he became recognized as an authority on Spanish matters. Stuart Reid in his "Life and Times of Sydney Smith", says: "No man in England, at the beginning of the century, was more of an authority on subjects connected with the constitutional history of the Peninsula than Lord Holland's physician."(1)

This probably explains the fact that he constantly wrote on constitutional questions and subjects, suggested by the early history of France and Spain. His articles are extremely well written, marked by an unusual degree of first-hand knowledge. Among his reviews in the "Edinburgh" one of "Wardens Letters from St. Helena", written in 1816, is said to have surprised Napoleon by its intimate

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(1) "The Life and Times of Sydney Smith". Stuart J.Reid, Sampson Low, Marston & Co.Ltd. 1901. P.111.

knowledge of his early life.

Brougham is the authority for the statement, "His articles in the "Edinburgh Review" are said to have exceeded thirty in number."[1] This gives some impression of his unusual ability, as yet really unacknowledged, as a book-reviewer, when it is recalled that Smith only wrote some seventy-five.

His death, in 1843, removed one of the ornaments of the Whig party, and one who had for many years given of his best to the "Edinburgh."

Thomas Thomson (1768-1852)

Thomas Thomson graduated from Glasgow in 1789, and was admitted to the bar in 1793. Although a very close associate of Jeffrey, and other projectors of the "Edinburgh", Thomas Thomson contributed but three papers to that periodical, on Darwin's "Temple of Nature",1803, Miss Seward's "Memories of the Past", 1804, and Good's "Life of Geddes", 1804.

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(1) "The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham" written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol.1. P. 380.

Thomas Brown (1778-1820)

Thomas Brown was born early in 1778 and on the death of his father, his mother moved to Edinburgh where he was educated. After graduation from Edinburgh, in 1796, he became associated with the band who established the "Edinburgh". His attachment to the "Edinburgh" must rest on two articles only, the first written on Kant, in the second number; the second article in the third number was altered unreasonably by the editor, with the result that Brown withdrew his support from the new organ.

John Thomson (1765-1846)

This man, born at Paisley, educated at Glasgow and Edinburgh, has been long considered an early reviewer to the"Edinburgh". This seems very strange, for it is possible only to find two articles accredited to him. He was called by his contemporaries "the most learned of physicians,"(1) more than an ordinary tribute to the ability of a medical man in the first half of the last century.

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(1) "The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham," written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol.1. P.379.

Chapter V.

The Foundation of the Great Quarterlies.

The effect of the appearance of the "Edinburgh Review" was remarkable, not only in literary circles but among educated men and women in Scotland and England. "The authorship of the different articles was discussed at every dinner-table,"[1] and it is certain that the fresh, vigorous writing found in the new organ formed a very welcome relief to the tedious, often inane, remarks which then formed the staple of periodical literary criticism. "Three editions were immediately exhausted,"[2] and before long the new Review had almost a clear field to itself. "The 'Critical' gave up the ghost after a number of years,"[3] although the 'Monthly' managed to exist, after a fashion, down to nearly the middle of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it must be said that the effect on the curious reader of today who removes dust from volume after volume of the early numbers of the "Edinburgh" to look into them is one of disappointment.

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(1) Autobiography of Mrs Fletcher, 2nd Edition, Edmonston & Douglas, 1875. P. 82.

(2) "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Lord Brougham", written by himself. Harper & Bros. New York, 1871. Vol.1.P.245.

(3) "The Life and Times of Tennyson from 1809 to 1850. Thomas R. Lounsbury, Yale University. New Haven, 1915. P.98

"Criticism is a still more perishable commodity than poetry,"[1] and that which Sir Walter Scott called the "acid" squeezed into the sauce of the Edinburgh, has evaporated.

An examination of the early numbers of the "Edinburgh" shows that, although established by Whigs, it did not adopt a very decided tone in political matters, certainly nothing except the cover "blue and buff" would have shown the political sympathies of the projectors during the first five years of its existence.

Social and political reforms were, it is true, advocated, but the "Edinburgh" could scarcely be called a party organ until the appearance in October 1808, of a review on "Exposition of the Practices and Machinations which led to the Usurpation of the Crown of Spain and means adopted by the Emperor of the French to carry it into execution" recently written by Don Pedro Cevallos. This review definitely announced the political attitude of the "Edinburgh". If in the early days readers had suspected the new review of being Whiggish, they were now certainly convinced.

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(1) "Hours in a Library: Leslie Stephen; Smith Elder & Co. London, 1909; Vol.11. P.237.

Immediately in the hearts of the Tories indignation was excited and, before long it is safe to assume, some method of retaliation was being devised. The Tories could not let pass, unanswered, any public expression of foreboding as to the success of the war in Spain. The Whigs, whose policy had been opposed to the war in the Peninsula, naturally predicted its failure, and at this time had ample reason for doing so. It was equally natural that the Tories should be disgusted by the apparent want of patriotism.

The "Edinburgh" must be answered, and the best method to compete with the press has always been the press. Therefore this article of 1808 may be considered as the direct reason for the foundation of a new quarterly. Yet, there were other agents working in that direction.

Already there had been negotiations among various parties concerning the starting of a Tory quarterly, and the article on the "French Usurpation of Spain", the work in uncertain proportions of Jeffrey and Brougham had the effect of bringing these negotiations at once to a point.

For years this article was attributed to Brougham, by

whom it was included in his 'Contributions to the "Edinburgh Review." Brougham's memory cannot always be trusted, but yet, on seeing in the "Life of Lord Jeffrey" the importance attached to the article, Brougham claimed the article as his own, and his claim seemed to be supported by the fact that Jeffrey had not included the paper in his "Contributions to the Edinburgh Review" published in 1844. Yet, although the mark of Jeffrey can be seen clearly in the article, it was not till the last quarter of the century, when both men were dead, that the truth concerning the authorship of the famous review became known. This discovery points to the fact that Jeffrey had not published the article as his own because he had considered it as partially the work of his more conceited colleague, Brougham.

Cockburn, in his "Journal," recorded how "his lordship (meaning Brougham) only wrote the first or second paragraphs, and all the rest was by Jeffrey. Jeffrey told me so when I was going over the Review with him, for the very purpose of identifying his articles, and though he was warned that it was ascribed to Brougham." Empson asked Macaulay if he had ever spoken of this famous article to Jeffrey, and the answer is - "I'll tell you what Jeffrey told me

in the drawing-room at Craigcrook. I spoke of Brougham as the author. Jeffrey said that almost the whole paper was his own, and that he should have printed it as his own in the collection, had it not been that a passage near the beginning was Brougham's."(1) In addition, there exists a very interesting comment, by the son of Macvey Napier, Jeffrey's successor as editor of the "Edinburgh Review", which seems conclusive, "In January, 1843, my father made the following answer to a question put to him by an old friend respecting this article. "Brougham began the article and wrote part: Jeffrey the rest; and the noted passage as to the mode in which Bonaparte directed his military combinations and made attacks, was made by Brougham. It has been said, I know, but only lately, that the article was written by Jeffrey, but at the time it was, as I recollect well, universally ascribed to Brougham, in toto. On mentioning it to Jeffrey about a week ago, when talking of a republication of some of his reviews, he told me expressly it was a joint publication."(2)

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(1) "Selected Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier"; edited by his son; Macmillan and Co. 1879. Footnote.P.308 copied from "Journal". Lord Cockburn 11. P. 279.

