# A History of Booksellers




Henry Curwen

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# A

# HISTORY OF

# BOOKSELLERS,

## *THE OLD AND THE NEW*.

By HENRY CURWEN.



"In these days, ten ordinary histories of kings and courtiers were well exchanged
against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

London:
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY.



# PREFACE.



istory” has been aptly termed the “essence of innumerable biographies;” and this surely justifies us in the selection of our title; but in inditing a volume to be issued in a cheap and popular form, it was manifestly impossible to trace the careers of all the eminent members, ancient and modern, of a Trade so widely extended; had we, indeed, possessed all possible leisure for research, every available material, and a space thoroughly unlimited, it is most probable that the result would have been distinguished chiefly for its bulk, tediousness, and monotony. It was resolved, therefore, in the first planning of the volume, to primarily trace the origin and growth of the Bookselling and Publishing Trades up to a comparatively modern period; and then to select, for fuller treatment, the most typical English representatives of each one of the various branches into which a natural division of labour had subdivided the whole. And, by this plan, it is

believed that, while some firms at present growing into eminence may have been omitted, or have received but scant acknowledgment, no one Publisher or Bookseller, whose spirit and labours have as yet had time to justify a claim to a niche in the "HISTORY OF BOOKSELLERS," has been altogether passed over. In the course of our "HISTORY," too, we have been necessarily concerned with the manner of the "equipping and furnishing" of nearly every great work in our literature. So that, while on the one hand we have related the lives of a body of men singularly thrifty, able, industrious, and persevering —in some few cases singularly venturesome, liberal, and kindly-hearted—we have on the other, by our comparative view, tried to throw a fresh, at all events a concentrated, light upon the interesting story of literary struggle.

No work of the kind has ever previously been attempted, and this fact must be an apology for some, at least, of our shortcomings.

H. C.

*November, 1873.*





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# *THE BOOKSELLERS OF OLDEN TIMES.*

Long ages before the European invention of the art of printing, long even before the encroaching masses of Huns and Visigoths rolled the wave of civilization backward for a thousand years, the honourable trades, of which we aim to be in some degree the chroniclers, had their representatives and their patrons. Without going back to the libraries of Egypt —a subject fertile enough in the pages of mythical history—or to the manuscript-engrossers and sellers of Ancient Greece—though by their labours much of the world's best poetry, philosophy, and wit was garnered for a dozen centuries, like wheat ears in a mummy's tomb, to be scattered to the four winds of heaven, when the Mahometans seized upon Constantinople, thenceforth to fructify afresh, and, in connection with the art of printing, as if the old world and the new clasped hands upon promise of a better time, to be mainly instrumental in the "revival of letters"—it will be sufficient for our present purpose to know that there were in Rome, at the time of the Empire, many publishing firms, who, if

they could not altogether rival the magnates of Albemarle Street and the "Row," issued books at least as good, and, paradoxical as it may seem, at least as cheaply as their modern brethren.

To the sauntering Roman of the Augustan age literature was an essential; never, probably, till quite modern times was education—the education, at all events, that supplies a capability to read and write—so widely spread. The taste thus created was gratified in many ways. If the Romans had no Mudie, they possessed public libraries, thrown freely open to all. They had public recitations, at which unpublished and ambitious writers could find an audience; over which, too, sometimes great emperors presided, while poets, with a world-wide reputation, read aloud their favourite verses. They had newspapers, the subject-matter of which was wonderfully like our own. The principal journal, entitled *Acta Diurna*, was compiled under the sanction of the government, and hung up in some place of frequent resort for the benefit of the multitude, and was probably copied for the private accommodation of the wealthy. All public events of importance were chronicled here; the reporters, termed *actuarii*, furnished abstracts of the proceedings in the law courts and at public assemblies; there was a list of births, deaths, and marriages; and we are informed that the one article of news in which the *Acta Diurna* particularly abounded was that of reports of trials for divorce. Juvenal tells us that the women were all agog for deluges, earthquakes, and other horrors, and that the wine-merchants and traders used to invent false news in order to affect their various markets. But, in addition to all these means for gratifying the Roman taste for reading, every respectable house possessed a

library, and among the better classes the slave-readers (*anagnostæ*) and the slave-transcribers (*librarii*) were almost as indispensable as cooks and scullions. At first we find that these slaves were employed in making copies of celebrated books for their masters; but gradually the natural division of labour produced a separate class of publishers. Atticus, the Moxon of the period, and an author of similar calibre, saw an opening for his energies in the production of copies of favourite authors upon a large scale. He employed a number of slaves to copy from dictation simultaneously, and was thus able to multiply books as quickly as they were demanded. His success speedily finding imitators, among whom were Tryphon and Dorus, publishing became a recognized trade. The public they appealed to was not a small one. Martial, Ovid, and Propertius speak of their works as being known all the world over; that young and old, women and girls, in Rome and in the provinces, in Britain and in Gaul, read their verses. "Every one," says Martial, "has me in his pocket, every one has me in his hands."

"Laudat, amat, cantat nostros mea Roma libellos:
Meque sinus omnis, me manus omnis habet."

Horace speaks of the repugnance he felt at seeing his works in the hands of the vulgar. And Pliny writes that Regulus is mourning ostentatiously for the loss of his son, and no one weeps like him—*luget ut nemo*. "He composes an oration which he is not content with publicly reciting in Rome, but must needs enrich the provinces with a thousand copies of it."

School-books, too, an important item in publishing eyes, were in demand at Rome: Juvenal says that "the verses which the boy has just *conned*

*over* at his desk he stands up to repeat," and Persius tells us that poets were ambitious to be read in the schools; while Nero, in his vanity, gave special command that his verses should be placed in the hands of the students.

Thus, altogether, there must have been a large book-buying public, and this fact is still further strengthened by the cheapness of the books produced. M. Geraud[1] concludes that the prices were lower than in our own day. According to Martial the first book of his Epigrams was to be bought, neatly bound, for five denarii (nearly three shillings), but in a cheaper binding for the people it cost six to ten sestertii (a shilling to eighteenpence); his thirteenth book of Epigrams was sold for four sestertii (about eightpence), and half that price would, he says, have left a fair profit (Epig. xiii. 3). He tells us, moreover, that it would only require one hour to copy the whole of the second book,

"Hæc una peragit librarius hora."

This book contains five hundred and forty verses, and though he may be speaking with poetical licence, the system of abbreviations did undoubtedly considerably lessen the labour of transcribing, and it would be quite possible, by employing a number of transcribers simultaneously, to produce an edition of such a work in one day.

In Rome, therefore, we see that from the employment of slave labour—and some thousands of slaves were engaged in this work of transcribing—books were both plentiful and cheap.[2]




**William Caxton. The first printer at Westminster.**
**1410–1491.**



**Caxton's Monogram.**
**(*Facsimile from his Works.*)**

In the Middle Ages this state of things was entirely altered. Men were too busy in giving and receiving blows, in oppressing and being oppressed, to have the slightest leisure for book-learning. Slaves, such as then existed, were valued for far different things than reading and writing; and even their masters' kings, princes, lords, and other fighting dignitaries, would have regarded a quill-pen, in their mail-gloved hands, as a very foolish and unmanly weapon. There was absolutely no public to which bookmakers could have appealed, and the art of transcribing was confined entirely to a few monks, whose time hung heavily upon their hands; and, as a natural result, writers became, as Odofredi says, "no

longer writers but painters," and books were changed into elaborate works of art. Nor was this luxurious illumination confined to Bibles and Missals; the very law-books were resplendent, and a writer in the twelfth century complains that in Paris the Professor of Jurisprudence required two or three desks to support his copy of Ulpian, gorgeous with golden letters. No wonder that Erasmus says of the *Secunda Secundea* that "no man can carry it about, much less get it into his head."

At first there was no trade whatever in books, but gradually a system of barter sprung up between the monks of various monasteries; and with the foundation of the Universities a regular class of copyists was established to supply the wants of scholars and professors, and this improvement was greatly fostered by the invention of paper.

The booksellers of this period were called *Stationarii*, either from the practice of stationing themselves at booths or stalls in the streets (in contradistinction to the itinerant vendors) or from the other meaning of the Latin term *statio*, which is, Crevier tells us, *entrepôt* or depository, and he adds that the booksellers did little else than furnish a place of deposit, where private persons could send their manuscripts for sale. In addition to this, indeed as their chief trade, they sent out books to be read, at exorbitant prices, not in volumes, but in detached parts, according to the estimation in which the authors were held.

In Paris, where the trade of these *stationarii* was best developed, a statute regarding them was published in 1275, by which they were compelled to take the oath of allegiance once a year, or, at most, once every two years. They were forbidden by this

same statute to purchase the books placed in their hands until they had been publicly exposed for sale for at least a month; the purchase money was to be handed over direct to the proprietor, and the bookseller's commission was not to exceed one or two per cent. In addition to the *stationarii*, there were in Paris several pedlars or stall-keepers, also under University control, who were only permitted to exhibit their wares under the free heavens, or beneath the porches of churches where the schools were occasionally kept. The portal at the north end of the cross aisle in Rouen Cathedral is still called *le Portail des Libraires*.




**Wynkyn de Worde. 1493–1534. The second printer a Westminster.**

**(*From a drawing by Fathorne.*)**



**Headpiece of William Caxton.**

In England the first stationers were probably themselves the engrossers of what they sold, when the learning and literature of the country demanded as the chief food A B C's and Paternosters, Aves and Creeds, Graces and Amens. Such was the employment of our earliest stationers, as the names of their favourite haunts—Paternoster Row, Amen Corner, and Ave Maria Lane—bear ample witness; while the term stationer soon became synonymous with bookseller, and, in connection with the Stationers' Company, of no little importance, as we shall soon see, in our own bookselling annals.

In 1292, the bookselling corporation of Paris consisted of twenty-four copyists, seventeen bookbinders, nineteen parchment makers, thirteen illuminators, and eight simple dealers in manuscripts. But at the time when printing was first introduced upwards of six thousand people are said to have subsisted by copying and illuminating manuscripts—a fact that, even if exaggerated, says something for the gradual advancement of learning.

The European invention of printing, which here

can only be mentioned; the diffusion of Greek manuscripts and the ancient wisdom contained therein, consequent upon the capture of Constantinople by the Turks; the discovery of America; and, finally, the German and English religious Reformations, were so many rapid and connected strides in favour of knowledge and progress. All properly-constituted conservative minds were shocked that so many new lights should be allowed to stream in upon the world, and every conceivable let and hindrance was called up in opposition. Royal prerogatives were exercised, Papal bulls were issued, and satirists (*soi-disant*) were bitter. A French poet of this period, sneering at the invention of printing, and the discovery of the New World by Columbus, says of the press, in language conveyed by the following doggerel:—

"I've seen a mighty throng
Of printed books and long,
To draw to studious ways
The poor men of our days;
By which new-fangled practice,
We soon shall see the fact is,
Our streets will swarm with scholars
Without clean shirts or collars,
With Bibles, books, and codices
As cheap as tape for bodices."

In spite of this feeling against the popularization of learning and the spread of education—a feeling not quite dead yet, if we may trust the evidence of a few good old Tory speakers on the evil effects (forgery, larceny, and all possible violation of the ten commandments) of popular education—a feeling perhaps subsiding, for a country gentleman of the old school told us recently that he "would wish every

working man to read the Bible—the Bible only—and *that* with difficulty"—a progressive sign—the world was too well aware of the good to be gathered from the furtherance of these novelties to willingly let them die, and though the battle was from the first a hard one, it has been, from first to last, a winning battle.




**Richard Pynson. Died about 1530.**



**Monogram used by Richard Pynson.**

It will be essential throughout this chapter, and indeed throughout the whole work, to bear in mind that it was not till quite modern times that a separate class was formed to buy copyrights, to employ printers, and to sell the books wholesale, to which their names were affixed on the title-pages—to be in fact, in the modern acceptation of the word, Publishers. There was no such class among the old booksellers; but they had to do everything for themselves, to construct the types, presses, and other essentials for printing, to bind the sheets when printed, and finally, when the books were manufactured, to sell them to the general public. For long, many of the booksellers had printing offices; they all, of course, kept shops, at which not only

printed books but stationery was retailed; bookbinders were not unfrequent among them; and, to very recent times, they were the chief proprietors of newspapers, a branch of the trade that appears, from some modern instances, to be again falling in their direction.

In England the printing press found a sure asylum, but at first the books printed were very few in number and the issue of each book small. The works produced by Caxton consisted almost entirely of translations. “Divers famous clerks and learned men,” says one of the early printers, “translated and made many noble works into our English tongue. Whereby there was much more plenty and abundance of English used than there was in times past.” Wynkyn de Worde followed closely in his master’s footsteps; but soon a new source of employment for the press was discovered, and De Worde turned his attention to the production of *Accidences*, *Lucidaries*, *Orchards of Words*, *Promptuaries for Little Children*, and the like. With the Reformation came of course a great demand for Bibles, and, between the years 1526 and 1600, so great was the rush for this new supply of hitherto forbidden knowledge that we have no less than three hundred and twenty-six editions, or parts of editions, of the English Bible.

In the “Typographical Antiquities” of Ames and Herbert are recorded the names of three hundred and fifty printers in England and Scotland, who flourished between 1474 and 1600. Though these “printers” were also booksellers, their history belongs more properly to the annals of printing. We will, therefore, confine ourselves to a preliminary account of the Stationers’ Company, and then enter forthwith

upon such biographical sketches as our space will allow, of the men who may be regarded, if not uniformly in the modern sense as publishers, at any rate as the representative booksellers of old London.

The “Stationers or Text-writers who wrote and sold all sorts of books then in use” were first formed into a guild in the year 1403, by the authority of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, and possessed ordinances made for the good government of their fellowship; and thus constituted they assembled regularly in their first hall in Milk Street under the government of a master and two wardens; but no privilege or charter has ever been discovered, under which, at that period, they acted as a corporate body. The Company had, however, no control over printed books until they received their first charter from Mary and Philip on 4th May 1557. The object of the charter is thus set forth in the preamble: “Know ye that we, considering and manifestly perceiving that several seditious and heretical books, both in verse and prose, are daily published, stamped and printed, by divers scandalous, schismatical, and heretical persons, not only exciting our subjects and liege-men to sedition and disobedience against us, our crown and dignity; but also to the renewal and propagating very great and detestable heresies against the faith and sound Catholic doctrine of Holy Mother the Church; and being willing to provide a proper remedy in this case,” &c. The powers granted to the Company by this charter were, verbally, absolute. Not only were they to search out, seize, and destroy books printed in contravention of the monopoly, or against the faith and sound Catholic doctrine of Holy Mother Church; but they might seize, take away, have, burn, or convert to their own use, whatever they should *think* was printed contrary

to the form of any statute, act, or proclamation, made or *to be* made. And this charter renewed by Elizabeth in 1588, amplified by Charles II. in 1684, and confirmed by William and Mary in 1690, is still virtually in existence. It is scarcely strange that such enormous powers as these were but little respected; indeed Queen Elizabeth herself was one of the first to invade their privileges, and she granted the following, among other monopolies, away from the Stationers' Company:—

To Byrde, the printing of music books.
To Serres, psalters, primers, and prayer books.
To Flower, grammars.
To Tothill, law books.
To Judge (the Queen's Printer), Bibles and Testaments.
To Watkin and Roberts, almanacs and prognostications.
To Vautrollier, Latin Testaments and other Latin books.
To Marsh, school-books.
To Day, A B C's and catechisms.

(This last had his printing office in Moorgate Street, ornamented with the motto, "Arise, for it is Day!")

The Stationers' Company, sorely damaged in trade by the sudden and almost entire loss of their privileges, petitioned the Queen, representing that they were subject to certain levies, that they supplied when called upon a number of armed men, and that they expected to derive some benefit when they underwent these liabilities. As a reply they were severely reprimanded for daring to question the Queen's prerogative, upon which they petitioned

again, but more humbly, that they might at least be placed on an equal footing with the interlopers, and be permitted to print something or other. Her Majesty was shortly pleased to sanction an arrangement by which they were to possess the exclusive right of printing and selling psalters, primers, almanacs, and books tending to the same purpose—the *A B C*'s, the *Little Catechism*, Nowell's *English* and *Latin Catechisms*, &c.

Ward, and Wolf a fishmonger, however, disputed the power of the Company, declaring it to be lawful, according to the written law of the land, for any printer to print all books; and when the Master and Wardens of the Company went to search Ward's house, preparatory to seizing, burning, or conveying away his books, they were ignominiously defeated by his wife. The Lord Treasurer likewise sent commissioners thither, "but they, too, could bring him to nothing."

Learning from this how useless the tremendous powers conferred upon them by their charter really were, the Stationers' Company took a wiser course and subscribed £15,000 to print the books in which they had the exclusive property.




**Richard Grafton, English Printer and Historian. Died
Common Prayer.**




**John Wight or Wyghte. Was living in 1551**

The "entry" of copies at Stationers' Hall was commenced in 1558, but without the delivery of any books, and these entries seem originally to have been intended by the booksellers of the Company to make known to each other their respective copyrights, and to act as advertisements of the works thus entered. Half a century later, Sir Thomas Bodley was appointed librarian at Oxford, and so great was his zeal for obtaining books that he persuaded the Company of Stationers in London to give him a copy of every book that was printed, and this voluntary offering was rendered compulsory by the celebrated Licensing Act of 1663, which prohibited the publication of any book unless licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, and entered in the Stationers' Registers, and which fixed the number of copies to

be presented gratis at three. In the reign of William and Mary the liberty of the press was restored, but in the new Act the door was unfortunately thrown open to infractions of literary property by clandestine editions of books, and in the following reign the property of copyright was secured for fourteen years, though the perpetuity of copyright was still vulgarly believed in, and, by the better class of booksellers, still respected. The number of compulsory presentation copies was gradually increased to eleven, forming a very heavy tax upon expensive books, and was only in our own times reduced to five. At present the registration of books at Stationers' Hall is quite independent of the presentations, which are still compulsory. The fee for the registration or assignment of a copyright is five shillings.

By the end of the last century all the privileges and monopolies of the Company had been shredded away till they had nothing left but the right to publish a common Latin primer and almanacs. In 1775 J. Carnan,[3] an enterprizing tradesman, questioning the legality of the latter monopoly, published an almanac on his own account, and defended himself against an action brought by the Company in which the monopoly was declared worthless. As, however, the Company still paid the Universities for the lease of the sole right to publish almanacs, they endeavoured to recover their privilege by Act of Parliament, but were defeated by Erskine in a memorable speech, who showed that, while supposed to be protectors of the order and the decencies of the press, the Company had not only entirely omitted to exercise their duties, but that, even in using their privileges, they had, to increase their revenue, printed, in the "Poor Robin's" and

other almanacs, the most revolting indecencies; and the question was decided against them.



Rayne Wolfe.
Paul's Churchyard.

King Henry VIII.'s
printer.



**1547.**




**John Day or Daye. "A famous printer. H**
**1522–1584.**

The "earliest men of letters"—if we accept the word in its modern meaning of those who earn their bread by their pens—were the dramatists; but the publication of their plays was a mere appendix to the acting thereof, and Shakespeare never drew a penny from the printing of his works. The Elizabethan dramatists—the Greenes and Marlowes—led a life of wretchedness only paralleled later on by the annals of Grub Street. As the use of the printing press expanded, however, a race of authors by profession sprang into existence. At the time of the Commonwealth James Howell, author of the

"Epistolæ Ho-elianæ," who was thrown into the Fleet prison, appears to have made his bread by scribbling for the booksellers; Thomas Fuller, also, was among the first, as well as the quaintest, hack-writers; he observes, in the preface to his "Worthies," that no stationers have hitherto lost by him. His "Holy State" was reprinted four times before the Restoration, but the publisher continued to describe the last two impressions, on the title-page, as only the third edition, as if he were unwilling that the extent of the popularity should be known—a fact probably unprecedented. But still the great writers had either private means, or lived on the patronage of rank and wealth; for the reward of a successful book in those days did not lie in so much hard cash from one's publisher, but in hopes of favour and places from the great. The famous agreement between Milton and Samuel Simmons, a printer, is one of the earliest authenticated agreements of copy money being given for an original work; it was executed on April 27th, 1667, and disposes of the copyright of "Paradise Lost" for the present sum of five pounds, and five pounds more when 1300 copies of the first impression should be sold in retail, and the like sum at the end of the second and third editions, *to be accounted as aforesaid; and that* (each of) *the said first three impressions shall not exceed fifteen books or volumes of the said manuscript*. The price of the small quarto edition was three shillings in a plain binding. Probably, as Sir Walter Scott remarks, the trade had no very good bargain of it, for the first impression of the poem does not seem to have been sold off before the expiration of seven years, nor till the bookseller (in accordance with a practice nor confined solely to that age) had given it five new title-pages. The second five pounds was received by Milton, and in

1680, for the present sum of eight pounds, his widow resigned all further right in the copyright, and thus the poem was sold for eighteen pounds instead of the stipulated twenty. The whole transaction must be regarded rather as an entire novelty, than as an example of a bookseller's meanness—a view too often unjustly taken.

The first "eminent man of letters" was Dryden, who serves us as a connecting link between those who earned their livelihood by writing for the stage and those who earned it by working for the booksellers, and the first "eminent publisher" was Jacob Tonson, his bookseller. Dryden, like his predecessors, commenced life as a dramatist, but in his times plays acquired a marketable value elsewhere than on the stage. Before Tonson started, Dryden's works—almost entirely plays—were sold by Herringman, the chief bookseller in London, says Mr. Peter Cunningham, before Tonson's time; but now only remembered because Dryden lodged at his house, taking his money out in kind, as authors then often did.



**Jacob Tonson.**
**1656–1736.**
**(*From the Portrait by Kneller.*)**

Jacob Tonson, born in 1656, was the son of a

barber-surgeon in Holborn, who died when his two sons were both very young, leaving them each a hundred pounds to be paid them on their coming of age. The two lads resolved to become printers and booksellers, and, at fourteen, Jacob was apprenticed to Thomas Barnet. After serving the usual term of seven years he was admitted to the freedom of the Stationers' Company, and immediately commenced business with his small capital at the Judge's House, in Chancery Lane, close to the corner of Fleet Street. Like many other publishers he began trade by selling second-hand books and those produced by other firms, but he soon issued plays on his own account; finding, however, that the works of Otway and Tate, which were among his first attempts, had no very extensive sale, he boldly made a bid for Dryden's next play, but the twenty pounds required by the author was too great a venture for his small capital, so "Troilus and Cressida; or Truth found too Late," was published conjointly by Tonson and Levalle in 1679. This connection with Dryden, which lasted till the poet's death, was of only less importance to the furtherance of Tonson's fortune than a bargain concluded four years later with Brabazon Aylmer for one-half of his interest in the "Paradise Lost," which Dryden told him was one of the greatest poems England had ever produced. Still he waited four years before he ventured to publish, and then only by the safe method of subscription, and in 1788 the folio edition came out, and by the sale of this and future editions Tonson was, according to Disraeli, enabled to keep his carriage. The other moiety of the copyright was subsequently purchased. There is a pleasant description of Tonson, in these early days, in a short poem by Rowe:—

"While in your early days of reputation

You for blue garter had not such a passion,
While yet you did not live, as now your trade is,
To drink with noble lords and toast their ladies,
Thou Jacob Tonson, wert, to my conceiving,
The cheerfullest, best honest fellow living."

From John Dunton, the bookseller, we get the following description:—"He was bookseller to the famous Dryden, and is himself a very good judge of persons and authors; and, as there is nobody more competently qualified to give their opinion upon another, so there is none who does it with a more severe exactness, or with less partiality; for, to do Mr. Tonson justice, he speaks his mind upon all occasions, and will flatter nobody."

Not only did Tonson first make "Paradise Lost" popular, but some years afterwards he was the first bookseller to throw Shakespeare open to a reading public.

Then, as now, however, the works in most urgent demand were "novelties," and with these Dryden supplied his publisher as fast almost as pen could drive upon paper. From the correspondence between Dryden and Tonson, printed in Scott's edition of the poet's works, they seem to have been privately on very friendly terms, falling out only when agreements were to be signed or payments to be made. Tonson was at this time publishing what are sometimes known as *Tonson's*, sometimes as *Dryden's*, *Miscellany Poems*, written, so the title-pages averred, by the "most eminent hands." *Apropos* of this, Pope writes, "Jacob creates poets as kings create knights, not for their honour, but for their money. I can be satisfied with a bare saving gain without being thought an eminent hand." The first volume of the "Miscellany" was published in 1684, and the second

in the following year, and of this second, Dryden writes, after thanking the bookseller for two melons —"since we are to have nothing but new, I am resolved we shall have nothing but good, whomever we disoblige." The third "Miscellany" was published in 1693, and Tonson sends an earnest letter of remonstrance anent the amount of "copy" received of the translation of Ovid:—"You may please, sir, to remember that upon my first proposal about the third 'Miscellany,' I offered fifty pounds, and talked of several authors without naming Ovid. You asked if it should not be guineas, and said I should not repent it; upon which I immediately complied, and left it wholly to you what, and for the quantity too; and I declare it was the furthest in the world from my thoughts that by leaving it to you I should have the less." He proceeds to show that Dryden had sold a previous, though recent translation to another bookseller at the rate of 1518 lines for forty guineas, while he adds, "all that I have for fifty guineas are but 1446; so that if I have no more, I pay ten guineas above forty, and have 72 lines less for fifty in proportion. I own, if you don't think fit to add something more, I must submit; 'tis wholly at your choice, for I left it entirely to you; but I believe you cannot imagine I expected so little; for you were pleased to use me much kindlier in Juvenal, which is not reckoned so easy to translate as Ovid. Sir, I humbly beg your pardon for this long letter, and, upon my word, I had rather have your good will than any man's alive."

These were hard times for Dryden, for through the change of government he had been deprived of the laureateship, and it is little likely that Tonson ever received his additional lines or recovered his money. Frequent at this period were the bickerings

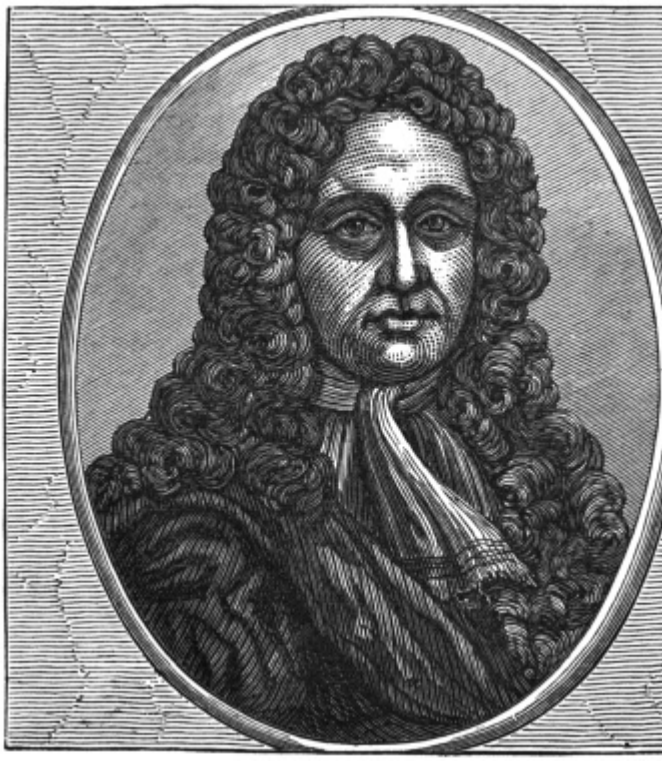
between them. On one occasion, the bookseller having refused to advance a sum of money, the poet forwarded the following triplet with the significant message, “Tell the dog that he who wrote these lines can write more:”—

“With leering looks, bull-faced and freckled fair,
With two left legs, with Judas-coloured hair,
And frowsy pores that taint the ambient air.”

The descriptive hint is said to have been successful. On another occasion, when Bolingbroke was visiting Dryden, they heard a footstep. “This,” said Dryden, “is Tonson; you will take care not to depart before he goes away; for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and, if you leave me unprotected, I shall suffer all the rudeness to which resentment can prompt his tongue.” And yet, almost at this period, we find Dryden writing, “I am much ashamed of myself that I am so much behindhand with you in kindness.”




**Richard Jones, Jhones, or Johnes, English P**



**John Dunton.**
**1659–1733.**

Dryden's translations of the classics had been most successful in selling off the "Miscellanies" very rapidly, and Tonson now induced the author, by the offer of very liberal terms, to commence a translation of Virgil. As usual, the preliminary terms were to be settled in a tavern—a custom between authors and booksellers that seems to have been universal. "Be ready," writes Dryden, "with the price of paper, and of the books. No matter for any dinner; for that is a charge to you, and I care not for it. Mr. Congreve

may be with us as a common friend." There were two classes of subscribers, the first of whom paid five guineas each, and were individually honoured with the dedication of a plate, with their arms engraved underneath; the second class paid two guineas only. The first class numbered 101, and the second 250, and the money thus received, minus the expense of the engravings, was handed over to Dryden, who received in addition from Tonson fifty guineas a book for the *Georgics* and *Æneid*, and probably the same for the *Pastorals* collectively. But the price actually charged to the subscribers of the second class appears to have been exorbitant, and reduced the amount of Dryden's profits to about twelve or thirteen hundred pounds—still a very large sum in those days. Frequent, however, were the disputes between them during the progress of the work. The currency at this time was terribly deteriorated. In October, 1695, the poet writes, "I expect fifty pounds in good silver: not such as I have had formerly. I am not obliged to take gold, neither will I; nor stay for it beyond four-and-twenty hours after it is due." Good silver, however, was very scarce, and was at a premium of forty per cent; so after a year's wrangling he had to put up with the fate of all who then sold labour for money. "The Notes and Queries," continues Dryden, perhaps as a gibe at Jacob's parsimony, "shall be short; because you shall get the more by saving paper." Again he attacks him, this time half playfully:—"Upon trial I find all of your trade are sharpers, and you not more than others; therefore I have not wholly left you." Tonson all along wished to dedicate the work to King William, but Dryden, a staunch Tory, would not yield a tittle of his political principles, so the bookseller consoled himself by slyly ordering all the pictures of Æneas in

the engravings to be drawn with William's characteristic hooked nose; a manœuvre that gave rise to the following:—

"Old Jacob, by deep judgments swayed,
To please the wise beholders,
Has placed old Nassau's hook-nosed head
On young Æneas' shoulders.

"To make the parallel hold tack,
Methinks there's little lacking;
One took his father pick-a-back,
And t'other sent his packing."

In December, 1699, Dryden finished his last work, the "Fables," for which "ten thousand verses" he was paid the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas, with fifty more to be added at the beginning of the second impression. In this volume was included his Ode to St. Cecilia, which had first been performed at the Music Feast kept in Stationers' Hall, on the 22nd of November, 1697.

In 1700 the poet died, but Tonson was by this time in affluent circumstances.

About the date of Dryden's death, probably before it, as his portrait was included among the other members, the famous Kit-Cat Club was founded by Tonson. Various are the derivations of the club. The most circumstantial account of its origin is given by the scurrilous writer, Ned Ward, in his "Secret History of Clubs." It was established, he says, "by an amphibious mortal, chief merchant to the Muses, to inveigle new profitable chaps, who, having more wit than experience, put but a slender value as yet upon their maiden performances." (Tonson must have been a rare publisher if he found "new chaps" to be

in any way profitable.) With the usual custom of the times, Tonson was always ready to give his author, especially upon concluding a bargain, wherewithal to drink, but he now proposed to add pastry in the shape of mutton pies, and, according to Ward, promises to make the meeting weekly, provided his clients would give him the first refusal of their productions. This generous proposal was very readily agreed to by the whole poetic class, and the cook's name being Christopher, called for brevity Kit, and his sign the Cat and Fiddle, they very merrily derived a quaint denomination from puss and her master, and from thence called themselves the Kit-Cat Club. According to Arbuthnot, their toasting-glasses had verses upon them in honour of "old cats and young kits," and many of these toasts were printed in Tonson's fifth "Miscellany." At first they met in Shire Lane, (Ward says Gray's Inn Lane), and subsequently at the Fountain Tavern in the Strand. In a short time the chief men of letters having joined the club, "many of the quality grew fond of sharing the everlasting honour that was likely to crown the poetical society." Sir Godfrey Kneller, himself a member, painted portraits of all the members, commencing with the Duke of Somerset, and these were hung round the club-room at Tonson's country house at Water Oakeley, where the members of the club were in after-times wont to meet. The tone of the club-room became decidedly political, and interesting as it is, our space forbids us to do more than give the following lines from "Faction Displayed" (1705), which, by-the-way, quotes Dryden's threatening triplet, already alluded to:—

"I am the Touchstone of all modern wit;
Without my stump, in vain you poets writ.
Those only purchase everlasting fame

That in my ‘Miscellany’ plant their name.
I am the founder of your loved Kit-Kat,
A Club that gave direction to the state.
’Twas here we first instructed all our youth
To talk profane and laugh at sacred truth;
We taught them how to toast and rhyme and bite,
To sleep away the day, and drink away the night.”

By this time Tonson had taken his nephew into partnership, had left his old shop in Chancery Lane, and changed his sign from the “Judge’s Head” to the “Shakespeare’s Head;” and he and his descendants had certainly a right to the latter symbol, for the editions of Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Warburton, Johnson, and Capell, were all associated with their name. The following schedule of the prices paid to the various editors possesses some bibliographical interest:—

| | £ | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rowe | 36 | 10 | 0 |
| Hughes | 28 | 7 | 0 |
| Pope | 217 | 12 | 0 |
| Fenton | 30 | 14 | 0 |
| Gay | 35 | 17 | 6 |
| Whalley | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Theobald | 652 | 10 | 0 |
| Warburton | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| Capell | 300 | 0 | 0 |
| Dr. Johnson, for 1st edition. | 375 | 0 | 0 |
| ” for 2nd edition. | 100 | 0 | 0 |

Upon Dryden’s death Tonson had looked round anxiously for a likely successor, and had made

humble overtures to Pope, and in his later "Miscellanies" appeared some of Pope's earliest writings; but Pope soon deserted to Tonson's only rival—Bernard Lintot, who also opposed him in an offer to publish a work of Dr. Young's. The poet answered both letters the same morning, but unfortunately cross-directed them: in the one intended for Tonson he said that Lintot was so great a scoundrel that printing with him was out of the question, and in Lintot's that Tonson was an old rascal.

Jacob Tonson died in 1736, and is reported on his death-bed to have said—"I wish I had the world to begin again, because then I should have died worth a hundred thousand pounds, whereas now I die worth only eighty thousand;"—a very improbable story, for, in spite of Dryden's complaints, Tonson seems to have been a generous man for the times, and to have fully earned his title of the "prince of booksellers." His nephew died a few months before this, and was succeeded by his son, Jacob Tonson the third, who carried on the business in the same shop opposite Catherine Street in the Strand, until his removal across the road, only a short time before his death. He died in 1767, when the time-honoured name was erased from the list of booksellers.

Bernard Lintot, or, as he originally wrote his name, Barnaby Lintott, was the son of a Sussex yeoman, and commenced business as a bookseller at the sign of the Cross Keys, between the Temple Gates, in the year 1700. He is thus characterized by John Dunton—"He lately published a collection of *Tragic Tales*, &c., by which I perceive he is angry with the world, and scorns it into the bargain; and I cannot blame him: for D'Urfey (his author) both

treats and esteems it as it deserves; too hard a task for those whom it flatters; or perhaps for Bernard himself, should the world ever change its humour and grin upon him. However, to do Mr. Lintot justice, he is a man of very good principles, and I dare engage will never want an author of *Sol-fa*,[4] so long as the play-house will encourage his comedies." The world, however, did grin upon him, for in 1712 he set up a "Miscellany" intended to rival Tonson's, and here appeared the first sketch of the "Rape of the Lock," and this introduction to Pope was to turn out of as much importance in his fortunes as the previous connection with Dryden had been to Tonson.

A memorandum-book, preserved by Nichols, contains an exact account of the money paid by Lintot to his various authors. Here are the receipts for Pope's entire works:—

| | £ | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1712, Feb. 19. Statius, first book; Vertumnus and Pomona | 16 | 2 | 6 |
| 1712, March 21. First edition of the Rape | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 1712, April 9. To a Lady presenting Voiture upon Silence to the author of a Poem called Successio | 3 | 16 | 6 |
| 1712–13, Feb. 23. Windsor Forest | 32 | 5 | 0 |
| 1713, July 22. Ode on St. Cecilia's Day | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| 1714, Feb. 20. Additions to the Rape | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| 1715, Feb. 1. Temple of Fame | 32 | 5 | 0 |
| 1715, April 31. Key to the Lock | 10 | 15 | 0 |
| 1716, July 17. Essay on Criticism | 15 | 0 | 0 |

In 1712 Pope, mindful of Dryden's success,

commenced his translation of Homer, and in 1714 Lintot, equally mindful probably of the profits Tonson had derived from Virgil, made a splendid offer for its publication. He agreed to provide at his own expense all the subscription and presentation copies, and in addition to pay the author two hundred pounds per volume. The Homer was to consist of six quarto volumes, to be delivered to subscribers, as completed, at a guinea a volume, and through the unremitting labours of the poet's literary and political friends, six hundred and fifty-four copies were delivered at the original rate, and Pope realized altogether the munificent sum of five thousand, three hundred and twenty pounds, four shillings.

It was probably just after the publication of the first volume, in August, 1714, that Pope wrote his exquisitely humorous letter to the Earl of Burlington, describing a journey to Oxford, made in company with Lintot. "My lord, if your mare could speak, she would give an account of what extraordinary company she had on the road; which since she cannot do, I will." Lintot had heard that Pope was "designed for Oxford, the seat of the Muses, and would, as my bookseller, by all means accompany me thither.... Mr. Lintot began in this manner: 'Now, damn them, what if they should put it in the newspapers, how you and I went together to Oxford? What would I care? If I should go down into Sussex, they would say I was gone to the Speaker. But what of that? If my son were but big enough to go on with the business, by God! I would keep as good company as old Jacob.'... As Mr. Lintot was talking I observed he sat uneasy on his saddle, for which I expressed some solicitude. '"Tis nothing,' says he; 'I can bear it well enough, but since we have the day before us,

methinks it would be very pleasant for you to rest awhile under the woods.' When we alighted, 'See here, what a mighty pretty Horace I have in my pocket! what if you amused yourself by turning an ode, till we mount again? Lord, if you pleased, what a clever Miscellany might you make at leisure hours.' 'Perhaps I may,' said I, 'if we ride on; the motion is an aid to my fancy, a round trot very much awakens my spirits; then jog on apace, and I'll think as hard as I can.'

"Silence ensued for a full hour, after which Mr. Lintot tugged the reins, stopped short and broke out, 'Well, sir, how far have you gone?' I answered, 'Seven miles.' 'Zounds, sir,' said Lintot, 'I thought you had done seven stanzas. Oldworth, in a ramble round Wimbleton hill, would translate a whole ode in half this time. I'll say that for Oldworth (though I lost by his Sir Timothy's), he translates an ode of Horace the quickest of any man in England. I remember Dr. King would write verses in a tavern three hours after he could not speak; and there's Sir Richard, in that rambling old chariot of his, between Fleet ditch and St. Giles's pound shall make half a job.' 'Pray, Mr. Lintot,' said I, 'now you talk of translators, what is your method of managing them?' 'Sir,' replied he, 'those are the saddest pack of rogues in the world; in a hungry fit, they'll swear they understand all the languages in the universe. I have known one of them take down a Greek book upon my counter and cry, Ay, this is Hebrew. I must read it from the latter end. My God! I can never be sure of those fellows, for I neither understand Greek, Latin, French nor Italian myself.' 'Pray tell me next how you deal with the critics.' 'Sir', said he, 'nothing more easy. I can silence the most formidable of them; the rich ones for a sheet a-piece of the blotted manuscript, which

costs me nothing; they'll go about to their acquaintance and pretend they had it from the author, who submitted to their correction: this has given some of them such an air, that in time they come to be consulted with, and dictated to as the top critic of the town. As for the poor critics, I'll give you one instance of my management, by which you may guess at the rest. A lean man, that looks like a very good scholar, came to me t'other day; he turned over your Homer, shook his head, shrugged up his shoulders, and pished at every line of it. One would wonder, says he, at the strange presumption of some men; Homer is no such easy task, that every stripling, every versifier—He was going on, when my wife called to dinner. 'Sir,' said I, 'will you please to eat a piece of beef with me?' 'Mr. Lintot,' said he, 'I am sorry you should be at the expense of this great book; I am really concerned on your account.' 'Sir, I am much obliged to you; if you can dine upon a piece of beef, together with a slice of pudding.' 'Mr. Lintot, I do not say but Mr. Pope, if he would condescend to advise with men of learning—' 'Sir, the pudding is on the table, if you please to go in.' My critic complies, he comes to a taste of your poetry, and tells me in the same breath that the book is commendable and the pudding excellent. These, my lord, are a few traits by which you may discern the genius of Mr. Lintot, which I have chosen for the subject of a letter. I dropt him as soon as I got to Oxford."

Pope's *Iliad* took longer in coming out than was expected. Gay writes facetiously, "Mr. Pope's *Homer* is retarded by the great rains that have fallen of late, which causes the sheets to be long a-drying." However, in 1718, the six volumes had been completely delivered to the subscribers, and three

days afterwards Tonson announced, as a rival, the first book of Homer's *Iliad*, translated by Mr. Tickell. "I send the book," writes Lintot to Pope, "to divert an hour, it is already condemned here; and the malice and juggle at Button's (for Addison had assisted Tickell in the attempted rivalry) is the conversation of those who have spare moments from politics."

Lintot intended to reimburse his expenses by a cheap edition, but here he was anticipated by the piratical dealers, who caused a cheap edition to be published in Holland; a nefarious proceeding that Lintot met by bringing out a duodecimo edition at half-a-crown a volume, "finely printed from an Elzevir letter."

The *Odyssey* was published in 1725, likewise by subscription, and Pope gained nearly three thousand pounds by the transaction, avowing, however, that he had only "undertaken" the translation, and had been assisted by friends; and "undertaker Pope" became a favourite byword among his many unfriendly contemporaries. Lintot was, however, disappointed with his share of the profits, and, pretending to have found something invalid in the agreement, threatened a suit in Chancery. Pope denied this, quarrelled, and finally left him, and turned his rancour to good account in the pages of the *Dunciad*.

By this time Lintot's fortunes were firmly assured. Pope was, says Mr. Singer, "at first apprehensive that the contract (for the *Iliad*) might ruin Lintot, and endeavoured to dissuade him from thinking any more of it. The event, however, proved quite the reverse. The success of the work was so unparalleled as to at once enrich the bookseller, and prove a productive estate to his family," and he must

have certainly been progressing when Humphrey Walden, custodian of the Earl of Oxford's heraldic manuscripts, made, in 1726, the following entry in his diary: "Young Mr. Lintot, the bookseller, came inquiring after *arms*, as belonging to his father, mother and other relations, who now, it seems, want to turn gentlefolks. I could find none of their names." "Young Mr. Lintot" was Bernard's son and successor —Henry.

There was scarcely a writer of eminence in the "Augustan Era," whose name is not to be found in Lintot's little account book of moneys paid. In 1730, however, he appears to have relinquished his business and retired to Horsham in Sussex, for which county he was nominated High Sheriff, in November, 1735, an honour which he did not live to enjoy, and which was consequently transferred to his son. Henry Lintot died in 1758, leaving £45,000 to his only daughter, Catherine.

Edmund Curll is, perhaps, as a name, better known to casual readers than any other bookseller of this period, and it is not a little comforting to find that the obloquy with which he has ever been associated was richly merited. He was born in the west of England, and after passing through several menial capacities, became a bookseller's assistant, and then kept a stall in the purlieus of Covent Garden. The year of his birth is unknown, and the writer of a contemporary memoir, *The Life and Writings of E. C—l*, who prophesied that "if he go on in the paths of glory he has hitherto trod," his name would appear in the *Newgate Calendar*, has unluckily been deceived. He appears to have first commenced publishing in the year 1708, and to have combined that honourable task with the vending of quack pills

and powders for the afflicted. The first book he published was *An Explication of a Famous Passage in the Dialogue of St. Justin Martyr with Typhon, concerning the Immortality of Human Souls*, bearing the date of 1708; and, curiously enough, religious books formed in aftertime a very large portion of his stock, side by side, of course, with the most filthy and ribald works that have ever been issued.

In 1716 began his quarrel with Pope, originating as far as we know in the publication of the *Court Poems*, the advertisement of which said that the coffee-house critics assigned them either to a Lady of Quality, Mr. Gay, or the translator of *Homer*. It is not clear now whether Pope was really annoyed by the appearance of the volume, or whether he had first secretly promoted it, and then endeavoured to divert suspicion. At all events, he had a meeting with Curll at the "Swan Tavern," in Fleet Street, where, writes the bookseller, "My brother, Lintot, drank his half-pint of old hock, Mr. Pope his half-pint of sack, and I the same quantity of an emetic powder; but no threatenings past. Mr. Pope, indeed, said that no satire should be printed (tho' he has now changed his mind). I answered that they should not be wrote, for if they were they would be printed." Curll, on entering the tavern, declared he had been poisoned, and for months the town was amused with broadsides and pamphlets relative to the affair. Pope afterwards published his version of the story in his *Miscellanies*; the "Full and True Account" is, however, as gross and unquotable as Curll's own worst publication.

Later on in the same year the bookseller fell into a fresh scrape. A Latin discourse had been pronounced at the funeral of Robert South by the

captain of Westminster School, and Curll, thinking it would be readily purchased by the public,

> "did th' oration print,
> Imperfect, with false Latin in't,"

and thereby aroused the anger of the Westminster scholars, who enticed him into Dean's Yard on the pretence of giving him a more perfect copy; there, he met with a college salutation, for he was first presented with the ceremony of the blanket, in which, "when the skeleton had been well shook, he was carried in triumph to the school, and, after receiving a mathematical construction for his false concords, he was re-conducted to Dean's Yard, and on his knees asking pardon of the aforesaid Mr. Barber (the captain whose Latin he had murdered) for his offence, he was kicked out of the yard, and left to the huzzas of the rabble."

No sooner was Curll out of one scrape than he fell into another; for, still in this same year, he was summoned to the bar of the House of Lords for printing and publishing a paper entitled *An Account of the Trial of the Earl of Winton*, a breach of the standing orders of the House. However, having received kneeling a reprimand from the Lord Chancellor, he was dismissed upon payment of the fees.

While the authorities were quick enough to punish any violation of their own peculiar privileges, they were graciously pleased to wink at the perpetual offences Curll was committing against public morals, for Curll was a strong politician on the safe party side, and in his political publications had in view the interests of the government. However, he was attacked on all sides by public opinion and the

press. *Mist's Weekly Journal* for April 5, 1718, contained a very strong article on the "Sin of Curllicism." "There is indeed but one bookseller eminent among us for this abomination, and from him the crime takes its just denomination of Curllicism. The fellow is a contemptible wretch a thousand ways; he is odious in his person, scandalous in his fame; ... more beastly, insufferable books have been published by this one offender than in thirty years before by all the nation." Curll, "the Dauntless," did not long remain in silence, and his reply is characteristically outspoken, for the writer was never a coward. "Your superannuated letter-writer was never more out than when he asserted that Curllicism was but of four years' standing. Poor wretch! he is but a novice in chronology;" and then, after threatening the journalist with the terrors of an outraged government, he concludes "in the words of a late eminent controvertist, the Dean of Chichester."

Curll was fond of the dignitaries of the Church, and endeavoured to play a shrewd trick upon one of them; he sent a copy of Lord Rochester's *Poems* (certainly not the most innocent book he published) to Dr. Robinson, Bishop of London, with a tender of his duty, and a request that his lordship would please to revise the interleaved volume as he thought fit; but the bishop, not to be caught, "smiled" and said, "I am told that Mr. Curll is a shrewd man, and should I revise the book you have brought me, he would publish it as approved by me."[5]

Public dissatisfaction seems to have been expressed more forcibly against Curll than heretofore, and to have taken the form of a remonstrance to government, for he published *The Humble Representation of Edmund Curll, Bookseller and*

*Citizen of London, containing Five Books complained of to the Secretary*. As the books were eminently of a nature requiring an apology, we cannot do more than give their titles: 1. *The Translation of Meibomius and Tractatus de Hermaphroditis*; 2. *Venus in the Cloister*; 3. *Ebrietatis Encomium*; 4. *Three New Poems, viz. Family Duty, The Curious Wife, and Buckingham House*; and 5. *De Secretis Mulierum*. At last the government did interfere, as we learn from a notice in *Boyer's Political State*, Nov. 1725:—

"On Nov. 30, 1725, Curll, a bookseller in the Strand, was tried at the King's Bench Bar, Westminster, and convicted of printing and publishing several obscene and immodest books, greatly tending to the corruption and depravation of manners, particularly one translated from a Latin treatise entitled *De Usu Flagrorum in Re Venereâ*; and another from a French book called *La Religieuse en Chemise*." In the indictment Curll is thus accurately summed up: *homo iniquus et sceleratus ac nequiter machinans et intendens bonos mores subditorum hujus regni corrumpere et eos ad nequitiam inducere*; and in the *State Trials* we read the following report of the sentence:—

"This Edmund Curll stood in the pillory at Charing Cross, but was not pelted or used ill; for being an artful, cunning (though wicked) fellow, he had contrived to have printed papers dispersed all about Charing Cross, telling the people how he stood there for vindicating the memory of Queen Anne."

It does, in fact, appear that he received three sentences at once, and that not until Feb. 12, 1728. For publishing the *Nun in her Smock*, and the treatise *De Usu Flagrorum*, he was sentenced to pay a fine of twenty-five marks each, and to enter into

recognizances of £100 for his good behaviour for one year; but for publishing the *Memoirs of John Ker of Kersland, Esq.* (a political offence), he was fined twenty marks, and ordered to stand in the pillory for the space of one hour.[6]

In 1729 Curll was again pilloried—this time by Pope in the *Dunciad*, in connection with Tonson and Lintot:

"With authors, stationers obey'd the call
(The field of glory is a field for all);
Glory and gain th' industrious tribe provoke,
And gentle Dulness ever loves a joke;
A poet's form she placed before their eyes,
And bade the nimblest racer seize the prize.

* * * * *

——Lofty Lintot in the circle rose:
'The Prize is mine, who 'tempts it are my foes;
With me began this genius, and shall end.'
He spoke, and who with Lintot shall contend?

"Fear held them mute. Alone untaught to fear,
Stood dauntless Curll: 'Behold that rival here!
The race by vigour, not by vaunts, is won:
So take the hindmost, hell,' he said, 'and run.'
Swift as a bard the bailiff leaves behind
He left huge Lintot, and outstript the wind.
As when a dab-chick waddles through the copse
On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops,
So labouring on with shoulders, hands, and head,
Wide as a windmill all his figure spread,
With arms expanded Bernard views his state,
And left-legged Jacob seems to emulate."

And finally Curll stumbles into an unsavoury pool:—

"Obscene with filth the miscreant lies bewrayed,
Fallen in the plash his wickedness had laid;
Then first (if poets aught of truth declare)
The caitiff vaticide conceived a prayer."

In reference to Curll there is a note to this passage, "He carried the trade many lengths beyond what it ever before had arrived at; he was the envy and admiration of all his profession. He possessed himself of a command over all authors whatever; he caused them to write what he pleased; they could not call their very names their own. He was not only famous among them; he was taken notice of by the state, the church, and the law, and received particular marks of distinction from each."

We have no space to discuss the vexed question as to how the letters of Pope published by Curll came into his hands—the discussion would occupy a volume and remain a moot question after all. But we are disposed to believe with Johnson and Disraeli that "being inclined to print his own letters, and not knowing how to do so without the imputation of vanity, what in this country has been done very rarely, he contrives an appearance of compulsion; that when he could complain that his letters were surreptitiously published, he might decently and defensively publish them himself." The letters at all events were genuine, and Pope in a feigned or real indignation caused Curll to be brought for a third time (the second had been for publishing the Duke of Buckingham's words) before the bar of the House of Lords for disobeying its standard rules; but on examination the book was not found to contain any letters from a *peer*, and Curll was dismissed, and boldly continued the publication till five volumes had been issued.

In spite, or perhaps on account of the unblushing effrontery with which he run amuck at everything and everybody, Curll was a successful man, as his repeated removals to better and better premises plainly testifies. Over his best shop in Covent Garden he erected the Bible as a sign. He has had many apologists, among others worthy John Nichols, as deserving commendation for his industry in preserving our national remains, but the scavenger, when he gathers his daily filth, lays little claim to doing a meritorious action, he only works unpleasantly for his daily bread; and it has been the repeated cry of publishers, even in our own times, in reproducing an immoral book, that they were wishing only for the preservation of something rare and curious. It were not well that any book once written should ever die,—that any one link in the vast chain of human thought should ever be irrecoverably lost, but the publisher of such a book must, at least, bear the same penalty of stigma as the author, for he has not even the author's self-vanity as an excuse, but only the still more wretched plea of mercenary motive. We will conclude our notice of Curll by an extract from "John Buncle," by Thomas Amory, who knew him personally and well. "Curll was in person very tall and thin—an ungainly, awkward, white-faced man. His eyes were a light gray—large, projecting, goggle, and purblind. He was splay-footed and baker-kneed.... He was a debauchee to the last degree, and so injurious to society, that by filling his translations with wretched notes, forged letters, and bad pictures, he raised the price of a four-shilling book to ten. Thus, in particular, he managed Burnet's 'Archæology.' And when I told him he was very culpable in this and other articles he sold, his answer was, 'What would I

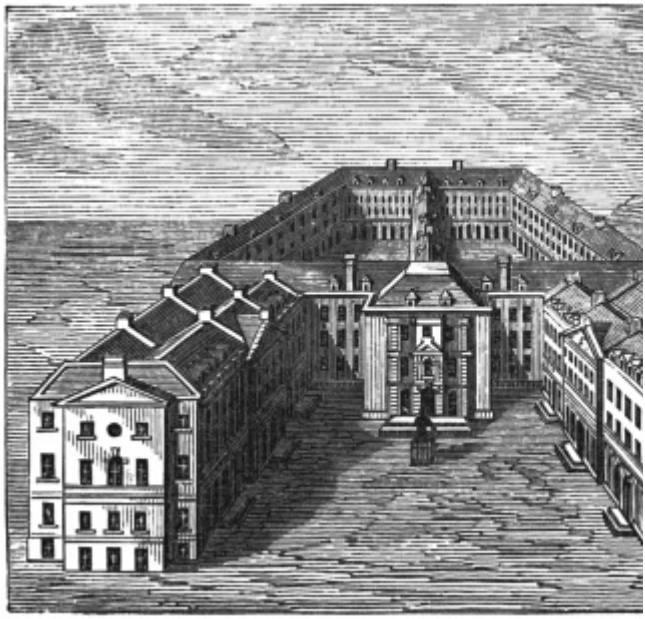
have him do? He was a bookseller;—his translators, in pay, lay three in a bed at the Pewter Platter Inn, in Holborn, and he and they were for ever at work deceiving the public.' He, likewise, printed the lewdest things. He lost his ears for the 'Nun in her Smock' and another thing. As to drink, he was too fond of money to spend any in making himself happy that way; but, at another's expense, he would drink every day till he was quite blind and as incapable of self-motion as a block. This was Edmund Curll. But he died at last as great a penitent, I think, in the year 1748 (it was 1747), as ever expired. I mention this to his honour."[7]

Thomas Guy, more eminent certainly as a very successful money-maker, and a generous benefactor to charitable institutions, than as a bookseller, was born in Horsley-down, the son of a coal-heaver and lighterman. The year of his birth is uncertain, but in 1660, he was bound apprentice to John Clarke, bookseller, in the porch of Mercers' Chapel, and, in 1668, having been admitted a liveryman of the Stationers' Company, he opened a small shop in "Stock Market" (the site of the present Mansion House, then a fruit and flower market, where, also, offenders against the law were punished) with a stock-in-trade worth above £200. From the first, Guy's chief business seems to have been in Bibles, for Maitland, his biographer relates, "The English Bibles, printed in this kingdom, being very bad, both in the letter and the paper, occasioned divers of the booksellers in this city to encourage the printing thereof in Holland, with curious types and fine paper, and imported vast numbers of the same to their no small advantage. Mr. Guy, soon becoming acquainted with this profitable commerce, became a large dealer therein." As early as Queen Elizabeth's

time, the privilege of printing Bibles had been conferred on the Queen's (or King's) printer, conjointly, of course, with the two Universities, and the effect of this prolonged monopoly resulted, not only in exorbitant prices, but in great typographical carelessness, and, says Thomas Fuller, under the quaint heading of "Fye for Shame," "what is but carelessness in other books is impiety in setting forth of the Bible." Many of the errors were curious;—the printers in Charles I.'s reign had been heavily fined for issuing an edition in which, the word "not" being omitted, the seventh, commandment had been rendered a positive, instead of a negative injunction. The *Spectator* wickedly suggests that, judging from the morals of the day, very many copies must have got abroad into continuous use. In the Bible of 1653, moreover, the printers allowed "know ye not that the *un*righteous shall inherit the kingdom of God" to stand uncorrected. However, the Universities and the King's printer still possessed the monopoly, and this new trade of good cheap Bibles "proving not only very detrimental to the public revenues, but likewise to the King's printer, all ways and means were devised to quash the same, which, being vigorously put in execution, the booksellers, by frequent seizures and prosecutions, became so great sufferers, that they judged a further pursuit thereof inconsistent with their interests." Defeated in this manner, Guy cautiously induced the University of Oxford to contract with him for an assignment of their privilege, and not only obtained type from Holland, and printed the Bible in London, but was, later on, in 1681, according to Dunton, a partner with Parker in printing the Bible, at Oxford (Parker could have been no connection of the famous publishing family).



**Thomas Guy, founder of Guy's Hos**
**(*From the statue by J. Bac***



**Guy's Hospital.**
**(*Bird's-eye view from a Print, 173*

Guy seems to have contracted in his early days very frugal and personally pernicious habits. According to Nichols, he is said to have dined every day at his counter, "with no other table-cloth than an old newspaper," and if the "Intelligence" or the "Newes" of that period really served him for a cloth, the dish that contained his meat must have been uncommonly small. "He was also," it is added, "as little nice in his apparel." It was probably, too, in the commencement of his career, that, looking round for a tidy and inexpensive helpmate, he asked his servant-maid to become his wife. The girl, of course, was delighted, but, alas! presumed too much upon her influence over her careful lover; seeing that the

paviours who were repairing the street, in front of the house (an order was issued, in 1671, to every householder to pave the street in front of his dwelling, "for the breadth of six feet at least from the foundation") had neglected a broken place, she called their attention to it, but they told her that Guy had carefully marked a particular stone, beyond which they were not to go. "Well," said the girl, "do you mend it; tell him I bade you, and I know he will not be angry." When Guy saw the extra charge in the bill, however, he at once renounced his matrimonial scheme.

The Bible trade proved prosperous, and Guy, ready for any lucrative and safe investment for his money, speculated in Government securities, and, according to Nichols and Maitland, acquired the "bulk of his fortune" by purchasing seaman's tickets; but the practice of paying the royal sailors by ticket does not seem to have existed later than the year 1684; so that if he dealt in them at all it must have been a very early period in his career, when it appears unlikely that he would have had much spare cash to invest. Maitland adds "*as well as in Government securities*, and this was probably the manner in which the 'bulk of his fortune' was really acquired."