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(2) Selected Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier;" edited by his son; Macmillan and Co. 1879. P. 309.

Of course, even Jeffrey is known to have made a mistake in assigning the authorship of an article, as Hazlitt later learned to his disgust. Hazlitt reviewed Leigh Hunt's "Rimini" and, later, claimed credit for the good nature shown in the act. "But in the review itself, by the time it left Jeffrey's hands, there was so much of Jeffrey, that he afterwards thought he had written it."(1)

This article on the "French Usurpation of Spain", the joint work of Brougham and Jeffrey, sent forever from the camp of the "Edinburgh Review", Scott and Southey, both of whom had suffered, so they thought, at the hands of the "Edinburgh", and deleted from the subscription list more than a score of Tories. The eccentric Earl of Buchan took a more conspicuous way of showing his displeasure. Throwing the obnoxious number on the floor of his hall, he solemnly kicked it out into the mud of the street, where it lay to be walked on by the passers-by.

The other agents working towards the foundation of a new quarterly at this time, were of three kinds, politieal, literary and mercantile; and these three

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(1) "Life of William Hazlitt", P.P.Howe, Martin Secker, 1922. P.203.

distinct circles were working toward the same object, but without any knowledge of the others' trend, yet without the cooperation of these three parties, the political, the literary and the mercantile, the success of the new quarterly would have been doubtful.

In October, 1808, the Tory party had been in power for several years and were destined to occupy the saddle for many more. In spite of the acceptation by many people of the "Edinburgh's" opinions, during the past six years; at this time it was felt that the pill could not be swallowed.

The Tory party having been well entrenched probably did not feel the need of a periodical supporting its doctrines, especially when such a weapon meant the imitation of a new organ founded by a group of youths in Scotland. "The more ardent and active minds on that side, however, were naturally impatient of the dictatorship exercised by Mr. Jeffrey and wanted only opportunity to establish an opposing force in the interests of their own venerable creed".(1) And of these active minds, the two most interested in founding a rival periodical were the cousins Canning,

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(1) "Christopher North; a Memoir of John Wilson" by his daughter, Mrs Gordon. Edmonston and Douglas, 1863. P. 244.

George and Stratford. Indeed, Stratford Canning has made a direct claim which has been generally accepted as being the individual who first conceived the plan of a rival organ.

"While walking along Pall Mall one day, before he left England for Constantinople, certainly before July 1808, and possibly before January -Stratford Canning made a plan for a Tory organ, conducted along the line of the "Edinburgh". He proposed the idea to George Canning who referred him with evident satisfaction to William Gifford. Stratford Canning declared that the name as well as the idea, originated with him and his friends, and that he drew up the sketch of a prospectus."(1) This would indicate that the plan for the foundation of a new Quarterly had long been considered at the time of the Edinburgh's definite stand, as shown by the review of "The French Usurpation of Spain." This may be termed the political agent, which encouraged the growth of a desire for a new review.

About this time another event played into the hands of the new reviewers, for in April 1808, Scott's anger had been aroused by a review of Marmion in the "Edinburgh". This meant that Scott who had contributed frequently to the early

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(1) Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review, 1809-1883". Walter Graham, Columbia University, New York, 1921. P.3.

numbers of the Review, abandoned the "Edinburgh" and at the same time gained the whole-hearted sympathy of a multitude of readers of both his works and his articles. Jeffrey had accused Scott of a mercenary spirit in writing his "Marmion" for money, and had further irritated the popular author by asserting that he had neglected Scotch feeling and Scotch characters. Within six months Scott had come to the conclusion that the only effective means of either defending himself or combatting the powerful influence of the "Edinburgh" was by just such a weapon. "The cure," Scott wrote, Nov.2, 1808, "lies in instituting such a review in London as should be conducted totally independent of book-selling influence on a plan as liberal as that of the "Edinburgh", its literature as well supported, and its principles English and constitutional."(1) This irritation may be said to be the powerful literary agent behind the new periodical, and may be said to have occurred, providentially, for the political projectors of the new review.

The mercantile agent behind the new quarterly was the publisher, Murray, who had probably not been unacquainted with the financial success of Constable who had published the "Edinburgh". Indeed, it is possible that Stratford

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(1) "A Publisher and his Friends", Samuel Smiles Murray, London 1891; letter to Mr. John Murray. p. 42

Canning's suggestion was anticipated by a letter, which Murray wrote to George Canning, as early as September 25, 1807, advising that some means equally popular ought to be adopted to counteract the dangerous tendency of the "Edinburgh", Murray offered to engage his "arduous exertions" (1) to promote its success.

Thus the idea of a Tory organ to rival the "Edinburgh", taking shape gradually in the minds of politicians, was adopted by an ambitious young publisher with his eyes on the future, and was finally brought to realization chiefly through the genius and industry of Walter Scott. In addition many eminent writers of Tory politics promised their aid. At length, in February, 1809, the opening number appeared. The editor was William Gifford, who retained the post till within about a year of his death in 1826. In the minds of its founders the political function of the new review called "The Quarterly" was paramount. The beginning of the Quarterly was attended by none of the romance which distinguished the "Edinburgh". "It was not a raid of inexperienced and unremunerated champions like the big literary frolic which had grown into so serious a business." (2)

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(1) Ibid. P. 93

(2) The Literary History of England."Mrs Oliphant, MacMillan, 1882. Vol. 11. P.65.

but, on the contrary, was founded with a distinctly political object, and by party politicians of high standing, to avert the dangers, threatened to church and state, by the spread of the doctrines of Whigs and reformers.

Before long it was recognized that a new and formidable rival had entered the field so long dominated by the "Edinburgh" and the two great literary and critical journals soon became the acknowledged standard-bearers of their respective political parties. It has been said that Jeffrey, whose indolence would have been better pleased at the absence of all rivalry, did not altogether dislike the prospect of sharp antagonism. He rejoiced "that this kind of literature" was to be improved by competition, and he was proud of the example he had set. In addition, although many actually cancelled subscriptions to the "Edinburgh", owing to the harsh treatment of Scott's "Marmion" and the definite stand taken on the "French usurpation of Spain", the "Quarterly" appearance caused an increased demand for the older review. In the first half dozen years of its life, the circulation of the "Edinburgh" had risen from 800 to 9,000, yet, in 1812, it had grown to approximately 10,000. In 1814, over 12,000 copies per quarter were

printed, the total number rising to more than 13,500 in the years 1817 and 1818, a number which was never exceeded.

From these figures it is evident that competition was beneficial to the older review, for the reviewers for the "Edinburgh" were stirred on to greater heights by the knowledge of the activity of the rival critics engaged by the "Quarterly". Indeed the birth of the "Quarterly" began a new era in the existence of the "Edinburgh". Without a doubt there was room for more than one critical journal in the field of English literature, politics and art.

Nor was the influence of these two great quarterlies affected by the appearance from time to time of other roughly similar ventures. These were usually though not invariably monthlies, Like the Anti-Jacobin Review, Some of them were the organs of parties. Hence their literary criticism was always more or less influenced by political considerations. A similar statement can be made of periodicals of another kind, such, for example, as the "British Critic" and "The Electic Review" whose reviewers were largely under the influence of sectarian bodies. On that very account they

appealed to a limited class. Besides these there were a number of quarterlies and monthlies that sprang up at intervals and lasted at best but a few years making no profound impression in any quarter. A fair specimen was "The British Review" which was begun in 1811 and lasted till 1825.

"This was somewhat disrespectfully described by Lord Byron as "my grandmother's review", a by no means inappropriate title, if we are to judge it by the character of its contents".(1) But such publications do not fall within the limits of this chapter, and a passing reference must suffice. Similarly, since this chapter deals with the foundation of the great quarterlies, the first agency that came to displace the quarterlies from the influential position in current criticism which they held then can be but mentioned. This was a monthly magazine, founded by no brotherhood of eager young writers but by "one long-headed and far-sighted man, William Blackwood, an Edinburgh bookseller."(2) Yet, this last seems, in the light of the information left by contemporaries, to be an over statement. The truth seems to be that several were simultaneously considering the establishment of a new miscellany, and that when these men were united, William

(1) "The Life and Times of Tennyson from 1809 to 1850; "Thomas R. Lounsbury. P. 127

(2) " The Literary History of England". Mrs. Oliphant. Macmillan & Co. 1882. Vol. 11. P.66

Blackwood was merely the mechanical genius behind the new venture.

To James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd", undoubtedly belongs the credit for being the most persistent in his desire to found the monthly, which eventually developed into "Blackwoods". R.P.Gillies has left a record of how "my good friend, the Ettrick Shepherd, has often talked to me on the propriety and duty of establishing a new monthly miscellany."(1) And, in addition, Hogg, in the Preface to his "Altrive Tales", has claimed the distinction; "I had been planning", he says, "with my friends to commence the publication of a magazine on a new plan; but for several years we only conversed about the utility of such a work, without doing anything further."(2) Gillies continues: "Among the Shepherd's acquaintances and cronies from the Forest was the late Thomas Pringle, a young man of excellent literary tact." To this man, Hogg related his scheme, and found that his friends had a plan in contemplation of the same kind." We agreed to join our efforts and try to set it

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(1) "Memoirs of a Literary Veteran": R.P.Gillies. Richard Bentley,1851. Vol.11. P. 230.

(2) "The Altrive Tales." By the Ettrick Shepherd,James Cochrane & Co. 1832. Vol. 1. P. LXXIII.

a-going."[1] "Thus", says Hogg, "I had the honour of being the beginner and almost sole instigator of that celebrated work, Blackwood's 'Magazine'."[2]

Pringle seems, early in the venture, to have taken the lead; for although the co operation of Hogg, Pringle and a host of other clever writers had been secured, it was Pringle and a friend of his, James Cleghorn, who, in December, 1816, applied to Mr William Blackwood to become the publisher of the newly projected monthly magazine. This information has been left by the daughter of "Christopher North" who adds, "Mr. Blackwood's sagacious eye at once discerned the elements of success in the project."[3] Yet, alongside this, must be recorded the definite statement of Hogg himself, "I went and mentioned the plan to Mr. Blackwood, who, to my astonishment, I found had likewise long been cherishing a plan of the same kind."[4] This

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(1) Ibid p LXXlll

(2) Ibid p LXXlV

(3) "Christopher North", "A Memoir of John Wilson," by his daughter, Mrs Gordon Edmondston and Douglas Edinburgh, 1863. Vol. 1. P. 245.

(4) The Altrive Tales, by the Ettrick Shepherd. James Cochrane and Co. 1832. Vol. 1. P. LXXIV

statement, written within fifteen years of the event, must be respected, yet, it is highly probable that both Pringle and Cleghorn, and Hogg, interviewed Blackwood about the same time, each without the other's knowledge, and it is more than probable that the publisher, Blackwood, would not consider it necessary, at that early stage of the project, to reveal the intentions o f one party to the other.

The first number of the new publication appeared early in Spril, 1817, bearing the title, "The Edinburgh Monthly Magazine," and, under the auspices of two gentle literary men, Pringle and Cleghorn. As might have been anticipated, these men could not endure for long the methods of their owner-editor, and within six months, publisher, editors and contributors were at a deadlock.

Gillies has recorded how "The new magazine went so far as two numbers under the management of Messrs Pringle and Cleghorn, without making any great sensation, Mr. Blackwood having all the while been hatching his own notions about a magazine, and quietly taking measures to realize them. In his views and plans whatsoever they were, the two editors did by no

means agree. The burly man (meaning Cleghorn) could dictate willingly enough but would not stand the dictatorship of a bookseller; in consequence of which a quarrel very naturally arose, and Mr. Blackwood suddenly announced his own "Edinburgh Magazine" to be managed, of course, "according to his own judgment" (1)

In this connection John Wilson's daughter has stated, "In acquiring the copyright of the magazine, Mr. Blackwood determined to abandon its old title, and give it a name combining the double advantage, that it would not be confounded with any other, and would, at the same time, help to spread the reputation of the publisher. Accordingly, in October, 1817, appeared for the first time, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, (No.Vll from the commencement." (2) Thus did Blackwood's, the oldest magazine of the nineteenth century, begin, definitely sponsored by a publisher because of its pecuniary return. (See footnote).

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(1) Memoirs of a Literary Veteran", R.P. Gillies, Richard Bentley, 1851. Vol.11. P.232.

(2) Christopher North." A Memoir of John Wilson", by his daughter, Mrs. Gordon Edmonston and Douglas. 1863. Vol. 1. P.247.

Footnote: Blackwood, after come contention and correspondence, agreed to pay his quondam partners £125. for their share in the copyright of the Edinburgh Monthly Magazine.

In the decade following the close of the Napoleonic war, a party was growing up in England definitely liberal; yet, decidedly in opposition to the two long-established parties. This party soon became known as the "Radical" party, and although in its ranks might be numbered, historians, philosophers and poets, it was felt that this small group should have a periodical of its own, in which the doctrines of reform might be advanced, and in which the ideals of the group should be constantly kept before the public.