That his finances were in a healthy condition, is apparent, from his appearance in Parliament as member for Tamworth, from 1695 to 1707. According to Maitland, "as he was a man of unbounded charity, and universal benevolence, so he was likewise a good patron of liberty, and the rights of his fellow-subjects; which, to his great honour, he strenuously asserted in divers parliaments." An honourable testimony to his character, supported

also by Dunton: “Thomas Guy, of Lombard-street, makes an eminent figure in the Company of Stationers, having been chosen sheriff of London, and paid the fine.... He is a man of strong reason, and can talk very much to the purpose on any subject you can propose. He is truly charitable.”

Throughout his life, he was very kind to his relatives, lending money when needed to help some, and pensioning others. To charities, whose purpose was pure benevolence, apart from sectarian motive, his purse was ever open, and St. Thomas’s Hospital and the Stationers’ Company were largely indebted to his generosity.

In his latter days, Guy was able to multiply his fortune many fold. The South Sea Company was a good investment for a wary, cool-headed business man, and he became an original holder in the stock. “It no sooner received,” says Maitland, “the sanction of Parliament, than the national creditors from all parts came crowding to subscribe into the said company the several sums due to them from the government, by which great run, £100 of the Company’s stock, that before was sold at £120 (at which time, Mr. Guy was possessed of £45,500 of the said stock) gradually arose to above £1,050. Mr. Guy wisely considering that the great use of the stock was owing to the iniquitous management of a few, prudently began to sell out his stock at about £300 (for that which probably at first did not cost him about £50 or £60) and continued selling till it arose to about £600 when he disposed of the last of his property in the said company,” and then the terrible panic came.

He was between seventy and eighty years of age when he determined to devote his fortune to

building and endowing a hospital which should bear his name, and, dying in 1724, he lived just long enough to see the walls roofed in. The cost of building "Guy's Hospital" amounted to £18,793, and he left £219,499 as endowment. At Tamworth, his mother's birthplace, which he represented in Parliament for many years, he erected alms-houses and a library. Christ's Hospital received £400 a year for ever, and, after many gifts to public charities, he directed that the balance of his fortune, amounting to about £80,000, should be divided among all who could prove themselves in any degree related to him. Guy's noble philanthropy would be unequalled in bookselling annals, but that Edinburgh, happily boasting of a Donaldson, can rival London in the generosity of a bookseller.

We have had occasion to quote several times from "Dunton's Characters;" and, as the author was himself a bookseller, and was, moreover, the only contemporary writer who thought it worth his while to preserve any continuous record of the bookselling fraternity, we must give him a passing notice here. John Dunton, the son of a clergyman, was born in 1689, and, after passing through a disorderly apprenticeship, commenced bookselling "in half a shop, a warehouse, and a fashionable chamber." "Printing," he says, "was the uppermost in my thoughts, and hackney authors began to ply me with specimens as earnestly and with as much passion and concern as the waterman do passengers with oars and sculls."

Having some private capital he went ahead merrily, printing six hundred books, of which he repented only of seven, and these he recommends all who possess to burn forthwith. Somewhat erratic in

his habits he went to America to recover a debt of £500, consoling his wife, "dear Iris," through whom he became connected with Wesley's father, by sending her sixty letters in one ship. Here he stayed for nearly a twelvemonth, pleasantly viewing the country at his leisure, and cultivating a platonic friendship with maids and widows. At his return he found his business disordered, and sought to make amends by another voyage to Holland. By this time he had pretty nearly dissipated his capital, but luckily came "into possession of a considerable estate" through the death of a cousin. "The world," he says, "now smiled on me, and I have humble servants enough among the stationers, booksellers, printers, and binders."

Of all his publications, the only one that attained any fame was the "Athenian Mercury," which reached twenty volumes. His three literary associates in this work were Samuel Wesley, Richard Sault, and Dr. John Norris, and with his aid they resolved all "nice and curious questions in prose and verse," concerning physic, philosophy, love, &c. They were afterwards reprinted in four volumes, under the title of the *Athenian Oracle*, and form a curious picture of the wants, manners, and opinions of the age; but the work is, perhaps, chiefly to be remembered as one of the earliest periodicals not professing to contain "news."

Dunton now, finding that he did not make much money by bookselling in London, went over to Dublin for six months with a cargo of books and started as auctioneer, naturally falling foul of the Irish booksellers, whom he dressed off in a tract entitled "The Dublin Scuffle." He returned to England complacently believing that he had done

more service to learning by his auctions "than any single man that had come into Ireland these hundred years."

In London, however, he was by this time so involved in commercial difficulties, that he was fain to give up bookselling altogether, and take to bookmaking instead; and his pen was so indefatigable that he soon bid fair to be the author of as many volumes as he had published. The book that concerns us most here is the "Life and Errors of John Dunton, written by himself in Solitude," in which is included the "Lives and Characters of a Thousand Persons now living in London." In this latter part he was obliged, "out of mere gratitude," "to draw the characters of the most eminent of the profession in the three kingdoms;" consequently we find some half-dozen lines of "character" given to every bookseller of his time in London, "gratitude" compelling him, however, to be almost invariably laudatory; the other parts of the "three kingdoms" are thus summarily and easily dealt with, "Of three hundred booksellers now trading in country towns, I know not of one knave or a blockhead amongst them all." The book, however rambling and incoherent, contains much worth preservation, and is not unpleasant desultory reading.

Dunton's own "character" has been preserved elsewhere than in his *Life and Confessions*. Warburton describes him as "an auction bookseller and an abusive scribbler;" Disraeli, "as a crack-brain, scribbling bookseller, who boasted that he had a thousand projects, fancied he had methodised six hundred, and was ruined by the fifty he executed." His greatest project, by the way, was intended "to extirpate lewdness from London." "Armed with a

constable's staff, and accompanied by a clerical companion, he sallied forth in the evening, and followed the wretched prostitutes home to a tavern, where every effort was used to win the erring fair to the paths of virtue; but these he observes were perilous adventures, as the cyprians exerted every art to lead him astray in the height of his spiritual exhortations."

There is something so Quixotic about his schemes, so complacent about his marvellous self-vanity, that we are really grieved when we find him ending his life, as most "projectors" do, with *Dying Groans from the Fleet Prison; or, a Last Shift for Life*. Shortly after this, in 1733, his teeming brain and his eager pen were at rest for ever.

Another bookseller, also a "man of letters," but of very different calibre from poor John Dunton, must have a niche here, not because he was eminent as a publisher, but because he was, taken altogether, the most famous man who has ever stood behind a bookseller's counter. One of our greatest novelists, his general life is so well known, that we will only treat here of his bookselling career. Samuel Richardson, born in 1689, was the son of a joiner in Derbyshire; a quiet shy boy, he became the confident and love-letter writer of the girls in his neighbourhood, gaining thereby his wonderful knowledge of womankind. Fond of books, and longing for opportunities of study, he was, at the age of sixteen, apprenticed to John Wilde, of Stationers' Hall, but his master, though styling him the "pillar of his house," grudged him, he says, "every hour that tended not to his profit." So Richardson used to sit up half the night over his books, careful at that time to burn only his own candles. On the termination of

his apprenticeship, he became a journeyman and corrector of the press, and six years later commenced business in an obscure court in Fleet-street, where he filled up his leisure hours by compiling indices, and writing prefaces and what he terms “honest dedications” for the booksellers.

Through his industry and perseverance his business became much extended, and he was selected by Wharton to print the *True Briton*; but, after the publication of the sixth number, he would not allow his name to appear, and consequently escaped the results of the ensuing prosecution. Through the friendly interest of Mr. Speaker Onslow he printed the first edition of the *Journal of the House of Commons*, completed in twenty-six folio volumes, for which, after long and vexatious delays, he received upwards of £3000. He also printed from 1736 to 1737 the *Daily Journal*, and in 1738 the *Daily Gazette*.

In 1740 Mr. Rivington and Mr. Osborne proposed that he should write for them a little volume of letters, which resulted in his first novel *Pamela*, the publication of which will be treated in our account of the Rivingtons. This was followed by *Clarissa*, one of the few books from which it is absolutely impossible to steal away, when once the dread of its size has been overcome. Though famous now as the first great *novelist* who had written in the English tongue, Richardson was not then above his daily work. He writes to his friend Mr. Defreval, “You know how my business engages me. You know by what snatches of time I write, that I may not neglect that, and that I may preserve that independency which is the comfort of my life. I never sought out of myself for patrons. My own industry and God’s providence have been my sole reliance.” In 1754, he was, to the great

honour of the members, chosen master of the Stationers' Company, the only fear of his friends being that he would not play the *gourmand* well. "I cannot," writes Edwards, "but figure to myself the miserable example you will set at the head of their loaded tables, unless you have two stout jaw-workers for your wardens, and a good hungry court of assistants."



**Samuel Richardson, Bookseller and Novelist. 1**
**(*From a Picture by Chamberlin.*)**

The honourable post he occupied shows his position in the trade at this time. This was improved

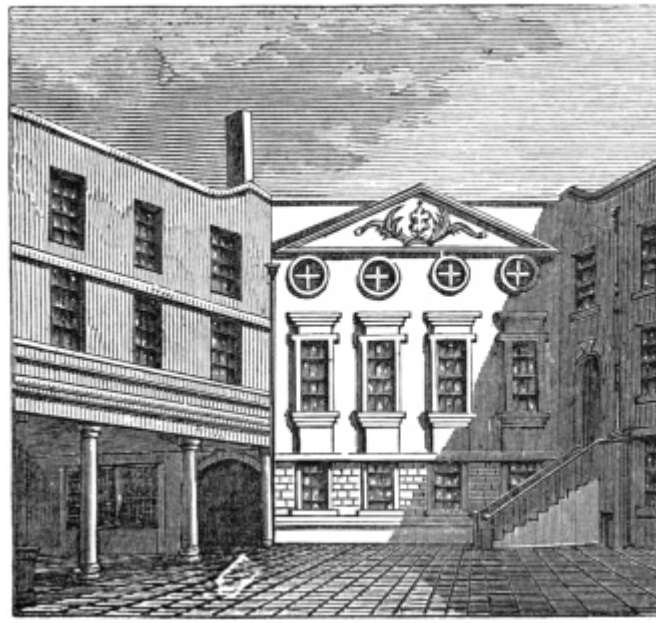
in 1760, by the purchase of a moiety of the patent of law-printer, which he carried on in partnership with Miss Lintot, grand-daughter of Bernard Lintot. He died in the following year, leaving funeral-rings to thirty-four of his acquaintances, and adding in his will, “Had I given rings to all the ladies who have honoured me with their correspondence, and whom I sincerely venerate for their amiable qualities, it would, even in this last solemn act, appear like ostentation.” It is impossible in treating of Richardson not to refer to his vanity; but the love of praise was his only fault, and it has grown to us, like the foible of a loved friend, dearer than all his virtues. It is not unpleasant to think that the ladies of that time, by the way in which they petted, coaxed, and humoured him, conferred an innocent pleasure upon the truest of all the delineators of their sex, except perhaps Balzac, who, if he knows it better, is more unfortunate in his knowledge. With all Richardson’s vanity, he drew a portrait of himself that is not far removed from caricature. “Short, rather plump than emaciated, notwithstanding his complaints; about five feet five inches; fair wig; lightish cloth coat, all black besides; one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support, when attacked by sudden tremors or startlings, and dizziness which too frequently attacks him, but, thank God, not so often as formerly; looking directly foreright as passers-by would imagine, but observing all that stirs on either side of him without moving his short neck; hardly ever turning back; of a light brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him; smoothish face and ruddy cheeked; at some times looking to be about sixty-five, at other times much

younger; regular even pace, stealing away ground rather than seeming to rid it; a gray eye, too often over-clouded by mistiness from the head; by chance lively—very lively it will be, if he have hope of seeing a young lady whom he loves and honours; his eye always on the ladies; if they have very large hoops, he looks down supercilious, and as if he would be thought wise, but, perhaps, the sillier for that; as he approaches a lady, his eyes are never set upon her face but upon her feet, and thence he raises it pretty quickly for a dull eye; and one would think (if one thought him at all worthy of observation) that from her air and (the last beheld) her face, he sets her down in his mind as so and so, and then passes on to the next object he meets."

Among other letters to Richardson we come across an affecting one from Dr. Johnson: "I am obliged to entreat your assistance, I am under arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings." As round Pope and Dryden formerly, so it is now round Johnson that the booksellers of the next decade cluster; and from the moment when first he rolled into a London bookseller's shop, his huge unwieldy body clad in coarse country garments, worn and travel-stained, his face scarred and seamed with small-pox—to ask for literary employment, and to be told he had better rather purchase a porter's knot, the future of the trade was very much wrapt up in his own. Forced by hunger to work for the most niggardly pay, he was yet not to be insulted with impunity. "Lie there, thou lump of lead," he exclaims as he knocked down Osborne of Gray's Inn Gate, with a folio. "Sir," he explains to Boswell afterwards, "he was impertinent to me, and I beat him."



**Edward Cave, founder of the "Gentleman'**



**The King's Printing House, Blackfriar**
**(*From a drawing made about 1750.*)**

Among the earliest of Johnson's employers was Edward Cave. The son of a shoemaker at Rugby, he contrived, in spite of the contumely excited by his low estate, to pick up much learning at the Grammar School, and after narrowly escaping an university training, and for a while obtaining his livelihood as clerk to a collector of excise and apprentice to a timber merchant, he found more congenial employment in a printing office, and conducted a weekly newspaper at Norwich. Returning to London, he contrived by multifarious work—correcting for the press, contributing to *Mist's Journal*, writing news letters, and filling a situation in the Post Office simultaneously—to save a small sum of money

sufficient to start a petty printing office at St. John's Gate. He was now able to realize a project he had before offered to half the booksellers in London, of establishing the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and to Cave must be conceded the honour of inventing that popular species of periodical literature. The first number was printed in 1731, and its success induced several rivals to enter the field, but only one—*The London Magazine*—and that a joint concern of the leading publishers, was at all able to hold any opposition to it; and the *London Magazine* ceased to exist in 1785, while the *Gentleman's Magazine* has only quite recently displayed a sudden rejuvenation. In its early days Johnson was the chief contributor to its pages. He had a room set apart for him at St. John's Gate, where he wrote as fast as he could drive his pen, throwing the sheets off, when completed, to the "copy" boy. The *Life of Savage* was written anonymously, in 1744, and Mr. Harte spoke in high terms of the book, while dining with Cave. The publisher told him afterwards: "Harte, you made a man very happy the other day at my house by your praise of *Savage's Life*." "How so? none were present but you and I." Cave replied, "You might observe I sent a plate of victuals behind the screen; there lurked one whose dress was too shabby for him to appear; your praise pleased him much."

In 1736, Cave began to carry out his scheme of publishing the reports of the debates in Parliament in the monthly pages of his magazine. With a friend or two he used to lurk about the lobby and gallery, taking sly notes in dark corners, remembering what they could of the drift of the argument, and then retiring to a neighbouring tavern to compare and adjust their notes. This rough material was placed in the hands of an experienced writer, and thus dressed

up, presented to the readers of the magazine. In 1738, the House complained of the breach of privilege committed by Cave, and, among other debaters, Sir William Younge earnestly implored the House to put a summary check to these reports, prophesying that otherwise "you will have the speeches of the House every day printed, even during your session, and we shall be looked upon as the most contemptible assembly on the face of the earth." After this check some expedient was necessary, and the proceedings in Parliament were given as *Debates in the Senate of Great Lilliput*, and were entrusted to Johnson's pen. On one occasion a large company were praising a speech of Pitt's; Johnson sat silent for a while, then said, "That speech I wrote in a yard in Exeter Street." It had been reprinted *verbatim* from the magazine, and had been drawn up entirely from rough notes and hints supplied by the messengers. When congratulated on his uniform political impartiality, Johnson replied: "That is not quite true, sir; I saved appearances well enough, but I took care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it." Cave's attention to the magazine was unremitting to the day of his death; "he scarce ever looked out of the window," says Johnson, "but for its improvement."

In 1749, the first popular review was started, by Ralph Griffiths; but before the time of the *Monthly Review* there had been various journals professing to deal only with literature. In 1683, had been published a *Weekly Memento for the Ingenius, or an Account of Books*, and, in 1714, the first really critical journal, under the quaint title, *The Waies of Literature*, and these had been succeeded by others. Still, the *Monthly Review* was a very great improvement. Among the chief early contributors

was Goldsmith, who escaped the miseries of ushership, and the weariness of a diplomaless doctor, waiting for patients who never came, or, at all events, never paid, to live as a hack writer in Griffiths' house. Here, induced by want, or kindliness to a fellow-starver, he got into trouble by borrowing money from his master to pay for clothes, and appropriating it to other purposes. Termed villain and sharper, and threatened with the Roundhouse, he writes: "No, sir; had I been a sharper, had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances; I am guilty I own of meanness, which poverty unavoidably brings with it."

As to the payment for periodical writing in that day, we are told by an author who recollected the *Monthly Review* for fifty years, that in its most palmy days only four guineas a sheet were given to the most distinguished writers, and as late as 1783, when it was reported that Doctor Shebbeare received as much as six guineas, Johnson replied, "Sir, he might get six guineas for a particular sheet, but not *communibus sheetibus*;" and yet he afterwards explains the fact of so much good writing appearing anonymously, without hope of personal fame, "those who write in them write well in order to be paid well."

Of all the booksellers of the Johnsonian era, Robert Dodsley, however, was *facile princeps*. Born in the year 1703, he commenced life as a footman, but a poem entitled *The Muse in Livery*, so interested his mistress, the Hon. Mrs. Lowther, that she procured its publication by subscription. After this he entered the service of Dartineuf, a celebrated voluptuary, the reputed son of Charles II., and one of the most

intimate friends of Pope. Here he wrote a dramatic satire, *The Toy Shop*, with which Pope was so pleased, that he interested himself in procuring its acceptance at Covent Garden. The piece was successful, and Pope, adding a substantial present on his own account of one hundred pounds, Dodsley was enabled to open a small bookseller's shop in Pall Mall, then far from enjoying its present fashionable repute. In this new situation, without any apprenticeship whatever, he soon attracted the attention not only of celebrated literary men, but his shop became a favourite lounge for noble and wealthy *dilettanti*. In 1738, began his first acquaintance with Johnson, who offered him the manuscript of *London, a Satire*. "Paul Whitehead had a little before got ten guineas for a poem, and I would not take less than Paul Whitehead," and without any haggling, the bargain was concluded. Busy as he soon began to be in his shop, Dodsley did not neglect original composition. He produced several successful farces, and in 1744, edited and published the work by which his name is best known now, *A Collection of Plays by Old Authors*, which did much to revive the study of Elizabethan literature, and was most fruitful in its influence on later generations.

In about the following year Dodsley proposed to Johnson that he should write a dictionary of the English language, and after some hesitation on the author's part, the proposal was accepted. The dictionary was to be the joint property—as was then beginning to be the case with all works of importance—of several booksellers, viz.: Robert Dodsley, Charles Hitch, Andrew Millar, Messrs. Longman, and Messrs. Knapton; the management of it during publication being confided to Andrew

Millar. The work took eight years, instead of the three on which Johnson had calculated, of very severe study and labour, and the £1575 which was then considered a very handsome *honorarium*, was all drawn out in drafts, for at the dinner given in honour of the completion of the great work, when the receipts were produced it was found that he had nothing more to receive. Johnson, after sending his last "copy" to Millar, inquired of the messenger what the bookseller said. "He said, 'Thank God I have done with him.'" "I am glad," said the Doctor smiling, "that he thanks God for anything."

Andrew Millar was by this time the proprietor of Tonson's shop in Fleet Street, and was a man of great enterprise. He was the publisher, among other authors, of Thomson, Fielding, and Hume, and Johnson invariably speaks well of him. "I respect Millar, sir; he has raised the price of literature:" "and," writes John Nichols, "Jacob Tonson and Andrew Millar were the best *patrons* of literature, a fact rendered unquestionable by the valuable works produced under their fostering and genial hands." Literature now was rapidly changing its condition. Johnson had discovered that the subscription system was essentially a rotten one, and that the real reading public, the author's legitimate patrons, were reached of course through the medium of the booksellers: "He that asks for subscriptions soon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him defame him:" and then again—"Now learning is a trade; a man goes to a bookseller and gets what he can. We have done with patronage. In the infancy of learning we find some great men praised for it. This diffused it among others. When it becomes general an author leaves the great and applies to the multitude." As to what the booksellers of the

eighteenth century were, and as to how they compare with the publishers of the nineteenth century, we will quote from an unedited letter of Mr. Thomas Carlyle, dated 3rd May, 1852, addressed to Mr. John Chapman, bookseller (Emerson's first English publisher, we believe), now Dr. Chapman:—

"The duties of society towards literature in this new condition of the world are becoming great, vital, inextricably intricate, little capable of being done or understood at present, yet all important to be understood and done if society will continue to exist along with it, or it along with society. For the highest provinces of spiritual culture and most sacred interests of men down to the lowest economic and ephemeral concerns, where 'free press' rules supreme, society was itself with all its sovereignties and parliaments depending on the thing it calls literature; and bound by incalculable penalties in many duties in regard to that. Of which duties I perceive finance alone, and free trade alone will by no means be found to be the sum.... What alone concerns us here is to remark that the present system of book-publishing discharges none of these duties—less and less makes even the appearance of discharging them—and, indeed, as I believe, is, by the nature of the case, incapable of ever, in any perceptible degree, discharging any of them in the times that now are. A century ago, there was in the bookselling guild if never any royalty of spirit, as how could such a thing be looked for there? yet a spirit of merchanthood, which had its value in regard to the prosaic parts of literature, and is even to be thankfully remembered. By this solid merchant spirit, if we take the victualling and furnishing of such an enterprise as Samuel Johnson's *English Dictionary* for its highest feat (as perhaps we justly may); and many

a *Petitor's Memories*, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, &c., in this country and others, for its lower, we must gratefully admit the real usefulness, respectability, and merit to the world. But in later times owing to many causes, which have been active, not on the book guild alone, such spirit has long been diminished, and has now 'as good as disappeared without hope of reinstation in this quarter.'"

To return to Dodsley, we find that in 1753 he commenced the *World*, a weekly essay ridiculing "with novelty and good humour, the fashions, follies, vices, and absurdities of that part of the human species which calls itself the World". Three guineas was allowed as literary remuneration for each number, but Moore, the editor, a receiver of this allowance, obtained much gratuitous assistance from Lord Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, and other men of wit and fashion. Another periodical, but a bi-weekly, the *Rambler*, all the work of Samuel Johnson, appeared without intermission for the space of two years, and in its gravity, its high morality, and its sententious language presents a curious contrast to its livelier companion. Dodsley, after having published Burke's earliest productions, entrusted to his care the management of a very important venture, the *Annual Register*, which was to carry Dodsley's name up to our own times. In the same year, 1758, his last play *Cleone*, in which he ventured to rise to tragedy, after having been declined by Garrick was acted at Covent Garden amidst the greatest applause, and for a number of nights, that, in those times, constituted a wonderful "run." And the author, fond to distraction of his last child, "went every night to the stage side and cried at the distress of poor Cleone;" yet when it was reported that Johnson had remarked that if Otway had written it,

no other of his pieces would have been remembered, Dodsley had the good sense to say “it was too much.”

A long and prosperous career enabled Dodsley to retire some years before his death, which occurred at Durham, in 1764.

Thomas Cadell, who had served his apprenticeship to Andrew Millar, was now taken into partnership, and in a few years he and the Strahans quite filled the place that Dodsley and Millar had previously occupied. Together they became the proprietors of the copyright of works by the great historical and philosophical writers who shed a lustre round the close of the eighteenth century, and among their clients we find the names of Robertson, Gibbon, Adam Smith and Blackstone. For the *History of Charles V.* Robertson received £4500, then supposed to be the largest sum ever paid for the copyright of a single work, and out of Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* the booksellers are said to have cleared £60,000. Cadell retired with an enormous fortune, and was honoured by being elected Sheriff of London at a very critical and important time. Alexander Strahan, became King’s printer, and left a fortune of upwards of a million. His business was eventually carried on by the Spottiswoodes.



**Thomas Cadell.**
**1742–1802.**

The practice, we have already referred to, of booksellers fraternising pleasantly together for the purpose of bringing out expensive editions at a lessened risk, led to many famous associations, the earliest of which, the "Congers," will be dealt with hereafter in connection with the history of families

still represented in the trade, but the “Chapter Coffee House” is too important to be passed over altogether.

There is an amusing account of the Chapter Coffee House in the first number of the *Connoisseur*. It “is frequented by those encouragers of learning, the booksellers.... Their criticisms are somewhat singular. When they say a good book, they do not mean to praise the style or sentiment, but the quick and extensive sale of it.... A few nights ago I saw one of these gentlemen take up a sermon, and after seeming to peruse it for some time, with great attention, he declared it was ‘very good English.’ The reader will judge whether I was most surprised or diverted, when I discovered that he was not commending the purity or elegance of the diction, but the beauty of the type, which, it seems, is known among the printers by that appellation.... The character of the bookseller is generally formed on the writers in his service. Thus one is a politician or a deist; another affects humour, or aims at turns of wit or repartee; while a third perhaps is grave, moral, and sententious.”

In this Coffee House the associated booksellers met to talk over their plans, and many a germ of most valuable projects was originated here; the books so published coming in time to be called “Chapter Books.” Among the chief members of the association were John Rivington, John Murray, and Thomas Longman, James Dodson, Alderman Cadell, Tom Davies, Robert Baldwin (whose name, if not family, figured in bookselling annals for a century and a half), Peter Elmsley, and Joseph Johnson. Johnson was Cowper’s publisher; the first volumes of the poems fell dead, and he begged the author to think nothing further of the loss, which they had

agreed to share. In gratitude Cowper sent him the *Task* as a present; it was a wonderful success, and altogether Johnson is said to have made £10,000 out of Cowper's poems. He assisted in the publication of the *Homer* without any compensation at all. The most important "Chapter books" were Johnson's *English Poets*, including his *Lives of the English Poets*, for which latter he received two hundred guineas, and a present of another hundred, and, on their re-publication in a separate edition, a fourth hundred. "Sir," observed the Doctor to a friend, "I have always said the booksellers were a generous set of men. Nor in the present instance have I reason to complain. The fact is, not that they paid me too little, but that I have written too much."

Of course when the booksellers met, the literary men were not far absent. "I am quite familiar" (writes poor Chatterton in his sad, boastful letters, meant to cheer up the hearts of the dear ones at home, while his own heart was breaking in London) "at the Chapter Coffee House, and know all the geniuses there. A character is now quite unnecessary; an author carries his character in his pen."

Later on, the Chapter Coffee House became the place of call for poor parsons, who stood there ready for hire, on Sunday mornings, at sums varying from five shillings to a guinea. Sermons, too, were kept in stock here for purchase, or could be written, there and then, to order.

At the very close of the last century a fresh band of "Associated Booksellers" was formed, consisting of the following: Thomas Hood (father of the poet), John Cuthel, James Nunn, J. Lea, Lackington, Allen and Co., and others. The vignette which ornamented their books was a Beehive, with the inscription of

"Associated," and thus they got the title of the "Associated Busy Bees."

Two of the principal booksellers towards the end of the last century, require, from the magnitude of their business, a somewhat lengthier notice.

George Robinson, born at Dalston near Carlisle, received his business training under John Rivington. In 1764 he started as a wholesale bookseller in Paternoster Row, and, by 1780, he could boast of the largest wholesale trade in London. Nor were the higher branches of his calling neglected, and in the purchase of copyrights he rivalled the oldest established firms. Among his publications we may mention the *Critical Review*, the *Town and Country Magazine*, and the *New Annual Register*; the *Modern Universal History* (in sixty volumes), the *Biographica Britannica*, and Russell's *Ancient and Modern Europe*; *Bruce's Travels* and the *Travels of Anacharsis*; the illustrated works of Hogarth, Bewick, and Heath; and the lighter productions of Macklin, Murphy, Godwin, Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Radcliffe, Dr. Moore, and Dr. Wolcot.

For the *Mysteries of Udolpho* Mrs. Radcliffe received five hundred guineas, the largest sum that had at that time been given for a novel, and Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot) made a still better bargain for his poems. They had already acquired a prodigious popularity, and in selling the copyright a question arose, as to whether they should be purchased for a lump sum or an annuity. While the treaty was pending Wolcot was seized with a violent and rather ostentatious attack of asthma, which sadly interrupted him in discussing the arrangements, and he was eagerly offered an annuity of £250. The arrangement was made by Walker, a partner with

Robinson in this transaction. Walker soon called to inquire after his friend's illness, "Thank you, much better," said Wolcot, "I have taken measure of my asthma, the fellow is troublesome, but I know his strength and am his master." Walker's face grew longer, and when he rejoined his wife in the next room, the doctor heard a shrill, feminine expostulation, "There, you've done it, I told you he wouldn't die!" He outlived all the parties concerned, and was in his own case, perhaps, scarcely justified in originating the famous saying, "that publishers quaff champagne out of the skulls of authors."

This over-eager parsimony was not in any way due to Robinson; his generosity to his authors was well known, and his house became a general rendezvous for the literary men of the day, who were heartily welcome whenever they chose to turn up, provided always that they did not come late for dinner. After Robinson's death in 1801, his son and brother carried on the business, but met with reverses, principally through loss of stock at a fire; but the wonderful prices that were realized at the auction, consequent on their declared bankruptcy, fairly set them afloat again. One bookseller, alone, is said to have invested £40,000 at the sale, and even the copyright of Vyse's *Shilling Spelling Book* was sold for £2,500, with an annuity of fifty guineas a year to the old schoolmaster Vyse.

James Lackington, in his *Memoirs and Confessions* has left plenty of material, had we space, for an amusing and instructive biography. He was born at Wellington in 1746, and his father, a drunken cobbler, would not even pay the requisite twopence a week for his son's education. Loafing about the streets all day as a child, he thought he might turn

his wanderings to account by crying pies, and as a pie-boy he acquired such a pre-eminence that he was soon engaged to vend almanacs. At fourteen he left this vagrant life to be apprenticed to a shoemaker, and his master's family becoming strong adherents to the new sect of Methodists, he too was converted, and would trudge, he says, through frost and snow at midnight to hear "an inspired husbandman, shoemaker, blacksmith, or a woolcomber" preach to ten or a dozen people, when he might have quietly stopped at home to listen to "the sensible and learned ministers at Taunton."

However, what he heard "made me think they knew many matters of which I was totally ignorant," and he set to work arduously at night to learn his letters, and when he was able to read, he bought Hobbe's *Homer* at a bookstall, and found that his letters did but little in assisting his comprehension; however, in his zeal for knowledge he allowed himself "but three hours' sleep in the twenty-four." The art of writing was acquired in a similar manner, and then he started on a working tour, making shoes on the road for sustenance, but suffering many hardships and miseries. To make matters worse, at Bristol he married a young girl of his own class, whose ill-health, though he was passionately fond of her, added no little to his troubles. Accordingly he went to London, that for her sake he might earn higher wages, and not altogether unhopeful of the fortunes he had heard were to be gained there by dogged hard work and endurance. They arrived with the typical half-crown in their pockets, and then Lackington, anxious to obtain the small legacy of £10 he had left at home, went for it personally; "it being such a prodigious sum that the greatest caution was used on both sides, so that it cost me about half the

money in going down for it, and in returning to town again." After working some time as a journeyman bookseller he opened a little cobbler's shop; and, thinking he knew as much about books as the keeper of an old bookstall in the neighbourhood, wishing also to have opportunity for study, he invested a guinea in a bagful of old books. To increase his stock he borrowed £5 from a fund "Mr. Wesley's people kept to lend out, for three months, without interest, to such of their society whose characters were good, and who wanted a temporary relief.... In our new situation we lived in a very frugal manner, often dining on potatoes and quenching our thirst with water; being absolutely determined, if possible, to make some provision for such dismal times as sickness, shortness of work, &c., which we had frequently been involved in before, and could scarcely help expecting not to be our fate again." He soon found customers, and "as 'soon laid out the money' in other old trash which was daily brought for sale."



**James Lackington, Bookseller.**
**1746–1816.**

In a short time he had realized £25, and was able to take a book-shop in Chiswell Street; and here he almost immediately lost his wife, which for a time involved him in the deepest distress, but in the following year he married again, and then resolved to quit his Wesleyan friends, a sect he thought incompatible with the dignity of a bookseller; indeed

"Mr. Wesley often told his society in Broadment, Bristol, in my hearing, that he could never keep a bookseller six months in his flock." From this time success uniformly attended his undertakings, and was due, he says, primarily to his invariable principle of selling at very low figures and only for ready-money. When he began to attend the trade sales he created consternation among his brethren. "I was very much surprised to learn that it was common for such as purchased remainders to destroy or burn one-half or three-fourths of such books, and to charge the full publication price, or nearly that, for such as they kept on hand." With this rule he complied for a short time; but afterwards resolved to keep the whole stock. The trade endeavoured to hinder his appearance at the sale-rooms, but in time they were forced to yield, and he continued to sell off remainders at half or a quarter the published price.[8] "By selling them in this cheap manner, I have disposed of many hundred thousand volumes, many thousand of which have been intrinsically worth their original prices." Such a method attracted a crowd of customers, and he soon began to buy manuscripts from authors. As to how his circumstances were improving we read, "I discovered that lodgings in the country were very healthy. The year after, my country lodging was transformed into a country house, and in another year the inconveniences attending a stage coach were remedied by a chariot," on the doors of which "I have put a motto to remind me to what I am indebted to my prosperity, viz.:—Small Profits do Great Things." Again, he was very fond of repeating, "I found all I possess in small *profits*, bound by *industry* and clasped with *economy*."

The shop in Chiswell Street was now changed

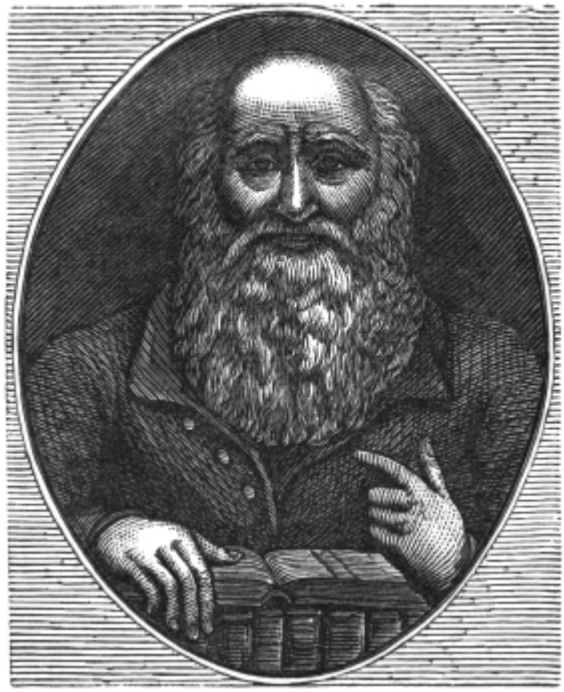
into a huge building at the corner of Finsbury Square, grandly styled the "Temple of the Muses;" above it floated a flag, over the door was the inscription "Cheapest bookshop in the world," and inside appeared the notice that "the lowest price is marked on every Book, and no abatement made on any article." "Half-a-million of volumes" were said, according to his catalogue, "to be constantly on sale," and these were arranged in galleries and rooms, rising in tiers—the more expensive books at the bottom, and the prices diminishing with every floor, but all numbered according to a catalogue, which Lackington compiled himself, and even the first he issued contained 12,000 volumes. During his first year at the "Temple of the Muses" he cleared £5000. In 1798, he was able to retire with a large fortune, and he again joined the Methodists, building and endowing three chapels for them, in contrition for having maligned them in his rambling *Memoirs*. Latterly he was fond of travelling, and made a tour of bookselling inspection through England and Scotland, seeing discouraging signs in every town but Edinburgh, "where indeed a few capital articles are kept." "At York and Leeds there were a few (and but very few) good books; but in all the other towns between London and Edinburgh nothing but trash was to be found." In Scotland, he looked forward with great curiosity to seeing the women washing soiled linen in the rivers, standing bare-legged the while, and indeed this incident seems to have afforded him more gratification than any in his travels except the following: "In Bristol, Uxbridge, Bridgewater, Taunton, Wellington, and other places, I amused myself in calling on some of my masters, with whom I had, about twenty years before, worked as a journeyman shoemaker. I addressed each with

‘Pray, sir, have you got any occasion?’ which is the term made use of by journeymen in that useful occupation, when seeking employment. Most of these honest men had quite forgotten my person, as many of them had not seen me since I worked for them; so that it is not easy for you to conceive with what surprize and astonishment they gazed on me. For you must know that I had the vanity (I call it humour) to do this in my chariot, attended by my servants; and on telling them who I was all appeared to be very happy to see me.”

James Lackington died in his country house in Budleigh Lutterton, in Devonshire, in 1815. His life is an eminent example how a man of no attainments or advantages can conquer success by sheer hard work and perseverance.

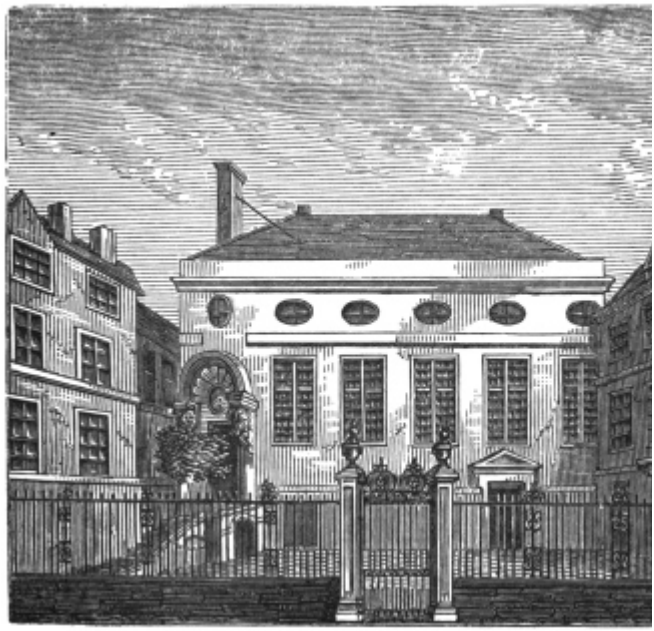
Lackington was not the only man of his time who perceived that the conditions of literature were displaying at least a chance of change; that the circle of the book-buying public was incessantly enlarging, and that, by supplying the best books at the cheapest remunerative rates, not only would the progress of education be accelerated, but that the very speculation would bring fortune as well as honour to the innovators in the Trade. One of the first booksellers to adopt this principle was John Bell, whose name is still preserved in *Bell’s Weekly Messenger*. His *British Poets*, *British Theatre* and *Shakespeare*, published in small pocket volumes, carried consternation into the trade, but scattered the English classics broadcast among the people. He was the first to discard the long s. He was soon rivalled by Cook and Harrison, and all three were distinguished, not only by publishing in little pocket volumes, exquisitely printed, and embellished by the

best artists for the many, what had before been produced in folios and quartos for the few, but as the inventors of the "number trade," by which even expensive works were sold in small weekly portions to those to whom literature had hitherto been an unknown luxury. Such were the *Lives of Christ*, *The Histories of England*, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, *Family Bibles with Notes*, and *The Works of Flavius Josephus*. Many of these "number books," though of no great literary merit, exhibited every possible attraction on their copious title-pages, and were announced with the then novel terms of "beautiful," "elegant," "superb," and "magnificent."



**Andrew Donaldson.**

(*From an Etching by Kay. 1789.*)



**Stationers' Hall, near Paternoster Ro**
(*From an Etching by R. Cole. 1750.*)

But the pioneer to whom the cheap book-buying public is most indebted was Alexander Donaldson, who, though an Edinburgh man, fought out his chief battles among his London brethren. Donaldson's contemporaries in Edinburgh in the middle of the eighteenth century were Bell, Ellis, and Creech, the only bookseller worth recording before that date being Alexander Ramsay, the poet. Donaldson having struck out the idea of publishing cheap reprints of popular works, extended his business by starting a bookshop in the Strand, London—a step that brought

him into collision with the London publishers—and authors, for Johnson calls him "a fellow who takes advantage of the state of the law to injure his brethren ... and supposing he did reduce the price of books is no better than Robin Hood who robbed the rich in order to give to the poor." In 1771, Donaldson reprinted Thomson's *Seasons*, and an action at law was brought against him by certain booksellers. He proved that the work in question had first been printed in 1729, that its author died in 1748, and that the copyright consequently expired in 1757; and the Lords decided in his favour, thereby settling finally the vulgar and traditional theory that copyright was the interminable possession of the purchaser. To follow this interesting question for a moment. In Anne's reign it was decided that copyright was to last for fourteen years, with an additional term of fourteen years, provided that the author was alive at the expiry of the first. In 1773–4, following upon Donaldson's prosecution, a bill to render copyright perpetual passed through the Commons, but was thrown out in the Lords, and in 1814 the term of fourteen years and a conditional fourteen was extended to a definite and invariable period of twenty-eight years. Finally in 1842, the present law was passed, by which the term was prolonged to forty-two years, but the copyright was not to expire in any case before seven years after the author's death.

Donaldson left a very large fortune, which was greatly augmented by his son, who bequeathed the total amount, a quarter of a million, to found an educational hospital for poor children in Edinburgh, under the title of "Donaldson's Hospital."

During the period under review the localities

affected by the bookselling and publishing trade had greatly changed and altered. The stalls of the "Chap. Book" venders had disappeared from London Bridge and the Exchange, and even Little Britain had been entirely vacated. Little Britain, from the time of the first Charles to Mary and William, was as famous for books as Paternoster Row afterwards became. But, even in 1731, a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* says, "The race of booksellers in Little Britain is now almost extinct; honest Ballard, well known for his curious divinity catalogues (he was said to have been the first to print a catalogue), being then the only genuine representative ... it was, in the middle of the last century, a plentiful and learned emporium of learned authors, and men went thither as to a market. This drew to the place a mighty trade, the rather because the shops were spacious and the learned gladly resorted to them, where they seldom failed to meet with agreeable conversations." The son of this Ballard died in 1796, and was by far the best of the Little Britain booksellers. When the "trade" deserted Little Britain, about the reign of Queen Anne, they took up their abode in Paternoster Row, then principally in the hands of mercers, haberdashers, and lace-men—a periodical in 1705 mentioning even the "semptresses of Paternoster Row;" for the old manuscript venders, who had christened the whole neighbourhood, had died out centuries before. It now became the headquarters of publishers and more especially of old booksellers, but with the introduction of magazines and "copy" books, that latter portion of the trade migrated elsewhere, and the street assumed its present appearance of wholesale warehouses, and general and periodical publishing houses. It was not long indeed before the tide of fashion carried many of the

eminent firms westward, and the movement in that direction is still apparent.



# *THE LONGMAN FAMILY.*

## CLASSICAL AND EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE.

The family of Longman can trace a publishing pedigree back to a date anterior to that of any other house still represented amongst us—the Rivingtons only excepted. As in the previous chapter, we shall select one member—necessarily that one to whom most public interest is attached—as the typical representative of the firm, touching lightly, however, upon all. And, in accordance with the scheme of the present volume, our remarks will primarily be devoted to a narrative of their business connections with that branch of literature—classical and educational works—with which the name of Longman is more immediately associated.

For the whole of the seventeenth century the Longman family occupied the position of thriving citizens in the busy seaport town of Bristol, then the Liverpool of the day, and acquired some considerable wealth in the manufacture of soap and sugar,

achieving in many instances the highest honours in civic authority. Ezekiel Longman, who is described as "of Bristol, gentleman," died in the year 1708, leaving, by a second marriage, a little boy only nine years of age, who, as Thomas Longman, is afterwards to be the founder of the great Paternoster Row firm.

By a provision of his father's will, Thomas was to be "well and handsomely bred and educated according to his fortune;" this, we presume, was duly accomplished, and in June, 1716, we find that he was bound apprentice for seven years to Mr. John Osborn, bookseller, of Lombard Street, London—a man in a good, substantial way of business, but not to be confused with the other Osbornes of the time. Unlike Jacob, Longman served his seven years, and reaped a due reward in the person of his master's daughter; and, as at the expiry of his time, the house of William Taylor (known to fame as the publisher of *Robinson Crusoe*) had lost its chief, Osborn being appointed executor for the family, we find that in August, 1824 "all the household goods and books bound in sheets" according to valuation were purchased by Longman for £2,282 9*s.* 6*d.*—a very considerable sum in those days, and, towards the end of the month, £230 18*s.* was further paid for part shares in several profitable copyrights.

In acquiring this business Longman took possession of two houses, both ancient in the trade, the *Black Swan* and the *Ship*, which, through the profitable returns of *Robinson Crusoe*, Taylor had amalgamated into one; and here on the self-same freehold ground, the immense publishing establishment of the modern Longmans is still standing.

The first trade mention we find of his name

occurs in a prospectus dated Oct., 1724, of a proposal to publish, by subscription, *The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq.* (the father of chemistry, and brother of the Earl of Cork), "to be printed for W. and J. Innes, at the West End of St. Paul's Churchyard, J. Osborn, at the *Oxford Arms*, in Lombard Street, and T. Longman, at the *Ship* and *Black Swan*, in Paternoster Row." In a few months after this Osborn followed his daughter to the Row, and, adding his capital to that of his son-in-law, remained in partnership with him until the end of his days.

In 1726, we find their names conjointly prefixed to the first edition of Sherlock's *Voyages*, and between that date and 1730 to a great variety of school books.

All the works of importance, many even of the minor books, were, at that time, published not only by subscription in the first instance, but the remaining risk, and the trouble of a pretty certain venture, were divided amongst a number of booksellers: and the share system was so general that in the books of the Stationers' Company there is a column ruled off, before the entries of the titles of works and marked "Shares," and subdivided into halves, eight-twelfths, sixteenths, twenty-fourths, and even sixty-fourths. Much of the speculative portion of a bookseller's business in those days consisted, therefore, not in the original publication of books, but in the purchase and sale of their shares, and to this business we find that Thomas Longman was especially addicted. As early as November, 1724, he bought one-third of the *Delphin Virgil* from Jacob Tonson, junior; in 1728 a twentieth of Ainsworth's *Latin Dictionary*, one of the most profitable books of

the last century, for forty pounds, and, much later on, one-fourth part of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment* for the small sum of twelve pounds.

The chief interest of the career of the house at this period lies in their connection with the *Cyclopædia* of Ephraim Chambers, which was not only the parent of all our English encyclopædias, but also the direct cause of the famous *Encyclopédie* of the French philosophers. Longman's share in this work, first published in 1728, cost but fifty pounds, and consisted, probably, only of one sixty-fourth portion; as, however, the proprietors died off, Longman steadily purchased all the shares that were thrown on the book-market, until, in the year 1740, the Stationers' book assigns him eleven out of the sixty-four—a larger number than was ever held by any other proprietor.

One of the few direct allusions to Longman's personal character relates to his kindness to Ephraim Chambers. A contemporary writes in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—"Mr. Longman used him with the liberality of a prince, and the kindness of a father; even his natural absence of mind was consulted, and during his illness jellies and other proper refreshments were industriously left for him at those places where it was least likely that he should avoid seeing them." Chambers had received £500 over and above the stipulated price for this great work, and towards the latter end of his life was never absolutely in want of money; yet from forgetfulness, perhaps from custom, he was parsimonious in the extreme. A friend called one day at his chambers in Gray's Inn, and was pressed to stay dinner. "And what will you give me, Ephraim?" asked the guest; "I dare engage you have nothing for dinner!" To which

Mr. Chambers calmly replied, “Yes, I have a fritter, and if you’ll stay with me I’ll have two.”

After the death of his partner and father-in-law, who bequeathed him all his books and property, Thomas Longman seems to have prospered amazingly. In 1746 he took into partnership one Thomas Shenrell; but, except for the fact that this name figures in conjunction with his for the two following years, then to disappear for ever, little more is known. In 1754, however, he took a nephew into partnership, after which the title-pages of their works ran:—“Printed for T. and T. Longman at the *Ship* in Pater-Noster-Row.” Before this, however, he is to be found acting in unison with Dodsley, Millar, and other great publishers of the day, in the issue of such important works as Dr. Samuel Johnson’s *Dictionary of the English Language*. On the 10th of June, 1855, only *two* months after the publication of the dictionary, he died, and Johnson is obliged to put off his well-earned holiday-trip to Oxford. “Since my promise two of our partners are dead (Paul Knapton was the second) and I was solicited to suspend my excursion till we could recover from our confusion. Thomas Longman the first had no children, and left half the partnership stock to his nephew and namesake, the rest of the property going to his widow.”

Thomas Longman, the nephew, was born in 1731, and, at the age of fifteen, entered the publishing firm as an apprentice, and at the date of his uncle’s death was only five-and-twenty.

Under his management the old traditions were kept up—more copyrights of standard books were purchased, the country trade extended, and more than this the business relations of the house were

very vastly increased in the American colonies. One of Osborn's earliest books, by-the-way, had been entered at Stationers' Hall in 1712 as *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testament. For the edification and comfort of the Saints in Public and Private, more especially in New England*. The nephew probably followed up the colonial trade of his uncle and master, for at the first commencement of hostilities in that country he had a very large sum engaged in that particular business, and, to the honour of the succeeding colonists, several of his correspondents behaved very handsomely in liquidating their debts in full, even subsequent to amicable arrangements and to the peace of 1783.

As in the case of the founder of the house, the folio *Cyclopædia*, still the only one in the field, occupied the chief attention of the firm. Already in 1746 it had reached a fifth edition; "and whilst," adds Alexander Chalmers, "a sixth edition was in question the proprietors thought that the work might admit of a supplement in two additional folio volumes. This supplement, which was published in the joint names of Mr. Scott and Dr. Hill, though containing a number of valuable articles, was far from being uniformly conspicuous for its exact judgment and due selection, a small part of it only being executed by Mr. Scott, Dr. Hill's task having been discharged with his usual rapidity." There the matter stood for some years, when the proprietors determined to convert the whole into one work. Several editions were tried and found wanting, and finally Dr. John Calder, the friend of Dr. Percy, was engaged, but provisionally only, for the duty. He drew up an elaborate programme, containing no less than twenty-six propositions. The agreement, as it illustrates, in some degree, the relative positions of

authors and publishers, may be quoted. Dr. Calder agreed to prepare a new edition of *Chambers's Cyclopædia* to be completed in two years. He received £50 as a retaining fee upon signing the agreement, and £50 a quarter until the work was finally out of the printer's hands. In spite of this retaining fee the proprietors appear to have been smitten with fear, perhaps dreading a repetition of Dr. Hill's inaccuracies, and sent round a specimen sheet to the eminent *literati* of the day, asking their opinions upon the matter and the style. All the verdicts were unfavourable, one contemptuous critic complaining that the author had twice referred favourably to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "a Scots rival publication in little esteem." Dr. Johnson cut away a large portion of his sheet as worthless; but, at poor Calder's request, who began to be perplexedly alarmed by all these adverse reviews, explained this superfluity as arising simply from *trôp de zèle*. "I consider the residuum which I lopped away, not as the consequence of negligence or inability, but as the result of superfluous business, naturally exerted in the first article. He that does too much soon learns to do less." Then apologizing for Calder's turbulence and impatience, the kindly doctor prays "that he may stand where he stood before, and be permitted to proceed with the work with which he is engaged. Do not refuse this request, sir, to your most humble servant, Samuel Johnson." Again and again the doctor interposed his influence, but in vain, and Abraham Rees, a young professor in a dissenting college near town, was engaged, and a new issue of the *Cyclopædia* (still Chambers's), in weekly parts, was commenced in 1778, running on till 1786, attaining a circulation of four or five thousand, then a large one, for each number; and Longman, as chief

proprietor, must have profited exceedingly by the work.

In the books of the Stationers' Company we find repeated entry of Longman as publisher or shareholder in such miscellaneous works as *Gil Blas*, *Humphrey Clinker*, and *Rasselas*; and, true to the old traditions of the firm, educational works were by no means neglected. Among others we note a record of *Cocker's Arithmetic*, since proverbially and bibliographically famous.

Cocker was an unruly master of St. Paul's School, twice deposed for his extreme opinions, but twice restored for his marvellous talents of teaching. "He was the first to reduce arithmetic to a purely mechanical art." The first edition, however, was published only after his death by his friend "John Hawkins, writing master"—a copy sold by Puttick and Simpson, in 1851, realized £8 10*s.* The fifty-second edition was published in 1748, and the last reprint, though at that time the work was in Longman's hands, bears "Glasgow, 1777," on the title-page.

"Ingenious Cocker now to rest thou'rt gone,
No art can show thee fully, but thy own,
Thy rare arithmetic alone can show
The vast *sums* of thanks we for thy labour owe."

In those days the publishers clave together in a manner undreamt of in these latter times of keener competition. Nichols, in speaking of James Robson (a Bond-street bookseller), and a literary club of booksellers, observes that Mr. Longman, with the late Alderman Cadell, James Dodsley, Lockyer, Davies, Peter Elmsley, Honest Tom Payne of the Mew's Gate, and Thomas Evans of the Strand, were

all members of this society. They met first at the "Devil's Tavern," Temple-bar, then moved to the "Grecian," and finally from a weekly gathering, became a monthly meeting at the "Shakspeare." Here was originated the germ of many a valuable production. Under their auspices Davies (in whose shop Boswell first met Johnson) produced his only valuable work, the *Life of Garrick*. Poor Davies had been an actor till Churchill's satire drove him off the stage—

"He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone."

From this he fled to the refuge of a bookselling shop in Russell-street, Covent-garden. He is described variously as "not a bookseller, but a gentleman dealing in books," and as "learned enough for a clergyman." Here he strived indifferently well till we come upon his epitaph—

"Here lies the author, actor Thomas Davies,
Living he shone a very *rara avis*;
The scenes he played life's audience must commend—
He honour'd Garrick, Johnson was his friend."

At this club meeting, too, Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* were first resolved on, and by the club clique the work was ultimately produced.

William West, a bookseller's assistant, who died at a great age at the Charter House, in 1855, has left in his *Fifty Years' Reminiscences*, and in the pages of the *Aldine Magazine*, a number of garrulous, amusing, but sometimes incoherent stories of the old booksellers. West says he knew all the members of the club, and bears witness that "Longman was a man of the most exemplary character both in his profession and in his private life, and as universally esteemed for his benevolence as for his integrity." He

mentions in particular Longman's generosity in offering George Robinson any sum he wished on credit, when his business was in a critical condition.

West adds, "I was in the habit of going to Mr. Longman's almost daily from the years 1785 to 1787 or 1788, for various books for country orders, being what is termed in all wholesale booksellers' shops 'a collector.' Mr. Norton Longman had been caused by his father wisely to go through this same wholesome routine of his profession; and I am informed that the present Mr. L. (Thomas Norton Longman), although at the very head of the book trade, has pursued a similar course with his sons."

Longman—and this brings us to the subject—had married a sister of Harris, the patentee, and long the manager of Covent Garden Theatre. By her he had three sons, and of these Thomas Norton Longman, born in 1771, about 1792 began to take his father's place in the publishing establishment; and about this time Thomas Brown entered the office as an apprentice. In 1794, Mr. Owen Rees was admitted a member, and the firm's title was altered to "Longman and Co.;" and at this time, too, the younger Evans, "rating," we are told, "only as third wholesale bookseller in England," became bankrupt, and the whole of his picked stock was transferred to 39, Paternoster Row. The stock was further increased by a legacy from the elder Evans to Brown's father in 1803. This elder Evans, as the publisher of the *Morning Chronicle*, had incurred the displeasure of Goldsmith, who, mindful of Johnson's former valour, "went to the shop," says Nichols, "cane in hand, and fell upon him in a most unmerciful manner. This Mr. Evans resented in a truly pugilistic method, and in a few moments the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield*

was disarmed and stretched on the floor, to the no small diversion of the bystanders."



**Thomas Longman.**
**1771–1842.**

Seven years, however, before this, Thomas Longman the second died, on the 5th February,

1797. Of the position to which he had attained it is sufficient to mention that when the Government were about to impose an additional duty on paper, subsequent to that of 1794, the firm of Longman urged such strong and unanswerable arguments against it and its impolicy that the idea was relinquished; and at this time the house had nearly £100,000 embarked in various publications.

Longman left his business to his eldest son, and to his second son, George, he bequeathed a handsome fortune, which enabled him to become a very extensive paper manufacturer at Maidstone, in Kent, and for some years he represented that borough in Parliament. As a further honour, he was drawn for Sheriff of London, but did not serve the office.

Edward Longman, the third son, was drowned at an early age in a voyage to India, whither he was proceeding to a naval station in the East India Company's service.

At the time of Thomas Norton Longman's accession to the chiefdom of the Paternoster Row firm, the literary world was undergoing a seething revolution. Genius was again let loose upon the earth to charm all men by her beauty, and to scare them for a while by her utter contempt for precedent. The torpor in which England had been wrapped during the whole of the foregone Hanoverian dynasty was changing into an eager feeling of unrest, and, later on, to a burning desire to do something, no matter what, and to do it thoroughly in one's own best manner, and at one's own truest promptings. No man saw the coming change more clearly than Longman; and anxious to profit by the first-fruits of the future, yet careful not to cast away in his hurry that

ponderous ballast of dictionary and compilation, he soon gathered all the young writers of the day within the precincts of his publishing fold.

Down at Bristol, the ancestral town of both Longman and Rees, Joseph Cottle had been doing honest service—without, we fear, much profit—in issuing the earliest works of young men who were to take the highest rank among their fellows. Cottle had published Southey's *Joan of Arc* in 1796, and in 1798 had issued the *Lyrical Ballads*, the joint composition of Coleridge and Wordsworth. When, in 1800, Longman purchased the entire copyrights of the Bristol firm, at a fair and individual valuation, the *Lyrical Ballads* were set down in the bill at exactly nothing, and Cottle obtained leave to present the copyright to the authors. In connection with Cottle and Longman, we must here mention a story that does infinite credit to both. At the very close of the eighteenth century, Southey and Cottle in conjunction prepared an edition of Chatterton's works, to be published by subscription for the benefit of his sister, whose sight was now beginning to fail her. Hitherto, though much money had been made from the works of the "boy poet," they had been printed only for the emolument of speculators.

The edition unfortunately proved a failure, but Longman and Rees entered into a friendly arrangement with Southey, and he was able to report in 1804 that Mrs. Newton lived to receive £184 15*s.* from the profits, when, as she expressed it, she would otherwise have wanted bread. Ultimately, Mary Ann Newton, the poet's niece, received about £600, the fruits of the generous exertion of a brother poet, and of the good feeling of a kind-hearted publisher.

The first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* did eventually sell out, and then Wordsworth, detaching his own poems from the others, and adding several new ones thereto, obtained £100 from Longman for the use of two editions, but the sale was so very slow that the bargain was probably unprofitable.

In this same year 1800 the house of Longman also published Coleridge's translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, written in the short space of six weeks. Very few copies were sold, but after remaining on hand for sixteen years, the remainder was sold off rapidly at a double price.