John Stuart Mill, himself a leader in the party of reform, has left a record concerning this. "The need of a radical organ to make head against the Edinburgh and Quarterly (then in the period of their greatest reputation and influence), had long been a topic of conversation between him (his father) and Mr. Bentham many years earlier, and it had been a part of their Chateau en Espagne that my father should be the editor; but the idea had never assumed any practical shape. In 1823, however, Mr. Bentham determined to establish the Review at his own cost, and offered the editorship to my father who declined it as incompatible with his India House appointment. It was then entrusted to Mr. (now Sir.John) Bowring, at that time a merchant in the city."(1)

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(1) "Autobiography by John Stuart Mill". Henry Holt and Co. 1873. P.91.

This would point to Bentham as being the power behind the Westminster, for not only had he the ability and the courage, but the wealth necessary for the establishment of a periodical, which, from the outset, had no intention of catering to to the desires of the multitude, or even the powerful. Bowring himself has given to Bentham the honour of founding the Westminster, for he wrote: "In the very centre of the group of persons who originated the Westminster Review stands the grand figure of Jeremy Bentham."(1) This removes all doubt as to the spirit behind the new periodical.

"In the meantime the nascent Review had formed a junction with another project of a purely literary periodical to be edited by a Mr. Henry Southern, afterwards a diplomatist, then a literary man by profession. The two editors agreed to unite their corps, and divide the editorship, Bowring taking the political, Southern the literary department." Southern's Review was to have been published by Longman, and that firm, though part proprietors of the "Edinburgh", were willing to be the publishers of the new Journal."(2) But on the eve of the first appearance of the "Westminster", Longman's

(1) Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring" Henry S. King, 1877. P. 65.

(2) "Autobiography by John Stuart Mill. Henry Holt and Co. 1873. P.94-95.

probably due to the threatened rival to the "Edinburgh"s" demand, refused to publish the new periodical. James Mill was, however, able to interest his own publisher in the scheme, and in April, 1824, the first number appeared.

Thus the last of the three great quarterlies saw the light of day. The "Westminster" was born just as the new radical movement was struggling against almost insurmountable difficulties, to its feet. As the second decade of the nineteenth century drew to a close, around the older Mill, James, (father of John Stuart) a score of young men had gathered, attracted by his writings and by his conversation. From this group developed the great movement of the middle century, and neither Tory nor Whig could compromise with the men who in 1824 launched the Westminster Review, backed by Jeremy Bentham.

Chapter VI.

An account of the Controversies between the "Edinburgh" and the Rival Reviews and between the "Edinburgh" and Authors therein Reviewed.

The account already given of the foundation of the different Quarterlies, beginning with the"Edinburgh"in 1802, must make it clear that the men behind these periodicals were of radically different schools of thought. Indeed, it is certain that this very fact was the real reason for the appearance in the field of the second great review, "The Quarterly".Since the editors of the reviews were unable to see eye to eye in matters political, it is therefore to be expected that there should be considerable differences in their attitudes towards politics, literature,and art, which were, after all, the staple of the productions.

However, it is safe to assume that the projectors of the "Edinburgh" did not suppose for an instant that the criticisms there appearing would ever be the cause of bitter disagreements. Indeed, it is suspected that the youthful founders of the "Edinburgh" rather hoped that

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readers would accept their criticisms, and authors criticized would feel hpnoured by mention in the columns of the new periodical. Truly in the first few numbers, the editors seem almost to be feeling their way in matters literary, seeking to catch an audience by the focussing of common sense on literature, and not going so far as to proclaim any definite policy. This, however, could not continue long, and in a few years, the "Edinburgh" found itself in a decidedly embarrassing position.

The first dispute between reviewer and reviewed did not reach the heights of controversy yet because of several facts in connection with it, may be referred to at this point. It was in reality a personal matter.

In the July number of the "Edinburgh" for 1806, a review appeared of Thomas Moore's recently published volume "Epistles, Odes and other Poems." Jeffrey, who reviewed the volume, condemned it in the opening paragraph as"a public nuisance".(1) and then went on to picture the poet as, "stimulating his jaded fancy for new images of impurity."(2)

Surely this was enough to enrage any man, yet the young poet has left in his"memoir" record of how, "on the first perusal of the article, the contemptuous language applied

(1) "Edinburgh Review" (July 1806) No.XVI. and XVIII.P.456.

(2) Ibid. p. 457

to me by the reviewer a good deal roused my Irish blood, the idea of seriously noticing the attack did not occur to me, I think, till some time after."(1) From his account Moore would seem to have played for a time with the idea of challenging Jeffrey to a duel, and then probably, in a moment of haste, sent a note to the "Edinburgh" reviewer whom he stigmatized as a "liar."(2) In a few hours seconds were procured, pistols borrowed and a duel arranged.

However, as fortune would have it, the lender of the pistols communicated with the police who intervened and put both poet and critic under arrest. Thus the first difference between reviewer and reviewed ended in little better than a farce.

As said before, this cannot be considered as a controversy, but as the first example of the length to which men were willing to go to vindicate an opinion once expressed it is not to be ignored.

The outcome of the duel between Moore and Jeffrey was almost as surprising as the details of the event itself, for the opponents became the closest of friends. This, too, is a valuable sidelight on the character of Jeffrey, who would defend to the bitter end a statement once made when

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(1) "Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore" edited by Lord John Russell. Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans. London, 1853. Vol.1. P.200.

(2) Ibid. P. 201.

convinced of its reasonableness, and yet who would be quick to establish a lasting friendship with a former foe. So ended the first dispute! Only a short time was to pass before the next.

In 1807, Lord Byron of Rochdale published a small volume of poems under the title of "Hours of Idleness". This collection will stand forever as his earliest performanee in poetry, and will be remembered as the origin of the first public quarrel between reviewer and reviewed in the new era of periodical criticism inaugurated by the establishment of the "Edinburgh". The poems in this book had appeared twice before, both times anonymously, first in 1806 as "Fugitive Pieces" (quickly suppressed;) again in 1807 as "Poems on Various Occasions". Yet, when, after considerable revising, later in 1807, the collection appeared, bearing for the first time the noble author's name, it contained much that was banal, jejune and tedious. In short, it was an easy mark for destructive criticism.

For a short time, Byron basked in the sunshine of popularity and praise, until early in 1808 the "Edinburgh" released its famous "critique". Because of the fact that Jeffrey later repudiated the authorship of this review, it would appear

that Brougham whom Byron declared to be "his only hate"was the author of it. On the whole the article was a piece of comparatively harmless banter. Byron was grievously annoyed and,his (almost constitutional) bitterness increased by the belief that the attack was partially due to his nobility, prepared to return the fire.