Southey (a Bristol man himself) met, too, with much kindness from the firm, but after his first poem with but little, as a poet, from the public. We have seen before that "the profits" on *Madoc* "amounted to exactly three pounds seventeen shillings and a penny." No wonder that he writes to a friend, "Books are now so dear that they are becoming articles of fashionable furniture more than anything else; they who do buy them do not read, and they who read them do not buy them. I have seen a Wiltshire clothier who gives his bookseller no other instructions than the dimensions of his shelves; and have just heard of a Liverpool merchant who is fitting up a library, and has told his bibliopole to send him Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, and if any of those fellows should publish anything new to let him have it immediately. If *Madoc* obtains any celebrity, its size and cost will recommend it to those gentry *libros consumere nati*, born to buy octavos and help the revenue." Southey's prose, however, proved infinitely more profitable, and for some years he was the chief contributor to Longman's *Annual Review* started in 1802, the same year as the *Edinburgh*

*Review*. About this time Longman first went to Scotland, paid a visit to Walter Scott, and purchased the copyright of the *Minstrelsy* then publishing; and in the following year Rees crossed the borders, and returned with an arrangement to publish the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* on the half-profit system, Constable having, however, a very small share in it. Scott's moiety of profits was £169 6*s.*, and success being then ensured, Longman offered £500 for the copyright, which was at once accepted. They afterwards added £100, "handsomely given to supply the loss of a fine horse which broke down suddenly while the author was riding with one of the worthy publishers" (Owen Rees).

Already in the first few years of the century we find the house connected with Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and Scott, but it was by no means entirely to poetry that Longman and Rees trusted. In 1799 they purchased the copyright of Lindley Murray's *English Grammar*, one of the most profitable school books ever issued from the press—for many years the annual sale of the *Abridgment* in England alone was from 48,000 to 50,000 copies. Chambers' *Cyclopædia* was entirely re-written, re-cast, and re-christened, and again, under the management of Abraham Rees, after whom it was named, came out in quarto form in parts, but at a total cost of £85. The ablest scientific and technical writers of the day were retained, and among them we find the names of Humphry Davy, John Abernethy, Sharon Turner, John Flaxman, and Henry Brougham. For the first twenty years of this century Rees' *New Cyclopædia* filled the place that the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—"a Scots rival in little esteem"—was afterwards to occupy.

In 1803, we find the trade catalogue has extended so much in bulk and character that it is divided into no less than twenty-two classes. Among their books we note Paley's *Natural Theology* (ten editions published in seven years), Sharon Turner's *Anglo-Saxon History*, Pinkerton's *Geography*, Cowper's *Homer*, and Gifford's *Juvenal*.

About this time too, they engaged very extensively in the old book trade, a branch of the business discarded about the year 1840. In a catalogue of the year 1811 we find some very curious books. Here are the celebrated *Roxburgh Ballads*, now in the British Museum; a Pennant's *London*, marked £300; a Granger's *Biographical Dictionary*, £750; Pilkington's *Dictionary of Painters*, £420; two volumes of *Cromwelliana*, £250; an extraordinary assemblage of Caxtons, Wynkyn de Wordes, and other early printed books, one supposed to date from 1446; a unique assemblage of *Garrickiana*, and many other articles of a matchless character.[9]

Longman was himself indefatigable in business, for fifty years unremittingly he came from and returned to Hampstead on horseback; but as the rious branches of the trade clearly prove, the superintendence of so vast a business was altogether beyond the power of any single man; and perhaps nothing tended more to raise the firm to the eminent position it soon attained than the plan of introducing fresh blood from time to time;—the new members being often chosen on account of the zeal and talent they had displayed as servants of the house. In 1804 Thomas Hurst, with the whole of his trade and connection, and Cosmo Orme (the founder of the hospital for decayed booksellers) were admitted. In

1811, Thomas Brown, whom we have already noticed as an apprentice, became a member of the firm, and until his retirement in 1859, took the sole management of the cash department, with so regular and just a system that an author could always learn what was coming to him, and when he was to receive it—a plan *not* invariably adopted in a publisher's counting-house. The firm was in 1824 further strengthened by the admission of Bevis Green, who had been apprenticed to Hurst in 1807. The title of the firm at this, its best known, period was, therefore, "Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green." When, however, Thomas Roberts entered, the title was changed to "Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green;" but we are anticipating, for Roberts died as recently as 1865, having acquired some distinction in private life as a Numismatist. For the sake of convenience, and for the sequence of the story, it will, perhaps, be as well to consider the firm as represented, as in fact from his leading position it was by Thomas Norton Longman, touching only upon the others individually when some directly personal interest arises. Before all these partnerships, however, were accomplished facts Longman had taken a much more precious, and even more zealous partner in the person of Miss Mary Slater of Horsham, Sussex, whom he had married as far back as the 2nd July, 1799.

Wordsworth of course continued his connection with the firm, though his profits were absolutely *nil*. Though a poetic philosopher he was not quite proof against the indifference of the public. In the edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* published in 1805 we find the significant epigraph, *Quam nihil ad genium, Papinique tuum*. In 1807, he published two new volumes, in which appeared many of his choicest pieces, and

among them his first sonnets. Jeffrey, however, maintained that they were miserably inferior, and his article put an absolute stop to the sale. Wordsworth had, perhaps deprived himself of all right to complain, for his harshest reviewer did him far more justice than he was wont to deal out to his greatest contemporaries. In 1814, we find Longman announcing, "Just published, the *Excursion*, being a portion of the *Recluse*, by William Wordsworth, in 4to., price £2 2*s.*, boards." Jeffrey used the famous expression—"This will never do;" and Hogg wrote to Southey that Jeffrey had *crushed* the poem. "What!" retorted Southey, "Jeffrey *crush* the *Excursion*! Tell him he might as easily crush Skiddaw!" Wordsworth, who had invariably a high value of his own works, even of his weakest ones, writes also,—"I am delighted to learn that the Edinburgh Aristarch has declared against the *Excursion*, as he will have the mortification of seeing a book enjoy a high reputation to which he has not contributed." For a while, however, Jeffrey's curse was potent, and it took six years to exhaust an edition of only 500 copies. We need scarcely follow Wordsworth's various publications (do their dates not lie on every table of every drawing-room in the land?), but the whole returns from his literary labours up to 1819 had not amounted to £140; and even in 1829 he remarks that he had worked hard through a long life for less pecuniary emolument than a public performer earns for two or three songs.

Longman had at one time an opportunity of becoming Byron's publisher, but declined the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* on account of the violent attacks it contained upon his own poets—those of the Lake school. With Scott we have seen that he had had dealings, and in these, at all events, Sir Walter's

joke, that *Longmanum est errare*, did not hold good. Before the collective edition of 1830, 44,000 copies of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* were sold. Though Longman was inclined to believe that Scott was not the author of *Waverley*, he was equally anxious to secure the publication of some of that extraordinary series of romances; and at a time when the Ballantynes were in trouble, purchased *Guy Mannering* by granting bills in advance for £1500, and taking a portion of their stock, to the extent of about £600 more. The *Monastery* was also published by him in 1820, and he is said, though the authority is more than dubious, to have paid Scott upwards of £20,000 in about fifteen years.

What Scott was to Constable, and Byron to Murray, that was Moore to Longman. "Anacreon Moore," as he loved to be called, had gained a naughty reputation from *Mr. Thomas Little's Poems*, and, in 1811, we find him writing to Longman—"I am at last come to a determination to bind myself to your service, if you hold the same favourable disposition towards me as at our last conversation upon business. To-morrow I shall be very glad to be allowed half-an-hour's conversation with you, and as I dare say I shall be *up all night at Carlton House*, I do not think I could reach your house before four o'clock. I told you before that I never could work without a retainer. It will not, however, be of that exorbitant nature which your liberality placed at my disposal the first time." Soon after this the Prince Regent threw over his old Whig friend, but Moore was so successful in his political warfare that he more than gained as a poet what he lost as a courtier, and his *Two-penny Post Bag* went through fourteen editions. He was, however, anxious to apply his genius to the creation of some work more likely

to raise his reputation than the singing of lascivious songs, or the jerking off of political squibs. Accordingly Perry, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, was sent to discuss preliminary matters with Longman. “I am of opinion,” said Perry, “that Mr. Moore ought to receive for his poem the largest price that has been given in our day for such a work.” “That,” replied Longman promptly, “was £3000.” “Exactly so,” rejoined the editor, “and no smaller a sum ought he to receive.” Longman insisted upon a perusal beforehand:—

“Longman has communicated his readiness to terms, on the basis of the three thousand guineas, but requires a perusal beforehand; this I have refused. I shall have no ifs.”

Again Moore writes, “To the honour and glory of romance, as well on the publisher’s side as on the poet’s, this very generous view of the transaction was without any difficulty acceded to;” and again, “There has seldom occurred any transaction in which trade and poetry have shone so satisfactorily in each other’s eyes.” So Moore left London to find a quiet resting-place “in a lone cottage among the fields in Derbyshire,” and there *Lalla Rookh* was written; the snows of two or three Derbyshire winters aiding, he avers, his imagination, by contrast, to paint the everlasting summers and glowing scenery of the East. The arrangement had hitherto been verbal, but on going up to town, in the winter of 1814, he received the following agreement from Longman.

## “COPY OF TERMS WRITTEN TO MR. MOORE.

“That upon your giving into our hands a poem of yours of the length of *Rokeby*, you shall receive

> from us the sum of £3000. We also agree to the stipulation that the few songs which you may introduce into the work shall be considered as reserved for your own setting."

Soon Moore writes to say that about 4000 lines are perfectly finished, but he is unwilling to show any portion of the work until the 6000 are completed, for fear of disheartenment. He requests Longman, however, "to tell our friends that they are done, a poetic licence to prevent the teasing wonderment of the literary quidnuncs at my being so long about it." Longman replies that "we are certainly impatient for the perusal of your poem, but solely for our gratification. Your sentiments are always honourable." At length, after very considerable delays on the part of the author, the poem appeared, and its wonderful success fully justified the publisher's extraordinary liberality. Moore drew a thousand pounds for the discharge of his debts, and left, temporarily only, we fear, £2000 in Longman's hands, the interest of which was to be paid quarterly to his father.

This was Moore's greatest effort; nor did he attempt to surpass it. One substantial proof of admiration of the poet's performance should not be overlooked: "The young Bristol lady," says Moore in his diary, Dec. 23rd, 1818, "who inclosed me three pounds after reading *Lalla Rookh* had very laudable ideas on the subject; and if every reader of *Lalla Rookh* had done the same I need never have written again."

As it was, however, he was soon obliged to set to work once more—this time as a biographer. The lives of Sheridan, Fitzgerald, and many others, bear testimony to his industry; but in spite, perhaps

because, of their pleasant gossiping tone, they are far from accurate. At one time he had so many lives upon his hands together, that he suggested the feasibility of publishing a work to be called the *Cat*, which should contain nine of them. His *Life of Byron* we have already alluded to, but we must again call attention to Longman's generosity in allowing him to transfer the work to Murray. Longman was not less eager in his kindness to his clients in private than in business relations. His Saturday "Weekly Literary Meetings" were about the pleasantest and most sociable in London. As early as 1804 we find Southey writing to Coleridge: "I wish you had called on Longman; that man has a kind heart of his own, and I wish you to think so; the letter he sent me was a proof of it. Go to one of his Saturday evenings, you will see a coxcomb or two, and a dull fellow or two; but you will, perhaps, meet Turner and Duppa, and Duppa is worth knowing." Throughout the day the new publications were displayed in a separate department for the use of the literary men, and house dinners were of frequent occurrence; the whole of the "Lake School" were steady recipients of Longman's hospitality whenever they came to town.

As, perhaps, the strongest proof of a man's kindliness of heart, Longman is invariably represented as being "almost adored by his domestics, from his uniform attention to the comforts of those who have grown gray in his service." He was a liberal patron of the "Association for the Relief of Decayed Booksellers," and was also one of the "Court of Assistants of the Company of Stationers," but, with the characteristic modesty of his disposition, paid the customary fine to be allowed to decline the offices of warden and master of the company.

For many years the "House" had been London agents and part proprietors of the *Edinburgh Review*, and when the commercial crash of 1826 destroyed Constable's huge establishment, the property was virtually in their own hands, and the number for December, 1826, is printed for "Longman, Rees, Orme, Browne, and Green, London, and Adam Black, Edinburgh;" and if we "read between the lines" of the new designation we learn that Hurst had been concerned in some bill transactions, and had been this year compelled to retire (he died an inmate of the Charter House, in 1847), and we may also gather something of the strong connection that was to be formed with the house of Adam Black.

Jeffrey retired from the editorial chair in 1829, but Macney Napier, the editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was appointed in his stead, and the literary management of the journal was still continued in Edinburgh. Sydney Smith ceased to write for the *Review* in 1827; but in 1825 an article was contributed on Milton, by a young man of five-and-twenty; and Mr. Thomas Babington Macaulay, who, as Moore said, could do any mortal thing but forget, was destined to be, not only the most brilliant of the daring and talented band of Edinburgh Reviewers, but eventually, one of the most powerful contributors to Longman's fortune and reputation.[10]

To return again to educational works, we find that in Mangnall's *Questions* a property had been acquired that fully rivalled Murray's *Mrs. Markham*. A type now of a hideously painful and parrot-like system of teaching (what negations of talent our sisters and mothers owe to this encyclopædic volume we shudder to sum up!) it was imitated and printed in every direction. Poor Miss Mangnall! who

recollects now-a-days that in 1806 she commenced her literary life with a volume of poems? A very similar book, but on scientific questions, was *Mrs. Marcet's Conversations*, which was not only profitable to Longman, but American booksellers, up to the year 1853, had reaped an abundant harvest from the sale of 160,000 copies.

The attempts already made by Constable and Murray to promote the sale of cheap and yet excellent books, led Longman to establish his *Cabinet Encyclopædia*. The management was given to Dr. Lardner, then a professor at the London University, and all, or nearly all, Longman's literary connections were pressed into service on his staff of contributors. In the prospectus we see the names of Scott, Moore, Mackintosh, Coleridge, Miss Edgeworth, Herschell, Long, Brewster, De Morgan, Thirlwall, and, of course, Southey. The *Times* gave more than a broad hint that some of the names were put forward as lures, and nothing else. Southey was anxious that this "insinuation" should be brought before a court of law, where the writer may be "taught that not every kind of slander may be published with impunity." The proprietors, however, contented themselves with publishing books, most indubitably written by the authors whose names they bore. The first volume was published in 1829, and at the close of the series, in 1846, one hundred and thirty-three volumes had been issued, the whole of which were eminently successful, and some few of them, such as Sir John Herschell's *Astronomy*, in particular, have since been expanded into recognised and standard works.

Another valuable work which has been a constant source of wealth to the firm, somewhat

similar in scope to the preceding, was McCulloch's *Commercial Dictionary*, first published in 1832; in which year the present Mr. Thomas Longman was admitted a partner, being joined by his brother, Mr. William Longman, in 1839. With young Mr. Thomas Longman, Moore appears to have been particularly friendly, addressing him always as "Dear Tom." As far back as 1829, we see the poet requesting that some one might be sent over to have "poor Barbara's" grave made tidy, for fear that his wife Bessy, who was about to make a loving pilgrimage thither, might be shocked, and we read afterwards that "young Longman kindly rode over twice to Hornsey for the purpose." In Moore's diary, too, for 1837, we find many regrets for the loss of Rees—a man "who may be classed among those solemn business-ties, the breaking of which by death cannot but be felt solemnly, if not deeply." And again, later on, in 1840: "Indeed, I will venture to say that there are few tributes from authors to publishers more honourable (or I will fairly say more deserved) than those which will be found among my papers relative to the transactions for many years between myself and my friends of the 'Row.'"

Thomas Longman the third was now an old man, but still constantly attentive to business. In his time he had seen many changes, but none more striking than those that occupied his latter days. *Madoc* was still lying on his shelves, but Southey was poet-laureate. Scott and Byron had in succession entranced the world. They had now withdrawn, and no third king arose to demand recognition. It was in the calm that followed that Wordsworth obtained a hearing. In 1839, the University of Oxford conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, amid the enthusiastic applause of a crowded theatre. Younger

men were coming to the fore, and though his contemporaries were fast dying off, still Longman was as eager for business as ever, and as ready, when it was over, for his chief pleasure—the enjoyments of domestic life; for his favourite pursuits—the love of music and the culture of fruits and flowers. As far as health and activity went, though in his 72nd year, he was still in the prime of life, when, on his usual ride to town, his horse fell, near the Small-pox Hospital, St. Pancras, and he was thrown over the animal's head and struck the ground with such violence as to fracture his skull and injure his spine; and in a few days afterwards he died at his residence, Greenhill House, Hampstead, on 28th August, 1842—leaving a blank, not only in his own family circle, but in the hearts of all who had known him as a master, or had reaped a benefit from the uniform generosity of his business dealings.

Mr. McCulloch and many of his literary clients erected a monument, the bust of which, by Mr. Moore, is said to be a good likeness, to his memory—an affectionate tribute seldom paid by men-of-letters to a publisher—now standing in Hampstead church.

His personalty was sworn under £200,000, and was principally left to his widow and family. The former, however, did not long survive her sorrow, but died some ten weeks after her husband.

Their second son, Mr. Charles Longman, of Two Waters, joined Mr. Dickenson, in the trade of wholesale stationers and paper-makers, in which they have since then attained a pre-eminence. Their eldest daughter married Mr. Spottiswoode, the Queen's printer, and the third daughter is the wife of Reginald Bray, Esq., of Shere.

The succession of a Thomas Longman to the

chiefdom of the house is, Mr. Knight says somewhere, as certain as the accession of a George was in the Hanoverian dynasty: and the present Mr. Longman, aided by his brother William, took command of the gigantic firm in Paternoster Row. The very year of their father's death was a year to be long remembered in the annals of the firm for an unusually successful "hit," in the production of the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. Not even in the palmy days of Scott and Byron was such an immediate and enormous circulation attained. In 1844, Macaulay ceased to contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*—nearly twenty years from the date of his first contributions; receiving latterly, we believe, £100 as a minimum price for an article. A collective edition of these essays was published in America; and within five years sixty thousand volumes were sold, and, as many of these were imported into England, Macaulay authorised the proprietors of the *Review* to issue an English edition, which certainly proved the most remunerative collection of essays ever published in this or any other country. The English edition contains twenty-seven essays, in some editions twenty-six. The Philadelphia edition contains eleven additional essays.[11]

These essays were all very excellent, but Macaulay's admirers regretted with Tom Moore, "that his great powers should not be concentrated upon one great work, instead of being scattered in Sibyl's leaves," and great was the satisfaction in 1841, when it was known that he was engaged upon a History of England, and the publication of the work was looked forward to with the greatest eagerness; and in 1849 the first two volumes appeared. Success was immediate—"Within six months," says the *Edinburgh Review*, "the book has run through five

editions, involving an issue of above 18,000 copies." By 1856, the sale of these two volumes had reached nearly 40,000 copies, and in the United States 125,000 copies were sold in five years. For the privilege of publication for ten years, it is said that Mr. Longman allowed the author £600 per annum; the copyright remaining in Macaulay's possession.

This success, however, was nothing to that achieved by the third and fourth volumes; and the day of their publication, 17th Dec., 1855, will be long remembered in the annals of Paternoster Row. It was presumed that 25,000 copies would be quite sufficient to meet the first public demand; but this enormous pile of books, weighing fifty-six tons, was exhausted the first day, and eleven thousand applicants were still unsatisfied. In New York one house sold 73,000 volumes (three different styles and prices) in ten days, and 25,000 more were immediately issued in Philadelphia—10,000 were stereotyped, printed, and in the hands of the publishers within fifty working hours. The aggregate sale in England and America, within four weeks of publication, is said to have exceeded 150,000 copies. Macaulay is also stated to have received £16,000 from Mr. Longman for the copyright of the third and fourth volumes.[12]

Upon the death of Mr. Macney Napier, the editorship of the *Review* was transferred to Mr. Empson, Jeffrey's son-in-law; while he in turn was succeeded by Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who finally gave place to Mr. H. Reeve.

In the way of cheap literature the "Travellers' Library," commenced in 1851, is deservedly worthy of notice. In this year occurred the unusual phenomenon of a pamphlet, bearing on its title-page

the joint names of Mr. Longman and Mr. Murray. This was a reprint of some correspondence with Earl Russell, in his official capacity, as to the injustice of the State undertaking the publication of school-books at the national expense, and compelling the government schools to adopt them—thus creating a perfect monopoly and interfering with private enterprise. The books in question were published by the Irish Educational Commissioners, but more than three-quarters of them were eventually sold in England—many of them, especially the collection of poetry, were, it was further urged, pirated from copyright works. The correspondence was long and protracted on the side of the publishers; and as is often the case in an important public question, Earl Russell's replies consisted of the merest acknowledgment. Mr. Longman had, however, an opportunity of a pleasant revenge. Tom Moore had left all his papers, letters, and journals to the care of his friend, Earl Russell—a man who, as Sydney Smith said, thought he could do anything—"build St. Paul's, cut for the stone, or command the Channel Fleet." The one thing apparently he could not do was the editorship or composition of a Poet's Life. The material, indeed, was ample, and seems to have been printed pretty much as it came to hand. However, the sum which Mr. Longman gave for the papers appeared, together with the pension, an ample provision for the devoted "Bessy."

Among the later efforts of the firm we may here mention the issue of many finely illustrated works, and we must also chronicle the fact that in 1863—the business connections and stock of the Parkers were added to the enormous trade of the leviathan firm. Giving a glance at the changes that have taken place in the members of the firm, we have merely

space to note that at Cosmo Orme's death in 1859 Mr. Brown retired, and at his decease on the 24th of March, 1869, left an immense fortune, more than £100,000 going in various legacies, of which the Booksellers' Provident Retreat and Institution each received £10,000, the Royal Literary Fund £3000, and the Stationers' Company in all £10,000, the balance after the various legacies, and there were no less than sixty-eight legatees, going to the grandchildren of Thomas Norton Longman. The personalty of Mr. B. E. Green, who died about the same date, was sworn under £200,000. Two of the former assistants, Mr. Dyer and Mr. Reader, have, on the good old system, been admitted to the firm, which now stands "Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer." Mr. Roberts, as before stated, died in 1865.

Both the Messrs. Longman are well known for their literary talents—Mr. Thomas Longman as editor of a magnificent edition of the New Testament; and Mr. William as an historical author. The first of his works was, we believe, privately printed, *A Tour in the Alps, by W. L.* Mr. William Longman has always been an enthusiastic Alpine traveller. He has, however, more recently published a *History of the Life and Times of Edward III.*, in two volumes, and at our present writing a new work has just appeared in which he says playfully, "I trust authors will forgive me, and not revenge themselves by turning publishers;" and he adds heartily and generously, "There is, nevertheless, some advantage in a publisher dabbling in literature, for it shows him the difficulties with which an author has to contend—the labour which is indispensable to produce a work which may be relied on—and it increases the sympathy which should, and which in these days does, exist between author and publisher." These

latter lines surely form a very fitting sentence with which to conclude our short history of the house of Longman.





# *CONSTABLE, CADELL, AND BLACK.*

## THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW," "WAVERLEY NOVELS," AND "ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA."

From 1790 to 1820 Edinburgh richly deserved the honourable title of "Modern Athens." Her University and her High School, directed by men pre-eminently fitted for their duties, capable of firing their pupils' minds with a noble purpose, endowed with a lofty ideal of a master's responsibilities—in fact, possessed of all the qualities that Dr. Arnold afterwards displayed elsewhere—attracted and educated a set of young men, unrivalled, perhaps, in modern times for genius and energy, for wit and learning. Nothing, then, was wanting to their due encouragement but a liberal patron, and this position was speedily occupied by a publisher, who, in his munificence and venturous spirit, soon outstripped his boldest English rival—whose one fault was, in fact, that of always being a Mæcenas, never a tradesman.

Archibald Constable was born on the 24th of February, 1776, at Kellie, in the parish of Carnbee in Fifeshire. He was the son of Thomas Constable, who, through his sagacity in rural matters, had risen to the position of land steward or baillie to the Earl of Kellie. The first thirteen or fourteen years of Archibald's life were passed beneath his father's roof, and his education, such as the parish school of Carnbee then afforded, consisted of a course of reading in the vernacular tongue, writing, arithmetic, and some elementary lessons in trigonometry, and beyond this humble curriculum, we believe his subsequent acquisitions did not much extend. Still, though he never attained any proficiency in academical studies, his native talents and address generally enabled him to both surmount and conceal it.

From an early age Archibald was possessed of a desire to enter upon a bookseller's useful career—a desire in his case not altogether unmixed with the hope of acquiring literary distinction. In 1788 therefore, he became apprenticed to Mr. Peter Hill, bookseller of Edinburgh, the old friend and correspondent of Burns. While a lad in Hill's shop he seems to have devoted his leisure hours to the acquisition of that knowledge of the early and rare productions of the Scottish press, and of all publications relating generally to the history, antiquities, and literature of Scotland, for which, throughout his subsequent career, he continued to exhibit a strong predilection. About the time of the expiration of his apprenticeship he married the daughter of David Willison, a printer, who, though previously very averse to the match, was subsequently of some service in enabling him to start for himself. Having hired a small shop in the High

Street, afterwards rendered conspicuous by his celebrity as a publisher, he issued, in November, 1795, the first of his Sale Catalogues of rare and curious books, which soon drew to his shop all the bibliographers and lovers of learning in the city. In this line of trade he speedily acquired considerable eminence, not so much by the extensiveness of his stock, for his capital was of the smallest, as by his personal activity, his congenial curiosity, and his quick intelligence. Here it was that Heber, in the course of his bibliomaniacal prowlings, came across Leyden, perched perpetually on a ladder reading some venerable folio, which his purse forbade him to purchase, but which through Constable's kindness was placed in this manner at his disposal. Heber soon brought him under Scott's notice, and thus had the pleasure of introducing the two most promising young men of the day to each other. Constable had, however, an ambition too strong to be satisfied with the routine business of a second-hand book-shop. Even before his shop in the High Street was fairly opened, he had himself offered a book to the trade—a reprint of Bishop Beveridge's *Private Thoughts on Religion*, struck off coarsely upon a whitey-brown sort of "tea-paper;" but still it was his first, and, as Archibald proudly said, "it was a pretty enough little bookie!"



**Archibald Constable.**
**1775–1827.**

Among other publications in which from his first outset he had been engaged, and which at the time he esteemed as by no means inconsiderable, were Campbell's "History of Scottish Poetry," Dalzell's

"Fragments of Scottish History," and Leyden's edition of the "Complaint of Scotland." In 1801 he acquired the property of the *Scots Magazine*, a miscellany which had commenced in 1739, and which was still esteemed as a repository of curious facts. This congenial publication engaged at first a considerable share of his personal attention, and, aided by the talents of Leyden, Murray, and Macneil, its reputation as a critical journal was raised into some importance.

Of all the extraordinary geniuses with whom Constable came into contact, none were more conspicuous to those near enough to judge than Leyden, his first editor of the periodical. A poet, an antiquarian, an Orientalist, he will long be distinguished among those whom the elasticity and ardour of genius have raised to distinction from an obscure and humble origin. The son of a day labourer at Denholm, he had, by sheer force of will, worked his way to the college of Edinburgh, where he at once obtained the friendship of many eminent literary men. His acquaintance with Scott soon introduced him into the best society in Edinburgh—which was then the most intellectual society in Europe—and here his wild uncouthness of demeanour did not at all interfere with the general appreciation of his genius, his gigantic endowments, and his really amiable virtues. Fixing his ambition on the East, where he hoped to rival the achievements of Sir William Jones, he obtained in 1802 the promise of some literary appointment in the East India Company's service; but when the time drew near it was discovered that the patronage of the season had been exhausted, with the exception of one surgeon-assistant's commission, and he was informed that if he wished to accept it he must

qualify within six months. He grappled at once with the task, and accomplished what takes other men three or four years in attainment within the incredibly short space of six months. He sailed for India in 1803, and died in 1811, at the early age of thirty-six, having in the seven years of his sojourn achieved the reputation of the most marvellous of Orientalists. His poetical remains were collected and given to the public in 1821, and exhibit in some instances a power of numbers which for mere melody of sound has seldom been surpassed in the English language.

In 1802, Constable commenced the *Farmer's Magazine*, under the management of an able East Lothian agriculturist, Mr. R. Brown, then of Markle. This work enjoyed a reputation contemporary with the whole of his business life. Altogether, Constable was making fair way as a publisher, when, in 1802, the *Edinburgh Review* burst like a bombshell upon an astonished world, and gave him just reason to believe that his professional fortune was thoroughly ensured in the most glorious manner.

The origin of the *Review*, like the beginnings of all things, is wrapped in doubt and mystery. Hitherto in the critical department of English literature, a review had been little more than a peg upon which to hang books for advertisement, and in which the general bearings of science, literature, and politics were left almost untouched. In Scotland, criticism was at a still lower ebb, for the country had possessed no regular review at all since the old *Edinburgh Review* had expired in 1756, after a flickering existence of a twelvemonth.

"One day," writes Sydney Smith, "we happened to meet in the eighth or ninth storey (it was the

third) of a flat in Buccleuch-place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed that we should get up a review. This was acceded to with acclamations. I was appointed editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the *Edinburgh Review*. The motto I proposed was—

'Tenui musam meditamur avenâ.'
'We cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal.'

But this was too near the truth to be admitted, and so we took our present grave motto from Publius Lyrus, of whom none of us had, I am sure, read a single line; and so began what has since turned out to be a very important and able journal. When I left Edinburgh it fell into the stronger hands of Lord Jeffrey and Lord Brougham, and reached the highest point of popularity and success."

It was resolved to bring out the first number of the work in June, 1802; but its outset was surrounded with many difficulties, arising from want of experience in its chief conductors. The meetings of the conspirators were held in a little room off Willison's (Constable's father-in-law's) office in Craig's-court, to which each man was requested to steal singly, by whichever way would be least suspicious; and there they examined and criticised each other's productions, and corrected the proof sheets as they were thrown off. Here it was that Jeffrey once rushed down excitedly into Willison's printing-office, crying, "Where is your pepper-box, man—your pepper-box?" In vain the printer declared he had no such useful article on the premises; Jeffrey persisted that the proof sheets must have been dusted with commas from a pepper-box, so lavish had the printer been with his points. Through

various delays, typographical and otherwise, the first number, as we have seen, did not appear until the following November.

Lord Brougham, in the first volume of his recently-published autobiography, flatly contradicts this account. "Nothing," he says, "can be more imaginary than nearly the whole of it." Still, when Sydney Smith published his version of the history, neither Lord Brougham nor any other person interested took the trouble to contradict it; and we are inclined to accept rather an account written within a short time of the foundation of the *Review* than to receive another version written by an octogenarian at an interval of more than half a century. A letter, moreover, of Sydney Smith's, first published in the *Athenæum* of April 1st, 1871, shows clearly that the proprietors of the journal presented him "with books to the value of £100 (corrected to £114) as a memorial of their respect for having planned and contributed to a work which to them has been a source of reputation as well as of emolument." On the other hand, Sydney Smith's editorship certainly did not extend beyond the first number, and was probably even in that subject to the direction of Jeffrey.

The list of contributions to the first four numbers may, however, be accepted as indisputable evidence of Brougham's enormous powers of work. To these four numbers he contributed twenty-one articles, besides portions of four others. Smith contributed eighteen, Jeffrey sixteen, and Horner seven. Brougham, too, kept up this rate of contribution more steadily than any of his colleagues. To the first twenty numbers he contributed no less than eighty articles, Jeffrey seventy-five, Smith twenty-three, and

Horner fourteen. By this time the new periodical was fairly launched, and the additional services of such men as Playfair, Thomas Brown, Walter Scott, Hallam, Murray, and Stodhart, had been secured.

The extensive circulation and reputation of the *Edinburgh Review* was, Scott himself says, due to two circumstances; first that it was entirely uninfluenced by the booksellers; and, secondly, the regular payment of editor and contributors: Jeffrey receiving, from the commencement of his labours, £300 per annum (afterwards increased to £800), whilst every contributor was compelled, even if wealthy, to accept a minimum bonus of £10 (afterwards raised to £16) per sheet.

Never before had the enterprise of young and almost unknown men started so ambitious a scheme, and never since have pluck and learning, talent and genius been so amply rewarded. They found the world of English society, English literature, and English politics warped and dwarfed—scared by the French Revolution and the American Republic into a dormant state of Toryism—they found matters thus, and in an incredibly short time they almost changed the current of the national thought. Jeffrey, with his clear, legal mind, his startling and brilliant manner of expression, his sarcasm cold and sharp-edged as a Toledo blade, unfortunately only too capable of wounding too deeply—won the position of the greatest English critic of all time, and of the most eminent Scottish lawyer of the day—achieving the highest honours open to the advocates of Edinburgh. Brougham, with his ponderous learning, his marvellous versatility, his immense powers of work, became not only the first English lawyer, but one of the first English statesmen of his time. Sydney Smith,

the wittiest man certainly of his century, might have attained the highest honours open to his calling, had he not preferred the more humble and more praiseworthy career of being a liberal clergyman at a time when the wearers of his cloth were one and all rank Tories to the backbone.

Constable, who had at first been rather startled and alarmed at the design of the *Edinburgh Review*, was not prepared, any more than the projectors themselves, for its immediate and splendid success. Without a publisher of his cast of mind the work, however, might have encountered some difficulties, and he was not slow to perceive, nor backward to follow, that line of conduct towards its conductors, without the observance of which the new relations between them could not long have been sustained harmoniously. The present proprietors of the work became, some years after its commencement, sharers of the property, but the publishing department remained, we believe, under his direction for many years.

In 1804 Constable assumed as partner Alexander Gibson Hunter, of Blackness, and from that time the business was carried on under the title of Archibald Constable and Co. In the following year, 1805, he added to the list of his periodicals the *Medical and Surgical Journal*, a work projected in concert with Dr. Andrew Duncan, and which existed till 1855, when it was united to the *Medical Journal of Science*. It was in this year, also, that the firm published a poem, which was eventually to do more for the enlargement of their business and the honour of their name than even the famous *Review* itself.

Walter Scott, as we have seen, while still unknown to fame, had been a frequent visitor at

Constable's old book-shop. The publishers of the first edition of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* were Longman and Co. of London, and Archibald Constable and Co. of Edinburgh; the latter firm taking but a small venture in the risk. The profit was to be divided equally between the author and the publishers, and Scott's portion amounted to £169 6*s.* Longman, when a second edition was called for, offered £500 for the copyright, which was immediately accepted, but they afterwards added, as the Introduction says, "£100 in their own unsolicited kindness." In the history of British poetry nothing had ever equalled the demand for the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. 44,000 copies were disposed of before Scott superintended the edition of 1830, to which the biographical introductions were prefixed.

In the ensuing year Constable issued a beautiful edition of what he termed *Works of Walter Scott, Esq.*, comprising the poem just mentioned, the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," "Sir Tristram," and a series of "Lyrical Ballads."

In 1806 it was rumoured that Scott had a new poem in hand. Longman at once opened negotiation as to its purchase, but in vain; and in a short time the London publishers heard with a feeling of jealousy, not unmixed with honest amazement, that Constable had offered one thousand guineas for a poem which had not yet been completed, and of which he had not even seen the scheme.

It may be gathered from the Introduction of 1830 that private circumstances of a delicate nature rendered it desirable for Scott to obtain the immediate command of such a sum; the price was actually paid long before the poem was published; and it suited well with Constable's character to

imagine that his readiness to advance the money may have outstripped the calculations of more experienced dealers.

The bargain having, however, been concluded he was too wary to keep the venture entirely to himself, and he consequently tendered one-fourth of the copyright to Mr. Miller of Albemarle Street, and to Mr. Murray, then of Fleet Street, London, and in both cases the offer was eagerly accepted.

*Marmion*, the poem in question, which had been announced by an advertisement in 1857, as *Six Epistles from Ettrick Forest*, met with an immense success, and 2000 copies, at a guinea and a half each, were disposed of in less than a month.

As an instance of the freedom Constable left to Jeffrey in the conduct of the *Review*, we are not a little astonished to read that the venture, in which he had risked so much, was attacked in a most slashing manner in his own journal. Jeffrey, thinking nothing of so ordinary a circumstance, sent the article to Scott with a note stating that he would come to dinner on the following Tuesday. Scott, though wounded by the tone of the *Review*, did his best to conceal it. Mrs. Scott, however, was very cool in her manner, and, as Jeffrey was taking leave, could no longer restrain her pique, and in her broken English —"Well, guid night, Mr. Jeffrey; dey tell me you have abused Scott in the *Review*; and I hope Mr. Constable has paid you well for writing it." This anecdote, insignificant in itself, prepares us to some extent for the coldness between them, which led Scott to originate the *Quarterly Review*.

Emboldened still further by the success of *Marmion*, Constable now engaged Scott to edit the works of Swift, and as Scott had several like

engagements on hand—he held, in fact, five separate agreements at the same time, for the London publishers—offered him £1500 for his new undertaking.

Constable was at this time in an apparently assured line of success. Though of a very sanguine nature—a quality without which no projector could possibly succeed—he was one of the most sagacious persons who ever followed his profession. A brother poet of Scott says of him: “Our butteracious friend turns up a deep draw-well;” and another eminent writer still more intimately connected had already christened him “the Crafty”—a title which, of all the flying burrs, was the one that stuck the firmest. His fair and handsome physiognomy was marked by an unmistakable and bland astuteness of expression. He generally avoided criticism as well as authorship, both being out of his “proper line.”

But of this “proper line,” and his own qualification for it, his esteem was ample. The one flaw, and the fatal flaw, in his character as a business man was his hatred of accounts, for he systematically refused during the most vigorous years of his life to examine or sign a balance sheet. Scott, in describing his appearance, says, “Ay, Constable is indeed a grand-looking chield. He puts me in mind of Fielding’s apology for Lady Booby—to wit that Joseph Andrews had an air which to those who had not seen many noblemen, would give an idea of nobility.” His conversation was manly and vigorous, abounding in Scotch anecdotes of the old times, and he could, when he had a mind, control the extravagant vanity which at times made him ridiculous. His advice was often useful to Scott, and more than one of the subjects of the novels, and

many of the titles, were due to his recommendations. Cadell, his partner, says that in his high moods he used to stalk up and down the room exclaiming, "By God! I am all but the author of the Waverley novels!"

Of course, as a successful publisher, Constable was overwhelmed with the manuscripts of embryo genius. One or two stories are worth repeating of the men who applied to him, but in vain. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, had already sold a volume of minor poems to Constable, when setting to work in earnest he went to him again; but "the Crafty" was too wise to buy a pig in a poke, and refused to have anything to do with the matter until he had seen the MS. This reasonable request the poet refused with, "What skill have you about the merit of a book?" "It may be so, Hogg," replied the Jupiter Tonans of Scottish publishers; "but I know as well how to sell a book as any man, which should be some consequence of yours, and I know too how to buy one." Hogg, however, easily found another publisher, and the *Queen's Wake* was soon as widely popular as its great merits deserved.

The other refusal, unfortunately, did not end in the same happy manner. Robert Tannahill, a Scotch weaver, whose songs in their artless sweetness, their simplicity of diction, their tenderness of sentiment, have long since won distinction, came up to Edinburgh very poor in purse, but rich in the future that poetic aspirations imaged forth. He put his manuscripts into Constable's hands, offering the whole of them at a very small price. Day after day he waited for an answer, with a mind alternating between hope and fear. Constable, who always distrusted his own judgment in such matters, and who, perhaps, at the moment had no one else to

consult, eventually returned the poems. Tannahill in a madness of despair put a period to his existence, adding one to those "young shadows" who hover round the shrine of genius, as if to warn all but the boldest from attempting to approach it.

The business of Constable's house was now so large and extensive that he thought it a hardship that so much of his wares should pass through the hands of English agents, who not only absorbed a large share of his profits, but who could not be expected to serve him with the same zeal as his own immediate followers. He and his Edinburgh partner, therefore, in 1808, joined with Charles Hunter and John Park in commencing a general bookselling establishment in London, under the designation of Constable, Hunter, Park, and Hunter.

Shortly after this a breach that had been created between Scott and Constable widened until at last they parted. Scott always maintained that the quarrel was directly caused by the intemperate language of Hunter, Constable's original partner; but the severance was probably in reality due to the influence of a third person—James Ballantyne—and was, perhaps to a certain extent, influenced by a feeling of pique at Jeffrey's recent conduct. In 1808 he took a part, perhaps as a suggester, certainly as a zealous promoter, in the establishment of the *Quarterly Review*, as a political and literary counterpoise to the *Edinburgh Review*. Already, in 1805, he had become a partner in the printing house of James Ballantyne and Company, though the fact remained for the public, and for all his friends but one, a profound secret. "The forming of this connection," says Lockhart, "was one of the most important steps in Scott's life. He continued bound

by it during twenty years, and its influence on his literary exertions and his worldly fortunes was productive of much good and not a little evil. Its effects were in truth so mixed and balanced during the vicissitudes of a long and vigorous career, that I at this moment doubt whether it ought, on the whole, to be considered with more of satisfaction or regret." Scott's wish, openly expressed in his correspondence, of thwarting Constable in his attempts to obtain a monopoly of Scottish literature, resulted in the establishment of a new and rival bookselling firm, under the title of John Ballantyne and Co., to which he appears to have supplied the whole capital—at any rate he subscribed his own half, with one-fourth, the portion of James Ballantyne, and not improbably also the other fourth for John Ballantyne.

John and James Ballantyne were the sons of a merchant at Kelso, and here it was they went to school with Walter Scott, and thus commenced an acquaintance so fraught with interest to all three. Early in life James Ballantyne, though not bred to the trade, nor "to the manner born," opened a printing house at Kelso and started the *Kelso Mail* newspaper, in which his brother John soon joined him. Having made some improvements in the art of printing, which rendered their provincial printing famous, they were persuaded to move to Edinburgh, and here they founded a press which, rivalling in its productions the works of a Baskerville or a Bensley, is at this present time as famous as ever. From their first start their old connection with Scott was serviceable, and in 1800 they printed his first important work, the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and from the time, 1805, when he first became commercially interested in their business, they were

firm friends and faithful allies. Scott, to his dying day, certainly reciprocated their kindly feelings, though Lockhart, his biographer, has since his death said very harsh things of the evil resulting from the connection. It is only fair to the Ballantynes to remember that both before and after the period of partnership with him, their house was eminently successful. In the meantime, Constable was busy publishing the works of Dugald Stewart, who at this time occupied the same place in metaphysics as Sir Walter did in poetry. The *Philosophical Essays*, published in 1810, excited great, and even popular, attention. He also became the proprietor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, for which he paid an enormous price, and to which he published an excellent supplement. We shall, however, treat more fully of the *Encyclopædia* in connection with Mr. Adam Black. We may here mention, as among Constable's other successful publications, Wood's excellent edition of Douglas's *Scottish Peerage*, and Chalmers' *Caledonia*.

The London branch was found to be unattended with the expected advantages, and was given up in 1811. In the early part of this same year Hunter retired from the Edinburgh house, upon which Constable, acting upon the liberal view he always entertained as to the value of his stock, and being, perhaps, not unwilling to impress the world with an exalted idea of his property, allowed his partner a greater amount of actual cash (£17,000 is understood to be the sum) than was really his due. Robert Cathcart, of Drum, writer-to-the-signet, and Robert Cadell, then a clerk in his employ, were admitted as partners. Cathcart, however, dying the following year, Cadell remained Constable's sole partner.

Constable had, of course, felt considerably hurt at Scott's desertion. Sometimes it is related he would pace up and down the room, as was his wont, raving grandiloquently of those who kick down the ladder by which they have risen. But now that Hunter had left the firm, and now that it was found that the new *Quarterly* did not in the least damage the value of the old one, a reconciliation could not but take place between men who had formerly been so friendly, and on the publication of the *Lady of the Lake*, Constable willingly gave the Ballantynes the value of his experience and trade knowledge, though he was not directly interested in the work.

The new poem was published just before the season for excursions, and thousands rushed off at once to view the scenery of Loch Katrine; and it is a well-ascertained fact that from the date of the appearance of this volume, assisted by subsequent of his publications, the post-horse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree.

Scott now found out that his move to the Ballantynes had not been attended with the success he expected. John Ballantyne proved but an irregular hand at book-keeping, and James was too much addicted to good cheer (or Lockhart sadly belies him) to be really serviceable as a business man. In vain did Scott write amusing letters of remonstrance; the publisher's business was neglected, and the firm, as booksellers, fell into difficulties. Constable was appealed to, and, finally, for £2000 consented to purchase most of the stock, and a complete business reconciliation was effected between him and Scott. The Ballantynes, however, still maintained their printing house, in which Scott was secretly the principal proprietor, and at which he insisted that all

his own works should at all times, no matter who the publisher, be printed.

About the year 1805 Scott had written a third part of a novel, which was advertised by John Ballantyne, under the title of *Waverley*, but he was unwilling to risk the loss of his poetical reputation by attempting a new style of composition. He, therefore, threw aside the work, and stumbling upon it in 1811, when his poetical reputation was beginning to wane, and soon after he had threatened, half in fun and half in earnest, "If I fail now I will write prose for life," he at once completed the story. The current rumour of the new novel having been rejected by several London publishers, is entirely untrue. The work was printed by the Ballantynes, and through the whole series the greatest secrecy as to the author's name was preserved. James Ballantyne himself transcribed the "copy," and copied Scott's corrections on to a duplicate proof sheet; nor was there a single instance of treachery throughout the whole time of the secret.

When the printed volumes of *Waverley* were put into Constable's hands, he did not for a moment doubt its authorship, but at once offered £700 for the copyright: this, we must remember, for a work to be published anonymously, at a time when Miss Edgeworth, the most popular novelist of her day, had never realized a like sum. The offer was, however, declined, and ultimately an arrangement was come to by which author and publisher were to share the profits.

*Waverley* took two or three months to win public favour, and then a perfect *furore* set in. Sloop-load after sloop-load was sent off to the London market, and on the rumoured loss of one of these vessels, half

London was in despair. The interest, too, excited by public curiosity as to the author's name, was carefully fostered, and in a short time 12,000 copies were disposed of.

Scott employed part of his literary gain in purchasing a property within three miles of Melrose, and gradually enlarged the dwelling-house until it became a castellated mansion of considerable size. The desire of becoming an extensive landed proprietor, became with him a far stronger passion than any craving for literary fame. It was more his desire, according to James Ballantyne himself, to "add as much as possible to the little realm of Abbotsford, in order that he might take his place, not among the great literary names which posterity is to revere, but among the country gentlemen of Roxburghshire."

Under the influence of this infatuation, Scott produced a series of novels, of which it will suffice to state the names and dates.

To *Waverley* succeeded, in 1815, *Guy Mannering*; in 1816, *The Antiquary*, and the first series of the *Tales of My Landlord*, containing *The Black Dwarf* and *Old Mortality*; in 1818, *Rob Roy* and the second series of the *Tales of My Landlord*, containing the *Heart of Mid Lothian*; and, in 1819, the third series, containing the *Bride of Lammermoor* and a *Legend of Montrose*. *Ivanhoe* was to have been issued as a separate work, by another anonymous author, so as to spur the interest of a public that might possibly be flagging; but the publication of a novel in London, pretending to be a fourth series of the *Tales of My Landlord*, determined him to produce it as the veritable production of the author of *Waverley*. This was followed in quick succession by *The Monastery* and

*The Abbot*, in 1820; *Kenilworth* and *The Pirate*, in 1821; *The Fortunes of Nigel* and *Hallidan Hill*, a dramatic poem, for the copyright of which Constable gave £1000, in 1822; *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, and *St. Ronan's Well*, in 1823; *Red Gauntlet*, in 1824; and *Woodstock*, in 1825.

The vast amount of business arising from these publications, produced in Constable's mind a conviction that he was a wealthy and prosperous man. Though never possessed of much free capital, he saw around him every day such proofs of an enlarging amount of stock, that nothing less than the demonstration of figures—a demonstration he cordially hated—could have given him greater assurance of his affluent condition. Like Scott, he, too, was intoxicated with success. He had a magnificent way of transacting all business, and living rather like a princely father of letters, than a tradesman aiming at making them subservient to his use, he was led into an expenditure beyond his means.

Another error lay in his yielding to Scott's desire for money, and the means of raising money by pre-payment for literary work yet to be accomplished. Of Scott's profits on his works, Lockhart makes the following statements: "Before Sir Walter went to London, in November, 1821, he concluded another negotiation of importance with the house of Constable and Co. They agreed to give, for the remaining copyright of the four novels published between December, 1819, and January, 1821—to wit *Ivanhoe*, *The Monastery*, *The Abbot*, and *Kenilworth*—the sum of five thousand guineas. The stipulation about not revealing the author's name under a penalty of £2000, was repeated. By these four novels,

the fruits of scarcely more than a twelve months' labour, he had already cleared at least £10,000 before this bargain was completed.... I cannot pretend to guess what the actual state of Scott's pecuniary affairs was at the time when John Ballantyne's death relieved them from one great source of complication and difficulty.... He must (in his improvements at Abbotsford) have reckoned on clearing £30,000, at least, in the course of two years, by the novels written within the period, and the publishers, as we have seen, were willing to give him £6000, within the space of two years, for works of a less serious sort, likely to be despatched at leisure hours, without at all interfering with the main manufacture. But, alas! even this was not all.... Before *The Fortunes of Nigel* issued from the press, Scott had exchanged instruments, and received his bookseller's bills for no less than "four works of fiction," not one of them otherwise described in the deeds of agreement. And within two years all this anticipation had been wiped off by *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Red Gauntlet*; and the new castle was at that time complete, and overflowing with all its splendour; but by that time the end was also approaching!"

To return for a moment to Constable's life as apart from the author of *Waverley*; he had, as we have seen, entertained in early years strong literary aspirations, and he repeatedly expressed a touching regret at the nonfulfilment of his hopes. The only literary efforts that have been distinctly traced to his pen consist of an edition of *Lamont's Diary*, in 1810; a compilation of the poetry contained in the Waverley Novels, and the composition of a small volume which appeared in 1822, under the title of *Memoirs of George Heriot*, jeweller to King James,

containing an account of the hospital founded by him at Edinburgh. In 1816 he lost his wife, and in 1818 he married Miss Charlotte Neale, who survived him. In the early part of 1822 his health suffered so severely that he was obliged to sojourn in the south for a while. In 1823, though professedly a Whig in politics, he was included by the liberal policy of the Government in a list of new magistrates for the city of Edinburgh; and in the same year he moved from the warehouse, which he had occupied for twenty years in the High Street, to an elegant mansion in the New Town, adjacent to the Register House, which had become his own through his second wife.

Constable had at this time all the personal and outward appearance of a successful man. He was stout and portly in body, and rather defiant and imperious in his manner. Among the trade he was known as the "Czar of Muscovy;" of the London potentates, John Murray had earned the *sobriquet* of the "Emperor of the West," and Longman and his string of partners as the "Divan." Constable had christened John Ballantyne the "Dey of Algiers," but, as John complained, had subsequently deposed him. The "Czar," however, was too fond of these nicknames. Longman was one day dining with him: "What fine swans you have on your pond there," quoth the Londoner. "Swans," cried Constable, "they are only geese, man! There are just five of them, if you please to observe, and their names are Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown." This skit cost "the Crafty" a good bargain.

About the year 1825, Constable devised a scheme greater than any he had yet floated, and the adoption of which was eventually destined to effect an entire revolution in the bookselling trade. After long study

of the annual schedule of tax-payers, he established his premises clearly enough. There was undoubtedly an immense majority of respectable British families who never thought of buying a book. "Look," he cried to Scott, "at the small class of people who pay the powder tax, what a trifle it is to each, and yet what a fortune it would bring to a bookseller! If I live for half-a-dozen years," he continued, "I shall make it as impossible that there should not be a good library in every decent house in Great Britain, as that the shepherd's ingle nook should want the 'saut poke.'"

"Troth," said Scott, "if you live you are indeed likely to be

'The great Napoleon of the realms of *print*.'"

"If you outlive me," retorted Constable, "I bespeak that line for my tombstone.... At three shillings or half-a-crown a volume every month, which must and shall sell, not by thousands, and tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, and, ay, by millions! Twelve volumes in the year, a halfpenny of profit on every copy of which will make me richer than all the copyrights of all the quartos that ever were, or ever will be, hot-pressed! Twelve volumes so good that millions must wish to possess them, and so cheap that every butcher callant may have them if he pleases to let me tax him sixpence a week!"

Scott saw the feasibility of the scheme, and it was decided to start at once with a life of the "other Napoleon," and a portion of one of the "Waverley Novels."

But, alas! before the plan could be carried into execution, the crisis came. Lockhart received a letter from London stating that Constable's London banker

had thrown up his book, and he galloped over at once to Sir Walter's, who smiled, re-lit his cigar, took the news coolly, and declined to believe it, and for the moment he was right.

Lockhart's account of the terrible failure in which Scott was involved is this: Whenever Constable signed a bill for the purpose of raising money among the bankers, for fear of accident, or any neglect in taking the bill up before it fell due, he deposited a counter-bill, signed by Ballantyne, on which, if need were, Constable might raise a sum of money equivalent to that for which he had pledged his word; but these counter-bills were allowed to lie in Constable's desk till they assumed the size of a "sheaf of stamps;" and when the hour of distress came, Constable rushed with these bills to the money-changers, and thus the Ballantynes who were liable to Constable for, say £25,000, were legally liable for £50,000. Constable, in his turn, carried on the same game with the London house of Hurst, Robinson, and Co., his agents—and upon a much larger scale. They neglected their own business of bookselling and entered heavily into speculation in hops, and in the panic of the close of 1825, availed themselves of Constable's credit, and he of the Ballantynes, and the loss descended upon their principal partner, Scott.

This account has been contradicted by the representatives of John Ballantyne, in two pamphlets, refuting Lockhart's history of the affair, and proving their side of the question by reference to the old account books; Cadell, Constable's quondam partner, and certainly not biassed in his favour, throws his vote in with the Ballantynes. The responsibilities they undertook were solely at the

bidding of Scott, and for his benefit; and in proof of this, they quote a clause from the last deed of partnership, dated 1st April, 1822.

"The said Sir Walter Scott shall remain liable for such bills and debts as there shall be due and current."

When the persons most interested differ vitally, it is hard to decide; however, the result of it all was, that when Hurst, Robinson, and Co. stopped payment in London, Constable failed for upwards of a quarter of a million, and the Ballantynes were also bankrupt to the extent of £88,607 19*s.* 9*d.* It was in the middle of January, 1826, that the actual crash came. Splendid and magnificent to the very last, Constable rushed off to town as fast as post-horses could carry him. He drove straight to Lockhart's house, "and asked me," says that gentleman, "to accompany him as soon as he could get into his carriage to the Bank of England, and support him (as a confidential friend of the author of the 'Waverley Novels') in his application for a loan of £100,000 to £200,000 on the security of the copyrights in his possession"—a proposal that would have rather startled the old lady of Threadneedle-street, who was, at that time of unparalleled panic, according to Mr. Huskisson's subsequent confession in the House, on the very verge of suspending payment herself. When Lockhart refused—and, of course, without direct instructions from Sir Walter, he could not hazard such a step—Constable became livid with rage, stamped on the ground, and swore that he could and would go alone.

How Scott bore the blow, and, what he dreaded infinitely more than the mere loss of money—the exposure it entailed of his connection with the printing house, we all know; how he declined to

accept any compromise; how he sold off his Abbotsford estate, which he had devoted all the efforts of his genius to acquire, and which he loved so well; how he slaved and toiled until the incredible sum was repaid—but, alas! at the expense of a life more precious than all the lucre of creditors; and how his last words on his death-bed were his best epitaph:—"My dear, be a good man, be virtuous, be religious—be a good man! Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."

Our matter, however, is with Constable. He saw his fortunes—the strong up-buildings of a gloriously successful lifetime—dashed to the ground at one blow. With a young family growing up around him, sick in body and weary in soul, he too had to begin life afresh. All his "sunshine" friends fell off, Scott was alienated, and his stock, which he had been wont to contemplate as a mine of wealth, was sequestered, and sold for a tithe of its value.[13] Cadell, his late partner, purchased the copyrights of the "Waverley Novels" for £8,500, and, securing Scott's countenance, set up as a fortunate rival.

Constable, however, went manfully to work at his proposed Miscellany. Captain Basil Hall, in kindly consideration, made him a present of his *Voyages*, and this was brought out in 1827, for the small sum of one shilling, and proved fairly successful. This same year, by-the-by, was commenced the *Library of Useful Knowledge*, by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, who, following Constable, had the "honour of leading the way in that fearful inroad upon dearness of the good old times of publishing, which first developed itself in the wicked birth of what the literary exclusives called the *Sixpenny Sciences*."

Constable's prospects were brightening; he had now gathered round him all the younger literary men of the day, when, in the midst of his struggles, his old disease of dropsy again attacked him, and he died on the 21st July, 1827.

His widow and family were left in sorry circumstances, but his son Thomas eventually attained the position of an eminent and well-known printer in Edinburgh. The Ballantynes, with whom he had been so intimately connected, disproved many of Lockhart's assertions, by showing that, by dint of hard work and good business habits, they were capable of success, unaided by the help of Sir Walter Scott.

Constable, if not the most successful, was certainly the most eminent of the Scotch publishers. It is pleasant where the two lives have been so curiously blended to be able to quote Scott's estimate of his character:—

"His vigorous intellect and vigorous ideas have not only rendered his native country the merit of her own literature, but established there a court of letters which commanded respect even from those most inclined to dissent from many of its canons. The effect of these changes operated, in a great measure, by the strong sense and sagacious calculation of an individual who knew how to avail himself, to an unhoped-for extent, of the various kinds of talents which his country produced, will probably appear much clearer to the generation which shall follow the present."

The remaining portion of this chapter will in itself bear ample testimony to the truth of this prediction; for we shall have to touch upon two distinct lives, and two long and very successful lives,

to trace the progress of the chief works which passed out of Constable's hands so shortly before his death.

Robert Cadell had been admitted a partner in the house upon his marriage with Constable's daughter, but she died childless long before the failure, and Cadell was soon married again to a Miss Mylne. Thus the family ties were severed, and, when the crash came, Cadell felt no hesitation in entering the field as a rival to his late partner.

The stock of the Waverley Novels was sold off, far below the market value, and the London publishers, judging from this that the intrinsic worth of the copyright had irretrievably declined, allowed Cadell, as we have seen, in conjunction with Scott, to become the purchaser at the low price of £8500. The success of the republication was astounding, and showed what real life and vivacity was still left in the copyright. By this scheme the whole of the novels were reprinted in five-shilling volumes with excellent illustrations, giving for ten shillings in two volumes what had been originally published in three at a guinea and a half.

After Scott's death the debt still amounted to £54,000; his life was insured for £22,000, there was £2000 in hand, and now Cadell most handsomely advanced £30,000 in order that the remaining debt might be liquidated, taking as his only security the right to the profit that might accrue from the copyright property. The family, dreading that the term of copyright might expire before the sum could be returned, endeavoured to obtain a special additional term, and on more than one occasion Serjeant Talfourd introduced a bill into the House of Commons to this effect, but without success. Fortunately, however, the event showed that Cadell

was commercially fully justified in his generosity, for before his death not only had he been reimbursed his £30,000, but a handsome profit had been earned "for the benefit of all whom it might concern."