This marks the first altercation occasioned by a review, and while in many ways it may not be considered as a controversy, because of the nature of Byron's retort, the matter must be referred at this point. Byron's reply to the review appeared in March 1809, "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,"

The reply has been given a very high place in the history of English satire, and is certainly more famous than the original"Hours of Idleness", yet, as the author of it realized nine years later, it has many faults. Moore has left a record of how, in the first leaf of his own copy, Byron wrote, "The binding of this volume is considerably too valuable for its contents". Certainly a severe judgment and the author's concluding remark on the whole poem, "The greater part of this satire I most sincerely wish had never been written," sounds like a "peccavi" and a belated acknowledgment of the

justice of the criticism of the "Edinburgh"

The final notes of this episode were sounded years later when the "Edinburgh" in an article on Edgeworth's "Patronage" wrote, "Our alleged severity upon a youthful production has not prevented the noble author from becoming the first poet of his time."(1) This undoubtedly referred to the review of "Hours of Idleness" and must have been of considerable gratification to one who had felt so keenly in his youth the displeasure of the "Edinburgh".

Byron not to be outdone in gallantry has left in "Don Juan" for all time in verse his "amende". First the reviewer is forgiven and, adds Byron,

I trust
He will forgive himself."(2) Then later in the same Canto, he addresses

"Dear Jeffrey, once my redoubted foe"

concluding the verse

You have acted on the whole
most nobly, and I own it from my soul."(3)

These marks of reparation must be remembered to the eternal glory of both Jeffrey and Byron, especially the tribute of the latter written but a few months before his death.

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(1) "Edinburgh Review" (Jan.1814). No. XLIV . Art. X. P.416.

(2) Poetical Works of Lord Byron. Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1921. "Don Juan". Canto X. Vs. XI. P.765.

(3) Ibid "Don Juan" Canto X. Vs.XVI. P.766

At the same time as the appearance of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers", a small book was published entitled "Strictures on Two Critiques in the "Edinburgh Review" on the subject of Methodism and Missions, by an unknown author, John Styles. Now the attitude of the "Edinburgh" to the Methodist movement and to the mission movement is quite easily understood, when it is recalled how the majority of the founders of the Review were either High Churchmen or Presbyterians. In their opinion these new movements were nothing more than the manifestation of an undignified, unrestrained fanaticism: and as such should be discouraged and exposed to ridicule, not a difficult way of treating any new religious tendency.

However, the "Edinburgh" had been withal if not gracious at least courteous in references made to both these movements. Very probably then had not the author of the book, by his manner left himself open to severe criticism, the "Edinburgh" might have ignored it altogether. Yet the "Edinburgh" in its review of the book did not treat the contents controversially, but rather made a formal statement of what it considered to be the extravagance and the danger of these popular sectaries."(1)

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(1) "Edinburgh Review (April 1809). No.XXVll Art. III.P.40.

On the same page the reviewer refers to the article which caused the publication of the "Strictures" stating that such opposition must be faced owing to our "conviction of the necessity of exposing and correcting the growing evil of fanaticism".(1) Reference has been made above to the manner of the author, and his expressions such as "whoever is unfriendly to Methodism is an infidel and an atheist", can only be compared in ricidulous folly to the later venom of a reviewer who couldwrite of "sacred and silly gentlemen" and worse than that "the numerous vermin of Methodism."

By this review the "Edinburgh" took its place in the very van of the attackers of the new sect.

The controversial incidents referred to up to this point, may be said to have been not unexpected. First Moore and Byron had been touched to the quick - really by a personal reference; secondly, the "Edinburgh" had given on more than one occasion an unpopular opinion on matters of general esteem. But the next controversy was not attributable to either of the above reasons, but to three opinions expressed over a space of three years, apparently mild, not intended to create discussion, yet directed either intentionally or unintentionally against Oxford University.

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(1) Edinburgh Review (April 1809) No.XXVII Art III. P.40

In January 1808, the "Edinburgh" in reviewing "Traite de Mechanique Celeste" by P.S. La Place regretted the slight attention paid to higher mathematics in England and stated that, in his opinion, this was to be attributed to the neglect of mathematics in the two great centres from which knowledge was supposed to radiate over the island. A few months later, the "Edinburgh" in reviewing an Oxford edition of Strabo made a few general observations on the use and abuse of classical learning and on the undue importance assigned to it in the English educational system. Again over a period of two years the "Edinburgh" had casually reflected on the system of classical education in England.

These remarks in the "Edinburgh" nevertheless formed the staple of a "Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review against Oxford, containing an account of studies pursued in that University", which appeared at Oxford in 1810. This publication must have come as a distinct shock to the editors of the "Edinburgh" many of whom had studied at Oxford, yet the book was reviewed most carefully in the next number.

The anonymous defender of Oxford first considered what he thought to be the attack on the English attitude to higher mathematics. He realized that more attention might

be paid to the subject, admitting that he was defending the weakest point in the Oxford system of education. This must have been a matter of some satisfaction to the "Edinburgh", who made it clear in its review that its original position was, therefore, by the author's own statement, unaltered.

Similarly the "Edinburgh" took up the other matters and successfully showed how the term "calumny against Oxford" was ridiculous, concluding the whole controversy by stating truly and generously that whatever the defects may have been in the system of education maintained at Oxford, "it is very honourable" (1)

This controversy was the occasion for the first reference made in the columns of the new "Quarterly Review" founded in 1809 to the older and by this time respected "Edinburgh. For in August 1810, the "Quarterly" in reviewing a second edition of the "Reply" agreed with the author of the "Reply" that the "Edinburgh" had erred. The "Quarterly" agreed that Oxford had certainly been maligned by the unjust references to that seat of learning and did not hesitate to state that the "Edinburgh" had done

(1) "Edinburgh Review" (Apr.1810) No.XXXl. Art.Vll. P.187

so, either by incapacity, forgetfulness or design."[1]

For several years after the Oxford controversy, there was reign of peaee between the reviewers and reviewed. Indeed the "Edinburgh" did not take part in another controversy until 1820. This dispute was centred around the work of one of the projectors of the recently established "Blackwood's Magazine". James Hogg, early in 1819, published the "Jacobite Relics of Scotland, being the Songs, Airs and Legends, of the adherents to the House of Stuart," which was reviewed in the "Edinburgh" for August 1820, with the verdict that Hogg was "wanting in delicacy almost entirely."[2]

Hogg was not the man to accept such a criticism, and in a letter in "Blackwood's" he brought the matter to a conclusion. He, in his letter, stated, how it was beyond his comprehension how his old friend, Francis Jeffrey, had permitted "one of his asses to have a kick at me".[3] Hogg did not complain because of the tone of the criticism, but, and this must have hurt the editor of the "Edinburgh", said, "Give me abuse as much as you will-by all means,-

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(1) Quarterly Review (Aug.1810) No.VIII. Art. XII. P.199.

(2) Edinburgh Review (Aug.1820) No.LXVII. Art. VII.P.156

(3) Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. (Oct.1820) No.XLIII.P.70. Letter from James Hogg to his reviewer.

but one thing only I ask of you: utter no falsehoods - speak not that which is not."(1) The letter closed with a criticism of the reviewer's own style and composition. From that time on Hogg was safe from the hostile criticism of the "Edinburgh."

The accounts so far given have been for the most part of controversies waged between reviewer and reviewed, but now must be considered at least two controversies in the last year of Jeffrey's office between rival reviews. As has been recorded in 1824 - a radical review - the "Westminster" had been set up. According to the son of the founder, John Mill, the new organ considered one of its features to be the reviewing of reviews. With such an intention lively hyper-criticism was to be expected, and as early as October 1824, the "Edinburgh" and the "Westminster" had locked horns.

The "Edinburgh" on reviewing a book, "Considerations on the Law of Entail", had not only advocated primogeniture, but had concluded the article with the statement that "We consider the existence of a numerous and powerful body of landed proprietors, without artificial privileges, but possessed of great natural influence, as essentially contributing to the improvement and stability of the public

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(1) Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. (Oct.1820) No.XLIII.P.70. Letter from James Hogg to his reviewer.

institutions of such densely peopled countries as France and England."[1] This, the new review could not let pass.

The "Edinburgh", as well, had taken the stand that an unlimited power of willing ought to be permitted to the proprietor of an estate; that the proprietor would exercise this power to the best advantage by leaving the whole of the bulk of his property to his eldest son and finally that if he died intestate the whole, or the bulk of his property, ought to descend to that same son. The hypercritic in the "Westminster" in a restrained and formal manner, characteristic of later reviews in the same journal, demonstrated the errors in the scheme of reasoning advanced by the "Edinburgh" and pointed out what it considered to be the evil effects of "primogeniture."

Again, in the first year of its existence, the "Westminster" true to its purpose, contained an article on "The Articles in the Edinburgh Review relating to Parliamentary Reform." The "Westminster" carefully considered the political theories maintained by the "Edinburgh" and endeavoured to show that,

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(1) Edinburgh Review (Oct.1824) No.LXXX. Art.IV. P.374

repeatedly, the older periodical "makes an assumption of angelic virtue on the part of the Whigs,"(1) which the "Westminster" declared the "Edinburgh" used as an argument for the Whigs controlling the Government.

The "Westminster" reviewer showed the absurdity of this and stated that since security and protection should be uppermost in the minds of the governing set that "by the very circumstance, however, of putting power in the hands of a few for the protection of the many that evil is created against which the remedy is sought."(1) The controversy boiled down - as it would be expected - to the agreement that the House of Commons was not what it should be. But the difference - the basis of the disagreement - was due to the fact that the "Edinburgh" advised letting the Whigs control the "House"; while the "Westminster suggested altering the system of government until the "House" did the work of the people, not as the Whigs (or Tories) wanted it - but as the people wanted it done.

Probably the most famous controversy between two rival journals was maintained between the "Edinburgh" and the "Westminster" in the last year of Jeffrey's office. In

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(1) Westminster Review. (July 1825) No.V11.Art 12.P.195.

March 1829, the "Edinburgh" in reviewing a copy of James Mills' "Essays", complained that Mills' theory of government "rests altogether on false principles".(1) The reviewer who is now known to have been Macaulay, exposed various fallacies in Mills' theory of government, and concluded his review by expressing his regret at seeing men of good intentions and good natural abilities wasting their energy at such tasks as engage the 'Utilitarians'. The "Edinburgh" reviewer, however, could not resist the temptation to sneer at the new school of economics, and in a very patronizing way, which the "Westminster" nor Mills could never tolerate, remarked "though quibbling about self-interest and motives, and objects of desire and the greatest happiness of the greatest number, is but a poor employment for a grown man, it certainly hurts the health less than hard drinking, and the fortune less than high play; it is not much more laughable than phrenology, and is immeasurably more humane than cock-fighting."(2)

In the next number of the "Westminster" a reply was attempted which was by no means a match for Macaulay, who retorted with considerable energy; and when the "Westminster" replied, Macaulay was able to produce an article even more

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(1) Edinburgh Review. (Mar.1829). No. XC VII. Art. Vll. P.160

(2) Ibid P. 189

unsparing than the first two. These articles were almost exclusively occupied with a dissection of what has been called the 'greatest happiness principle of government". Macaulay who wrote the reviews in the "Edinburgh" of the "Westminster" articles shows that brilliant gift of repartee which made him famous within a few years.

The contest between the "Edinburgh" and the "Westminster" was the most famous of the duels between the reviews - with the older periodical winning repeatedly. Much interest was displayed by readers both in England and on the Continent in the controversy, and the whole episode marked a fitting conclusion to Jeffrey's tenure of office as editor of the "Edinburgh".

In discussing these various controversies, it must be pointed out to the honour of the "Edinburgh", that whereas some of their views considered did doubtlessly contain ungentlemanly language, yet in no place did the "Edinburgh" reach the heights of sustained savagery and invective which have long been called one of the features of early nineteenth century English criticism.

The explanation for this may be seen in Brougham's

statement: "The rule was inflexibly maintained never to suffer the insertion of any attack by a writer who was known or even justly suspected, to have a personal difference with the author, or other sinister motive; and if any person had been found to have kept concealed such cause of bias upon the critical judgment, no contribution would ever afterwards have been received from that person."(1)

The "Edinburgh", it is believed, aimed at a disinterested, impersonal treatment of any author whose work was under consideration. Nothing in it approached the reference made in 1817 by Gifford in the "Quarterly" to Hazlitt as a "sour Jacobin" or to his work as "loathsome trash".(2) Nor was the "Edinburgh", indeed, ever subjected to such viciousness as was evident in Hazlitt's reply when he retorted that the "Quarterly" was nothing better "than a receptacle for the scum and sediment of all the prejudice, bigotry, ill-will, ignorance and rancour afloat in the Kingdom."(3)

And at the same time, the new "Blackwood's" under John Wilson and John Gibson Lockhart was releasing its series of attacks on Hunt and Keats precipitated by the so-called

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(1) "The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham written by himself. Harper and Brothers, New York. 1871. Vol.1.p.185.

(2) "Quarterly Review". (April 1817). No.XXIII.Art.VI. P.157.

(3) "The Collected Works of William Hazlitt" edited by A.R. Walter and Arnold Glover. J.M.Dent & Co. London.1902.Vol.1.P.365

"very culpable manner" in which Hunt's work was reviewed by the "Edinburgh". No critical articles ever achieved the notoriety that the early articles on Hunt did, not even the "Westminster-Edinburgh" contest.