According to Mr. James Mylne, one of Cadell's executors, the following is the total sale of Scott's works from the time they came into Cadell's hands until his death:—

| | *Circulation.* |
|---|---|
| Waverley Novels | 78,270 sets |
| Poetical Works | 41,340 " |
| Prose Works | 8,260 " |
| *Life* by Lockhart | 26,060 " |
| *Tales of a Grandfather* (as a separate work) | 22,190 " |
| Selections | 7,550 " |

and, as a test of the popularity of the *People's Edition* of the writings and *Life*, he states that the following numbers originally printed in weekly sheets were issued:

| | |
|---|---|
| Novels | 7,115,197 |
| Poetry | 674,955 |
| Prose | 269,406 |
| Life | 459,291 |
| Total Sheets | 8,518,849 |

Robert Cadell died on January 21st, 1849, after a long career rendered prosperous by this splendid property, and on March 26th, 1851, the novels, poems, prose works, and the "Life" by Lockhart were

put up to auction at the London Coffee House by Mr. Hodgson. The sale brought together the largest "trade" gathering that has ever been witnessed; there were publishers from the "Row" and Albemarle Street, booksellers from Ave Maria and Ivy Lanes, and speculators from every corner of the kingdom. The stock had been valued at £10,193 3*s.*, a very low figure, and it was announced that this would be sold only with the copyrights, and that the trustees retained the right of bidding. After much disputing as to these restrictions £5000 was offered, and quickly rose by leaps of £500 to £10,500, when Mr. Bohn and the "Row" retired, and the struggle lay between Mr. Virtue and some imaginary bidder, visible only to the eyes of the auctioneer. At £13,500 the copyright was "bought in" making the price, including the stock, £23,693 3*s.*

This afforded a wonderful contrast to the former sale at £8500, more especially when we consider that the copyright of the earlier novels had only five or six years more to run.

In a few weeks after this it was announced in the *Scotsman* that the whole of the copyrights were transferred to the hands of another eminent publishing firm in Edinburgh—Messrs. A. and C. Black, who, in conjunction with their friends, Messrs. Richardson Brothers, became the possessors at the price of £27,000.

Leaving the Waverley Novels for a time, it will be necessary to bring up the narrative of the career of Mr. Adam Black to the period when he was able to become the owner of the most valuable literary property that has ever existed.

Adam Black, the son of Charles Black, a builder of Edinburgh, was born in that town in the year

1784, and was educated primarily at the High School, on his entrance as a pupil at which, tradition says, he was accompanied by his father, who, having just left his employment for the purpose, appeared in full working garb, the mason's white leathern apron included. At the University his talents speedily procured him admittance into that clique of young Liberals who were afterwards to effect such a change in Edinburgh, indeed in cosmopolitan politics. After serving his apprenticeship to the book trade, in partnership with his nephew, the bookselling business of Adam and Charles Black was founded. In 1817 he married Isabella, only daughter of James Tait, architect (sister of William Tait, the well-known originator of *Tait's Magazine*), and at the time of Constable's failure was in a steady and prosperous way of business. This disaster was the means of making many fortunes, and in 1826 the *Edinburgh Review* appeared under the joint proprietorship of Thomas Norton Longman and Adam and Charles Black. As we have followed the career of the *Review* in our history of the Longman family, it will be unnecessary to enter fully into the changes of management and the success of later numbers.

Another work, however, afterwards thrown on the market, which also became the property of Messrs. A. and C. Black, is of such literary importance that we must again for a moment retrace our steps, in order to keep up the proper sequence of our narrative.

The idea of a compilation that should embrace all human knowledge is of very great antiquity. Pliny, in fact claims the name of "Encyclopædia" for his *Natural History*; but it was not till the sixteenth century that any attempt was made at arranging the

matter in a systematic manner, though the Arabians are said to have had a true *Encyclopædia* centuries before that date. It was long, however, before the idea occurred of employing the lexographic plan as a basis of a universal *répertoire* of learning, and the first great step in advance was the *Lexicon Technicum* of Dr. Harris, completed and published at London in the year 1710. The *Cyclopædia* of Ephraim Chambers, with which we have previously dealt, appeared in 1728, and for a long time was the supreme authority; through its success at home and abroad a new impulse was given to the desire for such publications. In France the *Encyclopédie* was projected by the Abbé de Gua, and was based originally on an unpublished translation of Chambers's *Cyclopædia*, made by an Englishman named Mills. In consequence of a quarrel with the publishers, De Gua threw it up, and it was then transferred to Diderot and D'Alembert; to become the text-book of the French philosophers. The publication of the seventeen volumes extended from 1751 to 1765, and six years after the latter date appeared the first volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

The plan and all the principal articles of this now important work were in this first edition devised and written by William Smellie.

Smellie began life as a compositor, and he used to lay down his composing-stick for an hour or two daily to attend the classes of the Edinburgh University. At the age of nineteen he was engaged by Murray and Cochrane as corrector of their press in general and conductor and compiler of the *Scots Magazine* at a salary of sixteen shillings a week. If the saying that "Edinburgh never had a Grub Street" is

true, it must have arisen rather from the perseverance of the writers than from the uniform generosity of the publishers.

The agreement upon which the *Encyclopædia* was undertaken was still in existence when Kerr wrote Smellie's *Life*; as a literary curiosity we quote it:—

> "Mr. Andrew Bell to Mr. William Smellie.
>
> "SIR,—As we are engaged in publishing a 'Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences,' and as you have informed us that there are fifteen capital sciences, which you will undertake for, and write up the sub-divisions and detached parts of them, conforming to your plan, and likewise to prepare the whole work for the press, &c., &c. We hereby agree to allow you £200 for your trouble."

The first proprietors were Andrew Bell, engraver, and Colin Macfarquhar, printer. The publication was commenced in weekly numbers in 1771, and completed in 1773, by which time the bulk in all consisted only of three small quarto volumes. A second edition was called for in 1776, and Smellie was offered a share in the property, but he declined to have anything more to do with it, as upon the recommendation of "a very distinguished nobleman" it was resolved to introduce a complete system of biography. The proprietors engaged, instead, James Tytler, a laborious miscellaneous writer, and a man of extraordinary knowledge. A large proportion of the additional matter, by which the work was extended from three to ten volumes, was due to his pen, but the payment for this labour is said to have been very small, and the unfortunate author was not able to support his family in a style superior to that of a common labourer. At one time, during the

progress of the work, he lived at the village of Duddingston, in the house of a washerwoman, whose tub inverted formed the only desk at his disposal, and one of his children was frequently despatched with a parcel of "copy" upon which their next meal depended.

This second edition consisted of 1500 copies, and extended to ten volumes quarto. The third edition, to which Tytler also contributed, was commenced in 1789. Till then it had been considered in the south as "a Scots rival of little repute" (to Chambers's *Cyclopædia*), but in this edition, beside the method and comprehensiveness of the plan, it rose greatly above its former level in its practical and speculative departments. It was completed in 1797, in eighteen volumes, to which Professor Robison supplied two supplementary volumes to complete the series he had commenced when the principal work was far advanced. The sale of this edition extended to ten thousand copies, and the proprietors are said to have netted £42,000 of clear profit, besides being paid for their respective work—the one as printer, the other as engraver. Much of this, of course, was due to poor Tytler's labours, who was still living in the utmost penury. He was, however, perfectly regardless about poverty, having no desire to conceal it from the world. He would finish his frugal meal of a cold potato before the eyes of a stranger with as much nonchalance as if it had been a sumptuous repast. He had that contentment with poverty which is so apt to make it permanent, and this, in addition to his imprudent and intemperate habits, cut off all chance of a higher social position. As a proof of his extraordinary stock of general knowledge, his biographer relates a characteristic anecdote.

"A gentleman in this city of Edinburgh once told me he wanted as much matter as would form a junction between a certain history and its continuation to a later period. He found Tytler lodged in one of those elevated apartments called *garrets*, and was informed by the old woman with whom he resided, that he could not see him, as he had gone to bed rather the worse for liquor. Determined, however, not to depart without his errand, he was shown into Mr. Tytler's apartment by the light of a lamp, where he found him in the situation described by the landlady. The gentleman having acquainted him with the nature of the business which brought him at so late an hour, Mr. Tytler called for pen and ink, and in a short time produced about a page and a half of letterpress, which answered the end as completely as if it had been the result of the most mature deliberation, previous notice, and a mind undisturbed by any liquid capable of deranging its ideas."

On the death of Macfarquhar the whole work became the property of Andrew Bell.

The fourth edition, augmented to twenty volumes, was completed in 1810, under the able superintendence of Dr. James Millar; but the editor was prevented from availing himself of Professor Robison's excellent supplementary articles by a temporary separation of that property from that of the principal work. This issue consisted of three thousand five hundred copies.

With the completion of this edition the progress of improvement was for a time suspended; but in 1814 the copyright of the work was purchased by Archibald Constable, who, with the enterprise that always distinguished him, at once projected a

supplement, which extended to six volumes. It was placed under the skilful management of Professor Macney Napier, and the publication lasted from 1815 to 1824. Many very distinguished authors were engaged as contributors, among whom we may specially mention Arago, Biot, and Dugald Stewart; and all the resources of the proprietors were devoted to this favourite undertaking.

In 1829 the whole of the copyrights (including that of Professor Robison's supplementary articles) passed into the hands of Messrs. A. and C. Black, assisted by their friends; and we are now able to resume our narrative at the point we left it.

The property was at first a joint stock concern, resembling the original proprietorship, and was, we believe, owned in equal shares by Mr. Abraham Thomson, as the binder; Mr. Thomas Allan, as the printer; and Messrs. A. and C. Black, as publishers. Mr. Thomson died shortly afterwards, and the Messrs. Black became the possessors of his interest in the work. Some years afterwards, the share held by Mr. Allan, who was a banker in Edinburgh, and also printer and proprietor of the *Caledonian Mercury*, also fell into the hands of the Messrs. Black. At this time the new edition was in midway progress, and the enormous expense necessary to complete the work rendered the venture single-handed something more than hazardous. But the ability, tact, immense energy, and unceasing labour of Mr. Adam Black, then in the prime of life, proved equal to the task he had undertaken, and in this case it may truly be said that for years he went on literally scattering bread upon the waters, and most deservedly did he obtain his reward. Previously, we believe, to the completion of this edition, Mr. Charles Black, who had long been

in delicate health, died.

Upon Jeffrey's retirement in 1829, Macney Napier, Professor of Conveyancing in the University of Edinburgh, was promoted to the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review*, and Mr. Black also secured his services for the management of the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia*. Napier was assisted by James Brown, LL.D., as sub-editor, and on his shoulders most of the hard work fell. Brown, who was trained as an advocate at the Scottish bar, relinquished this for literature. His thorough scholarship enabled him to undertake almost any department of literary work, and rendered him invaluable for the revisal of such a work as the *Encyclopædia*. He was also a ready and slashing political writer, at a time when political feeling was rampant. Remarkable alike for his mental activity and his personal irascibility, the one great difficulty lay in managing the Doctor. As an instance of this, the article "Alphabet" was entrusted to Brown for the new edition of the *Encyclopædia*. He was at the same time editor of the *Caledonian Mercury*, and on the appearance of something in that paper which led to a quarrel with Mr. Allan, the proprietor, who was also a shareholder in the *Encyclopædia*, Brown declined to go on with "Alphabet." The part in which this was to appear was due, and Brown was inflexible. The subject was a difficult one, peculiarly suited to Brown's abilities, and it was not easy elsewhere to find so competent a writer. In these circumstances, Mr. Black adopted the experiment of passing over that part and bringing out the succeeding one. Thus circumvented, Brown came to terms, and things again went on smoothly. But, notwithstanding his proverbial kindliness of disposition, he was hasty in coming to conclusions, and was always getting into scrapes of one kind or

another; and a duel, in which he and Charles Maclaren, editor of the *Scotsman*, figured as principals, furnished the Edinburgh *gamins* with a popular street song. He escaped all duellistic dangers, however, but his unremitting labours brought on a stroke of apoplexy, of which he died in 1841.

The great feature of the new edition was the preliminary "Dissertations," which were commenced by Professors Stewart and Playfair, who were both carried off in the midst of their labours. Sir James Mackintosh, who undertook to complete his friend's "History of Ethical and Political Philosophy" (the Metaphysical portion had been completed by Stewart) was also summoned from his labours before the Political division was commenced; and the "History of the Physical Sciences" was brought down by Professor Leslie to the commencement of this century.

"The 'Dissertations' produced by these four extraordinary men are still regarded with peculiar pride in Scotland; indeed, few nations can boast of such an intellectual group living at the same time, and adorning the same society; and yet, with powers of mind not far from equality, how various were their gifts, and how diversified their genius!"[14]

The seventh edition was commenced in monthly parts in March, 1830, and finished in January, 1842. Of its success it is almost unnecessary to speak; with confidence reposed in the proprietors sufficient to command the services of such writers as Young, Malthus, Macculloch, Mill, Roget, Wilson, Empson, De Quincey, and Tytler, while the editor can count on the aid of friends like Scott, Playfair, Stewart, Leslie, Lord Jeffrey, Sir William Hamilton, and Sir

John Barrow, it is not difficult to anticipate the result. The mere cost of presentation copies amounted to £416 16*s.*, and the amount of duty on the paper employed exceeded £6000; while, to go into heavier matters, the total expense of the twenty-one quarto volumes was, in a trial in the Jury Court of Scotland, proved to have been no less a sum than £125,667 9*s.* 3*d.* This amount, of course, includes every item of expenditure, among which the following are the most important:—

| | £ | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Contributions and Editing | 22,590 | 2 | 11 |
| Printing | 18,610 | 1 | 4 |
| Stereotyping | 3,317 | 5 | 8 |
| Paper | 27,854 | 15 | 7 |
| Bookbinding | 12,739 | 12 | 2 |
| Engraving and Plate-printing | 11,777 | 18 | 1 |

The literary contributions to the first volume of "Dissertations" alone cost upwards of £3450.

The work was eminently successful, and this immense expenditure shows us something of what "success" means in this instance. The commercial management of an undertaking like this was sufficient to occupy the attention of a man of extraordinary diligence; but Mr. Black found time, not only to contribute several articles to his *Encyclopædia*, but to take a very warm and prominent interest in the government of his native city; and from 1843 to 1848 he occupied the highest position to which a citizen of Edinburgh can aspire—that of Lord Provost.

Enterprise and success, more especially when

they are mingled with real desert, and caused by honest service, are qualities of which the Scotch, perhaps more than any other nation, are peculiarly proud; and when the representation of Edinburgh became vacant in 1856, a large and influential party at once nominated Mr. Adam Black to fill the post. Mr. Adam Black was a thorough-going Liberal and a Nonconformist, and a party of the electors received his nomination in a spirit of the greatest bitterness, and an opposition candidate was brought forward. The election came off on the 8th February, 1856, and Mr. Black, the friend of political freedom when friends were few, the champion of religious charity and goodwill when enemies were many, was rewarded for his consistency and his many services by a larger number of votes than had been polled for twenty years—no weak test of popular approbation. As a contemporary opinion, we may quote the *Scotsman* of that date:—"Honour to the candidate! Sincerely reluctant to compete for the honour, no sooner was he embarked, and saw that the great principles and the reputation of the city were concerned and imperilled in his person, than he threw himself into the work with a vigour that made even the youngest and most energetic of his supporters stand aside. We don't care who knows it: Mr. Black was the most effective member of his own committee—in word and in act, by day and by night, the veteran was ready with guidance and warning and incentive. In all his many battles in the public cause, he never made a better fight than when achieving this victory which so gloriously crowns his career."

In the House Mr. Black distinguished himself by his assiduity to business, and in 1864 he introduced his Copyright Bill, which, though it contained much

that was good, was ultimately thrown out.

Upon completion of the seventh edition, a number of cheap reprints were issued of the most famous articles of the "Encyclopædia," and met with a very favourable reception.

We have seen that in 1851 the Messrs. Black, in conjunction with Messrs. Richardson Brothers, became possessed of the Waverley Novels. Ultimately, the Messrs. Black purchased, it is said, the Messrs. Richardsons' share, and are now believed to be the sole proprietors of Sir Walter Scott's works. In the management of this property Mr. Adam Black exhibited the same rare sagacity, and reaped the same successful reward as in the former important work. In the middle of 1852, he announced that 120,000 complete sets of the Waverley Novels had been sold in this country alone since their first publication; and in 1858 an ingenious mathematician computed that the weight of the paper used for them was upwards of 3500 tons.

Among the most important editions issued by Messrs. Black we may instance the following:—

| | | | £ | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A Re-issue of the "Cabinet Edition" | in 1853–54 | at | 3 | 15 | 0 |
| "" | " 1860 | " | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| The "People's Edition" in 5 vols. | " 1855 | " | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| "Railway Edition" in 25 vols. | " 1858–60 | " | 1 | 17 | 6 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Illustrated Edition in 48 vols. founded on "Author's Favourite" | " | 1859–61 | " | 10 | 13 0 |
| "Shilling Edition" in 25 vols. | " | 1862–63 | " | 1 | 5 0 |

At our present writing a beautiful new edition, the "Centenary," is being published.

The moment that the copyrights of the earlier novels expired the market was flooded with cheap reprints; but the Messrs. Black were equal to the occasion. They issued a trade reminder to the public that the edition of 1829 was thoroughly revised by the author, was altered in almost every page and largely augmented by notes, and that it still was copyright, and as a death-blow to the reprints by rival houses they brought out the "sixpenny edition" in monthly volumes, each volume containing a complete tale with all the matter that had appeared in the more expensive editions. Thanks to former stereotypes they were thus enabled to present a series of the cheapest and most valuable books that any house in the country has yet been able to produce. The publication lasted from November, 1866, to November, 1868, and the complete issue consisted of twenty-five volumes, and thus the public were able to purchase for twelve shillings and sixpence what had originally cost upwards of forty pounds. Constable himself in his wildest dreams of cheap publishing never imagined such a marvellous feature as this.

As a proof of their popularity we quote from a contemporary writer in the *Illustrated Times*, 25th of September, 1867. The writer was travelling down to

Wales, and, at the London station, he said, "'Boy, where are the Scott novels?' 'Don't keep them,' he replied. 'Don't keep them! Why not?' 'Because, if we did, we should not sell anything else.' Here then, to begin with, is a small fact worth reflection. Some of the novels were first published fifty years ago. Can you point out any other series of books, or even any single book, a sixpenny edition of which Mr. Smith would be afraid to lay upon his bookstalls for fear the public might refuse to buy anything else?" At every station the writer made the same inquiry and met with the same result.

As through the business talents of the publishers, the printed works of Sir Walter Scott were reduced in price, so through the fame of the author did the autograph remains rise to a very wonderful fictitious value. Mr. Cadell made a remarkable collection of all the manuscripts he could purchase, and on the 9th of July, 1868, his collection was sold for £1073; while even a corrected proof of "Peveril of the Peak" realized £25.

The seventh edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" was finished, as we have previously stated, in 1842, and met with, not only an immediate, but also a continuous sale, but human knowledge refuses to be stereotyped, and at the close of 1852 the eighth edition was commenced, occupying nine years in the publication. The proprietors justly claim for it the proud title of "the largest literary enterprise ever undertaken by any single house in Great Britain." The editorial charge was entrusted to Dr. Thomas Stewart Trail, professor of medical jurisprudence in the University of Edinburgh; and, among the more important new contributors, we may mention Archbishop Whately,

Professor Blackie, and Dr. Forbes, the latter of whom contributed a new "Dissertation" to the introductory volume. Lord Macaulay contributed five of the leading biographies "as a token of friendship to the senior proprietor." "Any article of any value in any preceding edition," says the editor, "has been reprinted in this—in all cases with corrections, and frequently with considerable additions. Besides these, it has received so great an accession of original contributions, that nine-tenths of its contents may be said to be absolutely new," and this will probably apply with the same force to the ninth edition, which is to be commenced next year.

Long before this date Mr. Adam Black was assisted in his business by his sons. He retired from the house in 1865, and now laden with honours in public, and successes in business, life, he may fairly claim to be the Nestor of publishers. He must have seen many changes in the literary world, and marked many vicissitudes in the "realms of print;" but the changes as far as they operated for him were for the better, and vicissitudes seem invariably to have kept outside his charmed circle.

In the year 1861, a very valuable work—the "Collected Writings of the late Thomas De Quincey"—came into the hands of Messrs. Black; but, as the public are almost entirely indebted to the laborious care and patient perseverance of another publisher, Mr. James Hogg, then of Edinburgh, for the production of this collection, which then consisted of fourteen volumes, we have thought it better that this account should form a kind of supplement to our present chapter.

For a period of about forty years De Quincey had been an extensive contributor to periodical literature,

and it is scarcely surprising that, during such a length of time, the sources even where many of his contributions originally appeared had been forgotten, and that the very existence of a few had altogether escaped the author's recollection. Various attempts had been made to induce De Quincey to draw together and revise a selection from the more important of his scattered writings, but from his varying state of health and, consequent on this, his inveterate habit of procrastination, the work was always postponed; and from his advanced years, all hope was given up of the collected works ever appearing under the superintendence of the author.

In the year 1845, the well-known periodical, *Hogg's Instructor*, was started under the management and sole responsibility of Mr. Hogg. Sixteen volumes of the *Instructor* as a weekly serial were published, and among many other contributors of note was the "Opium-Eater," and from the commencement of their intercourse De Quincey and Mr. Hogg became firm friends.

About this time several volumes of De Quincey's writings had been collected and published by Messrs. Ticknor and Fields, of Boston, U.S., without, of course, the advantage of the author's own revisal; and, as the papers had been originally hurriedly written for magazines, and as, during the lapse of time, many changes had become unavoidable, the author felt that, in justice to himself, extensive additions and, in some cases, suppressions were necessary. Arrangements were accordingly entered into for bringing out the collected works at home in a thoroughly revised and amended form, Mr. Hogg undertaking all the responsibility, and engaging to give his aid both in collecting the materials, and in

generally seeing the volumes through the press. On the announcement of the publication it was confidently predicted by some of those who had been engaged in the previous attempts that not a single volume would ever appear. In order to afford ample time for the thorough revision of the work it was arranged that the publication should be spread over three years. The first volume appeared in 1853; but, instead of three years bringing the series to a close, eight years had elapsed before the thirteenth volume was completed, and then De Quincey died—the remainder of the thirteenth, and the whole of the fourteenth, being due to Mr. Hogg. During these eight years almost daily interviews or correspondence occurred between De Quincey and Mr. Hogg. To use the author's words, "the joint labour and patient perseverance spent in the preparation of these volumes was something perfectly astounding." In addition to the frequent and protracted interviews, the correspondence which passed during the progress of the work would fill a goodly volume.

In order to account for the delays which so frequently occurred, De Quincey remarks upon one occasion:—"I suffer from a most afflicting derangement of the nervous system, which at times makes it difficult for me to write at all, and always makes me impatient, in a degree not easily understood, of recasting what may seem insufficiently or even incoherently expressed." But, while suffering under this cause, he laboured under a daily and more formidable bar to progress, as annoying and perplexing to himself as to others. For many years he had been in the habit of correcting manuscript or of jotting down on loose sheets, more frequently on small scraps of paper, any stray

thoughts that occurred to him, intending to use them as occasion might afterwards offer. These papers, however, instead of being methodically arranged and preserved, were carelessly laid aside, and were soon mixed up with letters, proofs, old and new copy, newspapers, periodicals, and other confusing litter, and the numerous volumes he received from literary friends and admirers, all huddled together on chairs, tables, or wherever they at the moment might be stowed. Placing a high value on many things in this heterogeneous mass, and feeling assured in his own mind that strange hands would only render confusion worse confounded, he would allow no one to endeavour to put the things in order. Indeed, if anything could have ruffled his gentle nature into the use of an angry word it would have been the attempt to meddle with these papers. They very rapidly increased, and every search after missing copy or proofs made matters worse. When a dead block occurred his invariable practice was to build them up, as they lay, against the wall of the room, and, as a consequence, everything went astray. A few extracts from notes to Mr. Hogg will show the labour, suffering, and worry which this state of chaos entailed:—"My dear Sir,—It is useless to trouble you with the *ins* and *outs* of the process—the result is, that, working through most part of the night, I have not yet come to the missing copy. I am going on with the search, yet being walled up in so narrow an area (not larger than a postchaise as regards the free space), I work with difficulty, and the *stooping* kills me. I greatly fear that the entire day will be spent in the search."

"Yesterday, suddenly, I missed the interleaved volume. I have been unrolling an immense heap of newspapers, &c., ever since six a.m. How so thick a

vol. *can* have hidden itself, I am unable to explain."

"The act of *stooping* has for many years caused me so much illness, that in this search, all applied to papers lying on the floor, entangled with innumerable newspapers, I have repeatedly been forced to pause. I fear that the seventeen or eighteen missing pages may have been burned suddenly lighting candles; and I am more surprised at finding so many than at missing so few."

"I am utterly in the dark as to where this paper is —whether *chez moi*, or *chez la presse* (I use French simply as being the briefest way of conveying my doubts). Now mark the difference to me, according to the answer. 1. On the assumption that the paper is in *my* possession, then, of course, I will seek till I find it, and no labour will be thrown away. But 2. On the counter assumption that the paper is all the while in the possession of the press, the difference to me would be this: That I should be searching for perhaps half a day, and, as it is manifestly not on my table, I should proceed on the postulate that it must have been transferred to the floor, consequently the work would all be unavoidably a process of stooping, and all labour lost, from which I should hardly recover for a fortnight. This explains to you my earnestness in the matter. Exactly the same doubt applies (and therefore exactly the same dilemma or alternative of stoop or stoop not) to some other papers."

How keenly De Quincey felt in consequence of these continually recurring delays, the following sentences will show:—"It distracts me to find that I have been constantly working at the wrong part. It is most unfortunate, nor am I able to guess the cause, that I who am rendered seriously unhappy whenever I find or suppose myself to have caused any loss of

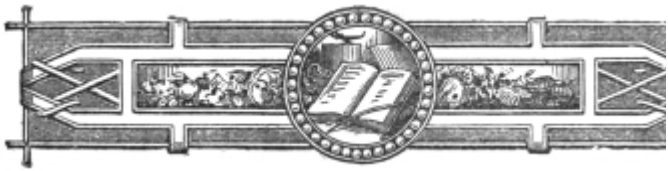
time to a compositor, whose time is generally his main estate, am yet continually doing so unintentionally and in most cases unconsciously. It seems as if to the very last my destiny were to cause delays."

The frequency of the communications and personal interviews which occurred during the eight years in which the works were in progress may be inferred from the following:—"My dear Sir,—I have been in great anxiety through yesterday and to-day as to the cause of a mysterious interruption of the press intercourse with me. Now, it has happened once before that we were at cross purposes, each side supposing itself stopped by the other. As the easiest way, therefore, of creeping out of the mystery I repeat it to you."

Notwithstanding the continual interruptions and the difficulty of dragging the volumes through the press, the cordial and friendly feeling which existed between De Quincey and Mr. Hogg was never interrupted by a single jarring word.

Since the fourteen volumes passed into the hands of Messrs. Black, they have added other two volumes, made up of biographies contributed by De Quincey to the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and a number of papers which remained in Mr. Hogg's hands.





# *JOHN MURRAY*:

## BELLES-LETTRES AND TRAVELS.

The foundation of the great publishing houses of London is co-temporary in date with the origin of the private banks and famous breweries; for, as in the case of these establishments, the connections requisite were so extensive, and the needful capital, to render venture a success, so large, that in many instances the present great publishing firms have been the work of three, in some cases even of five, generations. There have, of course, been isolated exceptions, as in the instance of Archibald Constable, of Edinburgh; but these rare cases, though often beneficial to the world at large, have seldom been individually successful.

John McMurray, the founder of the great London house of Murray, was born in Edinburgh about the year 1795, of very respectable parents, who not only gave him a good education, but enlisted for him the sympathies of Sir George Yonge, then an official in high favour. Through Sir George's influence a

commission was obtained in the Royal Marines, and in 1762, we find from the Navy List, that John McMurray joins his frigate full, probably, of hopeful anticipations of the promotion that sometimes came so speedily in the days of the old French wars. The Peace of Paris, however, was signed in the following year, and, spite of patronage and merit, McMurray was, in 1768, still a second lieutenant, and, in point of seniority, thirty-fourth on the list. Disgusted with a profession from which he could hope so little, and eager for a more useful career in life, in this same year he embraced an opportunity that seemed to give him a chance of exchanging the lounging idleness of Chatham barracks for the busy activity of London business, in a trade very congenial to his tastes, and not unaccompanied with hopes of solid emolument.

Among the friends he had made either afloat or at his Chatham quarters was William Falconer, who, a sailor boy "before the mast," had in the very year of McMurray's first entry into the service, published the beautiful poem of the "Shipwreck." This poem attracted great attention, and the author was promoted to the more honourable than lucrative position of midshipman. Fellow-townsmen—and in those days blood was thicker than water—and in some degree fellow-students, for both were lovers of books, they became firm friends; and McMurray's first thought, when the offer of a bookseller's business was put before him, was to secure the aid of his literary friend in his new venture; and an interesting letter, still preserved, gives the history of his commencement as a bookseller. Addressed to "Mr. William Falconer, at Dover," it runs as follows:—

"Brompton, Kent, 16th Oct., 1768.

"DEAR WILL,—Since I saw you, I have had the intention of embarking in a scheme that I think will prove successful, and in the progress of which I had an eye towards your participating. Mr. Sandby, bookseller, opposite St. Dunstan's church, has entered into company with Snow and Denne, bankers. I was introduced to this gentleman about a month ago, upon an advantageous offer of succeeding him in his old business, which, by the advice of my friends, I propose to accept. Now, although I have little reason to fear success by myself in this undertaking, yet I think so many additional advantages would accrue to us both, were your forces and mine joined, that I cannot help mentioning it to you, and making you the offer of entering into company. He resigns to me the lease of the house; the goodwill ——; and I only take his bound stock, and fixtures, at a fair appraisement, which will not amount to more than £400, and which, if I ever mean to part with, cannot fail to bring in nearly the same sum. The shop has long continued in the trade; it retains a good many old customers; and I am to be ushered immediately into public notice by the sale of a new edition of Lord Lyttelton's 'Dialogues;' and afterwards by a like edition of his 'History.' These works I shall sell by commission, upon a certain profit without risque; and Mr. Sandby has promised to continue to me, always, his good offices and recommendations. These are the general outlines; and if you entertain a notion that the conjunction would suit you, advise me, and you shall be assumed upon equal terms.

"Many blockheads in the trade are making fortunes; and did we not succeed as well as they, I think it must be imputed only to ourselves.... Consider what I have proposed, and send me your answer soon. Be assured in the meantime that I

remain, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate and humble Servant,
"JOHN MCMURRAY.

"P.S.—My advisers and directors in this affair have been Thomas Cumming, Esq., Mr. Archibald Paxton, Mr. Samuel Paterson, of Essex House, and Messrs. J. and W. Richardson, printers. These, after deliberate reflection, have unanimously thought that I should accept of Mr. Sandby's offer."

From some reason or other the offer was declined; perhaps, as Falconer's biographer asserts, he was at this time (though absent for a while at Dover) living with his pretty little wife in an attic in Grub Street, toiling at his "Marine Dictionary," and with no prospect of raising the money requisite for the partnership proposed; perhaps he had already accepted the pursership of the "Aurora" frigate. At all events, immediately after the publication of the third edition of his "Shipwreck," which was to have contained some lines addressed to McMurray, which, in the hurry of departure were omitted, he sailed in the "Aurora" for India. The Cape was safely reached, but after leaving it the "Aurora" was never heard of again. Ship, crew, and passengers were all lost, and, through the untimely death of the author, the "Shipwreck" acquired a melancholy and almost prophetic interest, which speedily exhausted the third and many future editions.

In the meantime John McMurray had commenced bookselling in earnest. It was at a time when, through Wilkes and Bute, national feeling seems to have run very high, and to be a Scotchman was hardly a recommendation to a beginner, and we find that, though McMurray headed all his trade bills

with a ship, as a proud testimony to his naval antecedents, he found it convenient to drop the Scotch prefix of Mc. The following copy of a trade card issued at the time is the first record we have of this alteration of title.

> JOHN MURRAY (successor to Mr. SANDBY),
> Bookseller and Stationer,
> At No. 32, over-against St. Dunstan's Church,
> in Fleet Street,
> London.
>
> Sells all new Books and Publications. Fitts up Public or Private Libraries in the neatest manner with Books of the choicest editions, the best Print, and the richest Bindings.
>
> Also,
>
> Executes East India or Foreign Commissions by an assortment of Books and Stationary suited to the Market or Purpose for which it is destined; all at the most reasonable rates.

Murray found that Sandby's connection at Fleet Street was a good one—Mr. William Sandby, indeed, could have been no ordinary bookseller, for his father was a prebendary of Gloucester, and his brother a master of Magdalen College, while he was accepted as partner in a wealthy banking firm—the trade were inclined to "back him up," and he was able to extend his business considerably in India and Edinburgh, where he had many friends. The new edition of Lord Lyttelton's "History" was brought out in stately quarto volumes, as befitted the rank of the author, and was completely issued in 1771–2, and, published "with a certain profit, without risque,"

must have proved much more remunerative than the original "Henry II." was to Sandby, who generously offered to pay for the author's corrections, and who found to his cost that not a single line was left as originally printed.

Murray seems to have kept up his connection with Edinburgh, for in 1773 we find him London agent for the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, and in the following year, when it was proposed to separate the *Magazine* from the *Review*, Stuart writes to Smellie:—"Murray seems fully apprised of the pains and attentions that are necessary, has literary connections, and is fond of the employment; let him, therefore, be the London proprietor." Murray consented to "take a share," if his advice were attended to; but the scheme of a review came to nothing, and even the existing *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* died, in 1776, of a violent attack on Lord Monboddo's "Origin of Language." Murray offered his condolence in the following laconic note:—

> "DEAR SMELLIE,—I am sorry for the defeat you have met with. Had you praised Lord Monboddo instead of damning him, it would not have happened.
>
> "Yours, &c.
> "JOHN MURRAY."

Murray, now that the Edinburgh scheme had come to nothing, commenced in 1780 a volume of annual intelligence of his own under the title of the *London Mercury*; and in January, 1783, with the assistance of a staff of able writers, among whom were Dr. Whittaker and Gilbert Stuart, who had lately come from Scotland, he started the *English Review*.

A great portion of Murray's retail stock was medical books, and for many years the house had a reputation in the medical world. Of the books, however, which he published, those more latterly issued proved by far the most successful, such as Langhorne's "Plutarch's Lives," Mitford's "Greece," and, in 1791, a thin octavo in which the elder Disraeli first gave the public his "Curiosities of Literature"—all of them works which have since been annual sources of revenue to the firm.

Murray found time, however, amidst all this business, to indulge his own literary tastes and aspirations, which had at one time been strong. Some of his pamphlets—such as the "Letter to Mr. Mason on his Edition of Gray's Poems, and the Practice of Booksellers" (1777); his "Considerations on the Freight and Shipping of the East India Company" (1786), and "An Author's Conduct to the Public, stated in the Behaviour of Dr. William Cullen" (1784)—acquired much transient reputation.

After a career, as successful we imagine as his wishes could desire, John Murray died on the 6th November, 1793, leaving behind him a widow, two daughters, and an only son, and bequeathing to the latter a business which was destined to carry the name of John Murray wherever the English language was spoken, and wherever English books were read, as the most venturesome and yet the most successful publisher who has ever, in London at all events, encouraged the struggles of authorship and gratified the tastes of half a world of readers.

John Murray, the son, the more immediate object of our memoir, was born in 1778, and was consequently only fifteen at the time of his father's death. He had been educated primarily at the High

School of Edinburgh, doubtless with a view of keeping up the Scotch connection, and had afterwards been removed to "various English seminaries"—among others to Dr. Burney's academy at Gosport, where, through the carelessness of a writing-master, while making a pen with a penknife, he lost the sight of one of his eyes. The founder of the house not only left the business to his son, but left also a council of regency to manage affairs until he came to the natural years of discretion. By a last will, dated about one month before his death, the elder John Murray appointed four executors—among them his widow, Hester Murray, and Archibald Paxton, who in his letter to Falconer he had named as one of his principal advisers in adopting the bookselling trade. For a year or two after 1793 the name of "H. Murray" figures at the top of the bills and trade circulars, and then disappears from them, Mrs. Murray having, it seems, in 1795, married "Henry Paget, Lieutenant in the West Norfolk Militia," and retired entirely from the management of the business. Murray was still too young to carry on the shop unaided, so his guardians admitted Mr. Highley, for a long time chief factotum in the shop and manager of the medical department, to a partnership with him. By the agreement the title of the new firm was to be "Murray and Highley;" the latter was solely to conduct the business, and to receive half the profits until young John came of age, after which they were to enjoy equal powers and "share and share" alike.



**John Murray—reading a newspaper.**
**1778–1843.**

Mr. Highley, who seems to have been a steady, plodding man with much latent exertion against all speculative venture, did little to increase the standing of the firm; probably he imagined that the trade in medical books, as it was attended with the least risk, was the most remunerative portion of the business. His worthy soul was vexed at the anger

excited by Whitaker's slashing articles in the *English Review*. "Enraged authors," it appears, took to sending huge parcels of defiant, contemptuous, and, worse still, unpaid MSS. to the publisher of the *Review*, complaining of the treatment which their books suffered at the hands of his critics, and "enraged authors" seem at this time to have been about the only readers of the savage periodical in question. One of the last numbers contains a notice that all unpaid post parcels may be inquired for again at the General Post Office; and soon after Mr. Highley eased his shoulders of this burden by merging the *English Review* in the *Analytical*.

Young Murray was at this time of a very different temperament to his partner—full of youth, fire, and energy, and uncommonly gifted with that speculative spirit which must have caused the elder man many a time to shake his head sagely, and to lift his gravely deprecating eyebrows. In fact, youth and age can never see matters with the same eyes;—the one looks as through a telescope magnifying all things within vision some hundred-fold; the other peers cautiously through spectacles, misty and begrimed, more used in guiding immediate footsteps than in gazing far ahead. Murray had attained his majority in 1799, and in four years the two partners resolved to sever their connection in a pleasant and friendly manner. By the formal deed of separation, dated 25th March, 1803, Highley retained all the medical business. But the principal act of parting was of anything but a formal nature. They drew lots for the old house and Murray was fortunate enough to secure the winning prize. Highley moved to No. 24, Fleet Street, but was able afterwards, in 1812, when Murray migrated to Albemarle Street, to move back again, and here he increased his medical connection, leaving a thriving

business to his son.

In this very year of separation the *Edinburgh Review* was started, and Murray was probably reminded of the scheme in which his father had once been concerned with Smellie to produce a periodical under a similar title, but the time was not yet ripe for his own projects.

In 1806, at the age of twenty-four, he married Miss Elliot of Edinburgh, a young lady descended from one of the best-known publishers in the Modern Athens, and this, perhaps, drawing his attention to household matters, led to the publication of Mrs. Rundell's "Domestic Cookery Book." It is said that the receipts came from the note-book of the mother of the late Admiral Burney, with whose family, be it remembered, he had been at school at Gosport. This was the first and one of the most lucrative "hits" that Murray made, and perhaps in the important items of £ *s. d.* rivalled "Childe Harold" itself. Byron sings of it in playful jealousy:—

"Along thy sprucest book-shelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine,
The Art of Cookery and mine,
My Murray!"

Murray's ambition however was not to be satisfied with the sop of a successful cookery book. His marriage may be supposed to have strengthened his interests in the Scotch metropolis, for in the following year we find Constable offering him a fourth share in Scott's forthcoming poem of "Marmion." "I am," writes Murray on the 6th Feb., 1807, "truly sensible of the kind remembrance of me in your liberal purchase. You have rendered Mr. Miller no less happy by your admission of him; and

we both view it as honourable, profitable, and glorious to be concerned in the publication of a new poem by Walter Scott." For an account of the success of "Marmion" we must refer the reader to the life of Archibald Constable; it is enough for our present purpose to know that Murray afterwards said that this fourth share, for which he paid £250, brought him in a return of fifty-fold.

The publication of "Marmion" was followed by a connection with Scott, who in the succeeding year edited for him Strutt's "Queen Hoo Hall."

Scott had before this been concerned with Campbell in a projected series of "Biographies of the Poets," which had however come to nothing. Murray now thought that Scott's talents, and more especially perhaps his name, would bestow certain success upon the project; and we find Campbell, who had just made a "poet's marriage"—with love enough in his heart and genius enough in his brain, but "with only fifty pounds in his writing desk"—inditing to Scott as follows:—

> "MY DEAR SCOTT,—A very excellent and gentlemanly man—albeit a bookseller—Murray of Fleet Street, is willing to give for our joint 'Lives of the Poets,' on the plan we proposed to the trade a twelvemonth ago, a thousand pounds.... Murray is the only gentleman in the trade except Constable.... I may perhaps also except Hood. I have seldom seen a pleasanter man to deal with. Our names are what he principally wants, especially *yours*.... I do not wish even in confidence to say anything ill of the London booksellers beyond their deserts; but I can assure you that to compare this offer of Murray's with their usual offers is magnanimous indeed.

> Longman and Rees and a few of the great booksellers have literally monopolized the trade, and the business of literature is getting a dreadful one indeed. The Row folks have done nothing for me yet; I know not what they intend. The fallen prices of literature—which is getting worse by the horrible complexion of the times—make me often rather gloomy at the life I am likely to lead. You may guess, therefore, my anxiety to close with this proposal; and you may think me charitable indeed to retain myself from wishing that you were as poor as myself, that you might have motives to lend your aid."

Scott, however, was too busy on higher paid work and was obliged to decline the offer, and for the present Campbell went back to his "hack-work." Poor Campbell had suffered much from the publishers. His "Pleasures of Hope" had been rejected by every bookseller in Glasgow and Edinburgh; not one of them would even risk paper and printing upon the chance of its success. At last Messrs. Mundell and Son, printers to the University of Glasgow, with much reluctance undertook its publication, upon the liberal condition of allowing the author fifty copies at trade price, and, in the event of its reaching a second edition, a gratuity of ten pounds. A few years afterwards, when Campbell was present at a literary dinner party, he was asked to give a toast, and without a moment's hesitation he proposed "Bonaparte." Glasses were put down untouched, and shouts of "The Ogre!" resounded. "Yes, gentlemen," said Campbell gravely, "here is to Bonaparte; he has just shot a bookseller!" Amid shouts of applause, for the dinner was in "Bohemia," the glasses were jangled and the toast was drank, for the news had but just arrived that Palm, a bookseller

of Nuremburg, had been shot by the Emperor's orders.

Constable scarcely thought, when he offered the fourth share of "Marmion" to Murray, that he was fostering a dangerous rival. Yet in the very year after the publication of "Marmion" he was projecting a rival quarterly, and the following letter to Canning, first printed in "Barrow's Autobiography," shows that Murray is entitled to the whole credit of the new scheme.

"September 25th, 1807.

"SIR,—I venture to address you upon a subject that is perhaps not undeserving of one moment of your attention.

"There is a work entitled the *Edinburgh Review*, written with such unquestionable talent that it has already attained an extent of circulation not equalled by any similar publication. The principles of this work are, however, so radically bad, that I have been led to consider the effect which such sentiments, so generally diffused, are likely to produce, and to think that some means equally popular ought to be adopted to counteract their dangerous tendency. But the publication in question is conducted with so much ability, and is sanctioned and circulated with such high and decisive authority by the party of whose opinions it is the organ, that there is little hope of producing against it any effectual opposition, unless it arise from you, sir, and from your friends. Should you, sir, think the idea worthy of encouragement I should, with equal pride and willingness, engage my arduous exertions to promote its success; but as my object is nothing short of producing a work of the greatest talent and importance, I shall entertain it no longer, if it

be not so fortunate as to obtain the high patronage which I have thus, sir, taken the liberty to solicit.

"Permit me to add, sir, that the person who thus addresses you is no adventurer, but a man of some property, including a business that has been established for nearly half a century. I therefore trust that my application will be attributed to its proper motives, and that your goodness will at least pardon its intrusion.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, &c., &c.,
"JOHN MURRAY."

Canning read the letter, and though for the present it was put away in his desk unanswered, the contents were not forgotten, for a few years before this he had heard Murray's name mentioned in a very honourable way. Some Etonians, among them Canning's nephew, had started a periodical called the *Miniature*, which brought them some fame, but left them under a pecuniary loss. Murray, with his usual good nature, and with something of the tact which afterwards made him so many powerful friends, took all copies off their hands, paid all their expenses, and though he found little demand for the work, offered to print a new edition. This was a trait of character that, with a clear-headed, far-seeing man like Canning, would probably go far. As yet, however, the Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, though he gave the matter careful consideration, did not care to commit himself upon paper.

Two months, however, before this letter Scott and Southey had been corresponding about the *Edinburgh Review*, Southey stating that he felt himself unable to contribute to a periodical of such political views, and Scott heartily agreeing in deprecating the

general tone of the *Review*.

Early in 1808, a very severe article came out in the *Review* anent "Marmion." Murray pricked up his ears, and, as he afterwards told Lockhart, "When I read the article on 'Marmion,' and another on general politics in the same number of the *Review* I said to myself, 'Walter Scott has feelings both as a gentleman and as a Tory, which those people must now have wounded. The alliance between him and the whole clique of the *Edinburgh Review*, the proprietor included, is shaken,'" "and," adds Lockhart, "as far at least as the political part of the affair was concerned, John Murray's sagacity was not at fault."

Murray saw that the right way to approach Scott was through the Ballantynes' printing press, in which Scott at this time was a secret partner, and in which he always expressed openly the greatest interest. So urgent did Murray's tenders of work become that a meeting at Ferrybridge, in Yorkshire, was arranged; and here Murray received from Ballantyne the gratifying news that Scott had quarrelled with Constable, and that it was resolved to establish a rival firm. Murray, who never wasted an opportunity from lack of decision, posted on to Ashestiel and had an interview with Scott himself, and the proposal of a new quarterly Tory periodical was eagerly snatched at. Strangely enough Murray arrived just as Scott, after reading an article on Spanish matters, had written to have his name erased from the list of subscribers to the *Edinburgh*. Murray was able to announce, too, that Gifford, the editor of the late *Anti-Jacobin*, had promised co-operation, and in a letter to Gifford we see Scott's satisfaction clearly enough:—

"John Murray of Fleet Street, a young bookseller of capital and enterprize, and with more good sense and propriety of sentiment than fall to the share of most of the trade, made me a visit at Ashestiel a few weeks ago, and as I found he had had some communication with you on the subject, I did not hesitate to communicate my sentiments to him on these and some other points of the plan, and I thought his ideas were most liberal and satisfactory."

Soon after Canning wrote to the Lord Advocate on the subject, and the Lord Advocate communicated with Scott, who recommended that in all things save politics the *Edinburgh* should be taken as a model, especially in the liberal payment of *all* contributors, and in the unfettered judgment of the editor. Gifford was unanimously fixed on as fitted for the editorial chair. That he possessed vigour was apparent from his success—a plough-boy, a sailor, a cobbler, then a classical scholar, the translator of "Juvenal," the biting satirist of the "Baviad and Mæviad," the brilliant editor of the *Anti-Jacobin*, who so well suited to out-rival Jeffrey?

All the talent available was secured. Scott came to town to be present at the birth of the expected prodigy, and well he might, for three of the articles in the first number were his own. Rose, and young Disraeli, and Hookham Frere, and Robert Southey—the future back-bone of the *Review*—were all represented, and on 1st February, 1809, the first number of the *Quarterly Review* was published. According to tradition there were high jinks at Murray's shop in Fleet Street when the first numbers arrived from the binders; a triumphal column of the books "was raised aloft in solemn joy in the counting-house, the best wine in the cellar was

uncorked, and glasses in hand John Murray and assistants danced jubilant round the pile." The pile, however, did not long remain, as so many famous columns have done to mock the hope of its builders, but the whole issue was sold almost immediately, and a second edition was called for.

To the second number Canning himself contributed, and received his payment of ten guineas per sheet. Barrow, too, was introduced, who contributed, in all, no less than one hundred and ninety-five articles, "on every subject, from 'China' to 'Life Assurance.'" After Barrow and Croker, Southey was, perhaps, the most prolific; to the first hundred and twenty-six numbers he contributed ninety-four articles—many of them of great permanent value—and to him Murray uniformly exhibited a generosity almost without parallel. For an article on the "Lives of Nelson," he received twenty guineas a sheet, double what Southey himself acknowledged to be ample, and he was offered £100 to enlarge the article into a volume, and having exceeded the estimated quantity of print, Murray paid him double the amount stipulated, adding another 200 guineas when the book was revised for the "Family Library." For the review of the "Life of Wellington," Southey got £100, and he thought the sum so large that he himself calls it "a ridiculous price;" yet this ridiculous price he continued to receive, and he was in the habit of saying that he was as much overpaid for his articles by Murray, as he was underpaid for the rest of his work for other publishers. "Madoc," of which he had great hopes, brought him £3 19*s.* 1*d.* for the first twelvemonth, and the three volumes of the "History of the Brazils," scarcely paid their expenses of publication.

Of the other contributors it is unnecessary to speak fully here; but the *Review*, now that it was established, gave Murray at once a pre-eminence in the London trade, by bringing him into connection with the chief Conservative statesmen, and with the principal literary men in England.

The alliance that Murray had formed with the Ballantynes was soon dissolved, for Murray, though venturous enough, was a man of business, and their loose, slip-shod way of general dealings, did not at all satisfy his requirements. William Blackwood, then a dealer in antiquarian books, was chosen instead as Edinburgh agent, and, in conjunction with him, Murray purchased the first series of the "Tales of My Landlord." This was in 1816, and some payments for *Quarterly Review* articles was well-nigh the last business communication between Scott and Murray.

Now that Murray had so completely rivalled Constable in one line—that of the *Review*—he wished to rival him in another. Constable had made an apparent fortune out of Scott's poetry, in which Murray had in one case, to the extent of one quarter, participated. Scott had, it is true, left Constable, but was for the present unalienable from the Ballantynes, who at this moment enjoyed the dubious services of a London branch.

Looking round among the young and rising writers of the day, for one who was likely to enhance the fame and increase the wealth of his house, Murray mentally selected Lord Byron, then known, not only as the noble poetaster of the "Hours of Idleness," but as the bitterest satirist who had dipped pen in gall since Pope had lashed the hack-writers of his time in the "Dunciad." Murray made no secret of his wish to secure Byron as a client, and the rumour

of this desire reached the ears of Mr. Dallas, the novelist, who happened at that very moment to be seeking a publisher for a new poem in two cantos, by his distant cousin and dear college chum, Lord Byron. Byron had just arrived from the East, bringing with him a satire, entitled "Hints from Horace," of which he was not a little hopeful, and also, as he casually mentions, a "new attempt in the Spenserian stanza." Dallas read the "new attempt," and, enthralled by its beauty, forthwith undertook securing its publication. But, even in those days of venturous publishers and successful poems, the matter looked easier than it proved. Longman declined to publish a poem by a writer who had so recently lashed his own favourite authors. Miller, of Abermarle Street, a notable man in his day, and generous withal (had he not given the widow of the late Charles James Fox £1500 for her defunct husband's historical fragments, and did he not eagerly snatch at one-fourth share of "Marmion?") would have none of it, his noble patron, Lord Elgin, being abused in the very first canto. Dallas then appears to have heard a rumour of Murray's willingness; the manuscript was taken to him, and £600 was offered, there and then, for the copyright. Byron was at that time unwilling to receive money for work done solely for love and fame; he had lately attacked Scott in a directly personal manner, as "Apollo's venal son:"—

"Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy Muse just half-a-crown per line!"

and generously made a present of the copyright to Dallas—a brother author, less gifted in purse and brain—and thus the bargain was concluded. This was the commencement of a friendship between author

and publisher which has, perhaps, only one parallel in literary annals—that of Scott and Constable. From the letters between Byron and Murray we can discern clearly that the connection, tinged as it was with much generous feeling on both sides, was far from being of a purely commercial nature.

"Childe Harold," for this, of course, is the poem referred to, was "put in hand" at once. Quartos were then in vogue for all books likely to attract attention, and Murray insisted that profit as well as portliness was to be found therein. Byron was for octavos and popularity; but as he said wofully at the end of one of his letters, "one must obey one's bookseller." During the progress of the printing, Byron would lounge into the shop in Fleet Street, fresh from Angelo's and Jackson's. "His great amusement," says Murray, "was in making thrusts with his stick, in fencer's fashion, at the 'sprucebooks,' as he called them, which I had arranged upon my shelves. He disordered a row for me in a short time, always hitting the volume he had singled out for the exercise of his skill. I was sometimes, as you will guess, glad to get rid of him." As for correction, Byron was willing enough to defer at any time to Murray's advice, upon all questions but politics, though only to a limited extent: "If you don't like it, say so, and I'll alter it, but *don't* suggest anything instead." In one letter we find a strange absence of a young writer's anxiety anent the importance of typography. "The printer may place the notes in his *own way*, or in any *way*, so that they are out of my way." In another: "*You have looked at it?* to much purpose, to allow so stupid a blunder to stand; it is not 'courage,' but 'carnage,' and if you don't want to see me cut my own throat see it altered!" Again, but later, "If every syllable were a rattlesnake, or every

letter a pestilence, they should not be expunged." "I do believe the Devil never created or perverted such a fiend as the fool of a printer." "For God's sake," he writes in another place, "instruct Mr. Murray not to allow his shopman to call the work 'Child of Harrow's Pilgrimage!!!' as he has done to some of my astonished friends, who wrote to inquire after my sanity on the occasion, as well they might!" To John Murray we imagine Lord Byron must have appeared as much of a contradiction as he did to the world outside.

Byron was extremely anxious that no underhand means should be used to foster the success of "Childe Harold." "Has Murray," he writes to Dallas, "shown the work to any one? He may—but I will have no traps for applause." On receipt of a rumour from Dallas, he indites a stormy letter to Murray, absolutely forbidding that Gifford should be allowed to look at the book before publication. Before the letter arrived, however, Gifford had expressed a very strong opinion, indeed, as to the merit of the poem, which he declared to "be equal to anything of the present day." Byron wrote again to Murray, "as never publisher was written to before by author:"—"It is bad enough to be a scribbler, without having recourse to such shifts to escape from or deprecate censure. It is anticipating, begging, kneeling, adulating—the devil! the devil! the devil! and all without my wish, and contrary to my desire."

In the early spring of 1812, "Childe Harold" was ready, and three days before its appearance, Byron made his maiden speech in the House of Lords; a speech which was received with attention and hailed with applause, from those whose applause was in itself fame. It is needless here to recapitulate the

success of "Childe Harold," how, on the day after publication, Lord Byron awoke, and, as he himself phrased it, found himself famous.

The publication of "Childe Harold," was not the only important event of this year, 1812, to the subject of our memoir. In this same year, Murray purchased the stock-in-trade of worthy Mr. Miller, of 50, Albemarle Street, and migrated thither, leaving the old shop, east of Temple Bar, to be re-occupied by-and-by (in 1832) by the Highley family.

Here it was, at Albemarle Street, that Murray attained the highest pinnacle of fame on which ever publisher stood. His drawing-room, at four o'clock, became the favourite resort of all the talent in literature and in art that London then possessed, and there *were* giants in those days. There it was his "custom of an afternoon," to gather together such men as Byron, Scott, Moore, Campbell, Southey, Gifford, Hallam, Lockhart, Washington Irving, and Mrs. Somerville; and, more than this, he invited such artists as Laurence, Wilkie, Phillips, Newton, and Pickersgill to meet them and to paint them, that they might hang for ever on his walls. Famous tales, too, are told of the "publisher's dinners;" of tables surrounded as never any king's table but that of the "Emperor of the West's" had ever been. As Byron makes Murray say, in his mock epistle to Dr. Palidori—

"The room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,
And others, neither bards nor wits,
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of gent,
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.
A party dines with me to-day,

All clever men who make their way;
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey
Are all partakers of my pantry.

* * * * *

My room's so full—we've Gifford here,
Reading MS. with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming articles."

Mr. Planché, in his recently-published "Recollections," gives us an amusing account of one of these literary réunions; this time, however, at the house of Horace Twiss. Murray, James Smith, and others remained in the dining-room very late, and the party grew noisy and merry, for Hook was giving some of his wonderful extempore songs. Pressed for another, he declared that the subject should be "John Murray;" but the "Emperor of the West" objected most vehemently, and vainly chased Hook round the table in furtive endeavours to stop a recitative, of which Planché only remembers the beginning:—

"My friend, John Murray, I see, has arrived at the head
of the table,
And the wonder is, at this time of night, that John
Murray should be able.
He's an excellent hand at supper, and not a bad hand
at lunch,
But the devil of John Murray is, that he never will
pass the punch!"

Among the many instances of Murray's munificence was the offer of £3000 to Crabbe for his "Tales of the Hall," and the copyright of his prior works. Some zealous friends, however, thought this too small a sum, and opened negotiations with

another firm, but the other firm offered considerably less; and Crabbe, fearing that Murray might consider the bargain as out of his hands entirely now, went straightway to Albemarle Street with Rogers and Moore as mediators. Murray, however, assured them that he had from the first considered the matter as entirely settled.

Lord Byron's personal connection with the Albemarle Street clique was of comparatively short existence, for, in 1816, he left England for the last time; but to the time of his death he kept up a regular correspondence with Murray of the frankest and most cordial kind. Now, Murray hearing that Lord Byron was in difficulties, sends him a draft for £1500, promising another for the same amount in the course of a few months, and offering to sell the copyright of his works for his use, if that were not sufficient. Then, again, in a freak, Byron presents Murray with "Parisina" and the "Siege of Corinth," and returns the cheque for £1000 which the publisher had forwarded.

"Your offer is liberal in the extreme, and much more than the two poems can possibly be worth; but I cannot accept it, nor will not. You are most welcome to them as an addition to the collected volumes, without any demand or expectation on my part whatever.

"P.S.—I have enclosed your draft, *torn*, for fear of accidents by the way. I wish you would not throw temptation in mine; it is not from a disdain of the universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship him; but what is right is right, and must not yield to circumstances."

The following is in a somewhat different tone:—

"You offer 1500 guineas for the new canto of ("Don Juan"). I won't take it. I ask 2500 guineas for it, which you will either give or not, as you think proper. If Mr. Moore is to have 3000 for "Lalla," &c., if Mr. Crabbe is to have 3000 for his prose or poetry, I ask the aforesaid price for mine." ("Beppo" was eventually thrown into the bargain.) "You are an excellent fellow, *mio caro* Murray, but there is still a little leaven of Fleet Street about you now and then —a crumb of the old loaf.... I have a great respect for your good and gentlemanly qualities, and return your friendship towards me; and although I think you are a little spoiled by 'villanous company,' with persons of honour about town, authors, and fashionables, together with your 'I am just going to call at Carlton House, are you walking that way?'—I say, notwithstanding 'pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses,' you deserve the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having."

Now, like a spoiled child, Byron wishes back all his copyrights, and intends to suppress all that he has ever written, and Murray has to chide him and coax him, with much disinterestedness, urging him to labour steadily for a few years upon some work worthy of his talents, and fit to be a true monument of his fame.

Some of Byron's letters are in an earnest, many in a playful, mood, most in prose, but sometimes the poet breaks into a charming doggerel of delicious "chaff." Here is one specimen:—

"TO MR. MURRAY.

"Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard of Pindus climbs,

My Murray.

"To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged MS. authors come;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

"Upon thy tables' baize so green,
The last new *Quarterly* is seen,—
But where is thy new magazine,
My Murray?

"Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine,—
The 'Art of Cookery,' and mine,
My Murray.

"Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons to thy mill bring grist;
And then thou hast the 'Army List,'
My Murray.

"And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without the 'Board of Longitude,'
Although this narrow paper would,
My Murray!"

VENICE, March 25, 1818.

There was no end to Byron's wit and playfulness. Sometimes Murray would act as a mentor and adviser in more serious matters, but his advice would be pleasantly turned off with a jest. At the time when Byron was most calumniated, when there were cruel stories afloat about the life he led and the opinions he held (though none so cruel as have since been promulgated by a well-known American authoress), Murray's soul was comforted by the present of a

Bible—a gift from the illustrious poet. “Could this man,” he asked, “be a deist, an atheist, or worse, when he sent Bibles about to his publishers?” Turning it over in wonderment, however, some inquisitive member of his four-o’clock clique found a marginal correction—“Now Barabbas was a robber,” altered into “Now Barabbas was a *publisher*.” A cruel stab, a “palpable hit,” maybe, at some publishers, but, as regards Murray, an uproarious joke to be gleefully repeated to every comer. As a refutation of this playful libel, and as the clearest and most succinct way of showing what amounts of money Byron really did receive, we append the following account:—

| | | £ |
|---|---|---|
| 1807 | *Hours of Idleness* | |
| 1809 | *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* | |
| 1812 | *Childe Harold,* I. II.[A] | 600 |
| 1813 | *The Gaiour* | 525 |
| ” | *Bride of Abydos* | 525 |
| 1814 | *Corsair*[15] | 525 |
| ” | *Lara* | 700 |
| 1815 | *Hebrew Melodies*[16] | |
| 1816 | *Childe Harold,* III. | 1,575 |
| ” | *Siege of Corinth* | 525 |
| ” | *Parisina* | 525 |
| ” | *Prisoner of Chillon* | 525 |
| 1817 | *Manfred* | 315 |
| ” | *Lament of Tasso* | 315 |
| 1818 | *Beppo* | 525 |
| ” | *Childe Harold,* IV. | 2,100 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1819 | *Mazeppa* | 525 |
| ” | *Don Juan*, I. II. | 1,525 |
| 1820 | *Don Juan*, III. IV. V. | 1,525 |
| ” | *Marino Faliero* | |
| ” | *Doge of Venice* | 1,050 |
| 1821 | *Sardanapalus*, *Cain*, and *Foscari* | 1,100 |
| ” | *Vision of Judgment*[17] | |
| 1822 | *Werner*; *Deformed Transformed*; *Heaven and Earth*, to which were added *Hours of Idleness*, *English Bards*, *Hints from Horace*, &c. | 3,885 |
| | Sundries | 450 |
| 1822 | *Don Juan*, VI. VII. VIII. IX. X. XI. | |
| 1823 | *Age of Bronze*, *The Island*, and more cantos of *Don Juan* | |
| | Total | £19,340 |
| | *Life*, by Thomas Moore | 4,200 |
| | | £23,540 |

Murray’s kindness to Byron may be said to have displayed itself even after his death. In 1821, Byron had given his friend Moore his autobiography, partly as a means of justifying his character, partly to enrich his friend. Moore, pressed as usual for money, made over the MS. to Murray for the sum of 2000 guineas, undertaking to edit it in case of survivorship. He subsequently intended to modify the transaction by a clause to be inserted in the deed, by which he, Moore, should have the option of redeeming it within three months after Byron’s

death. When Byron did die, in 1824, the MS. was given to Gifford to read, and found to be far too gross for publication, and, spite of Moore's wish to modify it, Sir John Hobhouse and Mrs. Leigh insisted upon its being destroyed. Murray offered to give it up upon repayment of the 2000 guineas; and after an unpleasant scene in Murray's shop, the MS. was destroyed by Wilmot Horton and Colonel Doyle, with the full consent of Moore, who repaid Murray the sum advanced by a draft on Rogers.

No sooner had it been burnt than it was found that, through the want of the clause above named, Moore's interest in the MS. had entirely ceased at Byron's death; and though Moore, nobly and firmly, refused to receive the money back from Byron's friends, he chose to consider for a time that Murray had wronged him.

He took a proposal to Longman of a "Life of Byron," and the matter was partially arranged, when Moore, urged on both by his feelings and his friends, seeing Murray in the street, started after him. "Mr. Murray, some friends of yours and mine seem to think that we should no longer continue on these terms. I therefore proffer you my hand, and most heartily forgive and forget all that has passed." Murray's face brightened into smiles, and on parting he said, "God bless you, sir, God bless you!" Longman agreed, upon this, that Murray was the publisher to whom a life of Byron most properly belonged, and Murray eventually gave £4200 for one of the most delightful and entertaining biographies in our literature—a companion volume, in every way, to Boswell's "Johnson" and Lockhart's "Scott." Murray, in this transaction, seems to have behaved with generous firmness. Now that Byron was dead,

the autobiography would certainly have proved the most remunerative of all his works; and Moore himself, in his Diary, ultimately confessed that "Murray's conduct" had been admirable throughout.

In this year, 1824, not only did Murray lose the services and the friendship of his best client, Lord Byron, who died at Missolonghi on the 19th of April, but Gifford, the able editor of the *Quarterly*, was incapacitated for further work, and resigned his post. Mr. John Coleridge, then a young barrister, succeeded, but though accomplished, clever, and able, he was "scarcely strong enough for the place;" Southey found out his incapacity for saying "no," and under his auspicious reign began to make the *Review* a quarterly issue of his own miscellaneous works. Strangely enough in the mourning coach that followed Gifford to his grave Murray drove with the man who was destined as an editor to rival the powers of the upbuilder of the *Quarterly's* reputation —this of course was John Gibson Lockhart, a young Edinburgh advocate, the son-in-law of Scott, and more than that, the author of "Peter's Letters," of "Valerius," of "Reginald Dalton," the translator of "Frederick Schlegel," and the "Ancient Spanish Ballads," and the noted contributor to *Blackwood*. Moore first heard of the arrangement down at Abbotsford, when Scott, after dinner, hopeful of his daughter's interests, and proud, may be, of his son-in-law, grew confidential. "Lockhart was about to undertake the *Quarterly*, has agreed for five years; salary £1200 a year, and if he writes a certain number of articles it will be £1500 a year." In this year, though the prospects of the *Quarterly* were ably secured, Murray met with the only really adverse turn of fortune, to which through a long career, and a bold one, he was ever subject. The terrible

commercial crisis which had been so long overhanging, burst at last into a deluge of ruin—Constable's house was swept away, the Ballantynes were for the moment overthrown, and Scott had to give up his lordly estates of Abbotsford, and generously work his life out to redeem a name on which he deemed a commercial slur had been cast. Murray, though he suffered by the panic, as all must suffer in the time of a general epidemic, was not severely hurt. Still, looking back now with the wisdom of wiseacres, who think we could have prophesied easily the actual events that did occur, the time does seem a strange one in which to start a new venture. This was nothing less than the establishment of a new Conservative journal, which was to rival the *Times* as the *Quarterly* rivalled the *Edinburgh*. According to the current rumour, it was young Disraeli (now the wily and veteran leader of the Conservative party) who first proposed the scheme; and, according to current rumour still, it was under his editorship, and with Dr. Maginn as chief foreign correspondent, that the *Representative* (price sevenpence daily) was started on the 26th of January, 1826. The journal was able, well-informed, and well-written, but the *Times* had a monopoly, and the Conservative party were not strong enough to support a first-rate organ of their own, and after a brief existence of six months, the *Representative* gave up the struggle. Murray was wont in future days, when rash young speculators urged the necessity of embracing some opening for a new daily paper, to point to a ledger on his book-shelves and say grimly, "Twenty thousand pounds lie buried there!"

The question as to who was the actual editor of the *Representative* has never been definitely settled. Mr. Disraeli, until the last year, never disclaimed the

supposed connection, and silence was considered as proverbially affirmative. Lockhart, too, has been put forward as a claimant. The nearest approach to any opinion that might have been final was given by the late James Hannay in the pages of the *Edinburgh Courant*. "We had the best authority for what we said —nay, the only authority—since even to Mr. Murray the question of the *Representative's* editorship is not a personal one. We now add that Mr. Disraeli's long silence in the matter admits of an explanation which will gratify his admirers of all parties. He hesitated to come forward with any eagerness to make a denial, which might have been interpreted as springing from a wish to disclaim newspaper association, but when the story was passing into literature in such a book as the biography of an eminent British writer, it was time to protest against any further propagation of the story, once and for all." But this "best and only authority" did nothing to render the question less intricate, for when Mr. Grant published the first instalment of his "History of the Newspaper Press," he thoroughly outdid Hannay, and with that ingenuous facility of arbitrating over moot points, and that mysterious power of catching rumours, as boys catch moths, and pinning them down in his collection under the general label of "facts," gave full details of Mr. Disraeli's connection with the *Representative*, the amount of his salary, together with a luxurious description of the splendours of his editorial offices! Mr. Disraeli roused at last, replied curtly that the whole narrative was entirely imaginary, and utterly devoid of fact or foundation in any one point. He has since then in a letter, upon a similar question, written by his solicitor to the *Leisure Hour*, declared that:—

"Mr. Disraeli never in his life required or

received any remuneration for anything he ever wrote, except for books bearing his name.

"Mr. Disraeli never was editor of the *Star Chamber*, or any other newspaper, journal, review, or magazine, or anything else."

To return, however, to legitimate book-publishing. About this time Campbell's old scheme of "Biographies of the Poets" was revived, re-appearing under the title of "Specimens of the British Poets;" and Murray was so pleased with the work that he made the stipulated sum of £500 into double that amount. To Allen Cunningham, too, he gave £50 per volume additional for his "Lives of the British Artists," and made the payment retrospective.

We could repeat five hundred anecdotes of his liberal and kindly generosity, but our space only permits us to record another, which it is very pleasant to read about.

It was twenty-two years since the obscure Fleet Street bookseller had embraced the "glorious and profitable" opportunity of taking a fourth share in "Marmion," and since then Sir Walter Scott had achieved an unparalleled position in the world of English letters, had written innumerable works, and had earned unheard-of sums—and had been completely ruined. With the aid of his creditors, Scott was now seeking to recover all his copyrights for a final edition of his collected works. All had been bought back save this fourth share of "Marmion." Lockhart was commissioned by his father-in-law to inquire on what terms the share might be re-purchased, and this was Murray's immediate reply:—

"Albemarle Street, June 8th, 1829.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Lockhart has this moment communicated your letter respecting my fourth share of the copyright of 'Marmion.' I have already been applied to by Messrs. Constable and Messrs. Longman to know what sum I would sell this share for; but so highly do I estimate the honour of being, even in so small a degree, the publisher of the author of this poem, that no pecuniary consideration whatever can induce me to part with it.

"But there is a consideration of another kind, which until now I was not aware of, which would make it painful to me if I were to retain it longer. I mean the knowledge of its being required by the author, into whose hands it was spontaneously resigned in the same instant that I read his request.

"The share has been profitable to me fifty-fold beyond what either publisher or author could have anticipated, and, therefore, my returning it on such an occasion, you will, I trust, do me the favour to consider in no other light than as a mere act of grateful acknowledgment, for benefits already received by

"My dear Sir,
"Your obliged and faithful Servant,
"JOHN MURRAY."

This noble act, we must remember, was performed at a time when the future was anything but bright, or at all events when the present was dismally gloomy. "Lydia Whyte," writes Tom Moore, "told me that Murray was very unsuccessful of late. Besides the failure of his *Representative*, the *Quarterly* did not look very promising, and he was about to give up the fine house he had taken in Whitehall, and return to live in Albemarle-street."

Constable had, some years previous, hit upon the idea of appealing to a public that should be numbered, not by tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, ay, and by millions! and had just commenced his "Miscellany." Murray, quick to receive a good idea, started at once into competition with his "Family Library," Lockhart commencing the series with a "Life of Napoleon" and the "Court and Camp of Bonaparte." Cunningham followed with his "Lives of the British Painters," and Southey revised his "Life of Nelson," and expanded another review article into a "Life of Wellington," on terms equally munificent with the other.

Cheap editions of Byron were multiplied by the score; Landor received a thousand guineas for his "Journals of African Travel," and Napier another thousand for his first volume of the "History of the Peninsular War." If Murray neglected opportunities, he generally managed to retrieve them. He might have had the "Bridgewater Treatises;" and he says, "The 'Rejected Addresses' were offered me for ten pounds, and I let them go by as the kite of the moment. See the result! I was determined to pay for my neglect, and I bought the remainder of the copyright for 150 guineas." Murray might have added that he generously gave the Smiths a handsome share in the ultimate profits.

Sometimes, too, he had the sagacity to buy the *failures* as well as the successes of other publishers. Constable produced a little "History of England," in one small volume, which fell still-born from the press. Murray purchased it for a trifle, re-christened it with his usual happiness, and as "Mrs. Markham's History of England" the work has been an annual source of revenue to the house, as the present Mr.

Murray's last trade sale list would tell us.

Murray was never dazzled by the fame of his Byrons, his Moores, his Campbells, and his Crabbes, but always recollected that "taste" is flitting, while works that only aid the necessities of mankind are always saleable. The "Army and Navy List" and the "Nautical Almanack" are every whit as profitable to-day as in the first year of their publication. Moore tells a story that shows he could still occupy his mind as well as fill his purse with "Mrs. Rundell's Cookery Book." "Called at Murray's," he writes in his "Diary," for 1831: "mentioned to him Lady Morgan's wish to contribute something to his 'Family Library,' and that she has materials ready for the lives of five or six Dutch painters. 'Pray, isn't Lady Morgan a very good cook?' I answered I didn't know; but why did he ask? 'Because,' said he, 'if she would do something in that line—' 'Why, you don't mean,' said I, 'that she should write a cookery book for you?' 'No,' answered John, coolly, 'not so much as that; but that she should re-edit mine' (Mrs. Rundell's, by which he had made heaps of money). Oh, that she could have heard this with her own ears! Here ended my negotiations for her Ladyship."

It was not merely to Englishmen that Murray extended a helping and a generous hand. When the first volume of the "Sketch Book," originally published in America, made its appearance in London, it was declined by Murray, and Irving was about to publish it on his own account; but after all arrangements had been made the printer failed. Lockhart had praised the book in *Blackwood*; and Scott, seeing at once its sterling worth, with his usual kindliness, pressed its merits upon Murray, who gave Irving £200 for it, afterwards more than doubling the

amount. Murray's transactions with Irving exhibit a singular phase of the international copyright law. This is how their account stands—

| | £ |
|---|---|
| "Sketch Book" | 467 |
| "Bracebridge Hall" | 1050 |
| "Tales of a Traveller" | 1575 |
| "Life of Columbus" | 3150 |
| "Companions of Columbus" | 525 |
| "Conquest of Grenada" | 2100 |
| "Tour on the Prairies" | 400 |
| "Abbotsford and Newstead" | 400 |
| "Legends of Spain" | 100 |
| Total | £9767 |

These sums of money having been paid, Mr. Bohn reprinted the volumes in a cheap edition. A law suit was of course the result, in which Murray's expenses ran up to £850, and Mr. Bohn's were probably as heavy. The question, however, was settled amicably, without being fought to the bitter end, and Irving received no more money from this side the Atlantic.

Most of the famous men with whom Murray had been connected had by this time disappeared, many of them having shed their rays meteor-like, and having done the duty unto which they were created in a momentary flash. The seething excitement called into being by the throes of the first French Revolution had subsided, and there were neither readers left to appreciate true poetry, nor true poets remaining, with strength of voice left in them to bring back memories in passion-laden melodies of

the troublous times they sprung from. All, on the contrary, was quiet and easeful—a happy time for commerce, but a barren hour for art.

Murray, skilled as any pilot in watching the direction of the wind, turned his attention to the publication of travels and expeditions—the very books for a fireside afternoon, when the wind is howling outside, and the snow-storm beating on the windows—and very soon Albemarle Street was as famous for its "Travels" as it had previously been for its "Belles-Lettres." Among the most valuable and successful of these were the expeditions of Mungo Park, Belzoni, Parry, Franklin, Denham, and Clapperton.

Murray had just launched his "Classical Handbooks," under the editorship of his son—had just made, in trade parlance, "another great hit" in Lady Sale's "Journal in Afghanistan"—when an attack of general debility and exhaustion compelled him to leave business and success alone—and for ever. He rallied so often that no serious results were anticipated by his family or physician; but after a very short illness he died suddenly on the 27th June, 1843, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, leaving three daughters and one only son. To his widow, in a will dated only seven days before his death, he bequeathed the whole of his estate.

A gentleman by manners and education; generous and open-handed, not for purposes of display, often not from mere trade motives, but from a true desire to return to genius and industry something of what he derived from them; an excellent man of business, with more powers of work than most men, understanding better than any how to measure the calibre of an author's genius, and to

gauge the duration of his popularity; skilful in timing a publication, so as to ensure a favourable reception, and yet honestly abhorring any recourse to the low art of puffing—such was John Murray as a publisher; the best representative of an honourable calling, and one who by his own influence tended not a little to make the years of his own working life the best representative period of English literature.

Mr. John Murray, who succeeded at once to his father's business, was born in the year 1808, and was consequently, in 1843, admirably fitted, by years and professional training, to take the management of so important a concern. He was educated at the Charterhouse and at Edinburgh University, and had had, moreover, all the advantages that foreign travel could bestow. As early as 1831, we hear of "Mr. John Murray, Jun.," at Weimar, presenting Goethe with the dedication of Byron's "Marino Faliero," and being received, together with that mocking and yet reverent tribute, in a gracious, kindly manner.

Mr. Murray thoroughly followed his father's idea, that the age had now come for the cheap publication of useful and practical books, and in the first year of his accession, issued the prospectus of his "Home and Colonial Library," which, being published at half the price of the "Family Library," was at least twice as successful, and was continued for upwards of six years. During these early years Mr. Murray made one mistake, and achieved one great success. The mistake was, however, in common with every publisher in London, for "Eöthen" went the rounds of the metropolitan book market, and was eventually published by a personal friend of Mr. Kinglake's. Mindful of his father's precedents, Murray soon secured the copyright. The success, on the contrary,

consisted in accepting what other publishers had refused, and issued from Albemarle Street, Campbell's "Lives of the Lord Chancellors" has proved one of the most successful biographical works of the time. In travel, biography, history, and science, the present Mr. Murray has fully sustained the name of the old house, and it is sufficient here to mention only the names of Hallam, Barrow, Wilkinson, Lyell, Gordon Cumming, Layard, Murchison, and Sir Robert Peel, to see how much we owe him.

On Lockhart's death, in 1854, the Reverend Whitwell Elwin was selected to fill the editorial chair of the *Quarterly*, and since that date the political opinions of the periodical have been considerably modified; at any rate, men of all parties have been allowed to write conscientiously in its pages, and it is even rumoured, that before this, its old opponent, Lord Brougham, contributed at least one article (that on *Chesterfield*, in vol. lxxvi.).

Among the most successful library books that Mr. Murray has recently published, we must instance those by Mr. Smiles and Dr. Livingstone, and, more especially, those by Mr. Darwin.

Mr. Murray's name is, however, most familiar to us now as the publisher of the famous *Handbooks* for travellers, the series now extending, not only through the outer world, but embracing our English counties; these latter, it is said, owing much to Mr. Murray's personal editorship.

In closing our short sketch of the "House of Murray," we cannot refrain from re-echoing a wish that has been often uttered before, that the present representative may find time amidst his professional labours, to edit the letters and to write a worthy life

of the great John Murray. No book that has ever been issued from Albemarle Street could be more popular or more welcome.



# *WILLIAM BLACKWOOD*:

## "BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE."

We have already, in our account of Archibald Constable, shown how deeply the brilliant writers—who for a while gave a bold literary supremacy to the northern capital—were indebted to the daring spirit and the generous purse of one Scottish publisher; we have here to follow the narrative of a rival's life—a life at outset very similar, but soon diverging widely, and which, actuated by very different principles, and aiming at very different results, was destined to open the arena of literary struggle to those whom honest political feeling had for a moment rendered dumb and inactive.

William Blackwood was born at Edinburgh, on the 20th Nov., 1776, of parents in an humble position in life, who, however, with the honest endeavour of most of their class in the north, contrived to give him a very excellent elementary education. From his earliest days, William had

exhibited a strong love for books, and at the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to Bell and Bradfute, of his native city; nor, indeed, did his education suffer from this premature removal from school; there is much leisure in a bookseller's shop, even for an industrious boy, and opportunity of more various reading than comes within the reach of many sixth-form scholars and university undergraduates. "It was here," says an obituary notice, "that he had so largely stored his mind with reading of all sorts, but more especially with Scottish history and antiquities, that on establishing himself in business, his accomplishments attracted the notice of persons whose good opinion was distinction." Before the expiry of his time, in 1797, he must also have displayed a talent for business life, for we find that he was immediately engaged by Messrs. Mundell & Co., then largely employed in the book trade at Edinburgh, to take the sole management of a branch house at Glasgow; and being thus, at the early age of twenty years, thrown almost entirely upon his own resources, and with his own judgment for his only guidance, he acquired that decision of character which distinguished him throughout after-life, and which was so instrumental in the fortunes of his house. In spite, however, of all his efforts, the firm of Mundell & Co. did not prosper at Glasgow—it was they, the reader may, perhaps, remember, who purchased the "Pleasures of Hope," for only fifty printed copies of the work, from Campbell—and after his year's service was over, he returned to Edinburgh, and re-entered the employment of Bell and Bradfute, with whom he remained for another year. In 1800, he entered into partnership with Mr. Ross, bookseller and bookseller's auctioneer; but the auctioneering part of the business proved distasteful

to him, and the old book trade presented a much more suitable field for his talents. With the energy of youth he started for London, and was initiated into the mysteries of bibliography by Mr. Cuthell, "famous," as Nichols says, "for his catalogues." Here he stayed for three years, and then, in 1804, came back to Edinburgh and opened an old-book shop, in South Bridge Street. For several years he almost confined his attention to the sale of rare and curious books, more especially those relating to the antiquities and early history of Scotland. His shop, like that of Constable, soon became a regular literary haunt, and he speedily acquired a reputation second to none of his own line in Edinburgh, and in the matter of catalogues, he rivalled Cuthell, his master; that one published in 1812 being the first in which the books were regularly classified, and "continues," says Mr. Chambers, "to be an authority to the present day." The old-book trade was at that time in its most flourishing condition, Dibdin was firing the minds of curiosity-seekers with a love for rare quartos and folios; Heber, and many more after his kind, were spending the main portion of their time, and the vast bulk of their fortunes, in the acquisition of immense libraries; and the old-booksellers of the day were making large incomes. Blackwood's success by no means satisfied his ambition, but enabled him to enter the field of publishing as a rival to Constable, who was now at the height of his glory. As early as 1811, we find him bringing out "Kerr's Voyages," a work of considerable importance and expense, and which was shortly succeeded by Macrie's "Life of Knox."

Blackwood's sojourn in London, and the credit attracted by his enterprising book-catalogues, led the way to his being appointed agent to several of the

London booksellers, among others, to John Murray, and to them, conjointly, the tale of the "Black Dwarf" was offered when Scott considered it desirable to bring it out in other hands, and with a title-page apparently by another author. Blackwood wrote to say that, in his opinion, the unravelling of the end of the story might be improved, and offered to pay for cancelling the proofs. Gifford, too, to whom Murray had shown it, was of a like opinion. Scott differed most essentially; witness his letter to Ballantyne:—

> "DEAR JAMES,
>
> "I have received Blackwood's impudent letter. G—— d—— his soul, tell him and his coadjutor that I belong to the Black Hussars of Literature, who neither give nor receive criticism. I'll be cursed but this is the most impudent proposal that ever was made."

This, of course, brought the proposal to a close for the time, though, as Lockhart says, "Scott did both know and appreciate Blackwood better in after times."

Blackwood was now, from the profits of the old-book trade and the success of his own publishing ventures, in a fair way to success, and in 1816 he took the bold step of selling off all his old stock and migrating to Prince's Street. "He took possession," says Lockhart, in "Peter's Letters," "of a large and airy suite of rooms in Prince's Street, which had formerly been occupied by a notable confectioner, and whose threshold was, therefore, familiar enough to all the frequenters of this superb promenade.... Stimulated, I suppose, by the example and success of John Murray, whose agent he is, he determined to make, if possible, Prince's Street to the High Street,

what the other had made Albemarle Street to the Row." It was not without much forethought, we may be sure, that this step was undertaken, and the speedy establishment of the famous magazine clearly shows us what was the chief motive to such a venturous change.

The magazine literature of the day was wofully weak. The vitality with which Cave had endowed the *Gentleman's Magazine*, had long since died away. No more such "hack-writers" as Johnson and Goldsmith came forward to enliven its pages, at the meagre payment of four guineas a sheet, and now it only—

"Hopped its pleasant way from church to church,
And nursed its little bald biography."

Such was the type of English periodical literature, and the Scotch were certainly no better off. The *Scots Magazine* stood Constable, it is true, in good stead, but only as a nursery ground, from which writers might be trained for transplantation to a stronger soil. Vastly different was the condition of the rival quarterlies; but still, in Scotland at all events, the *Edinburgh* carried everything after its own desire. Wit the writers had in plenty—learning, too, and the gift of open-speaking; but to fairness, biassed as they were by party ties, they never laid the least claim, and yet all Edinburgh was enthralled by the opinions of the *Edinburgh Review*, for intellectual attainments at that time commanded for their possessors the leading place in the society of the Modern Athens, and, as the principles advocated in its pages were decidedly opposed to those of the existing administration, the success it indubitably had attained, the vast following it was gathering, not only irritated but alarmed the Scotch Tory party.

Of course, the actual inventorship of the new project is a disputed point, but the evidence seems to tell us that, however the idea of a new Conservative organ had been talked over in literary coteries (and what scheme has not been planned a thousand times before execution whenever literary men meet together?), the plan had long been entertained and spoken of by Blackwood; and, as he proceeded to carry it into execution, the scheme may to all intents and purposes be regarded as his own.

Two gentlemen were engaged—Pringle and Cleghorn—who had received their training in the enemy's camp, as editors in chief, and with the assistance of Hogg, and the promised support of Scott and many other men of talent, the first number of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* was issued on All-Fools' Day, 1817—an ominous day for Blackwood, for he soon discovered that the prophets he had summoned to curse, heaped blessings on the heads of his opponents. This first number differed but little from other periodicals of its class. Only half the space was devoted to original matter, and the very opening pages contained a panegyric upon Horner, then lately deceased, an *Edinburgh Reviewer*—a Whig, and not much else. "You can't say too much about Sydney Smith and Brougham," said Scott to Jeffrey; "but I will not admire your Horner. He always puts me in mind of Obadiah's bull, who, although, as Father Shandy observed, he never produced a calf, went through his business with such a grave demeanour that he always maintained his credit in the parish." Nor was this the worst. In No. 3 a violent defence of the *Edinburgh* was undertaken warmly. This was too much for Blackwood; he gave his editors notice of a coming change, and after much chaffering he was glad to pay £125 down, and get rid

at once of them and the magazine; and—somewhat, doubtless, to his chagrin—they immediately returned to Constable and took charge of the *Scots Magazine*, which, under the title of *Constable's Edinburgh Magazine*, made a futile effort to re-juvenate itself.

With the sixth number of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* had appeared a notice stating that "this work is now discontinued, this being the last number of it;" but in the following month, with an alteration in the title, it arose, Phœnix-like, from the ashes, and, as *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, No. 7, created a sensation which has never perhaps been equalled. There was, to commence with, a monstrous list of all possible and impossible articles, chiefly threatened attacks upon the *Edinburgh*, then a violent attack upon their former defence of the *Edinburgh Reviewer's* onslaught upon Burns and Wordsworth; but the great feature in No. 7 (No. 1 in reality of *Blackwood*) was the "Translation from an Ancient Caldee Manuscript," in which the circumstances of the late feud, and Constable's endeavours to repair the fortunes of his old magazine, and the resuscitation of "Maga"—the birth, that is, of the genuine "Maga"—are thrown into an allegorical burlesque.

"The two beasts (the two late editors), the lamb and the bear, came unto the man who was clothed in plain apparel, and stood in the door of his house; and his name was as if it had been the colour of ebony (*Blackwood*), and his number was the number of a maiden when the days of her virginity have expired (*No. 17, Prince's Street*), ... and they said unto him, Give us of thy wealth, that we may eat and live, and thou shalt enjoy the fruits of our labour for a time, times or half a time.

"And he answered and said unto them, What will ye unto me whereunto I may employ you?

"And they proffered unto him a Book, and they said unto him, Take thou this, and give us a piece of money, that we may eat and drink and our souls may live.

"And we will put words into thy Book that shall astonish the children of thy people. And it shall be a light unto thy feet and a lamp unto thy path; it shall also bring bread to thy household, and a portion to thy maidens.

"And the man hearkened unto their voice, and he took their Book, and he gave them a piece of money, and they went away rejoicing in heart. And I heard a great noise, as if it had been the noise of many chariots, and of horsemen prancing upon their horses.

"But after many days they put no words in the Book, and the man was astonied, and waxed wroth, and said unto them, What is this that ye have done unto me, and how shall I answer those to whom I am engaged? And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

"And the man wist not what for to do; and he called together the friends of his youth, and all those whose heart was as his heart, and he entreated them, and they put words into the Book; and it went abroad, and all the world wondered after the Book, and after the two beasts that had put such amazing words into the Book.

"Then the man who was crafty in counsel and cunning in all manner of work (*Constable*), when this man saw the Book, and beheld the things which were in the Book, he was troubled in spirit and much cast

down.

"And he hated the Book and the two beasts that put words into the Book, for he judged according to the reports of men; nevertheless, the man was crafty in counsel, and more cunning than his fellows.

"And he said unto the two beasts, Come ye and put your trust under the shadow of my wings, and we will destroy the man whose name is as ebony and his Book.

"And the two beasts gave ear unto him, and they came over to him, and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth....

"Then was the man whose name is as ebony 'sore dismayed,' and appealed to the great magician who dwelleth by the old fastness hard by the river Jordan which is by the Border (*to Walter Scott*), and the magician opened his mouth and said, Lo! my heart wisheth thy good, and let the thing prosper which is in thy hands to do it.

"But thou seest that my hands are full of working, and my labour is great. For, lo! I have to feed all the people of my land, and none knoweth whence his food cometh, but each man openeth his mouth and my hand filleth it with pleasant things. (*This is more than a shrewd guess of the authorship of the Waverley Novels.*)

"Moreover, thine adversary also is of my familiars (*Constable, his publisher*).

"Yet be thou silent, peradventure will I help thee some little."

Chapter II. shows us Blackwood gazing despondently from his inner chamber, when a veiled figure appears, who

"Gave unto the man in plain apparel a tablet containing the names of those upon whom he should call; and when he called they came, and whomsoever he asked he came....

"And the first which came was after the likeness of the beautiful leopard, from the valley of the palm-trees, whose going forth was comely as the greyhound, and his eyes like the lightning of fiery flame (*Professor Wilson, author of the 'Isle of Palms.'*)...

"There came also from a far country, the scorpion which delighteth to sting the faces of men, that he might sting sorely the countenance of the man which is crafty, and of the two beasts (*Lockhart*).

"Also the great wild boar from the forest of Lebanon, and he roused up his spirit; and I saw him whetting his dreadful tusks for the battle" (*James Hogg*).

Then come Dr. Macrie, Sir William Hamilton, Arthur Mower, "and the hyæna that escheweth the light, and cometh forth at eventide to raise up and gnaw the bones of the dead, and it is as a riddle unto a vain man (*Riddell, the legal antiquarian*).

"And the beagle and the slowhound after their kind, and all the beasts of the field, more than could be numbered, they were so many."

In Chapter III., Constable finds that the "bear" and the "lamb" are unprofitable servants, and he, too, calls for aid, but Jeffrey—"the familiar spirit unto whom he had sold himself"—Leslie, and Playfair—contributors to the *Edinburgh*—refuse to come. In Chapter IV., Constable does get aid from Macney Napier, and others.

"And when I saw them all gathered together, I said unto myself, Of a truth the man which is crafty hath many in his host, yet, think I, that scarcely will these be found sufficient against them which are in the gates of the man who is clothed in plain apparel....

"Verily the man which is crafty shall be defeated, and there shall not escape one to tell of his overthrow.

"And while I was yet speaking, the hosts drew near, and the city was moved; and my spirit failed within me, and I was sore afraid, and I turned to escape away.

"And he that was like unto the messenger of a king, said unto me, Cry: and I said, What shall I cry? for the day of vengeance is come upon all those that ruled the nation with a rod of iron.

"And I fled into an inner chamber to hide myself, and I heard a great tumult, but I wist not what it was."

It is very hard for us now to duly appreciate the crushing effect of this Caldee manuscript.

It is certainly humorous, after a fashion now so prevalent in America, and undoubtedly witty.

Among the Edinburgh people of that time, when every man knew his neighbour, the effect was absolutely prodigious. A yell of despairing pain arose from one portion of the Whig party, who, if they had no administrative power in their hands, had hitherto held a patent of all literary ability; and from the other portion came an equally discordant cry, which eventually culminated in a fierce accusation of blasphemy and irreligion. Perhaps, however, the

strongest test we can apply to the power of this galling squib is the fact that every title bestowed in its pages has "stuck" to the individual against whom it was directed.

Blackwood was alarmed at the commotion he had caused, withdrew the obnoxious article from the second edition, suppressed it in what he could of the first, and in the second number inserted the following announcement:—"The editor has learnt with regret that an article in the first edition of last number, which was intended merely as a *jeu d'esprit*, has been construed so as to give offence to individuals justly entitled to respect and regard; he has, on that account, withdrawn it in the second edition, and can only add that, if what has happened could have been anticipated, the article in question certainly never would have appeared." It was, however, too late, war had been declared to the knife, and Blackwood was nothing loath to continue the struggle.

"The conception of the Caldee MS.," says Wilson's son-in-law, Professor Ferrier, "and the first thirty-seven verses of Chapter I., are to be ascribed to the Ettrick Shepherd; the rest of the composition falls to be divided between Professor Wilson and Mr. Lockhart, in proportions which cannot now be determined." Again, Mrs. Gordon tells us that this audacious squib was composed in her grandmother's house, 23, Queen Street, where Wilson lived, "amid such shouts of laughter as made the ladies in the room above send to inquire and wonder what the gentlemen below were about;" and yet she adds, as if to protect her father from suspicion of a share in it, that she "cannot trace to her father's hand any instance of unmanly attack, or one shade of real

malignity." Very probably not; but at the same time the fun of the squib is decidedly in Wilson's favourite manner. "An old contributor to *Blackwood*," who, in 1860, furnished a most interesting and full account of Maga and Blackwoodiana to the columns of the *Bookseller*, asserts, in reference to Hogg's claim, "on the best authority (that of the man who did write it), that there is no foundation whatever for any such pretext. The hare was started by Wilson at one of those *symposia* which preceded and perhaps suggested the *Noctes*. The idea was caught up with avidity by Hogg, and some half-dozen verses were suggested by him on the ensuing day; but we are, we believe, correct in affirming that no part of his *ébauche* appeared in the original or any other draft of the article." It is to be wished that this writer, whose article evidently exhibits personal knowledge, and, apart from a running attack upon Hogg, due impartiality, had, in putting forward a new version of the story, in contradiction to those already given, been enabled to give us the name of the writer, apparently, from the wording of the context, a new claimant.

Not only were Blackwood's "enemies" discomforted, but even his friends were sore dismayed. The first number of *Blackwood* bore the imprint of John Murray, but the "Caldee MS." caused him to withdraw his name, but after passing through the hands of three different London agents, the sixth again appeared under his countenance. This number, however, contained some unpalatable strictures on Gifford and the *Quarterly Reviewers*, and the Albemarle Street patronage was again withdrawn, only to be renewed in the eleventh number; but by the time it reached the seventeenth he washed his hands of it entirely, and in future it appeared

without the ornamental appendage of any London bookseller's name; the agency, distinctly one of sale only, was given to Cadell and Davies, who found it profitable enough to occupy the greater part of their attention. Cadell, naturally as nervous as Murray of giving, or being in any way instrumental in giving, offence, kept a stereotyped reply in readiness for any angry victim who rushed into his shop for redress —"I know nothing of the contents of the magazine; I am merely the carrier of a certain portion of its circulation to its English readers."

From the commencement of the new series—from the foundation that is of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*—Blackwood's fortunes and even the story of his life are inextricably bound up in the progress of the periodical; for he did not again, once he had got rid of Pringle and Cleghorne, entrust its charge and conduct to the care of any editor. For a long time Wilson was supposed to occupy the editorial chair. This supposition is treated in a letter, printed by his daughter: "Of *Blackwood* I am not the editor, although I believe I very generally got both the credit and discredit of being Christopher North. I am one of the chief writers, perhaps the chief writer, but never received one shilling from the proprietor, except for my own compositions. Being generally on the spot, I am always willing to give him my advice, and to supply such articles as are most wanted, when I have leisure." "From an early period of its progress," says Lockhart, speaking of Blackwood and the magazine, "it engrossed a very large share of his time; and though he scarcely ever wrote for its pages himself (three articles, we believe, he did contribute), the general management and arrangement of it, with the very extensive literary correspondence which this involved, and the

constant superintendence of the press, would have been more than enough to occupy entirely any man but one of his first-rate energies."

Before we follow up the chronicle of the life of *Blackwood* and its proprietor, it will be necessary to take a retrospective glance at the causes which rendered it possible to convert the snug, orthodox, and more than slightly Whiggish *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* into the slashing, defiant, jovial, dare-devil of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. This change was chiefly due to the influence of two men, Wilson and Lockhart, who, together with Hogg, had, under the old régime, contributed all there was of wit and sparkle. With these three writers, and the promise of further support, Blackwood had changed his mind as to putting his ill-fated periodical to the untimely end he had announced; and we have seen something, and shall see more, as to how far this determination was justified by success. In the meantime, it is essential to know a little of these two men, to whom primarily all the success was due.

John Wilson, the great Tory champion, was descended, not from a county family, but from a wealthy Paisley manufacturer; and, after taking all possible prizes at Glasgow University, went to conquer fresh worlds at Oxford, where he not only won the Newdigate prize of £50 by one of the best prize poems extant, in fifty lines, but excelled in all sports, to which a magnificent frame, a temper universally good, a wild exuberance of animal spirits, and a thirsty love of adventure could contribute.

Strange tales are told of his Oxford escapades; of recess rambles with strolling players; of wanderings, when smitten by the charms of a gipsy-girl, for weeks together with her tribe; of sojournings as a

waiter at a country inn, to be close to one of the fair waitresses.

However, his dreams of adventure were surrendered only after having planned an expedition to Timbuctoo, and he purchased an estate at Windermere, to be near the Lake school of poets, with whom he soon threw in his fortune. After the publication of the "Isle of Palms," and the "City of the Plague," he joined the Scotch Bar, and in the Parliament House struck up an acquaintance with another briefless barrister—Lockhart, seven years younger than himself.

John Gibbon Lockhart was also educated at Glasgow University, where gaining the "Snell" foundation, he was sent, at sixteen, to Balliol; after taking a first-class degree he travelled on the Continent, returning only when it was necessary to enter at Edinburgh as an advocate. Silent in private life, he found he could not speak at all in public; and many years afterwards, when making a speech at a farewell dinner, given in honour of his departure to undertake the editorship of the *Quarterly*, he broke down, as usual, and stuttered, "Gentlemen, you know I can't make a speech; if I could, we shouldn't be here."

Briefless both, and both endowed with strong literary tastes, they became sworn friends, though Wilson, with his splendid physique, his loose-flowing yellow hair, his deep-blue eyes, his glowing imagination, his eloquent tongue, and his defiance of all precedent, was as opposite a being as well could be imagined to Lockhart, who, to borrow Wilson's own words, had "an e'e like an eagle's, and a sort of lauch about the screwed-up mouth o' him that fules ca'd nae canny, for they couldna tholl the meaning

o't; and either set dumb-foundered, or pretended to be engaged to sooper, and slunk out o' the room."

With two such men as these it was little wonder that Blackwood resolved to continue the battle. The weapon, however, which had been so successfully used in the onslaught upon the *Edinburgh Review* became in the hands of young writers flushed with victory, instruments of aggression against those who had never offended; and, as it happened that the writers who were most personal in their attacks upon friend and foe alike were also the cleverest and most brilliant, Blackwood's position became one of difficulty. Lockhart "who stung the faces of men"—and sometimes their hearts—cared little as to who his shafts were directed against so long as they were sharp and biting. Cameleon-like he appeared in a thousand different forms. Now as the "veiled editor" himself, now the Dr. Morris of "Peter's Letters," and now as Baron Lauerwinkel, stabbing his contemporaries under the guise of a German commentator. Against all the members of the "Cockney School," a personal invective was habitually employed by him, at which in these calmer days of drier criticism we can only stand aghast. He says of Leigh Hunt, "The very concubine of so impure a wretch would be to be pitied; but, alas, for the wife of such a husband!"—and so forth.

In the February number of *Maga* a new contributor, Billy Maginn, made his first bow to the public as Mr. Ensign O'Doherty. Maginn was at this time a rollicking young Irishman of marvellous classical and literary acquirements, who at four-and-twenty had achieved the difficult honour of taking a degree of Doctor of Laws at Dublin, never before earned by one so young. He had a wonderful gift of

improvising in either verse or prose, and his talents were so versatile, his reading, though desultory, so universal, that he could immediately treat any subject, no matter what, in a sparkling and dashing manner. When, however, under the influence of liquor, he was perfectly unmanageable; and his writings bore every stamp of his own character. One of his first squibs in *Blackwood* was a Latin version of "Chevy-chase," which, in a foot-note expressed more than a doubt as to the Hebraical knowledge of Professor Leslie—an Edinburgh Reviewer who had recently been appointed to the University Chair of Philosophy. The enraged professor summoned the aid of the law. Blackwood accepted the challenge and inserted another article by Maginn, which stated that the professor "did not even know the alphabet of the tongue which he had the imprudence to pretend to criticise," and charged him, in addition, of stealing his pet theories respecting heat, from an old volume of the "Philosophical Transactions." The damages awarded amounted to £100, but as all the legal talent in Edinburgh was engaged in what was regarded as a party trial, the costs were unusually heavy. Nothing scared, however, Blackwood welcomed the writer to Edinburgh when he chose to cast off his incognita.

The magazine was thriving now, and circulated throughout the kingdom. Blackwood, busy as he was with its management, found time to push his general publishing business steadily forward. The issue of Brewster's "Edinburgh Encyclopædia" was continued, and Lockhart's talents were utilized beyond the pale of *Maga*. In 1818 Schlegel's "History of Literature," translated by Lockhart, was published; and in 1819 appeared Lockhart's "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, by Dr. Peter Morris"—a series of sketches of all

things Scotch, from which we extract an account of Blackwood and his shop:—

"First there is as usual a spacious place set apart for retail business, and a numerous detachment of young clerks and apprentices, to whose management this important department of the concern is entrusted. Then you have an elegant oval saloon, lighted from the roof, where various groups of loungers and literary dilettanti are engaged in looking at, or criticising among themselves, the publications just arrived by that day's coach from town. In such critical colloquies, the voice of the bookseller himself may ever and anon be heard mingling the broad and unadulterated notes of its Auld Reekie's music; for, unless occupied in the recesses of the premises with some other business, it is here that he has his usual station. He is a nimble, active-looking man of middle age, and moves from one corner to another with great alacrity, and apparently under the influence of high animal spirits. His complexion is very sanguinous, but nothing can be more intelligent, keen, and sagacious than the expression of the physiognomy; above all the gray eyes and eye-brows, as full of locomotion as those of Catalani's. The remarks he makes are in general extremely acute—much more so indeed than any other member of the trade I ever heard speak upon such topics. The shrewdness and decision of the man can, however, stand in need of no testimony beyond what his own conduct has afforded—above all in the establishment of his magazine (the conception of which I am assured was entirely his own)—and the subsequent energy with which he has supported it through every variety of good and evil fortune. It would be unfair to lay upon his shoulders any portion of the blame which any part of his book may

have deserved; but it is impossible to deny that he is well entitled to whatever merit may be supposed to be due to the erection of a work founded in the main upon good principles, both political and religious, in a city where a work upon such principles must have been more wanted, and, at the same time, more difficult than in any other with which I am acquainted."

On leaving the shop, Dr. Peter is taken to dine at "a house in the immediate neighbourhood, frequently alluded to in the magazine as the great haunt of his wits." This was Ambrose's, mentioned in the "Caldee MS."—"as thou lookest to the road of Gabriel and the land of *Ambrose*." At this favourite tavern, at the *noctes cœnæque deum*, was foreshadowed what was destined to be by far the most interesting portion of the earlier series of *Blackwood*.

The first trace we can find in the magazine of these famous *réunions* is in the number for August, 1819, where a work on military matter is reviewed by two different critics while enjoying their evening glasses at Ambrose's. This was followed up next month by a paper which occupied the whole of the number, entitled "Christopher in the Tent"—a sketch, suppositious, of course, of a country expedition of the whole staff—full of rollicking humour and uproarious fun, with etchings by Lockhart and jokes by all.

In the following year, 1820, the first of Blackwood's really classic novels appeared in the magazine. This was the "Ayrshire Legatees," by John Galt; and the editor, quick to perceive talent and eager to retain it, published in rapid succession a series of tales and sketches by the modern Smollet.

This year, too, was an important one for both of the chief contributors. Lockhart, whose rising merits had long since attracted the attention of Scott, married the "Great Magician's favourite daughter;" and Wilson, to the terror of half Edinburgh, became a candidate for the chair of Moral Philosophy at the University. Curious reports were spread of half true tales of youthful adventure, of bull-hunts by the shores of Windermere; of cock-fights in his own drawing-room; of a thousand escapades of one kind or another; and these were capped by a rumour that he was not very sound in either religion or morals; and even Tory counsellors shrunk from supporting a man who was said to be a fast liver and a free thinker. The Whigs started an excellent rival, Sir William Hamilton, and the contest was very keen. "I wad like to gie ye ma vote, Mr. Wulson," said an Edinburgh magistrate, "but I'm feared. They say ye dunna expect to be saved by grace." "I don't know much about that, baillie; but if I am not saved by grace I am sure my works won't save me." "That'll do, that'll do; I'll gie you my vote." Others were of a like mind, for Wilson was a man whom to know was to love, and the election was secured.

Immediately after the election Wilson returned to Elleray to recruit; and here an event happened which not only shows his natural impetuosity, but which might have been of very serious consequence, and, as a version of the story has recently appeared in "Barham's Life," it may not be altogether out of place to give the correct version here.

Lord M——r and three Oxford friends, one of whom had just been ordained, had started in their own coach upon a rollicking tour homewards; their journey, even in those free-and-easy times, was

marked by a blackguardism of conduct almost unparalleled.

At York they halted for a few days—few because the inhabitants would stand their presence no longer, and, after paying £150 for their hotel bills, and for the Vandalism they had committed in the town, they drove on to Windermere, and put up at the Ferry Hotel. Here they stayed for nearly four days, disporting themselves like Yahoos. Wilson, as is well known, was "Admiral of the Windermere Fleet," and chanced, while they were in the neighbourhood, to hold a regatta, giving his friends a tea at Ullock's Hotel, Bowness, when the amusements of the day were over.

Hither the travelling adventurers came by water; at the landing stage, however, one of the number, seeing a fisherman washing his nets in the lake, crept behind him, and with a shove and a hoarse laugh sent him into the water. Westmoreland blood is not easily cooled, and the peasant, seizing his attacker, ducked him within an inch of his life. Nothing daunted the other three proceeded to the hotel, and entered a room where tea was laid out for a large party; to knock the tray over, to pull the cloth off, to dance upon the tea-pot till it was flattened, and the crockery till it was smashed into a thousand smithereens, was, of course, only the work of an instant. Hearing the clatter, Mrs. Wilson hurried downstairs, and Lord M——r, mistaking her for the landlady, seized her by the neck, and tried to ravish a kiss. At this critical moment the Professor entered —one blow "from the shoulder" laid the noble lord at his feet; then, like a genuine old heathen warrior, placing one foot upon the neck of the prostrate wretch—"if you other two scoundrels are not out of

this room in an instant, I'll squeeze the man's breath out of his body." They heard—and fled. Wilson, in a fury of excitement, took boat to Belle Isle, and urged Mr. Curwen to act as his friend. Mr. Curwen represented that Lord M——r was utterly beneath contempt—that no professor of moral philosophy had ever been engaged in a cause of honour; that all his friends had been representing him as a quiet, orderly man—in fact, brought forward a thousand arguments which might have been of the utmost weight to a reasonable being—but not just at present to Wilson; he flung out of the room, crossed the lake, and sought a gallant naval officer, Captain Br——, who, a true Sir Lucius O'Trigger, said the matter was in good hands, and looked up his pistols. They adjourned to Elleray to wait the expected challenge: but on the evening of the following day, getting tired of inaction, they set out on a drive to see why the storm did not commence. Further search was endless. Lord M——r and his friends had taken to their coach and fled; they could not, however, get their horses out of the stables until they had paid an hotel bill of £120 and £20 to the landlord of Ullock's Hotel for damages. Thus the affair ended happily, and Wilson was able to return peaceably to Edinburgh to fulfil his new duties.

Few men ever undertook so important a charge with so little preparation. "But there was," says one who listened to him, "a genius in Wilson; there was grandeur in his conceptions, and true nobility in the tone and spirit of his lectures. I can compare them to nothing save the braying of the trumpet that sent a body of high-bred cavalry against the foe. 'Charge! and charge home!' Wilson's action upon the better and more pure-minded of his pupils was pre-eminently beneficial. His lectures deeply influenced

their characters for humanity, for unselfishness, for high and honourable resolve to fight the battle of life; like the old Danish hero 'to dare nobly, to will strongly, and never to falter in the path of duty.' Such was Wilson's creed; and, till 1850, when he was found stricken down in his private room, ten minutes after the class hour, he astonished and delighted all that was intellectual in Edinburgh by these, aptly termed, 'volcanic lectures on ethics.'"

Much work, however, had to be gone through before that date; his private fortune had been lost some years back by the failure of a house of business, and he was one of those men whom, the more work is thrown on them the more they are able to go through with.

In 1822 appeared the first specimen of his power as a novelist in the "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," which went rapidly through edition after edition; and in the March of this year appeared also the first number of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*—a curt dialogue between the editor and Ensign O'Doherty; it was not for seventeen numbers that Wilson, almost sorry, commenced that wonderful series that became one of the literary wonders of the day; and for thirteen years as Christopher North he continued to delight the world, and it is as Christopher North, in his shooting-jacket, with gun or fishing-rod, by the lochs or by the moors, amid the scenery which he has so marvellously limned, and the emotions to which he has given utterance, that he will be remembered to all time.

In 1824 we see that Carlyle gets his first pleasant encouragement in *Maga*, and Moir's most famous production, the "Autobiography of Mansie Wauch," appears. Moir—a young surgeon of only nineteen

when he first appeared in the pages of the original *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*—had at once attracted the attention of William Blackwood—"a man," says Moir's biographer, "of rare sagacity, courage, and persevering energy." As "Delta," in the pages of *Maga*, the popularity of Moir's softer and sweeter pieces was very great; and when "Mansie" appeared, "there were districts," says Aird again, "where country clubs, waiting impatiently for the magazine, met monthly as soon as it was issued, and had 'Mansie' read aloud by one of their number, amid explosions of congregated laughter."

Lockhart, too, had since his marriage been wielding his pen as freely as ever. "Valerius" and "Adam Blair" had both been successful ventures for Blackwood; and were succeeded in 1822 by the "Spanish Ballads," which have so much of the true ring of original poetry about them, that Lockhart's friends always regretted that he did not devote his time more exclusively to the composition of some original poetical work. In 1825 the editorship of the *Quarterly* was offered him, and Blackwood lost one of his earliest and strongest supporters. Shortly after this the other satirical spirit of the periodical—Billy Maginn—also moved southward.

But Blackwood was too firmly established now to dread the loss of any single contributor save one. The famous *Noctes* were, in reality, only just commencing; and there it is that the character of the Ettrick Shepherd most shines—vicariously, however, for his popularity is chiefly due to the piquancy and vitality with which the genius of Wilson endowed him. Whatever is best in the national genius of Scotland, in humour, poetry, imagination, and fervour, are poured forth in the quaint and broad

language of the Shepherd. But enough of the *Noctes*; are they not still familiar volumes upon the tables of all who read?

This year (1826), in which Blackwood was at the height of his success, was fatal, as we have before seen, to Constable; and with his failure disappeared for ever that rival to *Maga*, Constable's *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*.

In being thus minute in the history of the magazine, we can scarcely be said to be neglecting the history of its proprietor, for their careers were inextricably bound up together, and Blackwood looked upon it as a father might upon a darling son. In the exulting vanity of his success, he was induced, about 1825, to print for private circulation, an alphabetical list of contributors, and sent Wilson a proof, who, by way of remonstrance, dashed in the names of such celebrities as Omai the Otaheitan, and Pius VII., with the names of some of the most egregious fools and mountebanks he had ever met with, and returned it to the printer, who duly furnished Blackwood with a revise; and the absurd incongruity of the names showed him the incautious impropriety of which he had been guilty. Two impressions only were reserved, one for Blackwood and one for the professor.

As an editor, the punctuality and alacrity with which he acknowledged the communications of his contributors was wonderful; "and," says the "Old Contributor," "along with the mail coach copy of the magazine, or by an early post after its publication, came a letter to each contributor, full of shrewd hints for his future guidance, and often, not merely suggesting the subject for a future paper, but indicating with delicate hesitation the mode in which

he fancied it might be discussed with the best advantage.... The 'pudding' was invariably associated with praise. At the head or foot of the welcome missive was a cheque for your article, the amount of which was not carved and patted like a pound of butter, into exact weight, but measured with no penurious hand.... He hated a cockney as Johnson hated a Scotsman, and considered all writers on this side the border, who did not contribute to *Maga*, as falling within this category."

In 1827, Blackwood brought out two books, which were alike only in achieving, each of them, a vast popularity. One was "The Youth and Manhood of Cyril Thornton," by Captain Hamilton, and the other "The Course of Time," by Pollok, a Scottish, if not a British, classic. The *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* was continued till its final completion in eighteen quarto volumes, and not the least important of his publishing successes was the reproduction of the chief distinct works of Wilson, Lockhart, Hogg, Moir, Galt, and other writers connected with the magazine. He also continued to the close of his career, to carry on an extensive trade in retail bookselling.

In addition to these heavy labours, he still found opportunity during some of the best years of his life to take a prominent part in the affairs of the city of Edinburgh, for which he was twice a magistrate, "and in that capacity," says Lockhart, "distinguished himself by an intrepid zeal in the reform of burgh management, singularly in contrast with his avowed sentiments respecting constitutional reform." Here he often exhibited in the conduct of debate and the management of less vigorous minds, a very rare degree of tact and sagacity.

To return to the magazine. After Lockhart and

Maginn left Edinburgh, the bitterly personal tone by which it had been so frequently disfigured, was almost entirely dropped; and this negative fact, aided by the positive one of the great popularity of the *Noctes*, raised the circulation immensely.

In 1826, an early Elleray friend of Wilson's, De Quincey, "the opium-eater," began to discourse of things German in the pages of *Maga*; and in 1830, the "Diary of a Late Physician" was commenced. This, one of the most successful works of modern fiction, had, Warren tells us, "been offered successively to the conductors of three leading magazines in London, and rejected as 'unsuitable for their pages,' and 'not likely to interest the public.'... I have this morning been referring to nearly fifty letters which he (Blackwood) wrote to me during the publication of the first fifteen chapters of his 'Diary.' The perusal of them occasioned me lively emotion. All of them evidence the remarkable tact and energy with which he conducted his magazine.... He was a man of strong intellect, of great personal sagacity, of unrivalled energy and industry, of high and inflexible honour in every transaction, great or small, that I ever heard of his being concerned in."

Contemporary with the publication of the "Diary," was that of the successful books "Tom Cringle's Log" and "Sir Frizzle Pumpkin's Nights at Mess," the first by Michael Scott, and the second by the Reverend Mr. White. In May, 1832, appeared Wilson's review of Mr. Tennyson's first volume; in which the affectations of Mr. Tennyson's earlier writings were ridiculed, but his more worthy pieces were praised in no niggardly terms. At the moment Mr. Tennyson was irritated, but his anger soon evaporated in some not very pungent lines to "Rusty,

Crusty Christopher," which he has long since seen fit to suppress; and, eventually, he exhibited a due acknowledgment of the truth of Wilson's criticism, by removing several pieces and altering others. "Stoddart and Aytoun," writes Wilson in this same review, "he of the 'Death Wake' and he of 'Poland,' are graciously regarded by old Christopher; and their volume—presentation copies—have been placed among the essays of those gifted youths, of whom, in riper years, much may be confidently predicted of fair and good"—a sentence worth quoting, when it is remembered that Aytoun afterwards married Wilson's daughter, and in a few years occupied his position in the pages of *Maga* itself.

In 1833, Blackwood was still full of schemes and enterprises; he commenced the publication of Alison's "History of Europe." Only the first two volumes were published, and then not altogether successfully, when Blackwood was stricken down by a mortal disease, a tumour in the groin, which, in a weary illness of four months, exhausted his physical energies, but left his temper calm and unruffled, and his intellect vigorous to the last. He was attended by Moir—the sweet-toned "Delta" of his magazine—who had another dying patient scarce a hundred yards off. This was Galt, who had been personally estranged from Blackwood by rough advice and strictures as to one of his stories. Now, however, that they lay dying so near each to each, the old friendliness returned, and Moir bore pleasant messages and hopeful wishes from one bedside to another. They never met again. Galt lingered on for years, but Blackwood died on the 10th of September, 1834, in the fifty-seventh year of his age.

We have already given his character as described

by those who knew him best, and it were idle to add any weaker testimony.

He left a widow and a family of seven sons and two daughters, many of them very young; and the management of the business devolved upon the two elder, Robert and Alexander, who had for some years been associated with their father.

Until 1845, these gentlemen were at the head of the flourishing business, and with such a start they could not fail to succeed. The magazine, in spite of all rivals, continued to be as great a favourite as ever, though in a year or so after the death of the elder Blackwood, Wilson withdrew almost entirely from its pages, and his position was eventually occupied by his son-in-law, Professor Aytoun. Many new contributors, without distinction of sect or party, were added to the staff; and even Douglas Jerrold and Walter Savage Landor—ultra-radicals, both—were made free of its pages. John Sterling, "our new contributor," as Wilson fondly called him, fully retained the old reputation for deliciously sparkling poems and essays; and Lord Lytton, in the "Poems and Ballads of Schiller," kept alive the cosmopolitan spirit of poetry inaugurated by Lockhart. In 1845, Alexander Blackwood died, and was shortly afterwards followed by his brother, when John, the third son, the present proprietor of the business and the present editor of *Blackwood*, who was born in 1818, succeeded. So popular had *Maga* become in the colonies, and more especially in the United States, that a reprint of it was regularly published there every month. Mr. John Blackwood took counsel with the American lawyers, obtained an American contributor, and then threatened the Yankee publisher with all the terrors of the law, if

the number were pirated as usual—a successful step, for ever since that date a tribute tithe has been regularly paid for the right of republication. A branch house was started in London; the firm was also increased by the return from India of William Blackwood, who was a major in the Indian army.

In 1848 Lord Lytton commenced the "Caxtons," and novel after novel from his pen appeared in *Maga* to be anonymously successful even to the day of his death. For a period of twenty-five years, some of the finest novels and life-pictures in the language have made their first way to public favour through the medium of the magazine; and Mrs. Oliphant and George Eliot owed their first encouragement to the discernment of Mr. John Blackwood. That *Maga* is still *facile princeps* of the monthly literature is evident enough even from a bare mention of latest ventures, from the talent of "Earl's Dene" and the wit of the "Battle of Dorking."

Alison's "History of Europe" very soon proved its worth in the eyes of the public; and among other more recent successes of the house we may mention the novels of George Eliot, particularly "Middlemarsh," which came out in an altogether novel form.

As we shall not have another chance of returning to modern magazine literature, we may not inappropriately close the chapter with a short account of one or two of the most successful of the high-class publications.