At times the "Edinburgh" may have gone over the honourable limit, but even the unkindest remark that ever found its way into the pages of "Edinburgh" pales before "you, Leigh Hunt, are without exception the weakest wishy-washiest satirist whose pen ever dribbled. You are like a jack-ass that comes braying out of a pond in which he has been enclosed from Monday till Saturday." (1)

Such quotations from the newwr journals must make it clear that periodical criticism was rapidly descending into a deep pit of personal invective. No longer was an attempt being made to maintain the profession of periodical book-reviewing on the high plane established by the "Edinburgh".

The credit for keeping up the high standing, the credit for preventing this downward tendency must belong to "Edinburgh"; which, although constantly bringing up authors, as Jeffrey would say, for judgment, although constantly engageing in spirited disputed refused to indulge in ill-bred

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(1) "Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. (May 1818). No. XIV. P. 197. "Letter from Z to Leigh Hunt, King of the Cockneys."

personalities. The example provided by this attitude was valuable and had it not been for the high tone of the "Edinburgh" in the matter of book-reviewing, the new calling might very easily have burnt itself out in a short-lived flame of bitter and sarcastic personalities. But more will be said of this later.

In concluding this section, attention must be drawn to the fact that whereas the reviews, in the controversies with the authors reviewed, based their differences on matters literary, yet in the differences between rival organs, it was not literary but political matters which were the sources of contention. Again, very rarely do we see a review taking up the defense of an author attacked by a rival periodical. The attitude would seem to have been to let the author himself fight his own battles, and when another review did enter the struggle it was generally with the purpose of assisting the reviewers in crushing an author who dared to maintain an opinion contrary to that advanced by a journal of criticism.

Chapter V11

The Balahce Sheet in 1829 - A Retrospect.

This section is added to give the reader some impression of the good influence of the "Edinburgh Review" under Jeffrey. Although as has been stated, the "Edinburgh" constantly contributed to the public good, at this point, we shall examine the result of the activities of the "Edinburgh" during the editorship of Jeffrey and review its career from the distance of a century as even he could not have done at the time of his retirement.

Here, we shall reckon as assets the good which the "Edinburgh" accomplished in political and literary matters.

Politically the "Edinburgh" made its influence felt in almost every direction. Indeed, a more correct name for this non-literary influence exercised by the "Edinburgh" might be "social". The assets accumulated by 1829 under this heading will be described first.

The political influenceof the "Edinburgh" was most

apparent among the members of the Whig party. Here, too, it was probably most welcome. Yet, when the nineteenth century opened, there was literally no liberal party in Scotland.

A man might have counted the avowed Whigs on his fingers. The forty-five members of the House of Commons were elected by fewer than five thousand titular land - owners and self-elected town councillors. The whole executive power and political patronage of Scotland was vested in a clique of lawyers in Edinburgh, allied to the aristocracy, and thoroughly-trained, dulled tools of Lord Melville.

Indeed referring to this very time Walter Bagehot has written, "those years were the commencement of what is called the Eldonine period . As for Lord Eldon, it is the most difficult thing in the world to believe that there ever was such a man. He believed in everything which is impossible to believe in -- in the danger of Parliamentary Reform, the danger of Catholic Emancipation, the danger of altering the Court of Chancery, the danger of altering the Courts of Law, the danger of abolishing capital punishment for trivial thefts, the danger of making land-owners

pay their debts, the danger of making anything more, the danger of making anything less."(1)

And further on, Bagehot, speaking of the very years of Jeffrey's editorship, says, "On domestic subjects the history of the first thirty years of the nineteenth century is a species of duel between the Edinburgh Review and Lord Eldon . All the ancient abuses which he thought it most dangerous to impair, they thought it most dangerous to retain."(2)

And in this duel who triumphed? In 1829 was Jeffrey able to record victory" or "defeat"; "asset" or "liability"? Jeffrey's well known pessimism might have made the striking of the balance different in such a matter. Not so to-day! Yet the labour of more than one man was required to put the result in the asset column.

Some mention of the non-literary matters discussed in the columns of the "Edinburgh" will demonstrate the inadequacy of labelling them merely as "political". From the very beginning the manly humour and profound sense of Sydney Smith were combined with the versatile dazzling genius of Henry Broughman, in promoting the cause, with never ceasing energy, quarter by quarter,

(1) "Literary Studies". "The First Edinburgh Reviewers". Walter Bagehot. Vol.1. P.6-7. Longman & Co.
(2) Ibid P.11.

of general education and the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. The cause of Joseph Lancaster, of unsectarian education of the poor was maintained by the former against the Mistress Trimmers of the day, with calm, crushing power.

Sydney Smith's advocacy of the cause of the yuung chimney-sweeps, and his denunciations of spring-guns and man-traps, were among the first attempts to apply a rational, reflecting humanitarianism to the minor morals of life.

In such matters did the new Review make its presence felt, and before long its projectors could look back on a long series of social reforms, which it had really been instrumental in securing for the country.

Indeed, it would almost seem from the preface to Sydney Smith's collected reviews, written by himself, that he at least considered the social and political effect of the "Edinburgh" even more important that the contribution to literature."

Smith records how in 1802 "The Catholics were not emancipated - the Corporation Test Acts were unrepealed -

the Game Laws were horribly oppressive - steel traps and spring guns were set all over the country - prisoners tried for their lives could have no counsel - Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily upon mankind - libel was punished by the most cruel and vindictive imprisonments - the principles of Political Economy were but little understood - the law of Debt and Conspiracy were upon the worst possible footing - the enormous wickedness of the slave trade was tolerated," and Smith claims very justly and proudly that, no doubt, towards the removal or alleviation of these evils, the "Edinburgh Review" "gave no small assistance."(1)

The projectors of the "Edinburgh" therefore, in the duel with the many Eldons of the day could claim the victory. "Asset" was the column in which the result could be listed.

In addition, the "Edinburgh" by its absolute independence of the trade, raised the politics of the nation from the level of libellous pamphleteering and venal journalism, in which it had been wallowing for centuries, to that of serious debate. Surely these young men under Jeffrey have left an ineradicable imprint on the pages of English politics, first in providing at the same time a rallying point and mouth-piece

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(1) "The works of the Rev. Sydney Smith", Longman, Green Longman and Roberts. London 1860. Preface P.Vl.

for the Scotch Whig party which it had really called into existence and again in constantly demanding reforms in politics which would, in all probability, have been long denied the nation but for the never-ceasing demands of the newly-aroused "Edinburgh Review" inspired Whigs.

The influence of the "Edinburgh Review" in developing and strengthening the political convictions of the Whig party cannot be over-estimated, but its power was even more visible, certainly more palpable in literature. Amid the feeble periodicals of the day, it burst like a bomb-shell. In literature, the influence of the "Edinburgh" may be said to have been two-fold, first, its influence on the authors reviewed, second its influence on periodical criticisms of literature.