It was not to be expected that the marvellous success of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* would be allowed to pass unchallenged. The honour as well as the fortunes of the Southron publishers forbade it. In 1820, the *London Magazine*, a name borrowed from

an old and defunct periodical, was established by Baldwin, Craddock, and Joy, under the editorship of John Scott, formerly of the *Champion* newspaper. Many men of talent joined the staff, but Scott's old colleague, Wainwright, afterwards infamous as the insurance murderer, aided and abetted his chief in a series of very offensive personal articles. In two or three of them a fierce attack was made upon Sir Walter Scott, as being a mere pretender to the authorship of the Waverley Novels (which, as Scott was doing his utmost to hide his light under a bushel, was scarcely called for); and in addition to this the writers made an onslaught on all who were supposed to be connected with Blackwood or his magazine. Lockhart, with all the sensitiveness of your true satirist, called immediately for an apology, and was evaded by a demand that he should first disavow his connection with Blackwood. This was out of the question, and Mr. Christie, to whom Lockhart had entrusted negotiations, feeling that Scott was shuffling, and that he himself was being trifled with, let drop some expressions on his own account calculated to give offence. A meeting was arranged. Christie fired down the field, but Scott, not perceiving this, aimed deliberately at his opponent, but missed his mark. Christie, seeing his adversary again prepare to fire in his direction, did not a second time waste his powder, and the result was that Scott was mortally wounded.

Dreadful as was the catastrophe, and the sensation it made at the time, it tended to soften the asperities of the press, and was instrumental in bringing a better spirit to critical discussion.

After Mr. Scott's death, the proprietorship of the *London Magazine* was transferred to Taylor and

Hessay, the poetical publishers. The first of these gentlemen was the original proclaimer of Francis as the author of the "Letters of Junius;" the second will ever be remembered for his kindliness to John Keats. Mindful of the success of Blackwood, they retained the editorship in their own hands, and, again like him, were most liberal in their payments—a pound a page for prose, and two pounds for verse, was the *honarium* of ordinary contributors; Charles Lamb receiving, very fitly, two or three times that amount. It is Charles Lamb's name that is now most intimately connected with the *London Magazine*, for here it was that the famous "Essays of Elia" first appeared. Among the other contributors we find many celebrated names; Hazlitt furnished all the articles upon the drama, Mr. Carlyle contributed the "Life and Writings of Schiller" to the last three volumes, and here De Quincey first published his "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," filled with the weirdest fancies and the loveliest word-pictures in our literature. Here, too, Tom Hood fleshed his maiden sword; and among the other writers we find the names of Keats, Landor, Hartley Coleridge, Barry Cornwall, and Bowring. Such an array of talent did not, however, avail, without steady editorial skill, to win a wide popularity, and in 1825 the publication was suspended.

We have seen that Maginn had accompanied Lockhart to the south. In 1827 the *Standard* newspaper was founded, and he was installed in the editorial chair, where for some seven or eight years he drew £500 a year. His unrivalled facility in dashing off slashing articles upon any subject, quickly raised his income to eighteen or nineteen hundred; but his ever-increasing habits of intemperance rendered regularity of work

impossible. Together with Lockhart and other writers, he planned a London monthly rival to *Blackwood*, and in 1829 an East India merchant of the name of Fraser was found willing to make the necessary advances, and *Fraser's Magazine* was started. An editor was kept to correct the proofs, and to go to prison, as occasion might require; but Maginn contributed a large proportion of the first three numbers, and was virtually the manager. Hogg, who, as Wilson said, had made a perfect stye of every magazine in the kingdom, was invited up to town. Its rollicking tone, untempered by any genuine humour, was wofully overdone, and smacked of the reeking laughter of the pothouse. Maginn, having no one to direct his shafts, attacked every one right and left, and selected a series of literary and political butts for continuous practice, among whom were Professor Wilson, Tom Campbell, and Lord Ellesmere, who were insulted in the most audacious manner; and language and criticism like this gave constant rise to cudgellings, law-suits, and duels. Maginn, however, had plenty of courage—was as reckless with his pistol as his pen. Captain Berkeley having called at the office, seen Fraser, and horsewhipped him for a libel, was challenged by the writer of it—Maginn—who, sobered down for the moment, stood his fire for three rounds with the utmost nonchalance. In spite of the humour of Thackeray and the philosophy of Carlyle, lately admitted to its pages, *Fraser's Magazine* was commercially not successful until Maginn and Hogg were banished from the staff. When, however, it got into better hands, and led a cleanlier life, an ample field was found for its circulation.

Thackeray, whom we mentioned above, was instrumental in effecting a thorough change in

periodical literature. When under his direction, the *Cornhill* was started, to give for a shilling all that had before been given for two shillings and sixpence, the bookselling world was incredulous of success, and the book-buying world scarcely hopeful. More than 100,000 copies of the first number were sold, and as soon as it was seen that a vastly wide-spread circulation is infinitely more valuable than a narrower sphere at a much higher rate, a crowd of other shilling magazines were produced, among which it is enough to mention *Temple Bar*, *London Society*, *Macmillan's*, *Belgravia*, and a score of others, some of which were doubtless successful, but many more or less ephemeral. One detrimental fact has of course arisen from such a multiplicity of organs; the available talent of the day, such as it is, cannot now be concentrated. The same curse haunts the theatre; at present one "star" is as much as the greediest can expect on one stage.



# *CHAMBERS, KNIGHT, AND CASSELL*:

## "LITERATURE FOR THE PEOPLE."

We have already seen, in our short sketches of the Bells, the Cookes, the Donaldsons, and the Constables, some endeavour—neither faint nor altogether unsuccessful, yet not more than a trial venture, for education was still a monopoly of rank and riches—to render books the property and the birthright of the people. In our present chapter, however, we come to a new phase in the history of bookselling. The schoolmaster, as Brougham said, was abroad; the repressive taxes on knowledge either were, or were about to be, removed; learning, or a smattering of learning, was within the reach of most. The battle of future progress was to be fought out with the pen, just as the triumphs of early civilization had been achieved with the lance and with the sword. The public writer henceforth was to occupy the preacher's pulpit, and his congregation, far above the limits of any St. Peter's or St. Paul's, was to be told only by millions. Books were to be no

longer the curious luxuries of the rich man's library, or the hoarded and hardly-earned treasures of the student's closet, but were to be fairly placed at the disposal of the many.

Talent certainly, if not genius, is only the product of the requirements of the time and place; and as soon, therefore, as cheap books were in real request, men thoroughly competent and thoroughly earnest came forward to supply the want—fighting bravely, with all the strong energy of their wills, to do the work that each had chosen, and yet each as certainly acted upon invisibly, insensibly, and inevitably, by the true, if word-worn, laws of supply and demand.

The means by which this end was to be attained were many, and the labourers in the new fields of cheap literature numerous; but in our present chapter, as elsewhere, we have selected the representative men and the typical means. The names of Chambers, Knight, and Cassell (the latter certainly in a less degree) are inextricably woven into the movement, of which at present we have only seen the commencement; and the plan by which the most expensive treasures of literature, the choicest garnerings of our knowledge, were placed at the disposal of the meagrest purse, was almost universally that of distribution into small weekly or monthly parts, at an infinitesimal cost—a method that may with justice be styled the people's intellectual savings bank; and it is to the early history of the people's intellectual savings bank that we now address ourselves.[18]

Robert Chambers was born at Peebles, on the banks of the Tweed, on 10th July, 1802, two years later than his brother William, with whom his whole

career is intimately connected. They were the sons of James Chambers, at one time a prosperous muslin weaver, employing some hundred looms. Their father is described as "a lover of books, a keen politician, and an open-hearted friend;" but having already been generous beyond his means to the poor French prisoners in Scotland, he was completely ruined by the introduction of machine-weaving looms, and was compelled to sell his modest patrimony, and remove with his family to Edinburgh, with only a few shillings in his pocket on which to start life afresh. But before this the young lads' education had commenced. At Peebles there were certainly no newspapers; but their old nurse sung ballads and told them legendary stories of the former exploits of the warriors of the country side; and then there was old Tam Fleck, a host in himself, who had struck out a wandering profession of his own, a "flichty chield," who went about with a translation of Josephus (Lestrange, 1720) from house to house. "Weel, Tam, what's the news the nicht?" would one of the neighbours say, as Tam entered with the ponderous volume under his arm. "Bad news, bad news," replied Tam. "Titus has begun to besiege Jerusalem—it's gaun to be a terrible business." At the little village school, too, William was introduced to Latin for the fee of five shillings a quarter, and Robert was well grounded by Mr. Gray in English for two shillings and twopence. Robert was a quiet, self-contained boy, unable from a painful weakness in his feet to join heartily in the usual games of his schoolfellows. "Books," he writes in the preface to his collected works, "not playthings, filled my hands in childhood. At twelve I was deep, not only in poetry and fiction, but in encyclopædias." Receiving his first education at the Burgh Grammar School, he

acquired afterwards, at the Edinburgh High School, under the tuition of Mr. Benjamin Mackay, the usual elements of a classical education, embracing, indeed, as much Latin as enabled him in after-life to read Horace with ease and pleasure.



**Dr. Robert Chambers.**

**1802–1871.**

After months of pence-scraping and book-hoarding, Robert succeeded in collecting a stock worth about forty shillings; and with nothing but these, his yearning for independence, and his determination to write books by-and-by, and at present to sell them, the young boy of sixteen opened a little shop or stall in Leith Street. His brother William, after serving an apprenticeship to a Mr. Sutherland, also started as a bookseller and printer in the immediate neighbourhood; and from this time forward—a time when most boys were cursing the master's ferule and the Latin syntax—they were both independent. Of this period Robert gives the following graphic and almost painfully accurate account in a letter to Hugh Miller, written in 1854:—

> "Your autobiography has set me a thinking of my own youthful days, which were like yours in point of hardship and humiliation, though different in many important circumstances. My being of the same age with you, to exactly a quarter of a year, brings the idea of a certain parity more forcibly upon me. The differences are as curious to me as the resemblances. Notwithstanding your wonderful success as a writer, I think my literary tendency must have been a deeper and more absorbing peculiarity than yours, seeing that I took to Latin and to books both keenly and exclusively, while you broke down in your classical course, and had fully as great a passion for rough sport and enterprise as for reading, that being again a passion of which I never had one particle. This has, however, resulted in making you, what I never was inclined to be, a close observer of external nature—an

immense advantage in your case. Still I think I could present against your hardy field observations by frith and fell, and cave and cliff, some striking analogies in the finding out and devouring of books, making my way, for instance, through a whole chestful of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," which I found in a lumber garret. I must also say that an unfortunate tenderness of feet, scarcely yet got over, had much to do in making me mainly a fireside student. As to domestic connections and conditions, mine being of the middle classes were superior to yours for the first twelve years. After that, my father being unfortunate in business, we were reduced to poverty, and came down to even humbler things than you experienced. I passed through some years of the direst hardship, not the least evil being a state of feeling quite unnatural in youth, a stern and burning defiance of a social world in which we were harshly and coldly treated by former friends, differing only in external respects from ourselves. In your life there is one crisis where I think your experiences must have been somewhat like mine; it is the brief period at Inverness. Some of your expressions there bring all my own early feelings again to life. A disparity between the internal consciousness of powers and accomplishments and the external ostensible aspect led in me to the very same wrong methods of setting myself forward as in you. There, of course, I meet you in warm sympathy. I have sometimes thought of describing my bitter painful youth to the world, as something in which it might read a lesson; but the retrospect is still too distressing. I screen it from the mental eye. The one grand fact it has impressed is the very small amount of brotherly assistance there is for the unfortunate in this world.... Till I proved that I

> could help myself, no friend came to me. Uncles, cousins, &c., in good positions in life—some of them stoops of kirks, by-the-by—not one offered, nor seemed inclined to give, the smallest assistance. The consequent defying, self-relying spirit in which, at sixteen, I set out as a bookseller with only my own small collection of books as a stock—not worth more than two pounds, I believe—led to my being quickly independent of all aid; but it has not been all a gain, for I am now sensible that my spirit of self-reliance too often manifested itself in an unsocial, unamiable light, while my recollections of 'honest poverty' may have made me too eager to attain and secure worldly prosperity."

This period of struggle, however, opened his heart in after-life to all who were battling in like circumstances, for those who knew him well say that "many young literary men owed much to his help, for he was ever ready with kindly counsel as well as in more solid assistance when needed." It is pleasant to think that his little ciphering book, still in existence (the handwriting of which is extremely neat, so neat indeed that the young penman was employed by the civic authorities to engross on vellum the address presented to George IV. on his visit to Edinburgh in 1822), containing his first year's account of profit and loss, shows a balance small, certainly, but amply sufficient for his modest wants, for their united daily household expenses did not exceed one shilling.

Once a bookseller, Robert speedily found opportunity to become an author, and he undertook the editorship of a small weekly periodical called the *Kaleidoscope*; while his brother William, in order to do all the manual work connected with it, taught

himself the art of printing, and with an old fount of type, and a clumsy wooden press, which he had purchased for three pounds, composed and worked off all the impressions; his own contributions, some of them poetical, "finding their way into the stick without the intervention of copy." Here he was often seen, "a slim, light-eyed boy in his shirt-sleeves, tugging away with desperate energy at his old creaking press." When his very small and imperfect fount was inadequate to the demand for larger letters, he would sit up, after his long day's labour for half the night, carving the requisite capitals out of a piece of wood with his penknife. This first venture was necessarily short-lived, and died in the January of the year 1822—at which date they both gave up their bookstalls and took regular shops.

Nothing daunted by the untimely fate of his first effort, Robert entered the field again, and from his connection with the Tweed, and with the assistance of friends from that quarter, who aided him in the identification of some of Scott's characters, he produced a book that seemed likely to be popular —"Illustrations of the Author of Waverley," consisting of descriptive sketches of the supposed originals of the great novelist. The book was a success, not so much from a pecuniary point of view, but as introducing the author to the kindly notice of several literary men, and gaining him the friendship of Scott, still the anonymous "Wizard of the North," who mentions him in his diary as "a clever young fellow, but spoils himself by too much haste."

In the following year, when he was still only twenty years of age, he produced the "Traditions of Edinburgh"—a book that is, of his many contributions to the social and antiquarian history of

his native land, still, perhaps, the most popular. Every type of it was set up, every sheet of it pulled at press, by his brother, and the first edition, dated 1823, presents a curious contrast to the handsome copy published in 1869. The *Traditions* was a book the immediate popularity of which raised the author in public esteem, though its value is greater still at the present day, when many of the interesting associations connected with scenes and places are rapidly changing their character, or have been swept away altogether. Others than Scott even then expressed their wonder "where the boy got all his information." In a sketch of Robert Chambers, by the son of one of his earliest friends, that appeared in *Lippincott's Magazine* for July, 1871, an amusingly frank letter is quoted, which shows that the young writer was already getting into the "swim" of authorship:—"You may depend upon a copy of the 'Traditions of Edinburgh,' and a review of them as soon as they are ready. I am busy just now in writing reviews of them myself, for the various works I can get them put into, being now come to a resolution that an author always undertakes his own business best, and is indeed the only person capable of doing his work justice. I stood too much upon punctilio in my maiden work, the 'Illustrations,' and left the review of it to fellows who knew nothing about the subject, at least had not yet thought of it half so much as I had, who was quite *au fait* with the whole matter."

From this period Robert Chambers' books were marketable productions, and publishers began to seek out the young author. On the occasion of the great fires in November, 1824, when hundreds of poor families were rendered destitute, having no money wherewith to aid the victims, he wrote an

account of the historical “Fires in Edinburgh,” and assigned the profits, which were considerable, to the fund collected for the benefit of the sufferers; and from this time books flowed from his pen in rapid succession. In 1825, he composed, for a bookseller, his “Popular Walks in Edinburgh,” partly the result of rambles in the nooks and corners of the quaint old city, in company with Sir Walter Scott. In 1826, he published his “Popular Rhymes of Scotland,” and then started on foot, as if to cure his ailment by pedestrianism, on a rambling journey through the country, and published the result of his explorations in his “Pictures of Scotland,” which passed through several editions, and is still a lively companion to the tourist. In this same year, 1827, he contributed to Constable’s *Miscellany* the five volumes containing his “Histories of the Scottish Rebellion”—of which, that concerning the affairs of 1845, while true to facts, had all the glowing charms of a romance—and a “Life of James I.,” in two volumes. Next appeared three volumes of “Scottish Ballads and Songs,” followed by a “Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen”—the four volumes being commenced in 1832 and concluded in 1835—one of the most trustworthy and most entertaining books of reference in existence. A supplementary and fifth volume was afterwards added by the Reverend Thomas Thomson. Besides writing these various works, and giving some attention to his ordinary business, he found time to act as editor of the *Edinburgh Advertiser*.

In 1829, Robert Chambers married Miss Anne Kirkwood, of Edinburgh, a lady of very congenial qualities and attainments, and whose musical accomplishments constantly supplied him—after his heavy daily labours—with the recreation essential to one so passionately fond of music.

William Chambers was toiling away busily in his little shop in the Broughton suburb—writing, printing, and selling books. After some minor efforts at authorship, he wrote the "Book of Scotland," giving an account of the legal constitution and customs of his native country. This was followed by the "Gazetteer of Scotland," written in conjunction with his brother, which, from the then scanty printed material at their disposal, must have cost them an immensity of labour.

In 1832 came the turning point of the cause of the two brothers. The struggle for parliamentary reform had awakened a necessity for the spread of education. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had already been doing good service to the cause, with Lord Brougham as its president, and Charles Knight as its manager. And on the 4th of February, 1832, appeared the first number of Chambers' *Edinburgh Journal*. Mr. William Chambers has himself, in a letter to the editor of the *Athenæum* (April 1st, 1871), replied to a statement in a former number, that upon seeing a copy of the prospectus of the *Penny Magazine*, he put forward several suggestions to one of the chief promoters, and that his self-love being wounded by receiving no reply to his letter, he determined to realize his unappreciated ideas himself. The following, in his own letter, is, of course, the accurate history of the origin of the periodical.

"In the beginning of January, 1832, I conceived the idea of a cheap weekly periodical devoted to wholesome popular instruction, blended with original amusing matter, without any knowledge whatever of the prospectus of the *Penny Magazine*, or even hearing that such a thing was in contemplation.

My periodical was to be entitled Chambers' *Edinburgh Journal*, and the first number was to appear on the 4th of February. In compliment to Lord Brougham as an educationist, I forwarded to him a copy of my prospectus, with a note explaining the nature of my attempt to aid as far as I was able in the great cause with which his name was identified. To this communication I received no acknowledgment, but no self-love was wounded. My work was successful, and I was too busy to give any consideration as to what his lordship thought of it, if he thought of it at all. The first time I heard of the projected *Penny Magazine* was about a month after the *Journal* was set on foot and in general circulation."

The success of the new *Journal* was unprecedented; it immediately obtained a circulation of 50,000, and by 1845, when the folio, after a trial of the quarto, was exchanged for the octavo form, 90,000 copies were required to supply the demand. Started six weeks before the *Penny Magazine*, it is still the most successful and the most instructive of the cheap hebdomadal periodicals. At the very first flush of success, Robert Chambers' assistance was called in as editor, and in a short time the brothers finally entered into partnership as publishers; and their triumphs were henceforth achieved conjointly —"both of them," says an able writer in an old number of the *Dublin University Magazine*, "trained to habits of business and punctuality; both of them upheld in all their dealings by strict prudence and conscientiousness; and both of them practised, according to their different aims and tendencies, in literary labour."

Seldom, if ever, have two members of a publishing firm been so admirably fitted for their

business.

From the very outset the brothers were thrown entirely on their own resources; they had no literary jealousy, and eagerly enlisted on their staff most of the young aspirants in Scotland, who have since achieved a world-wide reputation. It was, however, to Mr. Robert Chambers' contributions that the *Journal* was primarily indebted for success, his delightful essays, æsthetic and humorous, permanently fixing the work in public esteem. Gifted with a keenly-accurate observation, with a grave yet kindly humour, his vignettes of life and character, under the *nom de plume* of Mr. Baldestone, were so truthful and so "telling," that they met with a very favourable reception, when republished separately, in seven volumes, in 1844. "It was my design," he says in the preface, "from the first, to be the essayist of the middle class—that in which I was born and to which I continue to belong. I, therefore, do not treat their manners and habits as one looking *de haut en bas*, which is the usual style of essayists, but as one looking round among the firesides of my friends." This was, doubtless, the primary secret of their success.

When Leigh Hunt, in 1834, established his *London Journal*, he announced that he intended to follow the plan of Chambers' *Edinburgh Journal*, "with a more southern element" added. This compliment, from a veteran so famous and so experienced, led to an interchange of editorial courtesies, in the course of which Robert Chambers claimed the distinction for his brother William—which had been somewhere awarded to Leigh Hunt—of having been the first to introduce cheap periodical literature of a superior class. Leigh Hunt,

in reply, while upholding his own title to priority by the indubitable evidence of the dates of his *Indicator*, *Tatler*, &c., cordially admitted that his young rivals had more wisely achieved the desired end by interesting a wider and less educated public.

In a few years all Edinburgh proved to be equal only to produce the Scotch edition of the *Journal*, a branch house was established in the English metropolis, the command of which was entrusted to a younger brother, Mr. David Chambers, who was born in the year 1820, and who was afterwards taken into partnership. Unlike his brothers, he had little taste for literature. In connection with the subsequent conduct of the *Journal*, we may mention the names of T. Smibert and Leich Ritchie (both deceased), and Mr. W. H. Wills, and Mr. James Payn, the sensational novelist, who for many years has had the leading conduct.

In 1844, Robert Chambers published a work written in conjunction with Dr. Carruthers, afterwards greatly enlarged, which takes a far higher rank than any preceding compilation of a similar character. This was Chambers' "Cyclopædia of English Literature," in which no less than 832 authors are treated critically and biographically, specimens of their most characteristic writings being quoted in addition. From the intrinsic value of the contents, and the marvellous cheapness of the price, a great popularity was attained, and in a few years 130,000 copies were sold in England alone, while in America it was at least as popular.

Among his other works at this period we may mention a labour of love—a chronological edition of Burns' poems, so arranged with a connecting narrative as to serve also as a biography. The

proceeds of the sale went towards securing a comfortable fortune for the poet's sister. We must mention, also, in passing, "The Domestic Annals of Scotland," and a dainty little volume of verse, printed for private circulation only, in 1835.

A book appeared about this time entitled, "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation," which was written to prove that the Divine Governor of this world conducts its passing affairs by a fixed rule, termed natural law. The orthodox party professed to be alarmed at the temerity of the writer, and by them the book was hailed with contumely. It was known that the proof sheets had passed through the hands of Mr. Robert Chambers, and on no better authority than this, not only did the public believe the story, but the "Vestiges" was entered in the catalogue of the British Museum under his name. A writer in the *Critic* boldly stated, "on eminent authority," that George Combe was the author, and though this was contradicted, and though the authorship is still a mystery, it would appear that Combe had, at all events, something to do with the work. In 1848, Robert Chambers was selected to be Lord Provost of Edinburgh; he was requested to deny the authorship, but his refusal to plead, and his consequent retirement, were probably due to his contempt for people who could make the authorship of a book a barrier to civic honours. His brother William, however, afterwards filled the office with such satisfaction to his fellow-citizens, that he was re-elected, after serving the prescribed term of three years.

Many of Robert Chambers's earliest essays in his *Journal* had been upon geology, and to this branch of science he became more and more addicted, and as a

geologist and antiquarian he turned to good account a somewhat extensive course of foreign travel. In 1848 he visited Switzerland; in 1849 Sweden and Norway; and in later years Iceland and the Faroe Isles, Canada, and the United States. One of the results of these travels was a volume on "Ancient Sea Margins"—containing a new theory, that had previously been propounded by him in a paper read before the "British Association," and had attracted no little attention.

To supplement what their *Journal* could not supply to the reading public, he and his brother also wrote, with not very much assistance, and, of course published, "Information for the People," "Papers for the People," and a series of miscellaneous tracts: 200,000 of the first named are said to have been sold.

During all this hard work Robert Chambers helped to conduct one of the largest printing and publishing concerns in Scotland. One of the chiefest triumphs of the brothers was "Chambers's Educational Course," an educational project so complete that few men could have ever hoped to realize it. This series begins with a three-halfpenny infant primer, and goes onward through a whole library of grammars, dictionaries, histories, scientific, and all primary class books, and cheap editions of standard foreign and classical authors, till it culminates in a popular "Encyclopædia" in ten thick volumes. This "Encyclopædia" was originally founded on the "German Conversations' Lexicon," but the articles were in all cases either re-written or thoroughly revised. It admirably supplies the wants of those readers for whom the "Penny Encyclopædia" was in the first instance devised, before its expansion

into the present more expensive form.

Literary honours fell fast upon Robert Chambers. He enjoyed the rare distinction of being nominated into the Athenæum Club by its committee of management, and was elected a member of many scientific societies; and finally the University of St. Andrews conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

In 1864 appeared his first real work, the "Book of Days," but the success that attended it was dearly bought. He had found it necessary to reside for some years in London, in order to avail himself of the inexhaustible treasures of the British Museum, but on his return to Scotland he was often heard to say "that book is my death-blow." His nervous system was shattered, and literary labour was at an end. After the completion of seventy volumes, and innumerable articles, compelling almost incessant mental effort for five-and-forty years, the overworked brain at last demanded repose. The descendants of Smollett, the novelist, offered him the use of some hitherto untouched family documents, and he was tempted once more to essay the long-loved task of composition; the volume was printed in 1867, and is said to bear painful marks of the undue strain from which his mind had suffered.

The very last years of his life were spent at St. Andrews, where on March 17th, 1871, he died, saying, "Quite comfortable—quite happy—nothing more!" leaving a family of nine children, one of whom, Mr. Robert Chambers, has for some time been a partner in the firm. His second wife (his first had died in 1863) did not survive him.

Few men have worked so hard as Robert Chambers; his life, busy in its threefold capacity of

author, editor, and publisher, can scarcely have known an unprofitable hour; few men have worked so well, for not a line that he has written, not a book that he has published, but has tended in some way to the education and social improvement of the people; and few men have reaped such an honourable and profitable reward for their labours.

Dr. Carruthers, his colleague in the "Cyclopædia of English Literature," says, "His worldly prosperity kept pace with his acquirements and his labours; he was enabled to practise a liberal hospitality and a generous citizenship; strangers of any mark in literature or science were cordially welcomed, and a forenoon antiquarian ramble with Robert Chambers in the old town of Edinburgh, or a social evening with him in Doune Terrace, were luxuries highly prized and long remembered. Thus we have an instance of a life meritorious, harmonious in all its parts, happy, and benefiting society equally by its direct operation and its example."

The news of Robert Chambers's death so affected his brother, Mr. David Chambers, who was at that time confined to his home through illness, that it caused the rupture of a blood-vessel in the liver, and three days after this he followed his elder brother; like him he had been an earnest friend of press reform, and had devoted much of his time to promoting the repeal of the fiscal restrictions upon newspapers.

Mr. William Chambers, who undertook from the first the largest share in the mercantile concerns of the firm, has still found time to accomplish a large amount of literary work. In addition to the book previously mentioned, he has published, among others, "Travels in Italy," and a "History of

Peebleshire," and the "Memoir of Robert Chambers," besides contributing freely to the *Journal*, and other of their serial publications.

* * * * *

Charles Knight was born at Windsor in the year 1791, and was the only child of his father, a bookseller and printer of some importance in that town, who, by his connection with the *Microcosm*, a paper conducted by Canning, and written by Hookham Frere, "Bobus" Smith, and other Etonians, had made many influential friends. The last number of this schoolboy journal appeared, however, four years before the birth of his son.

Charles was educated at the school of a Dr. Nicholas at Ealing, and his early avidity for reading had, he himself thinks, much to do with rendering his constitution weak and feeble. At the age of fourteen he signed indentures of apprenticeship to his father, and in 1812, when he attained his majority, he was sent up for a few weeks to London to undergo a short term of training in the office of the *Globe* newspaper, so as to give him practical experience in reporting and other journalistic work; for from early boyhood he had determined to possess a paper of his own. On Aug. 1st of the same year his desire was realized, and, in conjunction with his father, he started the *Windsor and Eton Express*, the editorship of which he continued up to the year 1827, finding time, however, in the midst of his busy life, to devote to the cultivation of more general literature. In 1813 appeared the first original work from his pen, "Arminius," a tragedy—which had been offered to the manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and had of course been rejected, but very

courteously. During his residence at Windsor he was co-editor, with H. E. Locker, of the *Plain Englishman*, a miscellaneous journal, which only lasted from 1820 to 1822.

His first venture into the dimly descried regions of popular literature appeared, he says, in the *Windsor Express* for Dec. 11, 1819, in a paper called "Cheap Publications," and was followed by others, till, in one of the last numbers of the *Plain Englishman*, we come across an article entitled "Diffusion of Useful Knowledge"—a straw which shows which way his mind was turning.



**Charles Knight.**
**1791–1873.**

Among Mr. Knight's other literary labours at this time, in 1820, he undertook the editorship of the *Guardian*, again in partnership with a colleague; and his life, divided between Windsor and London, became one of very pleasurable excitement. His connection, too, with a literary journal, served to render him familiar with the aspects of the

publishing trade in London, and at the end of 1822 he sold his share of the *Guardian*, and took up his position in Pall Mall East, and started as a publisher.

One day, shortly after this, coming back jaded and weary from his London office he found two Eton lads—W. M. Praed and Walter Blunt—waiting at his cottage with an eager proposal that he should publish an Eton miscellany. Generously and sympathetically did Mr. Knight enter into the schemes of the schoolboys; and the plan of the *Etonian* was forthwith drawn up. Knight found much pleasure in watching and assisting the young periodical, which was a kind of pleasant nursery ground for the growth and display of the youthful talent of which Eton then proudly and unwontedly boasted. "It was refreshing," he writes, "after the dry labours of his day in town, to watch the bright, earnest, happy face of Mr. Blunt, who took a manifest delight in doing the editorial drudgery; the worst proofs (for in the haste unavoidable in periodical literature he would sometimes catch hold of a proof *un*read) never disturbed the serenity of his temper. To him it seemed a real happiness to stand at a desk in the composing-room." But Praed it was, with his sparkling wit, his elegant aptness of expression, and his boyish gallantry that yet smacked of the wise experience of age, who was the life and soul of the project, and his contributions eventually occupied fully one-fourth of the whole miscellany, and when he went to Cambridge it was thought advisable, perhaps found necessary, to terminate the *Etonian* altogether. Still Mr. Knight's chief hopes as a publisher were centred in the promise of his young Eton friends, and during a week passed with them at Cambridge the general plan of *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* was settled, and he was introduced to

Derwent, Coleridge, Malden, and Macaulay, afterwards his chief contributors.

Mr. Knight was his own editor, and with the assistance of such writers, his periodical could not fail to be a success. Even Christopher North, in Edinburgh, was moved to write of them as a hopeful class of "young scholars," and Knight retorted to this stale accusation of youth by declaring that he had read and rejected seventy-eight prose articles, and one hundred and twenty copies of occasional verses, "all the property of the old periodical press," while Praed wrote saucily enough, that "Christopher North is a barn from his wig to his slippers."

After the first two numbers, Macaulay felt constrained to retire, as his father objected to the political opinions of the magazine, but he was luckily induced to alter his mind, and to the future numbers he contributed the best of his early poems—notably, "Moncontoria" and "Ivry" and the "Songs of the Civil Wars." Here, too, were printed Praed's most charming *jeux d'esprits*, so called, though depth of feeling and nobleness of sentiment often lay beneath their airy bantering tone. De Quincey, then almost starving in the streets of London, was made lovingly free of its pages, and the *Quarterly Magazine* attained a great celebrity as the most classical, and yet the lightest, gayest, and most pleasing periodical of the day.

Unfortunately a division occurred among the contributors themselves—their opinions, and the opinions they expressed, were as widely divergent as the four winds of heaven—their supply of matter was quite irregular, varying with the individual amusements of the hour—reaching, Knight tells us, to "wanton neglect;" and after many dissensions, the

publisher felt "that he had to choose between surrendering the responsibility which his duties to society had compelled him to retain, or to lose much of the assistance which had given to the *Quarterly Magazine* its peculiar character." He could not hesitate in his choice, and with the sixth number the work ceased, being, however, continued under the editorship of Malden, and in the hands of another publisher for a quarter longer, but the panic that ruined Scott and Constable, and shook so many publishing houses, made small work of the transplanted *Quarterly*.

This period of Knight's life may be regarded as the time when he sowed his publishing wild oats; henceforth sterner work awaited him. Among, however, the earliest of his distinct publications may be mentioned Milton's "Treatises on Christian Doctrine," then first discovered among the documents at the State Paper Office.

Knight had fortunately no bills afloat at the time of the panic which, in connection with his endeavour to assist the Windsor bank, he so graphically describes—"In the Albany we found the partners of one firm deliberating by candle light—a few words showed how unavailing was the hope of help from them: 'We shall ourselves stop at nine o'clock.' The dark December morning gradually grew lighter; the gas lamps died out; but long before it was perfect day we found Lombard Street blocked up by eager crowds, each man struggling to be foremost at the bank where he kept his accounts, if its doors should be opened." Still, Mr. Knight, though not directly involved, found, like many other publishers, that the schemes of 1825 would not sell in 1826, and that the booksellers must, spite of themselves, "hold on" as

best they could. Colburn, indeed, was the only one who still continued his ventures, and from the light and soothing nature of his publications, chiefly fictions calculated to allay the torture of reality, he was able to reap a reward for his temerity.

Every day found Mr. Knight more sick of his prospects than the last. The *Brazen Head*, a weekly satirical and humorous journal of his just started, lightened though it was by the rippling wit of Praed, fell upon the public like a leaden lump.

Mr. Knight's brain had long been filled with a scheme of popular and cheap literature, and he now made up his mind to start afresh—to tempt the world and bless it with a real "National Library," so good that all should desire, so cheap that all would buy. Lord Brougham, who was at that moment organizing the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," heard of this plan and obtained an introduction to the schemer. The idea of the National Library was at first taken up by the Society, but was finally adopted by John Murray. Differences of opinion as to the editorial responsibilities, and the arrangements as to the transfer of his stock to Albemarle Street, presented new difficulties, and thoroughly sick of the whole matter, Mr. Knight suddenly abandoned it. The germ of his idea, however, bore fruit in the "Treatises" published by the Society in March, and in the "Cabinet Encyclopædia," issued a few years afterwards by Longman. "My boat," writes Mr. Knight, "was stranded. Happily for me there were no wreckers at hand ready for the plunder of my damaged cargo." Anyhow, for the time being, publishing was over. To a man of indomitable pluck, and blessed with the pen of a ready writer, journalism presents a tolerably open field, and to

newspaper work Mr. Knight again addressed himself; but in a few weeks a document, which Mr. Knight values, he says, as a soldier values his first commission, reached him containing an offer of the superintendence of the Society's publications, an offer that was forthwith accepted. As a first step, the "Library of Entertaining Knowledge" was commenced, and, in 1828, he started the *British Almanac*, and the *Companion to the Almanac*—a wonderful change for the better after the "Poor Robins" and "Old Moores" of the past.

In 1832, Mr. Knight was offered an official position at the Board of Trade, but fortunately for the education and interests of the people he had the courage to refuse it, having the pleasure, however, of being asked to recommend some one else to the post. In the March of this year appeared the first number of the *Penny Magazine*, subsequent by only a very few weeks to *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*.

The new periodical had been suggested by Mr. Hill in a conversation about the wretched character of the cheap prints of the period. "Let us," he exclaimed, "see what something cheap and good can accomplish! Let us have a penny magazine!" "And what shall be the title?" asked Knight. "The *Penny Magazine*." At once they went to the Lord Chancellor, who entered cordially into the project, and though a few old Whig gentlemen on the committee urged that the proposed price was below the dignity of the Society, and muttered, "It is very awkward, very awkward," Mr. Knight undertook the risk, and was immediately appointed editor.

The success of the magazine was amazing even to the sanguine editor; at the close of 1832 it reached a sale of 200,000 in weekly and monthly parts—

representing probably a million readers, and Burke had only forty years previous estimated the number of readers in this country at 80,000! Among the contributors it will be sufficient to mention Long, De Morgan, Creswick, Allan Cunningham, and Thomas Pringle, whilom editor of the Whiggish *Blackwood*. One writer, however, stands out from the rest, both by his misfortunes and his attainments—coming not only under the "curse of poverty's unconquerable ban," but being completely deaf and almost dumb. Recommended to Mr. Knight as an extraordinary, though unknown genius, who had been brought up in a charity school, stricken with a sudden and melancholy affliction, who had worked his way to St. Petersburg, and thence through Russia to Moscow, and on to Persia and the Desert; who knew French and Italian perfectly; the kind-hearted publisher, from the very first, took a liking to Kitto—soon to be known as an eminent traveller, Orientalist, and Biblical commentator. After the first trial article of "The Deaf Traveller," Kitto was regularly engaged to assist Mr. Knight personally in his own room; and here in his spare time he managed to acquire German.

In spite of the somewhat scurrilous attacks made upon the *Penny Magazine* by Colburn in his *New Monthly* it was a continuous success, and ultimately paved the way to a work infinitely more important—the "Penny Encyclopædia."

It will be essential here to understand the position of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

This Society was founded in 1826 by Lord Brougham and other gentlemen, described by Mr. Knight as the leading statesmen, lawyers, and

philanthropists of the day. “It was a blow aimed at the monopoly of literature—the opening of the flood-gates of knowledge.” At first the Society possessed no charter, but obtained one in May, 1832, not probably a very useful or essential gift, nominating Brougham as president, Lord John Russell as vice-president, and William Tooke, Esq., treasurer. No subscriptions were called for, or rather these means had been at once abandoned, and the “arrangements made with the publisher since the beginning of the Society have gone upon the principle of leaving the committee as far as possible free from risk, and unencumbered with commercial responsibility; but at the same time deriving a fair proportion of pecuniary advantage from the ultimate success of the undertaking.” The publisher in the first instance paid down a certain sum for the copyright, sufficient to cover the disbursements to the authors by the committee, who, after a limit of sale, received a royalty of so much per thousand copies. At first the Society’s publications abounded in almanacs; “The British Almanack,” “The British 4*d.* Almanack,” “The Penny Sheet Almanack,” and “The British Working-man’s Almanack.” Then came the *Penny Magazine*, the *British Quarterly Journal of Education*, and the “Penny Encyclopædia,” the first number of which was issued in July, 1833. It was originally projected to form a moderate-sized book of eight volumes, and every article was to be written expressly for the work. This limited size was found to be incompatible with original work by the best writers, and after a year the price and quantity were doubled; after three years more, quadrupled. In the present form, and according to the original scheme, the issue would have taken thirty-seven years. But this increase of matter, while it largely enhanced the intrinsic value

of the work, was utterly fatal to its commercial success. The committee got, says Mr. Knight, the credit of the work, without incurring any of the risk; and the expenditure on literary matter alone amounted to £40,000. The sale, owing to the increase of matter and price, rapidly declined: at first consisting of 75,000 copies, it fell at the increase to twopence to 55,000, in the second year to 44,000, and at the close of the fourpenny period it was actually reduced to 20,000; and this chronic loss entailed upon Mr. Knight for the duration of eleven years absorbed every other source of profit in his extensive business. This loss was still further augmented by the enormously heavy paper duty of threepence per pound, but which was reduced in 1836 to half that price.

Mr. Knight was originally associated with Mr. Long in the editorial duties, but soon wisely gave up the management of the literary department.

Mr. George Long, who is now leaving a Professorship at Brighton College for Chichester,[19] had been bracketed with Macaulay and Professor Malden for the Craven Scholarship—a fact that says something, were it necessary, for his attainments—and was able to gather together the most able men of the day on his staff, all of whom, whether belonging to the Society or otherwise, were handsomely remunerated for their labour. Upon De Morgan rested, perhaps, after the editor, the heaviest labour, for he undertook the whole department of Mathematical Science. The Biographical portion was chiefly due to G. C. Lewis, G. Long himself, P. and W. Smith, and Donaldson. It is impossible, necessarily, to mention many out of the 200 contributors, and it will suffice for our purpose to enumerate the names

of Professors Craik, Forbes, and Donaldson, and Messrs. Ellis, Lewis, and Kitto, as writers on all general subjects; and Mr. W. J. Broderip as taking the Natural History department. Quite a new feature in the composition of the staff was the introduction of foreign writers of eminence, who composed either in their own language or in ours, all the articles being revised by the editor and his assistants, and rendered into perfectly good English.

We must follow Mr. Knight's own publications, remembering that their issue was contemporary with the "Encyclopædia." Next to that in costliness was the "Gallery of Portraits," issued in monthly parts at half-a-crown each, to which, among other authors, Hallam and De Quincey contributed.

The connection between Mr. Knight and Kitto was still very strong and affectionate. In January, 1834, we find him detailing pleasantly the amount of work he had to do for £16 a month—"a most comfortable sum for me"—and later on we come across him asking Mr. Knight's advice in regard to his proposed marriage. "I have felt it prudent and proper to postpone it for awhile until I should have consulted with you.... I have hitherto been so connected in my employments with those who took a strong personal interest in my affairs, and to whom I am accustomed to talk freely about them, that I am led to trouble you more about myself and my circumstances than is warranted by my existing relations. If so, I doubt not your kindness will readily excuse the absence in a dumb man of those little proprieties with which he has not had much opportunity of becoming acquainted." A curious subject on which to consult one's publisher, but then Mr. Knight was something more, and immediately

promised such remuneration and regular employment as would free Kitto's entrance into wedded life from the charge of imprudence.

The "Bilder Bibel," then publishing in Germany, suggested to Mr. Knight his "Pictorial Bible;" and Kitto, after having tested his own fitness for the work thoroughly, boldly undertook to execute the whole task, giving up, of course, all other work, and receiving £250 a year during the progress of the book, and on completion such a sum of money as seemed a small fortune. This completed—and it was one of the most remunerative works upon which Mr. Knight was ever engaged—he commenced his "Palestine," and in such subjects Kitto found at last his true vocation.

The "Pictorial History" occupied seven years in coming out, in parts, of course. Mr. Craik wrote the social, religious, and commercial portions, and Mr. C. Macfarlane undertook the larger department of civil and military history; many other gentlemen also contributed. The same fault occurred here as in the "Penny Encyclopædia"—it was too long for serial publication. By an error of judgment on the part of the editors, four of the eight volumes were devoted to the reign of George III.; the subscribers became weary, and the project turned out to be a commercial failure.

This was followed in 1843 by the "Illustrated London," certainly the best and most trustworthy history we yet have *in extenso* of the great metropolis.

The issue of the "weekly volumes" was also in progress, commencing with a "Life of Caxton," by Mr. Knight himself; but the series soon became the "shilling volumes."

The *Penny Magazine* terminated on the 27th Dec., 1845, and its continuation, *Knight's Penny Magazine*, proving but barely remunerative, the hint was taken, Mr. Knight declaring that it should never be said of him, "Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage."

The "Penny Encyclopædia" terminated in December, 1843, and though a ruinous loss to Mr. Charles Knight, was at the same time, as regards the general public, perhaps the greatest publishing triumph that had yet been accomplished. The banquet given in his honour by the contributors was, Mr. Knight tells us, the proudest moment in his life, and was certainly a tribute as well earned as it was unique.

Into the next and grandest venture of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge Mr. Knight could not afford to take part—fortunately, indeed, for the scheme, magnificent but futile, proved a deathblow to the Society. The "New Biographical Dictionary" was intended to assume proportions beyond anything of the kind hitherto attempted; but to the astonishment of the committee it was found that when the letter A was completed seven half volumes had been filled, and a loss of £5000 had been incurred. This was bad enough, but when contributors were requested to send in suggestions as to the letter B, one man alone forwarded more than 2000 names. By this time the Society had exhausted its available funds, and, frightened by the prospect, thought itself quite justified in retiring from the public scene. "Its work is done, for its greatest object is achieved—fully, fairly, and permanently. The public is supplied with cheap and good literature to an extent which the most sanguine friends of improvement could not in 1826 have hoped to

witness in twenty years."

In 1843, Mr. Knight had published his "Life of Shakespeare," a work by which, as a valuable history of Elizabethan times, and a charming, though necessarily an imaginary, sketch of our greatest poet, the author will, we think, though multitudinous in his writings, be most distinctly remembered. His edition of Shakespeare, which for reverent love and editorial labour is almost unrivalled, has appeared in various guises, as the "Popular," the "Library," the "National," the "Cabinet" (three editions), the "Medium" (three editions), and the "Stratford" (three editions).

By far the most remarkable of Mr. Knight's labours, and perhaps the most useful, was his "Shilling Volumes for all Readers" (1844–1849), 186 volumes, 16mo., in all; for though his editorial labours were terminated when about two-thirds of the work was completed, he still considered himself responsible as regards the general character of the works. "I may confidently state," he says, "that in this extensive series, no single work, and no portion of a work, can be found that may not safely be put into the hands of the young and uninformed, with the security that it will neither mislead nor corrupt." In a postscript to the last volume he adds: "I now venture to believe that I have accomplished what I proposed to do. First, I have endeavoured to produce a series of books which comprehends something like the range of literature which all well-educated persons desire to have at their command." Without attempting any very exact classification of the various subjects of the volumes, they may be thus distributed into large departments of knowledge:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Analytical Accounts of Great Writers, English and Foreign | 13 |
| Biography | 33 |
| General History | 5 |
| English History | 26 |
| Geography, Travel, and Topography | 33 |
| Natural History | 17 |
| Fine Arts and Antiquities | 8 |
| Arts and Sciences, Political Philosophy, &c. | 14 |
| Natural Theology and Philosophy | 15 |
| General Literature | 16 |
| Original Fiction | 6 |
| | 186 |

After this noble endeavour in a good cause, it is literally heartrending to read Mr. Knight's candid confession that not twenty volumes of the series achieved a circulation of 10,000 copies.

As soon as the Poor Law Board was established, Mr. Knight became officially connected with it as an authorized publisher, and from that time he almost entirely gave up general publishing, and his works were entrusted to the care of other firms.

The copyright of the "Encyclopædia" remained in his possession, and was turned to good account in the "National Encyclopædia," and later on in the "English Encyclopædia," in which, however, nothing was reprinted without thorough revision, many of the articles being entirely new.

Several of Mr. Knight's productions, such as "The Land we Live in," commenced in 1847, turned out, in the hands of the "copy publisher," to be perfect mines of wealth.

In 1854 appeared the “Popular History of England;” it was completed in 1862.

In 1851 we find Mr. Knight going about as joint manager with Mr. Payne Collier, of that band of illustrious amateur actors who have become so famous. Among them we find Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, G. Cruikshank, Wilkie Collins, and R. H. Horne. “A joyous time, this,” writes Mr. Knight, who had played the part of “One Tonson, a bookseller,” “left-legged Jacob” having, he adds, “but a paltry representative.”

Among Mr. Knight’s chief literary labours, we must instance his “Half-Hours with the Best Authors”—a book that has achieved a world-wide popularity; “Once upon a Time;” and “Passages of a Working Life for Half a Century” (in 3 volumes), a charming and interesting autobiography, to which we are indebted for most of the facts in this short notice of his life.

Full of years and of honours, Mr. Knight died at Addlestone, in Surrey, on the 9th of March, 1873, aged eighty-one; and five days afterwards was buried in the family vault at Windsor. The funeral was very large, from the number of literary men attending, who wished to show their feeling of affection and respect for the deceased. In the newspaper notices, too, the tribute of praise was unanimous and hearty; and it was resolved that the gratitude of writers and readers should not stop here. A committee has been formed to erect some kind of memorial, and many of the leading men of letters, as well as some of the leading publishers, are taking part in it. It has been hoped that this memorial may assume the shape of a free public library for London, and thus initiate a movement that, to our shame, has made such

successful way in our great provincial towns. Nothing else could so appropriately perpetuate the memory of a life so earnest in its purpose of spreading cheap literature far and wide, so brave in difficulty, so utterly unmindful of self-gain in the work planned out and done; that none who know its story can gainsay Douglas Jerrold's most happy epitaph, "Good Knight."

* * * * *

JOHN CASSELL, though of a family originally Kentish, was born at Manchester on 23rd January, 1817. The child of poor parents, his school education was very simple and elementary, and at an early age he adopted the trade of carpentry. In most lads of that class, education, such as it is, is totally ended when once they leave the school-house to follow some manual calling; but from the day that Cassell took his first serious step in life he determined to educate himself, to break down the trammels of class ignorance, first of all in his own case, and, that once accomplished, to assist with all the energy he possessed, his brother workmen to do the same. At first he found his evening studies, after a hard day's work at the bench, somewhat irksome and painful; but by degrees his reading became less and less elementary, and eventually he acquired, not only a considerable knowledge of English literature, but a fund of general information which, on the platform, as well as in private life, stood him in good stead; and he also attained sufficient proficiency in French to be afterwards essentially serviceable in his repeated visits to the Continent.

But, after all, his most valuable knowledge was acquired in the carpenter's shop, and among his

fellow-workmen; for here he gained an insight into the inner life—the struggles, privations, and miseries, as well as the hopes and ambitions—of the working classes; and this knowledge was carefully stored up until he should, at a future time, see some way of firing their minds and ameliorating their condition.

In 1833 the total abstinence movement was commenced in Lancashire, under the active leadership of Mr. Joseph Livesey, of Preston, and known as "The Temperance Movement," went through the length and breadth of the land. About two years later, Livesey first met young Cassell in a lecture-room or chapel in Manchester. "I remember quite well," he writes, "his standing on the right, just below or on the steps of the platform, in his working attire, with a fustian jacket and a white apron on"—a young man of eighteen, in the honestest and best of uniforms—his industrial regimentals.

Into the temperance movement John Cassell threw himself heart and soul; and thinking that London would afford a wider field for temperance missionary labours, and that his daily bread, as an artizan, might there be more easily earned, he left Manchester and arrived in the Metropolis in October, 1836, and in a few days he found his way to the New Jerusalem school-rooms in the Westminster Bridge Road, and made his first public speech. He is described by one who was present, as "a gaunt stripling, poorly clad, and travel-stained; plain, straightforward in speech, but broad in provincialism." Shortly afterwards, he is again to be traced to Milton Street, Barbican. But his appearance here marked an episode in his life; for his energy, his evident thoroughness, and his frank confession that he carried all his worldly goods in his little wallet,

and that the few pence in his pocket were his only fortune, at once gained him friends. A gentleman present took him to his own home, and shortly afterwards presented him to Mr. Meredith, who enrolled the young enthusiast forthwith among the paid band of temperance agents he was generously supporting at his own cost. With characteristic energy Cassell started on a temperance tour—a journey fraught with difficulty and hardship; and a few months after we find a notice of him in the *Preston Temperance Advocate*: "John Cassell, the Manchester carpenter, has been labouring with great success in the county of Norfolk. He is passing through Essex on his way to London. He carries his watchman's rattle—an excellent accompaniment of temperance labours." A strange life that gaunt young prophet must have led; trudging about from town to village, sounding an alarum ever as he went with his rattle, seeking by all means in his power to rivet a momentary attention, and then from barrel-head or tree-stump preaching in his broad Lancashire idiom a "New Crusade"—not against such puny foes and nations as Turk or Saracen—not of mere battles to be fought out by the exertion of so much or so little physical strength—but of hideous vices to be conquered—vices that sat like skeletons beside half the hearths in England then—and of noble mental victories to be achieved. The women heard his rude eloquence, and tears rushed to their eyes, as they prayed that their brothers and sons might hearken and be convinced. The men paused on their way to the pot-house, and heard how homes now desolate might be made happy, how the weeping wife and the starving children might be rendered contented and cheerful, how their own sodden lives might be again cleansed and brightened;—then independence rose

again from the hideous thrall that bound them, and many paused for ever. Even those who knew the proper use of alcohol listened with respectful attention to one who sought so earnestly to provide a safeguard for other men weaker than themselves. And thus Cassell trudged on, meeting often with scoffs and sneers, suffering much weariness and many privations, but still hopeful, eager, and earnest. In Lincolnshire his eloquent zeal won him not only a convert but a wife, and from this time he found that temperance lecturing was but a sorry provision for a family.[20]

Supported by his friends he now determined to aid the movement in another manner—and he started a temperance publishing office and bookshop at the very house in the Strand now occupied by Mr. Tweedie, the present temperance publisher. For some time his trade went on successfully, but he endeavoured to add to his resources by the congenial management of a large tea and coffee business in Fenchurch Street, and the liabilities he thus incurred overreached his capital.

Now, however, Cassell had many influential friends, and one of these had sufficient faith in his capacity to start him afresh in life—this time on a much larger scale. In his new business in La Belle Sauvage Yard, he was associated with Messrs. Petter and Galpin, who before then were not very considerable printers in the neighbourhood—and they determined to devote themselves to the broader work of producing cheap and popular books, then commencing to be in great demand—not from policy only, though as the life of Robert Chambers shows it was a moment when the tide of fortune might be advantageously made use of by those brave enough

and wise enough to see it—but also because it had by this time been discovered that before the masses could be in any signal way really raised in social condition they must be educated.

Being widely known as a man sprung from the people—as still one of themselves—the working classes had faith in Cassell, and readily purchased his books when they were not so readily tempted to try the publications of the various societies. His knowledge of their real conditions and their wants was very useful, and while his opinion in every matter was most carefully adopted, the business department remained rather in the hands of his junior partners, especially in later years.

In 1850 the *Working Man's Friend* appeared, the precursor of many similar works, and was followed, immediately after the Great Exhibition, by the *Illustrated Exhibitor*—a comprehensive and well-executed scheme intended to preserve a permanent reflection of the World's Great Fair. This same idea was successfully repeated in 1862.

Among all the works published by the firm perhaps the most useful was, and indeed is, the *Popular Educator*; in this, for the weekly sum of one penny, the vast store-house of human knowledge was thrown open; the matter, carefully systematised and arranged so as to encourage self-tuition, aided many a struggler in the path of progress. This was ably followed by the *Technical Educator*. In the former of these works Lord Brougham took an immense interest, and his opinion of John Cassell was as pleasing as it was often repeated.

Of the illustrated works issued in the same cheap method many were English, or rather European, classics, such as the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Don

Quixote," "Foxe's Book of Martyrs," "Shakespeare," "Robinson Crusoe," "Gulliver's Travels," &c. Like Tegg or Lackington, Cassell must be looked upon rather as an encourager of the reading than of the writing world; but among the works claiming originality as well as cheapness, the *History of England* is perhaps the best; the *Natural History* is well printed, well illustrated, and, as far as regards the more legitimate department of the publisher's trade, worthy of praise; the "letter-press," or literary portion, has, however, been much criticised. The *Family Paper* and the *Quiver* attained a very wide circulation, and while the latter is still one of the most favourite distinctly religious serials of the day, the former, until it was changed into the *Magazine*, held faithfully to its promise of pure and wholesome literature.

In furtherance of his various schemes, Cassell often travelled, particularly to France, where he was well known, and where he was thus enabled to effect a very considerable business in the exchange and purchase of illustrations for his various works. In 1859 he visited America, and, with the reputation that preceded him, met with a very flattering reception. On his return, with the energy that distinguished his character he started a company for the manufacture of petroleum, which was the first in England to recognise the value of the new discovery. He also published a series of articles entitled "America as it is," in which the contest between North and South was discussed with a keenness of vision that results proved to be correct and almost prophetic.

Among the important items of his business, and according to popular repute one of the most

profitable, was the issue of weekly papers, which, the outer pages being left blank for local news, were circulated under various titles throughout the United Kingdom. But the greatest venture of the firm was undoubtedly the *Family Bible*, which was commenced in 1859. The cost of production is said to have amounted to £100,000; in six years upwards of 350,000 copies were sold, and it is at present calculated that half a million have been disposed of. Of the influence of this and other kindred works in displacing the infamous prints and penny serial horrors, the *Bookseller* says—"We recently took a survey of the shop-windows in the notorious locality known as the Seven Dials. Here in one street, were three shops, the windows of which were filled with really respectable publications. In one shop scarcely anything was displayed but *Cassell's Family Bible*. In every one, of at least twenty-four, figured some event of sacred history. On making inquiries we found that a very large number in the very poorest neighbourhood was taking in the work every week, and expressed their delight to possess a long coveted article of furniture in the shape of a *family Bible*."

Up to his death Cassell was true to his early resolutions of fostering the progress of temperance and education, and on these subjects he was a frequent and popular lecturer. He took also a lively interest in the business of the firm, but latterly the management was virtually in the hands of his partners. The "History of Julius Cæsar," by the ex-emperor, was, however, entrusted to his care, and was the last publication in which he took an active interest. On the 1st of April, 1865, he died at his residence in Regent's Park. He is described as having "a fine, massive, muscular frame, active and temperate habits of life, a cheerful disposition, a

well-regulated mind, and troops of friends." Rising from the ranks, he was by his industry able to leave his wife a shareholder in one of our largest book-manufacturing firms to the extent of, it is said, forty-two thousand pounds. The main interest of his life must, however, be considered to lie in the earnestness with which he laboured in causes he felt worthy of all labour, rather than in his career as a publisher, for the books he issued were little other than reprints of books whose popularity had been previously tested.

At the time of Cassell's death it is said that upwards of 500 men were employed at the works; that 855,000 sheets were printed off weekly, requiring a consumption of 1310 reams of paper. Latterly Messrs. Petter and Galpin have launched out into a vastly superior style of book-publishing, and in placing the works of Gustave Doré before the English public have taken very high rank as Fine Art publishers. In other ways, too, they have shown a disposition to combine the production of valuable original works with the cheaper serials with which the name of their firm has been so long and successfully associated.

* * * * *

It is impossible to close this chapter without referring to the productions of Mr. Bohn. Our limited space and the value of his publications—all the more valuable, doubtless, from being mainly reproductions of standard works—alone prevent us from according him a separate chapter.

Mr. Henry George Bohn, born in the year 1796, was the son of a London bookseller, who came, however, of a German family. At an early age he

entered into his father's business, but throughout life, engrossed as deeply as any of his compeers in bookselling and publishing transactions, he ever found time and opportunity for literary labour, and, in all, twelve important works are due to his pen, either as author, translator, or editor. The first of his labours, the "Bibliotheca Parriana," was published in 1827. Very soon after, starting on his own account, he acquired a high reputation as a dealer in rare and curious books, and for the spirit with which he entered into the "remainder trade;" in this latter branch even Tegg was compelled to confess that Mr. Bohn eventually surpassed him. The merest reference to his monster "Guinea Catalogue" will give an idea of the magnitude of his transactions at this period. Far, however, from being a mere trade guide, this catalogue is an invaluable literary work—the most useful, as it certainly is the largest, that has come from Mr. Bohn's pen. It is quaintly described by Allibone as "an enormously thick *nondescripto*; Teutonic shape, best model; ... an invaluable lexicon to any literary man, and ten guineas would be a cheap price for a work calculated to save time by its convenience for reference, and money by its stores of information as to the literary and pecuniary value of countless tomes." The *Literary Gazette*, in an appreciative and well-earned compliment, says: "Mr. Bohn has outdone all former doings in the same line, and given us a literary curiosity of remarkable character. The volume is the squattest and the fattest we ever saw. It is an alderman among books, not a very tall one; and then, alderman-like, its inside is richly stuffed with a multitude of good things. Why, there is a list of more than 23,000 articles, and the pages reach to 1948!... This catalogue has cost him an outlay of more than £2000, and it describes

300,000 volumes, a stock which could hardly be realized at much less a 'plum.'"

In 1846, Mr. Registrar Hazlitt suggested the idea of a cheap uniform library of world-known books to David Bogue, the bookseller, who consequently commenced his European Library. In 1846–7, fifteen works were published, edited for the most part by Mr. W. Hazlitt. Mr. Bohn, however, discovered that in many of these works copyrights, of which he was the owner, were infringed, notably in Roscoe's "Lorenzo de' Medici" and "Leo X." An injunction was obtained against the further issue of one of Bogue's volumes, and in defence, if not retaliation, Mr. Bohn determined to enter the field as a publisher of a similar series. In 1846 he produced the first volume of his Standard Library, which, running on for 150 volumes, was sold at the then astoundingly small price—considering their size, their quality, and the care with which they were edited and printed—of 3*s*. 6*d*. each. In 1847, the Scientific Library was commenced, and was rapidly followed by the Antiquarian Library, the Classical, Illustrated, and Historical Libraries, the British Classics, &c. Bogue's small venture stood a poor chance against enterprise of this gargantuan scale, and in a short time his fifteen volumes came into Mr. Bohn's possession. Without counting the Shilling Library, or the more expensive works which were from time to time issued, Mr. Bohn continued the various libraries which are so immediately associated with his name, until the total number of 602 volumes afforded the student a collection of such books as he might otherwise have spent a lifetime and a fortune in acquiring. To few publishers, if to any, is the cheapening of the highest and rarest classes of English and foreign literature more deeply indebted

than to Mr. Bohn. Strangely enough, however, Mr. Bohn was the only member of the trade who endeavoured in 1860 to exert his influence against the abolition of the paper duty.

Among the best known of Mr. Bohn's own productions are his editions of Lowndes' "Manual," Addison's works, his "Polyglot of French Proverbs," his translation of Schiller's "Robbers," and his "Guide to the Knowledge of Pottery and Porcelain," which, though published in 1849, is still the standard work on the subject. His position as an antiquarian is widely acknowledged, and he is a Vice-President of the Society of Arts.

At an early period of his life Mr. Bohn married a daughter of the senior partner in the firm of Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., an alliance that doubtless strengthened his business connections. His trade sales were for many years among the most important in London, lasting for three or four days, and were conducted after the manner of the good old school of booksellers—now, alas! almost extinct—with the pleasing accompaniments of singing and supper. Though Mr. Bohn, a few years since, transferred his "Libraries" and his premises in York Street to Messrs. Bell and Daldy, he has not yet entirely severed his connection with the bookselling world, though as the "father of the trade" he has long since earned the right to leisure and retirement—a right acknowledged not alone in England, for in June, 1869, the *New York Round Table* devoted an interesting article to Mr. Bohn's retirement from the publishing world, and observed that many of his articles in "Lowndes" were unsurpassed in bibliography, especially those on Shakespeare and Junius. "Indeed," adds the writer, "if we may believe

report, such has been the unceasing devotion of Mr. Bohn to work that for years he has subjected himself to a weekly examination by his surgeon to warn him of the first symptoms of the collapse that such an unintermitted strain upon his mind might be supposed to produce."





# *HENRY COLBURN*:

## THREE VOLUME NOVELS AND LIGHT LITERATURE.

Round Henry Colburn clusters a body of writers, lighter and gayer, and consequently more ephemeral than any we have yet noticed—men and women, too, for the matter of that, who purchased immediate success too often with a disregard of future reputation.

As a lad, Henry Colburn was placed in the establishment of William Earle, bookseller, of Albemarle Street, and after this preliminary training obtained the situation of assistant to a Mr. Morgan, the principal of a large circulating library in Conduit Street. Here he had, of course, ample opportunity of gauging the reading taste of the general public, and it is probably from this early connection with the library-subscribing world that he determined henceforth to devote himself almost exclusively to the production of the light novelties which he saw were so eagerly and so incessantly demanded. In

1816 he succeeded to the proprietorship of the library, and conducted the business with great spirit and success until, removing to New Burlington Street, he resigned the Conduit Street Library to the hands of Messrs. Saunders and Ottley, who, until their recent dissolution, were famous, not only for their circulating library, but for the tender care they bestowed upon the works of suckling poets and poetasters.

Before this change of residence, however, Colburn had already made several serious ventures on his own account. All through his long career we shall find that he speculated in journalistic venture with as much spirit as he showed in any of his daring schemes to win popular credit and applause. In 1814, with the assistance of Mr. Frederick Shoberl, he originated the *New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register*, on "the principles of general patriotism and loyalty," founded, as its name implied, in direct opposition to Sir Richard Philips' *Old Monthly*. Among the early editors were Dr. Watkins and Alaric Watts, but in 1820 a new series was commenced under the title of the *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, and Thomas Campbell, the poet, was appointed editor. The agreement still exists in Beattie's "Life of Campbell," and was unusually liberal. He agreed to edit the periodical for three years, to supply in all twelve articles, six in verse, six in prose; and for these and his editorial services he received five hundred pounds per annum, to be increased if the circulation of the magazine materially improved. He was, of course, assisted by a sub-editor, and allowed a liberal sum for the payment of contributors. The magazine prospered, and passed successively through the editorial hands of Bulwer Lytton (1832) and Theodore Hook. In

1836 a third series appeared under Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, and though Colburn parted with the proprietorship to Messrs. Chapman and Hall, and they in their turn to Messrs. Adams and Francis, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth was till yesterday at his editorial post, delighting our children with precisely the same kind of enthralling romances with which he beguiled our fathers.

In 1817 Colburn determined to introduce a paper upon the plan of a popular German prototype, and on the 26th January the first number of the *Literary Gazette* appeared, price one shilling. H. E. Lloyd, a clerk in the Foreign Department of the Post-Office, a good linguist, and a well-known translator from the German, was the chief contributor, and appears to have shared the editorial duties with Miss Ross, a lady afterwards pensioned by the Government. The reputation achieved was great, especially in reference to the Fine Arts, which were skilfully handled by William Carey, and at the twenty-sixth number Mr. Jerdan, formerly editor of the *Sun*, purchased a third of the property, and became the regular editor. Messrs. Longman eagerly embraced the offer of a third share, and with a staff of contributors, who varied from Canning to Maginn, the *Literary Gazette* obtained a wide popularity, and was recognized as an authority upon other matters than literature. At present, however, the *Gazette* is most gratefully remembered as having encouraged in its poetical columns (fairly and impartially opened to merit, however obscure), the earliest writings of Mrs. Hemans, Bowles, Hood, Swain, James Smith, Howitt, and even Tupper. In 1842 Jerdan bought out Colburn and the Messrs. Longman, and from his hands the editorship passed to L. Phillips, L. Beeve, and J. L. Jephson. In 1858 a new series was commenced,

under, successively, S. Brooks, H. Christmas, W. R. Workman, F. Arnold, John Morley, and C. W. Goodwin. In 1862 it was finally incorporated with the *Parthenon*.

In 1816, the year before the foundation of the *Literary Gazette*, Colburn had, as we have seen, migrated to New Burlington Street, and soon rendered his shop famous as the chief emporium for the purchase and sale of novels and other light literature. The first book issued from the new establishment was Lady Morgan's "Zana"—a work certainly not worth much, but scarcely meriting an attack in the *Quarterly*, which Talfourd stigmatises as "one of the coarsest insults ever offered in print by man to woman;" however, through the power of her ladyship's name, and with the aid of skilful advertising—in which Colburn was perhaps the greatest expert in a time when the art had not reached its present high state of development —"Zana" proved eminently successful. Talented in a manner Lady Morgan certainly was, and, as a proof, is said to have made more than twenty-five thousand pounds by her pen. She had published a volume of verses at the unfortunately early age of fourteen, and this idea of precocity seems to us to accompany all her works.

At the suggestion of his friend Mr. Upcott, Colburn undertook, in 1818, the publication of "Evelyn's Diary," and its success would have been almost unparalleled had it not been followed in 1825 by the "Diary of Pepys." For more than 150 years this work reposed unread and unknown, until Mr. John Smith succeeded in deciphering the stenographic characters which had concealed so much amusement from the world. The work, edited

by Lord Braybrooke, was published in two volumes at six guineas, and though this and the two succeeding editions, at five guineas, were almost worthless from the editorial excisions they had undergone from the too-modest fingers of the noble editor, the issues went off very rapidly, and Colburn obtained a very handsome profit on the £2200 he had paid for the copyright. In the fourth edition of 1848 Lord Braybrooke was urged to restore those characteristic passages which he had before condemned, and the full value of the work, as a photographic picture of an amusing, though dissolute, time was firmly established. Evelyn had before given us the history of Charles the Second's Court, with a gravity and openly-expressed reprobation which finely suited his character of a worthy and dignified old English country gentleman; but still it is now to the pages of Pepys that all the world turns for an account of the royal domestic life of certainly the most infamous period of our annals. He is so charmingly garrulous, jotting down each night such quaint thoughts on what he had seen during the day, writing them by his fireside, with the same nonchalance with which he put on his night-cap, and with as little suspicion of ever being surprised in the one act as the other, that his truthfulness, his openness, and his scarcely-concealed partiality for as much vagabonding and frolicsome society as Mrs. Pepys would permit, carry the reader irresistibly along with him.

It is, however, when we come to the novels that Colburn ushered into the world, that we strike upon the one vein of profitable ore that he made so peculiarly his own; and *facile princeps* of all his novelistic clients, stands Theodore Hook. To understand the genius of all Hook's works, it is

essential to take a short retrospective view of his life and character. Two things, above all else, strike us in regarding him—that he possessed the greatest love of joke and frolic, and the most marvellous memory with which ever man was gifted. As a boy of seventeen, he dashed off an amusing comedy; this, he tells us in the really autobiographical sketch of "Gilbert Gurney," was the process. "To work I went, bought three or four French vaudevilles, and filching an incident from each, made up my very effective drama, the 'Soldier's Return.'" And for this bantling he received the handsome first-earnings of fifty pounds. Living, at a time when other boys were at school, in the gayest of all society in London, a welcome guest behind the curtain at every theatre, and hailed as a good fellow in every literary coterie, young Hook led a rollicking, devil-may-care life, giving the world back with interest the rich amusement he gathered from it. Now, making a random bet that a corner house in Berners Street should, within a week, be the most famous house in London; and within the time taking his opponent to a commanding window, that he might acknowledge that the wager had been fairly won; and the strange scene in the thoroughfare must have soon convinced him. The Duke of York, drawn by six grey horses, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Mayor in formal state, every woman of notorious virtue, every man of any fame or notoriety, porters bustling up with wine-casks and beer-barrels, milliners with bonnet-boxes crushed and battered, pastry-cooks with dainty dishes that the street gamins soon picked out of the gutters, undertakers with rival coffins, variously made to exact measurement, hackney-coaches, and vans, and waggons by the hundred—in fact, half the world of London was there by

invitations especially adapted to move each individual case, and the other half soon came as spectators. The impotent "Charleys" of the day found their efforts useless to dispel the block and crush, and long before the crowd was cleared away, the next day's papers were ringing with the "Berners Street Hoax." Again, we find him donning a scarlet coat, and, as the Prince Regent's messenger, delivering a letter to an obnoxious actor, eagerly inviting him to dine with that august personage; and then joining in the crush outside Holland House, to see his enemy come away discomfited as an impostor. No occasion was sacred from his jests, and his exuberant spirits were scarcely in accordance with the tranquillity of academic life. At his very matriculation the Vice-chancellor, struck by his youthful appearance, asked him if he was fully prepared to sign the thirty-nine articles. "Oh, certainly, sir," replied Hook with cool assiduity, "forty, if you please." Indignantly he was told to withdraw, and it took weeks of friendly interposition to appease the outraged dignitary. At the age of twenty he wrote his first novel, but it was a failure, and he shortly afterwards received the appointment of accountant-general and treasurer at the Mauritius. Here he stayed for some years, leading a life of pleasure, and going to the office only five times in the whole period, when suddenly a commission was appointed to inquire into the accounts, and he was dragged off from a supper, given in his honour, to prison, charged with a theft of £20,000, and sent under arrest to England. This "complaint of the chest," as he observed to a friend who was astonished to see him back so soon, was afterwards reduced to £12,000, and for this he was judged to be accountable, and put into the debtors' prison. Here,

from his diary, he seems to have enjoyed himself as much as ever, drinking as a loyal subject should, to the "health of my august detainer, the king." However, political influence was brought to bear upon the Government, and he was set at liberty with the burden of the debt hanging very lightly round his neck.

In 1820 he founded the *John Bull* newspaper, strongly in favour of the king's interests, scurrilous as it was witty; everybody read it, and for some years it yielded him £2000 per annum. His life we see had been sufficiently various, and not an incident of it was ever forgotten, for his memory was probably unrivalled. He made a bet that he would repeat in order the names of all the shops on one side of Oxford Street, and he only misplaced one; and he gained another wager by saying from memory a whole column of *Times* advertisement, which he had only once conned over; and on another occasion he utterly discomfited a universal critic, by engaging him in a conversation anent lunar eclipses, and then discharging three columns of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" at him, without pause or hesitation. He had, too, the gift of improvising verse in our stubborn English tongue, and was known on one occasion to introduce the names of fifty guests at a supper-table, in a song of fifty verses—each verse a rhymed epigram.

With attainments and experiences like these, Colburn may be considered as a wise rather than a venturous man when he offered Hook £600 to write a novel. The idea of the "Sayings and Doings" was struck out at a *John Bull* gathering, and the book when published in 1824, was so successful that 6000 copies of the three volumes were soon disposed of,[21]

and the generous publisher made the author a present of £350. For the *second series* (published in 1825), and the *third series* (published in 1828), he received a thousand guineas each. In 1830 appeared "Maxwell," perhaps the best of his novels, and this was followed by the "Parson's Daughter" (1833), "Jack Brag" (1837), and numerous others, for all of which he was very handsomely paid. But though he was earning at this period, upwards of £3000 a year by his pen, he was spending more than £6000, and was obliged, not only to make fresh engagements with his publishers, but to fore-draw to a very large extent, and to change his plans considerably with each instalment of indebtedness. Colburn and Bentley seem to have treated him with marked esteem and consideration, and his letters perpetually show this: "I have been so liberally treated by your house, that it seems almost presuming upon kindnesses" (1831). Again, in 1837: "I assure you I would not press the matter in a quarter where I am proud and happy to say—as I do to everybody—I have met with the greatest liberality."

In 1834 he took the management of the *New Monthly*, and to its pages he contributed what may be considered an autobiographical sketch. "Gilbert Gurney" and the sequel "Gilbert Married," the second of which unfortunately was not autobiographical; for he had formed ties with a woman who had not only sacrificed everything to him, but during the period of his imprisonment and his many troubles had behaved with exemplary faithfulness and unremitting attention; and these ties he had not the courage to legally strengthen. At his death the crown seized what little property he possessed, in the shape of household chattels and newspaper shares, to liquidate his unfortunate debt,

and his children were left penniless. A subscription was raised—if literary men are improvident (though many have more excuses for improvidence than Theodore Hook), they are at least kindly-hearted—and a sum of £3000 was collected, to which the King of Hanover contributed £500. As a strange test of Hook's joviality it is stated that the receipts of the dining-room of the Athenæum Club fell off by £300 when his well-known seat in "Temperance Corner" became vacant.

Another of the novelists with whom Colburn had long and intimate dealings was G. P. R. James, one of the most indefatigable writers that ever drove pen over paper. We give for the sake of clearness, a tabular statement of his extraordinary labours:—

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 51 | Novels in | 3 | Volumes | 153 | Volumes. |
| 2 | ” | 4 | ” | 8 | ” |
| 6 | ” | 2 | ” | 12 | ” |
| 16 | ” | 1 | ” | 16 | ” |
| Edited Works | | | | 14 | ” |
| Miscellaneous Contributions would fill say | | | | 10 | ” |
| | | | | 223 | Volumes. |

Truly a gargantuan labour! Some of James's early writings had attracted the attention of Washington Irving, who strongly advised the undertaking of some more important work, and as a consequence "Richelieu" was commenced. After it had received Scott's approval it was submitted to Colburn, and published in 1828 with a success that determined the young author's future career. We cannot, of course,

follow the progress of the 223 volumes as they issued from the press. It would be absurd to look for originality in a book-manufacturer of this calibre, and, as Whipple says, James "was a maker of books without being a maker of thought." Still they served their purpose of enriching the author and publishers, and at a time when the public appetite was less jaded than at present, his works were eagerly looked for, and even now many readers agree with Leigh Hunt:—"I hail every fresh publication of James, though I hardly know what he is going to do with his lady, and his gentleman, and his landscape, and his scenery, and his mystery, and his orthodoxy, and his criminal trial."

In 1826 Colburn published Banim's "Tales of the O'Hara Family," a book that excited a very strong interest in the public mind, and in the same year he issued "Vivian Grey," by a young author whose life was to be as romantic as his story. Mr. Disraeli's first book contains a curious confession of his youthful aspirations, and even a curiously exact prototype of his future life. This was followed in 1831 by the "Young Duke." "Bless me!" the elder Disraeli exclaimed when he read this eloquent account of aristocratic circles, "why the boy has never sat in the same room as a duke in his life." Mr. Disraeli's novels soon became famous for the portraits or caricatures of distinguished living people, scarcely disguised under the slightest of all possible pseudonyms; to those living in the metropolis the likenesses were evident enough, and a regular key was published to each for the benefit of our country cousins.

In 1829 Colburn published "Frank Mildmay," a novel full of false morality and falser style, but delineating sea life with such a flavour of fun and

frolic, adventures and brine, that Marryat was at once hailed as a true successor to Smollett. This was followed by a rapid succession of sea stories, among the best of which undoubtedly are “Peter Simple” and “Midshipman Easy.” The perusal of these works has probably done more to turn youthful aspiration and energies to the choice of a profession than any series of formal injunctions ever penned. Old King William, the Sailor-King, was so entranced with “Peter Simple” that he begged to be introduced to the author, and promised to bestow some honourable distinction upon him for his services; but afterwards recollecting suddenly that he “had written a book against the impressment of seamen,” he refused to fulfil his pledge. When, later on, Colburn published Marryat’s “Diary in America,” the Yankees felt terribly outraged, and the severe criticism that followed speedily emptied his shelves of a large edition.

This was emphatically the period of fashionable novels, and the great outside world was perpetually calling out for more and more romantic accounts of that attractive region to which middle-class thought could only aspire in reverent fancy. And though these novels seemed written primarily to illustrate the moral lesson of Touchstone to the Shepherd —“Shepherd, wert thou ever at court?” “No.” “Then thou art damned”—the public received the oracle, not only with humility, but thankfulness. For a time Mr. Bulwer Lytton was a disciple of this fashionable school, but even “Pelham” has an interest greater than any other specimen of its class, for though, in some degree, an illustration of the maxim that “manners make the man,” the threads of a darker and more tragic interest are interwoven with the tale. As an artistic worker, as a true delineator of our

subtler and deeper passions, Lord Lytton was far above any other of Colburn's writers—above, indeed, any other writer of the day; while his sophistry, immense as it undoubtedly is, only lends a more forcible and enthralling interest to his plots. None of Colburn's novelists—and their name was legion—brought in more grist to the publishing mill than Lord Lytton; and, when the meal had been baked several times, Messrs. Routledge paid the author £20,000 for all future use of these works—as popular now perhaps in their cheap editions as they have ever been before.

To return for a moment more immediately to Colburn's life, we find him still speculating in periodical literature, and with the same success as ever. In 1828 he commenced the *Court Journal*, and in the following year started the *United Service Magazine*, while for many years he possessed a considerable interest in the *Sunday Times* newspaper; and all these periodicals are still held in popular esteem.

The printing expenses of his enormous business had been very considerable, and in 1830 he resolved to take his principal printer, Mr. Richard Bentley, into partnership; but the alliance did not last long, and in August, 1832, the connection was dissolved, and Colburn relinquished the business in New Burlington Street to Mr. Bentley, giving him a guarantee in bond that he would not recommence publishing again within twenty miles of London.

However, his heart was so intuitively set upon the profitable risks of a publisher's career, that he could not quietly retire in the prime of life, and, accordingly, he started a house at Windsor, so as to be within the letter of the law, but the garrison town

was sadly quiet after the literary circles of London, and to London he again returned, paying the forfeiture in full. This time he opened a house in Great Marlborough Street, as his old establishment in New Burlington Street was, of course, in possession of Mr. Bentley, whose business had already assumed formidable proportions. At Great Marlborough Street, Colburn succeeded in rallying round him all his old authors, and, perhaps, the greatest triumphs that date from thence, are Miss Strickland's "Lives of the Kings and Queens of England and Scotland," for the copyright of the first of which he paid £2000. Burke's "Peerage," "Baronetage," and "Landed Gentry" were also among his most profitable possessions.

Throughout the whole of his business life, Colburn had a very keen perception as to what the public required, and of the market value of the productions offered him; and yet he was almost uniformly liberal in his dealings. His judgment of copyrights was occasionally assisted by Mr. Forbes and Mr. Charles Ollier.

Of course, among the multitude of books he produced, many were utterly worthless, beyond affording a passing recreation to the library subscribers, and many even were pecuniary failures. The most ludicrous of these failures was a scheme originated by John Galt, a constant contributor to the *New Monthly*. This was a periodical, which, under the title of the *New British Theatre*, published the best of those dramatic productions, which the managers of the great playhouses had previously rejected. The audacity of the scheme carried it through for a short time, but soon the unfortunate editor was smothered amid such a heap of dramatic rubbish, coming at

every fresh post, to the table of the benevolent encourager of youthful aspirations, that he was fain to acknowledge the justice of the managers' previous decisions.

Although Colburn was throughout his career chiefly successful as a caterer for the libraries, supplying them with novels, which, by some mysterious law, were required to consist of three volumes of about three hundred pages each, the cost of the whole fixed immutably at one guinea and a half, his "Modern Novelists," containing his best copyright works, in a cheap octavo form, attained the number of nineteen, being published at intervals between 1835 and 1841, and formed a valuable addition to the popular literature of the time.

Finally, Colburn, having acquired an ample competence, retired from business, in favour of Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, still, however, retaining his name to some favourite copyrights. He had been twice married, the second time, in 1841, to the daughter of Captain Crosbie, R.N.

After a period of well-earned leisure, rendered pleasingly genial by the constant society of his literary friends, Henry Colburn died, on the 16th of August, 1855, at his house in Bryanston Square.

The whole of his property was sworn to be under £35,000, and went to his wife and her family. Two years later, the seven copyrights he had reserved were sold by auction, and realised the large sum of £14,000, to which Miss Strickland's "Lives of the Queens of England" alone contributed £6900.

As publisher of three volume novels, Colburn was succeeded by two principal rival houses, with the foundation of each of which he was in some way

concerned. As Mr. Bentley's establishment in New Burlington Street was only a further development of Colburn's old house, a few words may not be out of place concerning it. In 1837, Mr. Bentley proposed to start a periodical to rival the *New Monthly*, and at the preliminary meeting it was proposed to call it the *Wit's Miscellany*, but James Smith objected to this as being too pretentious, upon which Mr. Bentley proposed the title of *Bentley's Miscellany*. "Don't you think," interposed Smith, "that that would be going too far the other way?" However, the name was adopted (Mr. Bentley denies the accuracy of this anecdote—but *se non è vero, è ben trovato*). One of the chief contributors to the new *Miscellany* was Barham, who had been a school chum of Mr. Bentley's at St. Paul's, and, until 1843, the "Ingoldsby Legends" delighted the public in the pages of the *Miscellany*. The last poem of the "Legends" was published in Colburn's *New Monthly*, but by Barham's express wish, the song he wrote on his death-bed, "As I Lay Athynkynge," appeared, as fitly closing his career, in *Bentley*. The first editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, was no less a man than Charles Dickens, who had previously contributed the "Sketches by Boz" to the *Morning Chronicle*, and who soon, as the author of *Pickwick*, became the most popular writer of the day. Mr. Bentley was one of the first publishers to secure Dickens's services, and in his magazine "Oliver Twist" appeared. The editorship afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Harrison Ainsworth and Mr. A. Smith. For the magazine, as for his ordinary business, Mr. Bentley secured the aid of most of the writers who had graduated first under Colburn; and to enumerate them would, with the exception of "Father Prout," be merely a repetition of names already mentioned, and

those who have won popularity since then have scarcely yet had time to lose it. An amusing story, however, worth repeating, has been recently told by the *Athenæum*, anent "Eustace Conway," a novel by the late Mr. Maurice. "We believe," says that journal, "we are not going too far in telling the following story about it. Mr. Maurice sold the novel to the late Mr. Bentley somewhere about the year 1830; but the excitement caused by the Reform Bill being unfavourable to light literature, Mr. Bentley did not issue it till 1834, when he had quite lost sight of its author, then a curate in Warwickshire. The villain of the novel was called Captain Marryat; and Mr. Maurice, who first learned of the publication of his book from a review in our columns, had soon the pleasure of receiving a challenge from the celebrated Captain Marryat. Great was the latter's astonishment on learning that the anonymous author of 'Eustace Conway' had never heard of the biographer of 'Peter Simple,' and, being in Holy Orders, was obliged to decline to indulge in a duel." Mr. Bentley died in September, 1871, and was succeeded in the business by his son, who for many years had been associated with him.





# *THE RIVINGTONS, THE PARKERS, AND JAMES NISBET*:

## RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

Not only is the Rivington family the oldest still existing in bookselling annals, but even in itself it succeeded, a century and a half ago, to a business already remarkable for antiquity. In 1711, on the death of Richard Chiswell, styled by Dunton "the Metropolitan of booksellers," his premises and his trade passed into the hands of Charles Rivington, and the sign of the "Bible and the Crown" was then first erected over the doorway of the house in Paternoster Row; and from that time to this the "Bible and the Crown" might have been fairly stamped upon the cover of nearly every book issued from the establishment, as a seal and token of its contents.

Charles Rivington was born at Chesterfield, in Derbyshire, towards the close of the seventeenth century, and from a very early age he evinced such a taste for religious books that his friends determined to send him to London, that he might become a

theological bookseller. Having served his apprenticeship with a Mr. Matthews, he was, in 1711, made free of the city, preparatory to entering into business on his own account, and, bearing the date of that year, billheads are still existing to which his name is affixed. In 1718 we find him, in conjunction with other firms, issuing proposals to print by subscription Mason's "Vindication of the Church of England, and the Ministry thereof," a principle that the family has steadily adhered to ever since; for though Rivington published one of Whitfield's very earliest works, "The Nature and Necessity of a New Birth in Christ," preached at Bristol in September, 1737, the author was then a young Oxford student, who had been but just ordained; and Wesley, too, the other great religious mover of the day, was still a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, when Rivington brought out his edition of Thomas à Kempis' "Imitation of Christ," a book that has, after the Bible, gone through more editions than any other.

About 1719, an association of some half-a-dozen respectable booksellers entered into partnership for the purpose of printing expensive books, and styled themselves the printing *Conger*,[22] and, in 1736, another similar company was started by Rivington and Bettesworth, who termed themselves the "New Conger."

Much of Rivington's business consisted in the publication of sermons, which, as a simple commission trade, was profitable without risk. An amusing story is told, which proves that the ponderous nature of his trade stock did not prevent Charles Rivington from being a man of kindly humour. A poor vicar, in a remote country diocese,

had preached a sermon so acceptable to his parishioners, that they begged him to have it printed, and, full of the honour conferred and the greater honours about to come, the clergyman at once started for London, was recommended to Rivington, to whom he triumphantly related the object of his journey. Rivington agreed to his proposals, and asked how many copies he would like struck off. “Why, sir,” replied the clergyman, “I have calculated that there are in the kingdom ten thousand parishes, and that each parish will, at least, take one and others more, so that I think we may venture to print thirty-five or thirty-six thousand copies.”

Rivington remonstrated, the author insisted, and the matter was settled. With great self-denial, the clergyman waited at home for nearly two months in silence, but at length the hope of fame and riches so tormented him that he could hold out no longer, and he wrote to Rivington desiring him to send in the debtor and creditor account at once, but adding liberally that the remittance might be forwarded at his own convenience. What, then, was his astonishment, anguish, and tribulation, when the following account was received:—

The Revd. Dr. * * *

To C. Rivington, Dr.

| | £ | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| To Printing and Paper, 35,000 Copies of Sermons | 785 | 5 | 6 |
| By sale of 17 Copies of said Sermon | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| Balance due to C. Rivington | £784 | 0 | 0 |

In a day or two he received a letter from

Rivington to the following purport:—

"REV. SIR,—I beg pardon for innocently amusing myself at your expense, but you need not give yourself any uneasiness. I knew better than you could do the extent of the sale of single sermons, and accordingly printed one hundred copies, to the expense of which you are heartily welcome."[23]

In 1736 Rivington became an active member of a society for promoting the encouragement of learning, but as he and his colleagues sustained much injury through it, this was in the following year abandoned.

In 1737 we find him venturing in a very different path. "Two booksellers," writes Richardson, "my particular friends (Rivington and Osborne), entreated me to write for them a little volume of letters, in a common style, on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves. 'Would it be any harm,' said I, 'in a piece you want to be written so low, if one should instruct them how they should think and act in common cases, as well as indite?' They were the more urgent for me to begin the little volume for the hint. I set about it, and in the progress of writing two or three letters to instruct handsome girls who were obliged to go out to service, as we phrase it, how to avoid the snares that might be laid against their virtue, the above story occurred to me, and hence sprang 'Pamela.'" The first two volumes of the story were written in three months, and never was a book of this kind more generally or more quickly admired. Pope asserted that it would do more good than twenty sermons, mindful, perhaps, of its publisher; Slocock and many other eminent divines recommended it from the pulpit; a critic declared that if all books were burnt, the Bible and 'Pamela'

ought to be preserved; and even at fashionable Ranelagh, where the former was in but little request, "it was usual for the ladies to hold up the volume (the latter) to one another, to show that they had got the book that every one was talking of." What, however, was more to Rivington's purpose, the volume went through five editions in the year of publication, 1741.

This success closed Charles Rivington's business life, for he died on the 25th of February, 1742.

By Ellen Pease, his wife, a native of Durham, he had six children, to whom his friend Samuel Richardson, the executor also of his will, acted as guardian.

Charles, the founder, was succeeded by John and James, who carried on the publishing business conjointly for several years, after which James joined a Mr. Fletcher, in St. Paul's Churchyard, with whom he brought out Smollett's "History of England," by which £10,000 was cleared—the largest profit that had yet been made on any single book. This success, however, encouraged James to neglect his affairs, and he took to frequenting Newmarket; racing and gambling soon ended in a failure, and in 1760 he thought it advisable to start for the New World. Here, in Philadelphia, he commenced his celebrated *Gazette*, and, as he advocated the British interests and took the loyal side, his premises were destroyed by the rebels, and his type cast into republican bullets. James Rivington then came back to London, where he obtained the appointment of "King's printer to America," and furnished afresh with types and presses he returned to recommence his *Royal Gazette*, which he carried on boldly up to the withdrawal of the British troops; and as he had

contrived somehow, it is said by forwarding early intelligence, to propitiate the enemy, he was allowed to continue his paper, which soon died for want of subscribers; but until 1802 he lived in New York, leaving many descendants there. Even in those early and unsophisticated days, Yankee gentlemen had contracted the habit of "cowhiding" obnoxious or impertinent editors, and the wit of the *Royal Gazette* was in its time sufficiently stinging and personal to involve its proprietor in many of these little difficulties. James Rivington relates rather an amusing story of an interview with Ethan Allen, one of the republican heroes, who came for the express purpose of administering chastisement. He says:—

"I was sitting down, after a good dinner, with a bottle of Madeira before me, when I heard an unusual noise in the street, and a huzza from the boys. I was on the second story, and, stepping to the window, saw a tall figure in tarnished regimentals, with a large cocked hat and an enormously long sword, followed by a crowd of boys, who occasionally cheered him with huzzas, of which he seemed quite unaware. He came up to my door and stopped. I could see no more—my heart told me it was Ethan Allen. I shut my window, and retired behind my table and my bottle. I was certain the hour of reckoning had come—there was no retreat. Mr. Staples, my clerk, came in, paler than ever, clasping his hands—'Master, he has come!' 'I know it.' I made up my mind, looked at the Madeira, possibly took a glass. 'Show him up, and if such Madeira cannot mollify him, he must be harder than adamant.' There was a fearful moment of suspense; I heard him on the stairs, his long sword clanking at every step. In he stalked. 'Is your name James Rivington?' 'It is, sir, and no man can be more

delighted to see Colonel Ethan Allen.' 'Sir, I have come——' 'Not another word, my dear Colonel, until you have taken a seat and a glass of old Madeira.' 'But, sir, I don't think it proper—' 'Not another word, Colonel, but taste this wine; I have had it in glass ten years.' He took the glass, swallowed the wine, smacked his lips, and shook his head approvingly. 'Sir, I come——' 'Not another word until you have taken another glass, and then, my dear Colonel, we will talk of old officers, and I have some queer events to detail.' In short, we finished three bottles of Madeira, and parted as good friends as if we never had cause to be otherwise."

In England, to return there, John Rivington was still successfully fostering his father's business. A quiet and sedate man, with nothing of James' rashness and venture about him, he is described by West as being stout and well formed, particularly neat in his person, of dignified and gentlemanly address, going with gold-headed cane and nosegay twice a day to service at St. Paul's—as befitted the great religious publisher of the day, and living generally upon the most friendly terms with the members of the Episcopal Bench, and breakfasting every alternate Monday with Bishop Seeker at Lambeth. A kind master, too, for coming back on the 30th of January, from service, and finding his sons and clerks plodding at the desk—"Tous, sous, how is this?—I always put my shutters up on this day."

In May, 1743, he married a sister of Sir Francis Gosling, Alderman, afterwards Lord Mayor, and as she brought him a fortune and fifteen children, the match may probably be considered a prosperous one.

Orthodox in his views, and true in business to the professions he held out privately, Wesley and

Whitfield had to go elsewhere for a publisher, although there must have been plenty of temptation to incline the trade to patronise Methodism, for Coote, in a comedy of his, published in 1757, makes a bookseller say:—"I don't deal in the sermon way now; I lost money by the last I printed, for all 'twas by a Methodist." But John Rivington would have none of them, and in 1752 we find him publishing "The Mischiefs of Enthusiasm and Bigotry: an Assize Sermon by the Rev. R. Hurd;" and about 1760 he was appointed publisher to the venerable "Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge"—an office that remained in the family for upwards of seventy years. Dissent in itself was injurious enough to his interests, but when Wilberforce and Hannah More succeeded in making a portion of the Church "Evangelical," upwards of half his customers deserted to a rival shop in Piccadilly.

Some time before this he had admitted his sons, Francis and Charles, into partnership, and he was then appointed manager in general of the works published by his *clique*;—that is, of standard editions of Shakespeare, Milton, Locke, and other British classics, and of such religious works as were produced in an expensive and bulky form; and of these works, two especially, Dr. Dodd's "Commentary," and Cruden's "Concordance" stand out so prominently that some slight account of their authors may not be unacceptable.

William Dodd was a man of great learning, and a very popular preacher in the metropolis, and in 1776, when he was appointed chaplain to the King, took his degree of LL.D. Ambitious and fond of display he found himself in debt, and determined to make a bold effort to secure the Rectory of St.

George's, Hanover Square. To her great surprise the wife of Lord Chancellor Apsley received an anonymous letter offering her £3000 if she would procure Dr. Dodd's presentation to the parish. This insulting proposal was traced to Dodd, and the King ordered that he should be deprived of his chaplaincy. This disgrace, of course, involved him still further, and to extricate himself from these difficulties he was tempted to forge the name of his pupil, Lord Chesterfield, to a bond for £4200. On the discovery of the forgery, Mr. Manley, a solicitor, called upon the doctor with the bill, leaving it on the table in a room where a fire was burning, when he went out for the obvious purpose of refreshment. Dr. Dodd appears to have been too honest to destroy the fatal document, and he was afterwards tried and condemned for forgery, and, spite of all the strenuous efforts of his friends, was executed on 27th of June, 1777.

Alexander Cruden, one of the most useful men who have ever followed the painstaking and praiseworthy profession of index-making, was born in Aberdeen in 1701. An unfortunate passion, which was treated by its unworthy object with great contumely, weakened his senses, and on the discovery that the girl he worshipped was pregnant by her own brother, he went for a short time entirely out of his mind. On his recovery, he was sent to London in the hopes that the difficulty of obtaining position and livelihood might act tonically. At one of the first houses at which he called, the door was opened by the wretched girl herself, and poor Cruden rushed off wildly and vacantly into the streets. For many years he was a bookseller, doubly entitled, therefore, to a notice here, and upon the counter of his shop, under the Royal Exchange, his

famous and laborious “Concordance” was compiled. Queen Caroline, to whom it was dedicated, unluckily died before publication, and the downfall of the expectations he had formed from her patronage was too much for the author, and his friends were compelled to place him in a lunatic asylum. Having made his escape, he brought an action against his relatives for false imprisonment—offering his sister the choice of Newgate, Reading and Aylesbury jails, and the prison at Windsor Castle. He was never insane in the eyes of his employers, and as a corrector of the press, especially in the finer editions of the classics, his services were invaluable. Henceforth he adopted the name of “Alexander the Corrector,” as expressive of his character of censor general to the public morals. Armed with a large sponge, his favourite and incessant weapon, he perambulated the town, wiping out all obnoxious signs, more especially “Number 45,” then rendered famous by Wilkes. Giving out, too, that he had a commission from above to preach a general reformation of manners, he made the attempt first among the gownsmen at Oxford, and then among the prisoners at Newgate; but in neither case did he meet with much encouragement. He asked for knighthood from the King, and a vacant ward from his fellow-citizens; and on refusal said that he possessed the hearts if not the hands of his friends. He was found dead on his knees, apparently in a posture of prayer, at his lodgings in Islington on November 1st, 1770.

Samuel Richardson appears to have entertained grateful remembrance of the commission to write the “Familiar Letters to and from several Persons upon Business and other Subjects,” for on his death he left a mourning ring to James Rivington.

During Dodsley's illness, Rivington and his sons managed the *Annual Register*, and when on his death it was sold to Orridge and others, they started an annual of their own, which lasted till 1812, and then till 1820 was in abeyance, resumed again till 1823, and in the following year the two were merged into one, and after being published for a few years by the Baldwins, its management returned again to their own hands. Through the *Register* they were brought into connection with Burke, and were subsequently publishers of his more important works.

At all times the Rivingtons took a very great interest in the Stationers' Company; this was especially the case with James, who served as master, and at the same time he, his two brothers, and his four sons were all members of the livery. He held many public appointments, was in commission of the peace, a governor of most of the Royal hospitals, and a director of the "Amicable Society," and of the Union Fire Office.

He died, universally regretted, on the 16th of February, 1792, in his seventy-second year, and was followed by his widow in the succeeding October.

Owing to the split we have referred to in his business, and to his uniform generosity, the fortune he left behind him was not large—indeed, money hoarding has been an attribute of none of the Rivington family.

His two elder sons, Francis and Charles, carried on the business vigorously. Another son, Robert, captain of the "Kent"—East Indiaman—fell, gallantly defending his ship in the Bay of Bengal, and was thus celebrated in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—

* * * * *

"His manly virtue mark'd the generous source,
And naval toil confirm'd the naval force;
In fortune's adverse trial undismay'd,
A seaman's zeal and courage he display'd;
For honour firmly stood, at honour's post,
And gain'd new glory when his life he lost!"

A fourth son John, a printer in St. John's Square, had died previously in 1785.

The first important event in the new publishing house was the establishment of the *British Critic*, in which Nares and Beloe were conjoint partners with Francis and Charles Rivington. The *British Critic* was started in January, 1793, in monthly numbers of two shillings each, and by the end of the century attained a circulation of 3500. The editorship was entrusted to Nares, and with the assistance of Beloe it was conducted down to the forty-second volume in 1813. William Beloe was some time librarian of the British Museum, but a stranger who had been admitted to the print-room, having abused his confidence, and stolen some of the pictures, the librarian was somewhat unjustly asked to resign. Among the other contributors to the *British Critic* were Dr. Parr—of whom Christopher North says, not unfairly, "in his character of a wit and an author one of the most genuine feather-beds of humbug that ever filled up a corner of the world"—and Whittaker, author of the "History of Manchester." In 1813, the second series of the *Critic* was commenced, under the editorship of the Rev. W. R. Lyall, afterwards Dean of Canterbury; in 1825 the publication was made quarterly, and a third series began, which, however, only reached three volumes.

Of all the literary men connected with the Rivingtons of this era, none were more useful, and

few deserve more grateful remembrance from posterity, than George Ayrscough—-*facile princeps* of index makers. Originally a miller's labourer, he obtained a situation in the Rivingtons' shop, and was afterwards promoted to a clerkship in the British Museum; soon after his further rise to the position of assistant librarian he took orders; but it is as a maker of catalogues and indexes that he is still known; and how great the labour and patient skill needful in compiling the indexes to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Monthly Review*, and the *British Critic* must have been, all students can approximately guess from the immensity of labour saved individually by their use.

John, the eldest son of Francis, was admitted a partner in 1810, and in 1819 they took a lease of No. 3, Waterloo Place; and so popular were they at the time that it is said Sir James Allen Park, one of the judges, came down to the new house before nine o'clock on New-year's Day, that he might enrol himself as their first customer. In 1820 they determined to start a branch house for the sale of second-hand books and general literature, and John Cochrane was placed at the head of this establishment. He collected one of the finest stocks ever gathered, and published the best and most carefully compiled catalogue that had then been issued, extending to 815 pages, and enumerating 17,328 articles, many of the rarest kind. The business, however, entailed considerable losses, and was abandoned in 1827.

On October 18, 1822, Francis Rivington, the senior partner, died, earning a character for high probity and sincere and unaffected piety. Like his father he had been a governor in many charitable institutions. "Such a man," says the author of his

obituary notice, “cannot go unwept to the grave; and the writer of this article, after a friendly intercourse of sixty years, is not ashamed to say that at this moment his eyes are moister than his pen”—a quaint but sincere tribute. He had married Miss M. Elhill, sister of an eminent lead merchant, and four of his sons survived him.

In 1827 George and Francis, sons of Charles, joined the firm; and in 1831, Charles, the younger of the two original brothers, was found dead on the floor of his dressing-room. In social life he was distinguished by the mildness and complacence of his temper; and his conversation was invariably enlivened with anecdotes and memories of the literary men and clergymen with whom he had come in contact.

The firm now, therefore, consisted of John, the son of the elder, and Francis and George, two sons of the younger brother.

We shall see, in the following memoirs of the Parkers, how marvellously religious life was quickened at Oxford by the publication of Keble’s “Christian Year.” This feeling, intense in its inner nature as any of the revivals, culminated or fulminated in the publication of the “Tracts for the Times”—the most important work, perhaps, with which the Rivingtons have ever been connected; and worthy, therefore, of the scanty notice for which we can afford space here. The “Tracts for the Times” were commenced in 1833, at a time, according to the writers, “when irreligious principles and false doctrines had just been admitted into public measures on a large scale ... when the Irish sees had been suppressed by the state against the Church’s wish.... They were written with the hope of rousing

members of the Church to comprehend her alarming position—of helping them to realize the fact of the gradual growth, allowance, and establishment of unsound principles in her internal concerns; and, having this object, they used spontaneously the language of alarm and complaint. They were written as a man might give notice of a fire or inundation, so as to startle all who heard him" (vol. iii. p. 3). As far as fulfilment of intention went in startling, the writers were perfectly successful. Exhibiting great talents, depth of thought, logical power, acuteness of reasoning, and an undoubted religious feeling, their effect was spontaneous. By one party, and an increasing one, the writers were welcomed with a reverend love that almost forbade criticism, and by the other with the greatest uneasiness and suspicion. The chief writers in the series, for the "Tracts" continued to appear during the space of several years, were Newman, Pusey, Keble, and Williams. In Ireland the clergy were anxious to come over in a body, and greet them collectively. In Scotland, Pusey and Newman were denounced at a public dinner as enemies to the established religion; and at Oxford, where they were personally loved and respected, they were looked upon by a large portion of the members with peculiar distrust. Parties in the Church were formed, and claimed, or were christened after, the names of the writers—such were originally the *Puseyites* and *Newmaniacs*. At length the famous "Number 90" appeared, and was thus greeted by the University:—"Modes of interpretation such as are suggested in this tract, evading rather than explaining the sense of the 39 articles, and reconciling subscription to them with the adoption of errors which they were destined to counteract, defeat the object, and are inconsistent with the due

observance of the above-mentioned statement." The Bishop of Oxford forbade their further publication, and shortly afterwards Newman, the author of "Number 90," showed his honesty by going over to the Roman Catholic Church.

The publication of these "Tracts" still further strengthened the Rivingtons in their position of High Church publishers, and their business benefited considerably by the great increase of the High Church party.

In 1827 a fourth series of the *British Critic* was commenced, incorporated with the *Theological Review*. In 1843, however, in consequence of the extreme views that had been expressed in its pages, the publication was discontinued, to the very great regret of the clergy; the *English Review*, which started from its ashes, met with but little support, and lasted only till 1853.

To complete our personal account of the firm:—John Rivington, who married Anne, daughter of the Rev. John Blackburn, canon of York, died 21st November, 1841, at the age of 62. His son John was admitted a partner in 1836, and is the present head of the firm. George Rivington died in 1842, having retired on account of ill health in 1857, and in 1859 Mr. Francis Rivington retired from active partnership. The present representatives of the firm consist, therefore, of Mr. John Rivington, fifth in descent from the founder, and Mr. Francis Hansard Rivington, who is the sixth.

In 1853 the firm removed their place of business from the ancient house in St. Paul's Churchyard, and consolidated it at 3, Waterloo Place, retaining nothing but some warehouses in Paternoster Row. In 1862, after an interval of thirty years, they re-

acquired the agency of the Cambridge "Press"—a famous manufactory of Bibles, Prayer Books, and Church Services; and in the next year, 1863, they opened branch houses at both Oxford and Cambridge —an extension of business that, after a long life of 160 years, says something for the vitality of the firm.

* * * * *

In treating of the Parkers, it will be necessary to bear in mind the essential fact that there were two distinct families of that name, both engaged in the publication of religious books, and both interested in the "Bible Press"—the one at Oxford and the other at Cambridge; and though its chief interest, as regards later years, will be centred in the younger (publishing) family, who began life in London, it will be necessary, according to our general plan, to give a preliminary glance at the elder family, whose name is more intimately connected with the University of Oxford.

The first of the Parkers with whom we need concern ourselves was Dr. Samuel Parker, sometime Bishop of Oxford. The product of a changeable age, he was a very Vicar of Bray. While at the University of Oxford, he affected to lead a strictly religious life, and entered a weekly society then called the "Gruellers," because their chief diet was water gruel; and it was observed "that he put more graves into his porridge than all the rest." Formerly a nonconformist, having once taken orders, he became chaplain to a nobleman in London, whom he amused with his humorous sallies at the expense of his old comrades the Puritans. During Charles's reign, his writings were distinguished by the bitterness of his attacks upon the dissenting party; and on the

accession of James he was installed in the bishopric of Oxford, upon the death of Dr. Fell—the famous subject of inexplicable dislike. He now embraced the Romish religion, “though,” writes Father Peter, a Jesuit, “he hath not yet declared himself openly; the great obstacle is his wife, whom he cannot rid himself of.” Finding the cause growing desperate, he sent a discourse to James, urging him to embrace the Protestant religion. His authority in the diocese became contemptible, and he died unlamented in 1687. He left, however, a son of his own name, an excellent scholar and a man of singular modesty, who married a bookseller’s daughter, of Oxford, and had a numerous family, to support whom he not only wrote, but published, and himself sold, books of a learned class—the most important of which was the “Bibliotheca Biblica.” He died in 1730, and his son, Sackville Parker, was an eminent bookseller in the Turl, his shop being chiefly frequented by the High Church and non-juring clergy. He was one of the four octogenarian Oxford booksellers who all died between 1795 and 1796, and whose united years amounted to 342. He was succeeded by Joseph Parker, his nephew.

About the year 1790, Joseph Parker was apprenticed to Daniel Prince, whose successor, Joshua Cooke, was agent to the University Press, and thus he was able to become acquainted with the management of its publications. The Bible Press was at this period in debt, and was an annual expense to the University, but Parker saw the feasibility of making it a profitable concern, and, by dint of strenuous persuasion, was, in 1805, allowed to enter into partnership with the University Press, jointly with Cooke and Samuel Collingwood, the latter of whom attended to the printing, while the publishing

business was left entirely in Joseph Parker's hands. Great difficulty was felt at first in borrowing money to meet that advanced by the University. In a few years, however, the debts were paid off, and large profits began to come in, and during his lifetime he was able to pay over upwards of £100,000 into the University chest, building in addition the new printing-office, at a cost of £40,000, investing large sums in "plant," and leaving a concern that was worth £10,000 a year to the partnership.

For the seven years previous to 1815 the number of Bibles printed at Oxford was 460,500; Testaments, 386,000; of prayer-books, 400,000; of catechisms, psalters, &c., 200,000; and the money received as drawback for paper duty amounted to £18,658 2*s.* 6*d.* For the same period at Cambridge the Bibles numbered 392,000; the Testaments, 423,000; the Prayer-books, 194,000; while the drawback was only upwards of £1087 7*s.* 6*d.* In addition to his interest in the Bible Press, which yielded him about £1000 a year, Joseph Parker, on the death of his regular trade partner, Hanwell, became sole proprietor of the old-established bookselling business of Fletcher and Hanwell, in the Fleet, and, on the retirement of Cooke, succeeded to the office of "Warehouse-keeper," and also to the appointment of agent for the sale of books published on the "Learned" side of the press; the value of the books sold on this side amounted to from £3000 to £5000 annually, while on the Bible side under his management the sales were something like £100,000 worth.

By far the most important work, however, with which Joseph Parker's name is concerned, is Keble's "Christian Year." We believe that the first risk of publishing was insured by Sir John Coleridge.

Nothing could be more unassuming than its first appearance in 1827, in two little volumes, without even the authority of an author's name. None of the regular literary journals noticed its publication, excepting a friendly greeting in a footnote to an article on another subject in the *Quarterly Review*. Appealing to no enthusiastic feelings, deprecating excitement, and courting no parties, silently and imperceptibly at first, but with increasing rapidity, it found its way among all sections of churchmen, and was the real commencement of that movement in the Church with which afterwards the "Tracts for the Times" were associated. At Oxford, when once its popularity was attained, its effects were marvellous; young men dropped the slang talk of horses and women and wine, and went about with hymns upon their lips; instead of the riotous joviality of "wines," the evening meetings became austere; and even the most careless made some little temporary effort to be better and purer. Partaking of the nature of a revival —among a better-educated and less-impressionable class than that usually affected by such movements— its strongest outward symptoms were of longer than ordinary duration, and its inner effects much deeper.

The most popular volume of poems of recent times, it is said in the number of its editions to have out-rivalled Mr. Tupper's works (we state a fact merely, with an apology for mentioning the two names together); in less than twenty years, twenty-seven editions had been exhausted.[24]

The author's profits, as well as the publisher's, were large, and the Rev. J. Keble devoted his portion of them to the entire reconstruction of his own church, that of Hursley, in Hampshire.

In 1832 Joseph Parker retired from business,

retaining, however, his share in the Bible Press until his death in 1850.

Mr. John Henry Parker, his nephew, was the son of John Parker, merchant, of the City of London, and was born in the year 1806. After receiving a good education at Dr. Harris's school at Chiswick, he entered the bookselling trade in 1821, and was consequently fully prepared, eleven years later, to occupy the position just vacated by his uncle.

Mr. John Henry Parker is known almost as well as an antiquarian, and as a writer on architecture, as a publisher. He continued his uncle's business at Oxford, and extended it to London, where for many years it was under the management of Mr. Whitaker. The University, however, bought in again the share held by his uncle, in 1850, and declined admitting Mr. J. H. Parker as a partner unless he undertook to give up general business, as by a clause in the deed of partnership none of the temporary proprietors are allowed to follow any other calling. Mr. Parker's business was in such a profitable condition as to render such a step totally out of the question. He acted, however, as agent for the Oxford Press for many years.

In 1856 the Gentleman's Magazine was transferred to his house, and for some time he was, with two other gentlemen, conjoint editor; and in 1863 he retired in favour of his son James, devoting his time exclusively to the study of architecture. Among his best-known writings are "The Glossary of Architecture," and "An Introduction to the Study of Architecture," both of which are considered standard works on the subject.

In 1863, the year of his retirement, the agency of the works published by the delegates of the Oxford

University Press was transferred to Messrs. Macmillan and Co., and the ancient connection was altogether broken. Mr. James Parker, however, still continues the Oxford book-trade, though we believe the London house does the more important business.

Having dealt thus cursorily with the firm of John Henry and Joseph Parker, of London and Oxford, we come to the somewhat similar title of John William Parker and Son, of the West Strand, London.

John William Parker,[25] whose father was in the navy, was born in the year 1793, and at an early age entered the service of the late Mr. Clowes, printer, then only commencing business, and, at the age of 14, was bound apprentice to him. Here he took a strong dislike to the irksomeness of case, and it was found more profitable to employ him in the counting-house generally, where his retentive memory and his habits of close observation were quickly turned to good account. When, indeed, most of the records were destroyed by the outbreak of a fire, young Parker's memory was found most essential as a substitute for the current business documents.

Messrs. Clowes commenced their printing establishment in a very small way, but soon progressed, and were among the first to use the steam press; but as they were then in Northumberland Court, Strand, their neighbour, the Duke of Northumberland, brought an action against them for causing a nuisance, and eventually bought them out of their tenement, and Parker induced Clowes to purchase the lease and plant of a factory in Duke Street, Stamford Street, which had been started unsuccessfully by Applegarth, the inventor of the steam press. Here, undisturbed by neighbouring

aristocrats, Parker became the manager of the business, and it prospered so exceedingly that he established a printing-press of his own in the immediate vicinity, and found it necessary to live in Stamford Street, where he made the acquaintance of Dr. D'Oyley, Rector of Lambeth, Dr. Mant, and a number of other influential clergymen, whose connection with the venerable "Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge" eventually stood him in good stead.

About the year 1828, the University of Cambridge found that the receipts from its Press were barely sufficient to cover the expenses, while at the sister University, under the management of Collingwood and Mr. Joseph Parker, the annual returns were not only large, but increasing yearly. In this strait the Syndics applied to Mr. Clowes, who sent Mr. Parker down to inspect. The sensible manner in which he at once detected the faults of the establishment, and suggested improvements, led to his immediate engagement as advising printer at a salary of £200; and he soon proved his worth by turning to account the apparently useless stereotype plates; from one set alone, in one year, he cleared £1500 by cutting out the heads of chapters, &c., and re-setting them in new type. He re-opened the account with the "Bible Society," and in dealing with the "Christian Knowledge Society," abolished the tax of middlemen.

Parker had hoped, by his energy and perseverance, to become a partner with Mr. Clowes, but finding this precluded by family arrangements, he established himself at 445, West Strand, and at once received the appointment of "publisher of the books issued under the direction of the Committee of

General Literature and Education, appointed by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." This "Committee" had been established to sanction and recommend books of a wholesome character, but which, not dealing chiefly with religious matters, were believed to be out of the legitimate sphere of the original Society's operations.

In July the first number of the *Saturday Magazine* appeared. Mr. Parker was his own editor, and many of the illustrations were from the pencil of his son, Mr. Frederick Parker, who died very young. The *Saturday Magazine*—one of the three parents of our cheap periodical literature—was published weekly at the low price of a penny, and, a *répertoire* of useful and entertaining facts, and not much else, was intended to counteract the effects of the licentious publications of the day, then the only ones within reach of the poorer classes. It was continued successfully for thirty-five volumes; but is more interesting now as the foreshadowing of a better time than for any intrinsic value of its own. It was eventually merged in *Parker's London Magazine*.

445, West Strand became, of course, the Cambridge Depository for Bibles, Testaments, and Common Prayer-books printed at the University Press, and, at the death of Smith, Parker was appointed printer to the University at a salary of £400 a year, and visited Cambridge once or twice a fortnight. For many years, in spite of all his strenuous efforts and his repeated advice, the Bible Society set their faces resolutely against steam-printing. On one occasion he prepared a large edition of the nonpareil Bible at two-thirds of the price then charged, and took a dozen copies to the manager, Mr. Cockle, hoping that the Bible Society would

encourage so laudable an improvement. The manager hummed and hawed, sent for the binder, told him in confidence that the Cambridge people had kindly prepared some cheap Bibles printed by machinery, but he thought "from the smallness of the margins they *might* not fold evenly, and was not sure that, as a cheaper ink had been used, they *might* not set off when pressed," and all these predictions were verified, and the Committee would not sanction the purchase of such rubbish. Strangely enough, two or three years later, when cheap Bibles were eagerly called for, the whole of the rejected set were purchased by the Society, and no difficulty was experienced in their manipulation.

William IV. having expressed his royal wish for a Bible, Mr. Parker determined to print one specially, and on the occasion of the installation prepared a dozen sheets, which were pulled by the Duke of Wellington and other magnates; this is the first book ever printed with red rules round, and, as the "King's Bible," attained in various forms and sizes a great success. A committee was appointed to read and revise it, and it was purposed to make it the standard edition. One copy upon vellum was intended for the King, but as he died before its completion, her present Majesty Queen Victoria was graciously pleased to accept it. After some years Parker's interest in the Bible Press flagged, and much dissatisfaction was caused, and about 1853 he retired altogether from the management.

Parker had from a very early date thought of printing his own books, and started an office that was afterwards removed to St. Martin's Lane, but ultimately relinquished the management to Mr. Harrison, whom he took into partnership. When the

Council of Education was formed Parker was appointed publisher, and gave every assistance in the way of funds and encouragement, and Mr. Hullah, in particular, found in him a warm supporter.

Parker was twice married; by his first wife he had two sons, Frederick and John William, and this latter, born in 1820, after receiving a good education at King's College, was admitted into the house in 1843, and in a few years took the chief management of the general business.

Under Mr. John William Parker, Jun., the house became identified with the Liberal and Broad Church party, and till his death he held the reins of *Fraser's Magazine* entirely in his own hands. Strangely had that periodical altered since the days of Maginn and Fraser. Now it was the centre, in connection with 445, West Strand, from which issued the teachings of Maurice, Kingsley, and Tom Brown—the nursery of muscular Christianity—in one sense the cradle of Christian Socialism.

Mr. Parker, Jun., in his capacity of publisher and editor felt an immense responsibility, and really believed that the bishops of the Church of England held but sinecure offices, while he, and the heads of other publishing firms, were our virtual spiritual fathers and directors. He made himself no partizan in the religious and political questions of the day, and no prospect of pecuniary advantage would induce him to publish a book until he was first assured that it was the expression of honest conviction, or the result of honest labour. "One day," says the writer of an obituary notice, "going into Mr. Parker's room, we found his pale face paler than usual with anger. 'Look at these,' he said, putting a bundle of letters into our hands, 'or rather do not look at them.' A

lady, eminent in certain circles as a spiritual teacher, wanted him to publish a devotional book for her. She had sent him the private correspondence of some thirty different ladies, who had trusted her with the innermost secrets of their souls and consciences, as an advertisement of herself, her abilities, and her popularity. Mr. Parker was perhaps never seen more indignant. He declined the book on the spot. He returned the letters with a regret that the lady should have sent him what had been intended for no eye but her own. A few days after he showed us the lady's reply. Stung by the rebuke, she had dropped the mask for the moment, and had told him she did not require to be lectured on her duty by an insolent tradesman."