The "Edinburgh", from the beginning, by the sharpness of its wit, the keenness of its criticism, and comprehensiveness of its knowledge, excited amazement and fear in the world of letters. Leslie Stephen has said, "Criticism is a still more perishable commodity than poetry",(1) but nevertheless the memory of a "perishable commodity" may be very bitter or very sweet.

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(1) "Hours in a Library." "The First Edinburgh Reviewers". Leslie Stephen. Smith, Elder & Co. London, Vol.11. P.237

As an illustration of the immense influence of the "Edinburgh", the effect on the sale of Wordsworth's works, may be considered. From time to time, it had complained of Wordsworth's poetry, and with such effect that in 1825, Coleridge wrote to Daniel Stuart, "Such has been the influence of the Edinburgh Review that in all Edinburgh, not a single copy of Wordsworth's works or of any part of them could be procured a few months ago," and then, referring to the preacher, Edward Irving, he remarked, "The only copy Irving saw in Scotland belonged to a poor weaver at Paisley."(1)

Another example which shows us the mighty force of the "Edinburgh" is found in a letter written by Byron in 1816 to Moore from Venice. He in mentioning Coleridge said, "I am very sorry that Jeffrey has attacked him, because, poor fellow, it will hurt him in mind and pocket."(2) And, a few years later, the same poet, in a letter to Murray, his publisher, wrote "Nobody could be prouder of the praises of the Edinburgh than I was, or more alive to their censure, as I showed in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."(3)

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(1) William Wordsworth": George McLean, Harper, John Murray, London, 1916. Vol.11. P.241.

(2) "The Life, Letters and Journals of Lord Byron". Thomas Moore, John Murray, 1920. P.230.

(3) Ibid. P. 464

Without a doubt, every prose author, every poet, in publishing his work, hoped for the commendation of the "Edinburgh". This may not have been justly meted out, indeed, many instances might be quoted of ill-placed praise or excessive castigation, but with it all, the "Edinburgh" we must believe attempted and did give a disinterested review of a work published.

In another manner, too, the "Edinburgh" had an immense influence. We have seen that the "Edinburgh" did affect poets and authors, but in its example to others we can see its literary influence at its greatest. Indeed, Lord Brougham in his "Memoirs" has said, "The first effect of our Review, absolutely independent of the trade and of any party in the country, local or general was to raise the character and to increase the influence of periodical criticism."(1) Another item for the "Asset" column.

In a previous chapter some mention was made of the condition of book-reviewing at the end of the eighteenth century. In a word, up to the year 1802, the producer of a critical review was nothing better than a book-seller's drudge. The establishment of the "Edinburgh" immediately

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(1) "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Lord Brougham" written by Himself, Harper & Brothers. New York 1871. Vol. 1. p. 185.

altered this condition as even its earliest readers were aware. Coleridge in his "Biographia Literaria" has in most definite terms stated, "I most willingly admit, and estimate at a high value, the services which the "Edinburgh Review", and others formed afterwards on the same plan have rendered to society in the diffusion of knowledge. I think the Edinburgh Review an important epoch in periodical criticism and that it has a claim upon the gratitude of the literary republic, and indeed of the reading public at large, for having originated the scheme of reviewing those books only which are susceptible and deserving of argumentative criticism."(1)

The influence of the "Edinburgh" as a model for others in its manner and in its independence, was great but is not to be compared in importance with the great example established by the "Edinburgh's" policy of paying and paying well for work done.

The original idea had been to run the "Edinburgh" along the same gentlemanly lines as former reviews, that is, "It was to be all gentlemen and no pay."(2) This condition, however, was soon changed, for in May, 1803, Jeffrey is found writing to Horner that in consequence of a negotiation between

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(1) Biographia Literaria. S.T. Coleridge, Oxford, 1907. Vol.11. P.86.

(2) "The Edinburgh Review". No. CCCCll. (Oct.1902) P.285

Sydney Smith and the publishers the latter were willing to pay £200 a year to the editor and £10 a sheet for contributions.

The explanation for this is probably that the success of the new review was so stupendous and the return from the sale of it so great, that the editor realized the only way to maintain the review at the high level on which it was started was by attracting first class writers only. Thus, there would be no let-down in the demand for the review, and consequently contributors might be paid highly for their work.

This was an unheard of thing in Jeffrey's day, as revolutionary as the new review was successful, and Jeffrey seems to have doubted the wisdom of the policy of paying reviewers, for he feared what he called "the interference with professional employment and character, and risk of general degradation."(1)

It is difficult in these days to realize the sort of coy feeling with which men regarded any direct pecuniary relations with the press at the beginning of the last century. Writers were regarded half with fear, half with

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(1) Quoted from " Life of Lord Jeffrey". Vol. 1. P.71. in "Life and Times of Sydney Smith", Stewart J.Reid. Sampson Low & Co. London 1884. P.62.

disdain. They had no acknowledged place in society. Even so late as 1808 the "Benchers" of Lincoln's Inn made a by-law excluding all persons who had written for the daily papers from being called to the bar.

It is needless to say that a very complete change has passed over public opinion in this matter, and the credit for this altered condition is undoubtedly due to Jeffrey and the writers for the "Edinburgh". Other reviews, founded along the same lines as the "Edinburgh" adopted the same scheme of paying reviewers, and thus the whole tone of book-reviewing was raised because once the dreaded opprobrium was removed, men of the very best type were pleased to devote their services to the new profession. Surely this great service is well placed on the balance sheet under the heading "asset".

This concludes the consideration of the good effects of the "Edinburgh" by 1829. What facts should we put in the "Asset" column, that place reserved for the items which should create happiness in the mind of the compiler? What matters would Jeffrey have inserted in that column? In 1829, if he had made a grand review of the career,

accomplishments and condition of the "Edinburgh, what facts would have pleased him?

Surely the first item on the asset column would have been the social reforms secured by the "Edinburgh", assisted by the Whig party which it had really revived. The second would probably have been the elevation of periodical criticism by improving the attitude and the tone of it, by employing well-paid, disinterested critics.

The third would have been, it is safe to assume, the contribution made to literature by supplying an authoritative source of criticism. Just what effect this may have had on authors no one can say, but if the existence of such an organ means that writers are forced to try to write better, the effect is, without a doubt, good.

The point, however, cannot be pressed. The retort might be, "What of the authors cruelly crushed by such an organ?" To which the answer suggests itself: "If an author is crushed by a harsh criticism, so that he ceases to write, he should never have started." Yes, in the asset column can be fairly added, "the good effect on authors reviewed."

As has been recorded, Jeffrey retired from the editorship of the "Edinburgh" in 1829. In season and out of season he worked for it, and he it was who did more than any other man to bring and keep the "Edinburgh Review" to the front of the best thought of the day. Truly did his biographer, Cockburn, say when Jeffrey retired, "He had a career to look back upon such as never elevated the heart of anyone who had instructed the public by periodical address." (1)

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(1) "Life of Francis Jeffrey. Lord Cockburn, Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1874. P.280

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