Of the success with which Mr. Parker's publications met it is sufficient to mention the names of Maurice, Kingsley, Mill, Buckle, and Lewis. Fruitful of discussion as were the works of the writers mentioned, they were all thrown into a temporary shade by the cry that arose on the publication, in 1860, of "Essays and Reviews," to which only the first named contributed. Shortly after the appearance of the volume a document was issued, bearing the signature of every bishop of the united Church, condemning many of the propositions of the book as inconsistent with an honest subscription to her formularies. This was succeeded by an address to the Archbishop of Canterbury, signed by more than 10,000 clergymen, condemning in the strongest terms the teaching of the essayists. As we all remember, the case was tried in the Court of Arches, and led to the temporary suspension of Dr. Williams and Mr. Wilson; a suspension that was afterwards reversed by the Privy Council. But this case, interesting as it may be for the student in the

future, though one of too many *causes célèbres* of church persecution, is too well known to detain us longer at present.

Mr. Parker, who took a deep interest in all religious questions, held weekly gatherings at his house, and was loved and respected by his clients, who regarded him as a friend rather than a business aid. He died in 1861, and for the moment the knot of earnest men who were clustered round *Fraser's Magazine* were dispersed. But in the year 1863 the agency of the works published by the delegates of the Oxford University Press was transferred from the other Parkers to Messrs. Macmillan, and henceforth *Macmillan's Magazine* and its contributors may be considered as an offshoot from 445, West Strand.

After the death of his son, Mr. Parker, who had for some years taken little active part in the management of the business, took his old assistant, Mr. William Butler Bown, into partnership; but the connection did not last long, and in 1863 the stock and copyrights were disposed of to Messrs. Longman, who agreed to allow Mr. Bown an annuity of £750 a year, which he only lived a year and a half to enjoy.

On May 18th, 1870, Mr. John William Parker died at his country house near Farnham. By his first wife he left two daughters living, and by his second (the daughter of Dr. Mantell, the well-known geologist) one son and two daughters. He was seventy-eight years of age at the time of his death; and, though his life presents us with little that is striking or historically strange, he had played an honest part manfully, and may be remembered as one of the few instances in which a publisher, successful as an architect of his own fortune, has been wise enough to transfer his business at the very

zenith of its success to the keeping of other hands, when he had ascertained that his own were too aged for its proper maintenance and management. The Broad Church, so called, and the liberal thought of the country, owe much to the now defunct firm of John William Parker and Son.

* * * * *

JAMES NISBET, the son of a poor Scotch farmer, who afterwards became a cavalry serjeant, was born on Feb. 3rd, 1785. After receiving the ordinary rudiments of education he was apprenticed to Mr. Wilson of Kelso for three years, but having obtained the offer of a situation in London he was permitted to leave before his indentures had expired. He left Scotland with only four guineas in his purse, and being delayed on the road, was obliged to sell his violin. On reaching town he became clerk to a Mr. Hugh Usher, a West India merchant in Moorfields, and his salary commencing at £54 12*s.* per annum took some years before it increased to £120.

James Nisbet's career has been to a certain extent chronicled by his son-in-law, the Rev. J. A. Wallace, in a volume entitled, "Lessons from the Life of James Nisbet, the Publisher"—not, says the author, "a mere biography"—would that it were!—but a series of forty chapters or lessons, each commencing with a text and ending with a hymn. To its rambling and incoherent pages we are indebted, however, to many of the facts in the following notice.

On the evening of Nisbet's arrival in London a young Scottish friend took him about sight-seeing. The walk terminated in a blind alley and a strange looking house—which instinct at once told him was

"the house of the destroyer." He gave up intercourse with his companion, and fled away hastily, and not till some few days afterwards, when he found a refuge in the Swallow Street Chapel, did he recover his equanimity.

From his earliest boyhood he had a great liking for "the courts of the Lord;" a pocket-book dated 1805, contains a list of places at which the gospel was reported to be purely preached. It seems, too, that his favourite books at this time were Henry's "Commentary," Cruden's "Concordance," Hall's "Contemplations," and Baxter's "Saints' Rest." At the Swallow Street Chapel he met his future wife.

As befitted a persevering and energetic man he was an early riser, yet he found that not only did his business require it, but he discovered "our Lord when on earth rising a great while before day that He might spend some time in secret prayer, and David says, 'Early will I seek Thee.'" So good a habit scarcely needed so lofty an apology.

His father appears to have remonstrated with him as to his excess of zeal: "Concerning the meetings you attend, God Almighty never designed man to spend all his time in godliness; He designed such as you and me to work for our bread"—advice that had not much effect, for we find Nisbet writing when down home in Scotland in 1808, "I have lost much time in coming here—no Thursday night sermons, no companion with whom I would wish to be on intimate friendship, and no Sabbath schools; and the Sabbath is a very poor Sabbath, very unlike our dear Sabbath in London."

Having, however, returned to London in 1809, he commenced business for himself on a very limited scale as a bookseller in Castle Street, and

characteristically the first books sold were copies of Streeter's "Catechism." In due course of time he prospered, was admitted to the freedom of the City of London, and elected to the office of Renter Warden in the Stationers' Company.

As soon as his reputation as a religious publisher was established, he purchased a house in Berners Street—"the great object of his ambition being, not to amass a large fortune for aggrandisement, but to be the pious proprietor of a comfortable dwelling, which he could throw open for the hospitable entertainment of godly men."

He firmly adhered to his principles of publishing books of one peculiar class, and rigidly excluded everything that was not of a moral or religious character; and not satisfied with purchasing the copyright of his authors upon highly advantageous terms, often added a liberal bonus when the work proved profitable. "To such a degree," says his biographer, "did his generosity overflow, that one estimable man, 'whose praise is in all the churches,' felt constrained to put the curb on his publisher's largesse. 'I shall agree to accept one hundred pounds, and no more,' commences one of his legal agreements."

Such conduct had its reward, for, says Mr. Wallace, "notwithstanding the humble position which James Nisbet occupied as a mere shopkeeper, so high was the estimation in which he was held as a philanthropist and a churchman that he was occasionally honoured by pressing invitations from families in the higher ranks of life, to visit them at their country seats"—the lesson drawn from such amazing condescension by the biographer being, "Him that honoureth I will honour"—and

accordingly Nisbet went for a whole week to Tollymore Park, and naturally writes from there: “What a blessed thing it is to be a Christian.” The curious chapter in which this visit is recorded is headed, “Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord.”

Among the numerous authors with whom Nisbet was connected was Edward Irving, for whom he published “Discourses on Daniel’s Vision of the Four Beasts,” and other books. Irving, by far the greatest orator and most eloquent speaker of our later times, “was for long enshrined in the warm recesses of Nisbet’s heart, and Nisbet not only sat under him, but contributed £21,000 to the Regent’s Square Church. But the love of truth was in Nisbet stronger than earthly affection, and soon the gift of speaking with unknown tongues was discovered.” “Last Sabbath,” writes Nisbet, “a most tumultuous scene took place, the lives of many people being in jeopardy, so that even Mr. Irving himself was terrified, and said that he would not allow the spirits to speak again in public.” He was then accused of heresy, and Nisbet, like most conscientious men, felt constrained to side against him. An ecclesiastical assize was holden for his trial, in March, 1833, at which a strange scene occurred. His answer to the charge was rather an authoritative command than an apology, perorating thus:—

“I stand here not by constraint, but willingly. Do what you like. I ask not judgment of you; my judgment is with my God; and as to the General Assembly, the spirit of judgment is departed from it. Oh, know ye not how near ye are to the brink of destruction. Ye need not expedite your fall. All are dead carrion. The Church is struggling with many

enemies, but her word is within herself—I mean this wicked assembly."

Then after the trial he was found guilty, and the sentence of deposition was about to be prefaced with prayer, when a loud voice was heard from behind a pew where Irving stood:—"Arise, depart! arise, depart! flee ye out, flee ye out of here! ye cannot pray! How can ye pray? How can ye pray to Christ whom ye deny? Ye cannot pray. Depart, depart! flee, flee!" The church was at this moment wrapped in silent darkness, and when this strange voice ceased, the 2000 sprang trembling to their feet as though the judgment day had come. On lighting a candle, however, it was ascertained that the speaker was a Mr. Dow, who had been lately ousted from the church for similar views. Irving rose grandly to obey the call, and pressing through the crowd that thronged the doorway and the aisles he thundered: "Stand forth! stand forth! what, will ye not obey the voice of the Holy Ghost? As many as will obey the voice of the Holy Ghost, let them depart!" Onward he went to the door, and then came to the last words:—"Prayer, indeed, oh!" and thus he left his church for ever.

Thousands and almost millions of tracts and small books did Nisbet scatter broadcast, freely to those who could not pay, with small charge to those who could. And at the period of the "Disruption" he circulated at his own expense, not only in Scotland and Ireland, but all over England, great multitudes of Dr. James Hamilton's "Farewell." But even in the midst of these labours the ungodly were busy, and a rumour was circulated that James Nisbet had gone over to the Church of Rome; and this, in spite of his well-known antipathies, gained considerable

credence. The following is from a letter from Mr. Wolff:—"I, a few days ago, read in the *Morning Post* that an eminent and successful bookseller had entered the Church of Rome. I thought that this bookseller must be one of the Tractarian party (the Rivingtons), but to my utter astonishment I heard it whispered that the bookseller was nobody else than Mr. James Nisbet, his whole family, and my old friend Mr. Murray, with the observation that 'one extreme leads to the other extreme.'... My dear Nisbet and Murray, what could induce you to do such a spite to your John Knox, Chalmers, and Gordon, and join with a rotten church? Nobody is more impatient in acknowledging the good things to be found in the Church of Rome than myself, yet I would rather see the Pope and all his cardinals fly to the moon than become a Papist again. In fact I never was one." (A curious way of putting it.)

This was not the only hoax by which James Nisbet was a sufferer. Later on, a practical joke was played upon him by some wag, who sent the following to a large number of country papers:—

"Nearly Ready, in Three Handsome Octavo Volumes,

"LITERARY PYROTECHNICS; or, Squibs, Pasquins, Lampoons, and other Sparkling Pleasantries, by the best English Writers, from the Reign of Elizabeth to the Present Day, with Philological Notes by the Hon. the Vice-Chancellor Sir William Page Wood, Knt.

"James Nisbet and Co., Berners-street, London."

This very advertisement was directed to be inserted in the next issue, and a copy of the paper containing the advertisement was to be sent to the publisher with the price of inserting it four or six times. About one hundred papers fell into the snare, to James Nisbet's horror and amazement.

Nisbet was a very charitable man to all of his way of thinking. The "Saints" were freely welcomed to his hospitable house, which was used as a free hotel by travelling missionaries and preachers, who often said a grateful "grace for all the rich mercies of his table." He was one of the chief supporters of the Fitzroy Schools, and one of the most zealous founders of the Sunday School Union. Nor was he wanting in generosity to general and more publicly useful charities; and, during a period of thirty years, his books show that he collected for more than five hundred institutions, and that the total amount that passed through his hands was £114,339 16*s.* 4*d.*

It is pleasant, amid the farrago of religious cant and trash with which the "Lessons from his Life" are surrounded, to find some glimmering of the real man —the enterprising and successful bookseller. "From his energy of character, and from habit, he was more accustomed to lead others than to be led himself; therefore, any attempt to alter or set aside arrangements which he had himself devised ... was almost sure to meet with, on his part, a strenuous and determined resistance."

In 1854, when the cholera was raging in London, his brave conduct was far above any party praise. The position of chairman of the Middlesex Hospital devolved temporarily upon him, and fearlessly he set about his difficult duty. Day after day he was at his post, directing all things, and alleviating, with every means in his power, the physical sufferings of the patients; and still, while adopting all that was proper to check the progress of the disease, not unmindful of administering the consolations of religion.

He died on the 8th November, 1854, having been seized with a violent illness on his return from a

before-breakfast visit to the Orphan Working School at Haverstock Hill.

In a funeral sermon, preached by Dr. Hamilton at Regent's Square church, his character is thus summed up, both sides of it being cautiously exhibited:—"With a sanguine temperament, he had strong convictions and an eager spirit; and, whilst he sometimes magnified into an affair of principle a matter of secondary importance, he was impatient of opposition, and did not always concede to an opponent the sincerity he so justly claimed for himself. Then, again, his openness was almost excessive, and his determination to flatter nobody sometimes led him to say things more plain than pleasant.... Those only could appreciate his excellence who either knew his entire mode of life, or whose casual acquaintance was confined to the walks of his habitual benevolence."

As a publisher, he was eminently successful, and reaped a due reward for his honest industry; never had he a bad debt but once, and, on recovering that unexpectedly, he presented the amount of it, in a silver service, to a church. The books he issued were chiefly of an ephemeral religious class, and literature is certainly less indebted to his success than were the charitable institutions of the day.

Mr. James Murray, who had been Nisbet's partner in business for many years, succeeded to the command of the firm; and, after his death at Richmond in June, 1862, Mr. Watson, the present manager, was appointed by the family to superintend the whole concern.





# *BUTTERWORTH AND CHURCHILL*:

## TECHNICAL LITERATURE.

In treating of "technical literature," we shall encounter many works which were rightly described by Charles Lamb as "books which are not books;" and the present chapter will be interesting rather as containing biographical notices of men who thoroughly deserved, and thoroughly achieved, success, than for any bibliographical anecdotes we can lay before the reader.

The value of technical literature, in a publishing point of view, had been correctly estimated in the very earliest times of bookselling annals, and Richard Tottell (or Tothill), an original member of the Stationers' Company, and eventually their chairman, had in Edward the Sixth's reign, and subsequently in Queen Elizabeth's, succeeded in obtaining a patent for law-books; and when, through the petition of the Stationers' Company, he was compelled to forego some of the works which he had thus monopolised,

he warily "kept his law-books to himself, and yielded 'Dr. Wilson upon Usurie,' and 'The Sonnets of th' Earle of Surrey.'" Tothill, however, did still publish other books than those relating to the very remunerative branch of law; for, in 1562, he produced "Stow's Abridgment of the Chronicles of England;" and, in 1590, "Tusser's Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry." His name would, probably, have been unknown, at all events forgotten, had he not occupied the *Hands and Star* in Temple Bar, the very same shop which, two-and-a-half centuries afterwards, Henry Butterworth again rendered famous as the great emporium of legal books.

Tothill was succeeded by John More (he had been previously represented, but only for awhile, by Barker and others), and we have already seen that Samuel Richardson, and Lintott's granddaughter, had obtained the patent of King's Printers for legal books; this brings us up in date to, at all events, the uncle of the subject of our present memoir.

Henry Butterworth, the most famous of all our law-publishers, was born on 28th February, 1786, in the city of Coventry. His father was a wealthy timber-merchant, and his ancestors fairly claimed alliance with the great county families, though Butterworth Hall, in the township of Butterworth, near Rochdale, in their possession since Stephen's reign, had already fallen into alien hands. The Rev. John Butterworth, his grandfather, had removed from Rochdale to Coventry; he was well known as the author of a "Concordance to the Holy Scriptures," which passed through several editions, and was the received work upon the subject until the appearance of Cruden's more famous "Concordance."

Young Henry Butterworth was educated at the Public Grammar School, in Coventry, and afterwards placed under the tutorial care of Dr. Johnson, of Bristol; but at the early age of fourteen, his education (inasmuch as book-learning was concerned) was considered at an end, and he entered the large sugar-refinery of Mr. Stock, of Bristol. But the hot atmosphere, and the incessant and laborious toil, proved too much for young Butterworth's health, though the work had otherwise been rendered pleasant enough through his master's kindness. As he had already shown much business talent and ability, Stock urged Mr. Joseph Butterworth, his own relation by marriage, and Henry Butterworth's uncle, to do something for the lad. Joseph Butterworth accordingly made overtures to Henry's family, and though they were loath to send their son to the distant trials and temptations of the metropolis, the offer was a tempting one, as it contained a tacit promise of admitting him, at some future time, to a partnership in the enormous business. Young Butterworth at once determined to accept the proposal; and on the 5th December, 1801, he arrived in London by the Bristol coach, having left Bristol straightway, without even having had an opportunity of bidding his relatives farewell.

The business carried on at No. 43, Fleet Street, was on a very extensive scale, and Joseph Butterworth was not only a well-known member of Parliament, but was an exceedingly wealthy and zealous philanthropist; and at his uncle's dinner table young Henry Butterworth met many eminent and good men who were associated together to fight in a common cause—among others we may particularize Wilberforce, Teignmouth, Liverpool, Bexley, Zachary Macaulay, and Robert and Charles Grant—and from

the time of his first introduction he enrolled his name among these ardent religious and social reformers.

Young Butterworth entered very heartily into the conduct of his uncle's business, and, owing to his efforts, its relations were very vastly extended.

In 1813 he was in a position to marry a lady of birth and fortune, the daughter of Captain Whitehead, of the Fourth Irish Dragoon Guards, who not only afterwards entered fully into all his philanthropic projects, but possessed a refined and cultivated intellect, which found utterance in a volume of "Songs and Poems," by E. H. B., published by Pickering in 1848, which are evidently, as the authoress says of another gift—

"An offering from a heart sincere.
Tho' small and worthless, what I send,
'Tis hallowed by affection's tear."

In 1818, Butterworth found that there was little likelihood of his admission, as had been previously agreed upon, to a satisfactory share of his uncle's business; and having now to consider not only his own interests, but the welfare of a wife and family, he determined, with a sense of disappointment, to seek an independent roof, and there to carry out, on his own account, the art and mystery of law printing.

Before we follow him to his new abode, we will devote a few words to his uncle's successful career. Joseph Butterworth, who had, in connection with Whieldon, founded a very large law-publishing business, realized, it is said, the largest fortune ever made by law publishing, and was one of the original founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society, its earliest meetings being held at his house in Fleet

Street. His son died before him, and his business was sold to Messrs. Saunders and Benning; and after various fortunes, the shop became the Bible warehouse of Messrs. Spottiswoode.

Henry Butterworth, supported by his father's capital, took a lease of No. 7, Fleet Street, a house which had been, as we have seen previously, occupied by Tothill and other ancient law publishers. And from this shop were issued the vellum-bound volumes whose contents are sacred to all but those assiduously apprenticed to the law. Butterworth's position was still further improved by his appointment to the profitable post of Queen's law publisher. To the general student the law-books of the period are as little known as they were to that worthy country justice who, wishing to learn something definite about the law he so zealously administered, told his bookseller to send him forthwith the "Mirror for Magistrates;" and the vastly popular law-books did not, of course, come within the province of the technical publisher. Butterworth, however, saw the decline of two works which had been regarded as time-honoured text-books on the subject—Burn's "Justice" and Blackstone's "Commentaries." Many booksellers had made large fortunes out of Burn since the time when the author, wearied out with carrying his manuscript from shop to shop, had accepted a nominal fee to get it off his hands; and now Butterworth, by publishing Serjeant Stephen's celebrated "Commentaries on the Laws of England"—the most successful law-work of modern times—erased Blackstone from the category of legal text-books.

Butterworth, however, though energetic as a publisher, found time to take part in the government

of the city. In 1823 he was elected as representative of the ward of Farringdon Street Without, but he afterwards declined to be nominated to the office of sheriff. However, his connection with the city was still further strengthened by his appointment as Commissioner of Income and Property Tax, and Land and Assessed Taxes for London, and also as Commissioner of Roads. On his first arrival in town he had served in a light volunteer regiment, recruited to resist the aggression of the great Napoleon; and on his retirement from the corporation, about the year 1841, he received a captain's commission in the Royal London Militia.

We gather something of Butterworth's general kindness and consideration to those beneath him in station from the following anecdote:—Shortly after the passing of the new Poor Law Act in 1834, the guardians of the West Surrey Union ordered that the annual Christmas dinner for the workhouse inmates should consist, as wont, of roast beef and plum-pudding. The Poor Law Board—a new broom—was horrified at this munificence, and sent down their inspector, Dr. Kay, to inquire into the proposed extravagance. He offered a compromise by substituting boiled beef for roast, not that it would be in any degree cheaper, but that (a satisfactory object, we suppose, to the Board) it would not be quite so palatable. Butterworth, who was one of the guardians, was inflexible, and finally sent in his resignation; but as he was too useful a local authority to be spared, the Board sent back the resignation, and permitted the paupers to feast upon the disputed beef, roast.

In his later years Butterworth took much interest in church-building, and at Tooting, St. Dunstan's-in-

the-West, and his native city of Coventry, he subscribed large sums for that purpose.

After the death of his wife, which occurred in 1853, he gradually withdrew from general society, though he still attended the congenial meetings of the Stationers' Company. The day of his death was, curiously enough, the most important day in the law publishing year—the first day of term—2nd November, 1860. On the previous evening he had given his annual admonition to those around him in business to awake up from the lethargy of the long vacation, and on the following morning it was found that he had passed away, as if in sleep.

For nearly sixty years Butterworth had occupied a leading position as a publisher and as a citizen, and during that period had won the friendship and respect of all who came in contact with him. The alms which his industry enabled him to make were conscientiously, quietly, and discriminatingly bestowed: and the painted glass memorial window erected to him in the choir of the Cathedral of St. Paul's was a fitting tribute from a very large number of friends and admirers, many of whom had experienced the kindly assistance of his friendship and advice.

* * * * *

As we have previously seen, divinity and education were among the first subjects to attract a special attention, and works relating to them would otherwise have come within our category of technical books. No sooner, however, were the lawyers fairly supplied with special text-books than the doctors began to clamour for the like, and the publisher who has of all others most zealously

administered to their wants is still happily amongst us.

John Churchill was born about the commencement of the century, and was apprenticed in the year 1816 to Messrs. Cox and Son, medical booksellers in Southwark. “The house of business was,” he says, “immediately adjoining Guy’s and St. Thomas’s Hospitals, and became the daily resort of the lecturers and numerous students of the schools; I thus early in life became known to the celebrated men of the day, little anticipating that eventually I should become the publisher of Guy’s and St. Thomas’s Hospital Reports, and of so large a proportion of the works that issued from the medical press.”

At the time when young Churchill entered the profession of medical publishing, the periodicals, and, of course, the standard technical works, presented a striking contrast to those at present in existence, for now the medical profession assert, with the greatest truth, that their special organs are of far higher intrinsic worth, and of far better “tone” of thought and expression, than those relating to any other purely technical subject. For years, however, after Churchill became a bookseller’s assistant the medical press was only on a par with the papers relating to the other professions, and was chiefly represented by the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, founded by J. Johnson in 1820, and the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, a work we have already come across in our notice of Constable. These reviews contained no original reports, no strictures on the hospital appointments then jobbed, like everything else, to men of wealth, family, and interest. In fact, they consisted of little besides long

and elaborate abstracts of new books.

On Sunday, 2nd October, 1823, the first number of a journal that was to cause a great revolution in medical literature, and to affect in no slight degree the whole medical profession, was issued from a small publishing shop in the Strand. The journal was, of course, the *Lancet*, and the publisher young Thomas Wakley. Wakley had walked the united hospitals of Guy's and St. Thomas's, and had taken his degree in 1817. He does not appear to have practised regularly till, about 1822, he took a small shop in the Strand, and with the assistance, in a pecuniary point of view, of Collard (now the senior partner of the famous piano factory) determined to start a thoroughly independent medical journal. The first number contained a report of a lecture by Sir A. Cooper, printed from memory. The professors and hospital officers fired up, and for long Wakley had to encounter the same difficulties and almost the same penalties which Cave had previously undergone in commencing his reports of Parliamentary proceedings. As a former student, Wakley attended the lectures, and, like other students, was seen to take occasional notes. Cooper could not, however, bring the charge home till he hit upon the device of calling at midnight at his lodgings, and asking to see the "doctor" upon urgent medical business, when he surprised him red-handed correcting a proof-sheet of a lecture. The discovery was so sudden and so undeniable that neither could refrain from laughter; and eventually Cooper, not ill-humouredly, offered to allow his lectures to appear if the proofs were first sent him for revision. Consequently, Cooper, though often criticised in the *Lancet*, never received a nickname, as did most of the other medical celebrities of the day. For instance, Brodie was

known as the “little eminent;” Earle, the “cock sparrow;” Mayo, the “owl;” and Halford, the “eel-backed.”

The *Lancet*, for many years, was hated by that part of the profession interested in vested rights, and eagerly patronised by general surgeons and students. The language of the *Lancet* was as violent as the many abuses it attacked could justify; and Cobbett, who was a friend and adviser of Wakley’s, was adopted as a model, while a barrister, named Keen, used to join the party on printing nights to see that the free strictures were not legally liable as libels. An active, though unpaid, member of the staff, was Lawrence, who, however, forsook his reforming principles when once he became a placeman, and was succeeded by Wardrop, whose scurrility, wit, and venom did much in giving the *Lancet* a lasting reputation for raciness of style and satirical power. They were shortly afterwards joined by Mr. J. F. Clarke, who edited the periodical for upwards of forty years, and to whose amusing and graphic autobiography we are indebted for much of the preceding details. The success of the *Lancet* soon enabled Wakley to enter Parliament as a representative of Finsbury, and he actually combined together the work of the legislator, the coroner, and the editor, often toiling unremittingly for eighteen consecutive hours.

By the time the *Lancet* was thus firmly established, Churchill, long out of his apprenticeship, had commenced medical publishing on his own account; and from his famous shop, in New Burlington Street, issued most of the standard works upon the subject; and, encouraged by the success of the *Lancet*, he determined to make his establishment

the centre of periodical, as well as more permanent, medical literature. In 1836, was started therefrom the *British and Foreign Medical Review*, conducted first by J. Forbes, and afterwards by J. C. Conolly. In 1848, it was merged into the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, which, from 1824 to 1847, had been under the editorship of H. J. Johnson. These two were now amalgamated into the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, which, dating from Churchill's establishment, has acquired a professional standing equal to that of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* in more general criticism. In 1839, appeared the first number of the *Medical Times and Gazette*, which, under the editorial care of T. P. Healey, and subsequently of J. L. Bushman, has found a very large and influential *clientèle*.

The medical writers have at present something in common with the early authors. Their works bring them in more remuneration through eventual patronage than from habitual sale, but their patronage is that of all the great public, who are waiting to have their ailments cured. As an instance of the way in which literature may improve the position of a medical man, it is stated by Mr. W. Clarke that, through Elliotson's clinical reports in the *Lancet*, his income was raised, in one year, from £500 to £5000. And yet, on the other hand, when he openly gave in his adherence to the newly-imported doctrine of mesmerism, his large public and private practice almost entirely deserted him; and as the legitimate organs were closed to one so abandoned as even to experiment in "the unknown," he started a medico-mesmeric journal of his own, the *Zoist*, which was, of course, not published by Mr. Churchill.

There is necessarily the same want of general

interest in medical as in legal bibliography; and, as in the latter case, works more popularly known were almost invariably published by the usual popular publishers. For instance, Dr. Buchan's "Domestic Medicine"—probably the most profitable medical book ever written (but not to the author, as he sold the copyright for five pounds), after being re-written by Smellie—was issued in 1770, by the ordinary booksellers. During the author's lifetime, nineteen editions, each of five thousand, were published, and the volume was translated into all the modern languages.

If Mr. Churchill's catalogue can show no book with a popularity like this, it displays many which, appealing only to a class audience, and necessarily obliged to keep pace with the discoveries of the day, have at once retained their high price and yet reached the honour of numerous editions.

It is probably owing chiefly to this fact of an incessant demand by a large section of, at all events, one branch of students, that technical publishing has proved so remunerative, and has escaped, in a great degree, the risk attached to other departments of the trade.

At the close of the year 1870, Mr. Churchill resolved to give up the active management of his large business, and issued a farewell circular to the trade: "After fifty-five years' active and immediate association with your profession, I see it my duty to retire into private life. Be my future days few or many, I shall ever retain a lively sense of the many friendships I have formed, and of the unvarying proofs of confidence and regard shown to me through so long a series of years. My pathway of life has been a happy one, bringing me into daily

correspondence with the *élite* of the profession, and united with them in promoting the interests of science and literature, while the success of my many publications has both gratified and amply rewarded my exertions. My sons, John and Augustus Churchill, have been eight years associated with me. I may be influenced by a father's feelings, but I believe I can honestly state that, by education, earnest purpose in the fulfilment of duty, a high sense of integrity guiding and regulating their transactions, they will be found worthy of your confidence, and thus maintain the character of the house whose reputation and business transactions have extended to all parts of the world." To this honest expression of well-earned business contentment, we can only add our wishes that Mr. Churchill's years of retirement may be as happy as his years of toil have been useful and beneficial.

Among other technical publishers, Mr. Henry Laurie, whose house dates from the commencement of English hydrography, and whose numerous publications are known wherever English navigation has extended, requires at least a mention here. The oldest existing house of this nature, but one, in Europe (Gerard Hulst Van Keulen & Co., of Amsterdam, being the exception), it was founded by R. Sayer, at the "Golden Busk" (53, Fleet Street), in conjunction with John Senex, the well-known cosmographer. Here Cook's original charts were issued; and it says something for his accuracy that his "Survey of the South Coast of Newfoundland" has not yet been superseded. On Sayer's death, the business was relinquished to Robert Laurie and James Whittle, and, in 1812, the former was succeeded by his son, R. H. Laurie, who, on the death of Whittle, became sole proprietor. In a short time,

the business extended to the production of illustrations of all descriptions, whilst the maps produced, under the care of De la Rochette, John Purdy, and Mr. Findlay, still retained their pre-eminence; the business was, however, again restricted to hydrography. R. H. Laurie died as recently as January 19, 1858, leaving two daughters, and the establishment was continued under the direction of his sole executor, Mr. Findlay.



# *EDWARD MOXON*:

## POETICAL LITERATURE.

After Dodsley's death, though poetry was at times far from being an unprofitable speculation, the publishers seem to have shunned it as a speciality; and, accordingly, a Constable, a Murray, and a Longman, though gathering large incomes from the sale of the works of some one or two great poets, placed their main reliance upon the prose compositions that administered to either the pleasure or the necessities of their public.

For a time, Taylor and Hessey almost adopted poetical publications as the mainstay of their business; and in their generous encouragement of Keats, and others of lesser note, including Clare, are to be gratefully remembered; but their trade-life as poetical publishers was brief, and it remained for Edward Moxon to identify his name with all the best poetry of the period in which he lived, to a greater extent than any previous bookseller at any time whatsoever.

Edward Moxon, not unlike some others of his craft, began life with strong literary aspirations. His warm admiration for genius, his hearty good-fellowship, and his longings for a literary career, brought him into contact with some of the greatest writers of the day, and attracted their support and friendship. As early as 1824 he was made a welcome member of the brilliant circle that owned Charles Lamb as its chief, and to be a *protégé* of Lamb's was a passport into all literary society. In 1826, he published his first volume, "The Prospect; and other Poems;" and his friends received it with all possible kindness, as, perhaps, containing germs of something better. Even Wordsworth, usually very niggard of praise, wrote him a letter of encouragement—and warning:—"Fix your eye upon acquiring independence by an honourable business, and let the Muse come after rather than go before." But advice of this nature, even when given with the practical illustrations that Wordsworth's own career might have furnished, had little likelihood of being accepted by a young and impetuous poetaster; and in 1829 we find Moxon launching another venture on the world—"Christmas, a poem"—to be as coldly received by the "general public" as the former. What, however, the advice of a veteran poet could not effect, a stronger power was able to accomplish.

During Lamb's residence at Enfield, their acquaintance ripened into a very frequent intercourse, and eventually resulted in Moxon's engagement to a young lady who spent most of her time under the protection of Lamb and his sister. Lamb had met Miss Isola some years before at Cambridge, and had taken so much interest in the little orphan girl, who was then living with her grandfather—an Italian refugee, and a teacher of

languages—that by degrees he came to be looked upon as almost a natural guardian. Marriage, however, was out of the question until her lover had some more substantial manner of livelihood than the cultivation of the Muse seemed ever likely to afford him. In this strait, Rogers came forward and generously offered to start him in life as a publisher, and, with the goal of matrimony in view, the offer was eagerly accepted.

Accordingly, in 1830, Moxon opened a small publishing shop at 34, New Bond Street. The first volume he issued was "Charles Lamb's Album Verses," and the dedication sufficiently explains its purpose:—

> "DEAR MOXON,—I do not know to whom a Dedication of these trifles is more properly due than to yourself: you suggested the printing of them—you were desirous of exhibiting a specimen of the *manner* in which the publications entrusted to your future care would appear. With more propriety, perhaps, the 'Christmas,' or some of your own simple, unpretending compositions, might have served this purpose. But I forget—you have bid a long adieu to the Muse ... it is not for me nor you to allude in public to the kindness of our honoured friend, under whose auspices you are becoming a bookseller. May this fine-minded veteran in verse enjoy life long enough to see his patronage justified. I venture to predict that your habits of industry, and your cheerful spirit, will carry you through the world.
>
> "ENFIELD, 1st June, 1830."

An unfavourable notice of these "Album Verses" appeared in the *Literary Gazette*; but Lamb was too well loved to lack defenders, and some verses in

reply, by Southey, were soon afterwards inserted in the *Times*.

In the following year the *Englishman's Magazine* came into Moxon's hands, and to its pages Elia lent the charm of his pen. Although it only lasted from April till October, its columns still present us with matter of literary interest. In the same number we find a sonnet signed "A. Tennyson," and a very long review upon "Poems, chiefly Lyrical, by Alfred Tennyson," written by his friend Arthur H. Hallam. This was almost Mr. Tennyson's first avowed appearance in public; and as Mr. Moxon's name was so intimately associated with the poet's future works, we may be allowed to go back for a moment. In 1827 a little duodecimo volume of 240 pages, entitled "Poems, by Two Brothers," was published by J. and J. Jackson, Market Place, Louth; and the "two brothers" were Charles and Alfred Tennyson, the latter being only seventeen years of age. In 1829 Mr. Tennyson gained the Chancellor's gold medal at Cambridge for a prize poem on "Timbuctoo," his friend Hallam being also one of the competitors. The prize poem was printed with his name, and, a thing quite unprecedented, was noticed at length in the *Athenæum*, as indicating "really first-rate poetical genius, and which would have done honour to any man that ever wrote.... How many men have lived for a century who could equal this?" In the following year, 1830, appeared the "Poems, chiefly Lyrical, by Alfred Tennyson;" London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, 1830 (pp. 154); and it was these, of course, which were reviewed by Hallam in the *Englishman's Magazine*. In the course of a very long notice, the writer says:—"The features of original genius are clearly and strongly marked. The author imitates nobody; we recognise the spirit of the age,

but not the individual pen of this or that writer.... In presenting the young poet to the public as one not studious of instant popularity, and unlikely to attain it ... we have spoken in good faith, commending the volume to feeling hearts and imaginative tempers." Even before this review, deeply interesting when we remember what a loving and loved friend he was who wrote it, the little volume was noticed in the *Westminster Review* by, it is believed, Mr. John Stuart Mill, as demonstrating "the possession of powers, to the future direction of which we look with some anxiety. He has shown, in the lines from which we quote, his own just conception of the grandeur of a poet's calling; and we look to him for its fulfilment." Encouragement such as this led Moxon to publish a further volume of Mr. Tennyson's poems in 1833, and the connection thus commenced lasted throughout his lifetime. In a letter addressed to him by Wordsworth, as a northern correspondent in the book-market, there is intelligence, neither pleasant for a veteran poet to indite, nor for a young publisher to receive:—"There does not seem to be much genuine relish for poetical publications in Cumberland, if I may judge from the fact of not a copy of my poems having been sold there by one of the leading booksellers, though Cumberland is my native county." In this same year, too, Moxon published, for the first time, a collected edition of the "Last Essays of Elia;" but before this time he proved, by his attention to his business, that he was worthy of Miss Isola's hand. Lamb's letters to Moxon, in the few weeks preceding the marriage, are in his happiest, most delicately-bantering style—for instance: "For God's sake give Emma no more watches—*one* has turned her head. She is arrogant and insulting. She said something very unpleasant to

our old clock in the passage, as if he did not keep time, and yet he had made her no appointment. She takes it out every moment to look at the minute hand. She lugs us out into the field, because there the bird-boys cry out—'You, pray, sir, can you tell us the time?' and she answers them punctually. She loses all her time looking to see what the time is! I heard her whispering just now—'so many hours, minutes, &c., to Tuesday; I think St. George's goes too slow.'... She has spoilt some of the movements. Between ourselves, she has kissed away the 'half-past twelve,' which I suppose to be the canonical hour in Hanover Square." On the 30th July they were married. Lamb, as long as he lived, regarded them with almost paternal affection, and, at his death, left Moxon his treasured collection of books.

Meanwhile the illustrated edition of Rogers's "Italy" was in preparation, and with a view to its publication Moxon moved to Dover Street, Piccadilly.

Rogers spared no cost in the production of what was intended to be the most beautifully illustrated volume that had ever been published. £10,000 was spent on the illustrations and the engraving of them. There were fifty-six engravings in all by Turner, Stothard, and other eminent artists. Turner was to have received fifty pounds apiece for his drawings, but at one time the whole speculation threatened to turn out a failure, and he then offered the bard the use of them for five pounds each instead. To match this luxurious volume the illustrated edition of Rogers's "Poems" was brought out, at a further cost of £5000, with seventy-two engravings by Turner, Stothard, Landseer, Eastlake, &c., and, in spite of the enormous outlay on the two works, their increasing popularity must have recouped the poet, for upwards

of 50,000 copies are said to have been sold before the year 1847. Moxon was always proud of the share he had taken in the production of these works. All the volumes he issued were indeed remarkable for the beautiful manner in which they were "got up," and in 1835 he published such an exquisite edition of his own sonnets that the beauty of this dandy of a book enraged and alarmed a writer in the *Quarterly*:—"Its typographical splendours led us to fear that this style of writing was getting into fashion," but fortunately for the reviewer's peace of mind he discovered "that Mr. Moxon the bookseller is his own poet, and that Mr. Moxon the poet is his own bookseller.... The necessity of obtaining an imprimatur of a publisher is a very wholesome restraint, from which Mr. Moxon—unluckily for himself and for us—found himself relieved." Surely after a notice like this—indeed we have only quoted the kindlier portion, for often as publishers din the unsaleable nature of the drug poetry into the ears of young writers, the charm of retorting upon a bookseller seldom falls so temptingly before an author.—Moxon must have regretted that he did not cleave to a promise, held out in his first essay in 1826:—

"You'll hear no more from me,
If critics prove unkind;
My next in simple prose must be;
Unless I favour find."

This will perhaps suffice as a specimen of the productions of Moxon's muse, though the first lines in the volume, a "Sonnet to a Nightingale," are inviting. They had been the cause of much pleasantry among the author's friends, as having been penned by one who had never heard the song of the bird to

which they were addressed, and the internal evidence upon this point is indubitably strong; the sonnet perhaps, to state it in proportion, is to Keats's "Ode to the Nightingale," as the owl's screeching "too-whit" to "Sweet quired Philomela."

By this time, however, Moxon, in spite of his bad poetry, had made a wide reputation as a poetical publisher, and from his establishment was issued, not only all that was most valuable of contemporary poetical literature, but with true catholic taste, the works of our older dramatic poets, edited for the most part by the Rev. Alexander Dyce. By degrees, too, Moxon was enabled to add to his catalogue the works of many of the poets who had shed a lustre upon the two first decades of this century, especially the works of Keats, Shelley, and Leigh Hunt.

In 1839 he brought out Mrs. Shelley's edition of her husband's poems—the first "complete edition" that had been published. In the following year a bookseller in the Strand named Hetherington was indicted for selling a work entitled "Haslam's Letters to the Clergy of all Denominations," and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, as having published in this volume sundry "libels" against the Old Testament. While the trial was pending, Hetherington commissioned a servant of his, named Holt, to purchase copies of "Shelley's Poems" from the publisher, and from the retail dealers, and then obtained a similar indictment against Moxon. The celebrated trial the "Queen *v.* Moxon" was of course the result. The prosecution relied chiefly upon certain passages in "Queen Mab," more especially in the notes, and these were read in order to prove the charge of blasphemy. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd was engaged for the defence. "I am called," he

commenced, “from the bar in which I usually practise, to defend from the odious charge of blasphemy one with whom I have been acquainted for many years—one whom I have always believed incapable of wilful offence towards God or towards man—one who was introduced to me in early days, by the dearest of my friends who has gone before—by Charles Lamb—to whom the wife of the defendant was an adopted daughter.” After a magnificent oration in which he asked, with a fitting indignation, “if the publisher of any penny blasphemy is to have the right of prescribing to us legally that such and such pages are to be torn from the treasured volumes of our choicest literature,” he left in the hands of the jury “the cause of genius—the cause of learning—the cause of history—the cause of thought,” and concluded by a tribute to Moxon’s character—“beginning his career under the auspices of Rogers, the eldest of a great age of poets, and blessed with the continued support of that excellent person, who never broke by one unworthy line the charm of moral grace which pervades his works, he has been associated with Lamb, whose kindness ennobled all sects, all parties, all classes, and whose genius shed new and pleasant lights on daily life; with Southey, the pure and childlike in heart; with Coleridge, in the light of whose Christian philosophy the indicted poems would assume their true character, as mournful, yet salutary, specimens of powers developed imperfectly in this world; and with Wordsworth, whose works, so long neglected and scorned, but so long silently nurturing tastes for the lofty and the pure, it has been Mr. Moxon’s privilege to diffuse largely throughout this and other lands, and with them the sympathies which link the human heart to nature and to God, and all classes of

mankind to each other." Lord Denman, before whom the case was tried, instructed the jury, in his summing up, to administer the law as it undoubtedly stood, though he himself was of opinion that the best and most effectual method of acting in regard to such doctrines was to refute them by argument and reasoning rather than by persecution. The jury accordingly returned a verdict of guilty, unaccompanied by any observation whatsoever. The illegal passages were eliminated for a time; and thus the matter ended. The trial took place in June, 1841, at a time when Moxon was in great sorrow for the loss of his eldest son, and much sympathy was exhibited towards him.

Shelley's name, however, was designed to be associated with further publishing vexations. In 1852, Moxon issued a volume entitled "Letters of P. B. Shelley," with an introductory essay by Mr. Robert Browning. The usual presentation copies were sent to the papers, the "Letters" were generally noticed as being essentially characteristic, but the discretion shown in printing them was much questioned. Naturally Mr. Browning's essay attracted a large share of attention, though consisting of but forty-four pages, for it is his only acknowledged prose work (why, by the way, has it never been reprinted?). He describes Shelley as a man "true, simple-hearted, and brave; and because what he acted corresponded to what he knew, so I call him a man of religious mind, because every audacious negative cast up by him against the Divinity was interpreted with a mood of reverence and adoration." An early copy of the volume was sent to Mr. Tennyson, and Mr. Palgrave, who was then paying him a visit, turned over its pages until he came to a passage in a letter which he at once

recognised (with a most dutiful and filial remembrance), as a portion of an article upon "Florence," which Sir Francis Palgrave had contributed to the *Quarterly Review*. He immediately communicated with his father, who, after comparing the printed letter with the printed article, wrote to Moxon and informed him that this letter was cribbed bodily from the *Quarterly Review*. Moxon replied that the original was in Shelley's handwriting and that it bore, moreover, the proper dated postmark. Even the experts pronounced the letters genuine, and the detectives were then set to work—the book having, of course, been immediately withdrawn from publication. The MSS., which had been bought at public auction, were traced to Mr. White, a bookseller in Pall Mall. He alleged that in 1848, two women began to bring him letters of Byron's for sale, at first in driblets and impelled by poverty, they then offered him other letters by Shelley, and books with Byron's autograph and MS. notes. His suspicions were aroused, he followed them home, and insisted upon seeing the real owner of the letters. This person was introduced to him as Mr. G. Byron, a son of the poet, and thus he thought the mystery satisfactorily explained. He then sold the letters relating more purely to family matters to Shelley's relatives; Murray became the eventual purchaser of Byron's, and Moxon of Shelley's letters—and Murray, who only had his volume in the press, at once stopped it. The letters are now believed to have been the forgeries by G. Byron, and are indeed indexed under his name in the British Museum Catalogue. The system upon which he had obtained money for them appears to have been very extensive and well organised, and as some few were probably genuine, and others based upon a substratum of truth, the

difficulty of judging those which in various ways have got into print, was extreme. Altogether, this is one of the most notable literary forgeries of modern times.

To return, however, to Moxon, we find that in 1835, conjointly with Longman, he published Wordsworth's "Yarrow Revisited," and shortly after this the poet transferred all his works from the Messrs. Longman, and we believe that Moxon purchased the copyrights of the past poems for the sum of one thousand pounds.

Mr. Browning's earlier volumes, like Mr. Tennyson's "Lyrical Poems," had been published by Effingham Wilson, but in 1840 Moxon issued "Sordello." This was followed by "Bells and Pomegranates," published in numbers between 1842 and 1845, and by a "Blot in the Scutcheon," (acted at Drury Lane in 1843), and which, though unsuccessful on the stage, was in the opinion of Charles Dickens "the finest poem of the century." In 1848, however, Mr. Browning removed his works to the care of Messrs. Chapman and Hall.

Among the other authors whose productions were issued by Moxon somewhere at this period, and whom we cannot do more than mention, were Talfourd, Monkton Milnes (Lord Houghton), Tom Hood, Barry Cornwall (Proctor), Sheridan Knowles (who was by turn an usher, a journalist, a dramatic poet, and a dissenting minister), Quillinan (whose works Landor wittily, though unjustly, described as Quillinanities), Mr. Browning (for a brief period only), Haydn, and Dana.

Mr. Tennyson had been silent for ten years, had been maturing his talents, been mourning for the death of his friend Hallam, and probably during the

whole of this time not a thousand copies of his poems had been sold. But he was already acknowledged as one of our greatest living poets by a small and ardent band of admirers, and in 1842 he was induced to break his long silence and publish an edition of his poems in two volumes, of which the second was composed entirely of new pieces, and in the first some were new, and many had been re-written. By this time his success was publicly and generally acknowledged, and fresh editions were called for in 1843, 1845, 1847, and from that date in still more rapid succession. The beauty and purity of his poems attracted royal favour, and in 1846 he received a pension from the crown, and this unfortunately gave offence to some rivals in the divine art, and Lord Lytton in the "New Timon" attacked "Schoolmiss Alfred." To this Mr. Tennyson replied by a poem published in *Punch* (February, 1846), which may be summed up in the two words, "Thou bandbox." In 1843, Wordsworth, in a letter to Reed, says, "I saw Tennyson when I was in London several times. He is decidedly the first of our living poets (*sic*), and I hope will live to give the world still better things. You will be pleased to hear that he expressed, in the strongest terms, his gratitude to my writings. To this I was far from indifferent, though persuaded that he is not much in sympathy with what I should myself most value in my attempts, viz., the spirituality with which I have endeavoured to invest the material universe, and the moral relations under which I have wished to exhibit its most ordinary appearances." Again, in 1848, Mr. Emerson, in describing a visit to Wordsworth, says, "Tennyson, he thinks, a right poetic genius, though with some affectation. He had thought an elder brother of Tennyson at first the better poet, but must now

reckon Alfred the true one."

When Wordsworth died in 1850, the laureateship was offered to Mr. Rogers, and the letter conveying the offer was written by Prince Albert. The poet, however, was now eighty-seven years of age, and he felt that his years and his wealth should prevent him from interfering with the claims of younger and poorer men, and he generously felt impelled to decline the honour, which was then conferred upon Mr. Tennyson, who received, as he says so beautifully, in reference to Wordsworth, the

"Laurel, greener from the brows
Of him who uttered nothing base."

Before this, however, the "Princess" and "In Memoriam" had appeared. For a time Mr. Tennyson was again silent, breaking his silence only by four poems contributed to the *Examiner*, and by the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" (Moxon, 1852). One of the four poems in the *Examiner*, however, was "The Charge of the Light Brigade," and of this Moxon published a quarto sheet of four pages. —"Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on the 'Charge of the Light Brigade' at Balaclava, I have ordered a thousand copies of it to be printed for them.—ALFRED TENNYSON."[26]

In 1855 appeared another poem resulting from the war—"Maud," one of the most beautiful and least understood of all Mr. Tennyson's compositions.

On the 3rd of June, 1858, Edward Moxon died, having, as a publisher, earned the esteem of all his clients and the gratitude of all the public. What his services to literature have been the names comprised

in his catalogues bear ample witness. Truly Lamb's dedicatory prophecy had been amply fulfilled! On his death the immediate management of the firm devolved upon Mr. J. Bertrand Payne, and under his rule the business was distinguished rather for the energy with which the already published works were pushed forward than for any encouragement held out to acknowledged genius. Mr. Payne himself undertook the superintendence of the "Moxon's Miniature Series," and, as soon as the "Idylls of the King" had been published, of the luxurious edition of them illustrated by that extraordinary genius, M. Gustave Doré. There was one exception to his lack of enterprise. In 1861 Mr. Pickering published the "Queen Mother" and "Rosamond," two plays by Mr. Swinburne, then a young man of eighteen. Except in the case of a condemnatory notice in the *Athenæum* these poems attracted little or no attention; but in 1865 "Moxon and Son" published the "Atalanta in Calydon," which at once marked out the author as the most musical, and one of the greatest, of our living singers. It was at all events pretty generally acknowledged that for true poetic inspiration, momentary if it were, no poet of our generation could rival Mr. Swinburne. This opinion was still further strengthened by the publication of "Chastelard," in 1866. When, however the "Poems and Ballads" appeared, they were met by such a whirlwind of abuse from critics, whose professional morality was supposed to have been shame-stricken, that the publishers explained that they were unaware of the nature of the poems they had laid before the public, and suppressed the edition before it got into circulation. As a consequence the few copies that had been sold were eagerly sought at a price of five guineas, and the volume was speedily republished in

America. In this strait, Mr. J. Camden Hotten came forward, and to him Mr. Swinburne confided all his hitherto published poems, including the much-abused and also much-praised “Poems and Ballads.” His latest works, however, “The Ode to the French Republic,” and the “Songs before Sunrise,” have been issued by Mr. Ellis, who as the publisher of Mr. Morris, Mr. Swinburne, and Mr. Rossetti, bids fair to occupy the position so long and so honourably occupied by Moxon as a distinctively poetical publisher.

Before this Mr. Tennyson had removed his copyrights to the care of Mr. Strahan, and though in 1869 Mr. Arthur Moxon was admitted a member of the firm, the old glory had departed from them; and in the summer of the year 1871 the whole business was transferred to Messrs. Ward, Lock, and Tyler, and Mr. Beeton was appointed manager; the house in Dover Street was no longer retained, though Mr. Arthur Moxon’s services have been secured to superintend the business department. The first volume issued under the new régime—the “Sonnets” of Edward Moxon—is a timely tribute to the founder of the famous house. We could not, perhaps, give him higher praise than in saying that he was as good as a publisher as he was indifferent as a poet.



# *KELLY AND VIRTUE*:

## THE "NUMBER" TRADE.

The "Number Publishers" may be looked upon as the modern pioneers of literature; their books are circulated by a peculiar method, among a peculiar public, almost entirely through the agency of their own canvassers, without the intervention of any other bookseller, and the works thus sold are scarcely known to the ordinary members of the publishing world. As the business is conducted by house to house visitation, a substratum of the public is reached which is entirely out of the stretch of the regular bookselling arm, though, when once a taste for reading has been developed, the regular bookseller cannot fail to benefit, as he will from every onward step in education and progress.

The *Canvassing Trade* is conducted by only a few houses in London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. In our introductory chapter we caught a glimpse of some of the earlier members, but in modern times two names —Kelly, and, in a much broader sense, Virtue—stand

forward prominently, and to these two we shall address ourselves.

Thomas Kelly[27] was born at Chevening, in Kent, on the 7th of January, 1777. His father was a shepherd, who, having received a jointure of £200 with his wife, risked the capital first in a little country inn, and afterwards in leasing a small farm of about thirty acres of cold, wet land, where he led a starving, struggling life during the remainder of his days. When only twelve years old, barely able to read and write, young Kelly was taken from school, and put to the hard work of the farm, leading the team or keeping the flock, but he was not strong enough to handle the plough. The fatigue of this life, and its misery, were so vividly impressed upon his memory, that he could never be persuaded to revisit the neighbourhood in after-life; and though at the time he endeavoured to conceal his feelings from his family, the bitterness of his reflections involuntarily betrayed his wishes. He fretted in the daytime until he could not lie quietly in his bed at night, and early one morning he was discovered in a somnambulant state in the chimney of an empty bedroom, “on,” as he said, “his road to London.” After this his parents readily consented that he should try to make his way elsewhere, and a situation was obtained for him in the counting-house of a Lambeth brewer. After about three years’ service here, the business failed, and he was recommended to Alexander Hogg, bookseller of Paternoster Row. The terms of his engagement were those of an ordinary domestic servant; he was to board and lodge on the premises, and to receive ten pounds yearly, but his lodging, or, at all events, his bed, was under the shop counter.

Alexander Hogg, of 16, Paternoster Row, had

been a journeyman to Cooke, and had very successfully followed the publication of “Number” books. In the trade he was looked upon as an unequalled “puffer,” and when the sale of a book began to slacken, he was wont to employ some ingenious scribe to draw up a taking title, and the work, though otherwise unaltered, was brought out in a “new edition,” as, according to a formula, the “Production of a Society of Gentlemen: the whole revised, corrected, and improved by Walter Thornton, Esq., A.M., and other gentlemen.”

Kelly’s duties were to make up parcels of books for the retail booksellers, and his zeal displayed itself even in somnambulism, and one night when in a comatose state, he actually arranged in order the eighty numbers of “Foxe’s Martyrs,” taken from as many different compartments. He spent all his leisure in study, and soon was able to read French with fluency, gaining the proper accent by attending the French Protestant church in Threadneedle Street. The good old housekeeper, at this time his only friend, was a partaker of his studies; at all events, he gave her the benefit of all the more amusing and interesting matter he came across. His activity, though it rendered the head-shopman jealous, attracted Hogg’s favourable attention, and the clever discovery of a batch of stolen works, still further strengthened the interest he felt in his serving boy. The thieves, owing to the lad’s ingenuity, were apprehended and convicted, and Kelly had to come forward as a witness. “This was my first appearance at the Old Bailey, and as I was fearful I might give incorrect evidence, I trembled over the third commandment. How could I think, while shaking in the witness-box, that I should ever be raised to act as Her Majesty’s First Commissioner at the Central

Criminal Court of England!"

Half of his scanty pittance of ten pounds was sent home to aid his parents, and as his wages increased, so did this dutiful allowance. In this situation Kelly remained for twenty years and two months, and at no time did he receive more than eighty pounds per annum, and it is believed that when his stipend reached that petty maximum, he defrayed the whole of his father's farm rent. That he was not entirely satisfied with his prospects, is evident from the fact that about ten years after he joined Hogg he accepted a clerkship in Sir Francis Baring's office, but so necessary had he become to the establishment he was about to leave, that his late master prevailed upon him to accept board and residence in exchange for what assistance he might please to render over hours. After six weeks of this double work, poor Kelly's health began to suffer, and it was plain that he must confine his labours to one single branch of trade. "Thomas," said his master, sagaciously enough, though probably with a view to his own interests, "you never can be a merchant, but you *may* be a bookseller." This advice chimed in with his inclination, if not with his immediate prospects, and Kelly devoted himself to bookselling.

At length Hogg, falling into bad health, and desiring to be relieved from business, proposed to Kelly that he should unite in partnership with his son; but the conscientious assistant felt constrained to decline the tempting offer, by reason of the young man's character, and resolved rather to attempt business on his own account. In 1809, therefore, he started in a little room in Paternoster Row, sub-rented from the landlord—a friendly barber. On his small front room he wrote his name, "Thomas Kelly,"

and by way of advertising his change of position, he generally stood downstairs in the common doorway. To all the "Row" Hogg's able assistant had been known simply as "Thomas," and one old acquaintance actually asked him, "Well, Thomas, who is this Kelly that you have taken up with?"

For the first two years his operations were confined solely to the purchase and sale of miscellaneous books on a small scale, and the limited experiment proved successful. Of "Buchan's Domestic Medicine" he bought one thousand copies in sheets at a low price, and, having prefixed a short memoir of the author, and divided them into numbers or parts, he went out himself in quest of subscribers; and a thousand copies of the "New Week's Preparation" were treated in a like manner and with similar success. Henceforth he resolved to print at his own risk, always adopting the sectional method, and working his books, from first to last, entirely through the hands of his own agents, and the profit he found in this scheme depended almost entirely upon the happy knowledge he possessed of human character, and the cautious foresight with which he was able to select his canvassers. One of the first works he published in this manner was a large Family Bible, edited by J. Mallam, Rector of Hilton, afterwards known as "Kelly's Family Bible." To each of his canvassers he gave stock on credit, worth from twenty to one hundred pounds, ready money was insisted on, and this plan insured a speedy return of capital. The Bible extended to one hundred and seventy-three numbers, and the entire work cost the subscribers £5 15*s.*, paid, of course, in weekly or monthly driblets; and, as 80,000 copies were soon sold, the gross receipts must have reached £460,000. Nearly half this sum, however, went in the agents'

allowances for canvassing and delivery. The paper duty alone on this one work was estimated at upwards of £20,000. To this Bible succeeded "The Life of Christ," "Foxe's Martyrs," and the "History of England," all in folio, with copper-plate embellishments; and "Hervey's Meditations," "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," and various other popular works, in octavo.

Six months after he had left his former situation, Hogg died, and the son soon fell into difficulties, and was obliged to relinquish the business, which Kelly immediately purchased, speedily adding to it the trade of Cooke, the owner of No. 17, and thus uniting the two concerns into one.

About the year 1814 the system of printing books from stereotype plates began to be very generally adopted for large editions, and Kelly at once saw its advantages, but, of course, as in all improvements, the trade set themselves against the innovation, and he had to purchase land at Merton, and erect a foundry of his own, and then, and not till then, the printers relinquished their opposition, and the building was abandoned. It was about this time, in March, 1815, that he very nearly lost a moiety of his fortune through fire. Luckily, upon the outbreak of a fire in the neighbourhood a few days before, he had been alarmed, and had gone straightway to the office of the Phœnix Company, and paid a deposit on the insurance. Before the policy was made out, the whole of his stock was destroyed, but the Phœnix Company paid up without an hour's delay, and, in return, he never cancelled a single policy with them until this sum had been reimbursed. How largely Kelly traded may be gathered from the fact that from one of his agents alone he often received from £4000 to £5000

per annum.

To revert for a moment to his private life; his father had died in 1810, when the bookseller was still a struggling man, but, in spite of his difficulties, he paid at once the amount of his father's debts; and brought his mother up to Wimbledon, where she lived to see her son a wealthy and prosperous man. To his old master's widow he generously allowed an annuity, and even aided young Hogg, who had pursued him with inveterate hatred, with the loan of £600. He never married. When little known he saved a member of the Court of Aldermen from bankruptcy by an advance of £4000, and he was always ready to lend out his money to those in trouble. But once, when asked to give his acceptance to ten or twelve thousand pounds worth of bills—in these terms, "Will you, for once in your life, do a good action, and oblige me?"—he thought himself perfectly justified in refusing, and soon after the acceptor of these bills failed. In 1823 he was elected into the Common Council of his ward; in 1825 he served as Sheriff with Mr. Alderman Crowder, on whose death he succeeded to the Alderman's gown of Farringdon Without. He always lamented his want of a systematic education, and late in life he endeavoured, in some way, to supply the place of it by experience gathered from foreign travel.

Notwithstanding his immense issues of costly books, he exercised the most watchful prudence. "Books," he says, "generally, printed in the ordinary way, only sell 500 or 1000 copies, and periodical publications would be ruinous. Nothing but a vast sale will prove remunerative," and this "vast sale" he certainly effected in almost every instance. He published twelve separate issues of the Bible, and

disposed of, probably, not less than 250,000 copies. The following is a list of his more important works: —"History of the French Revolution," 20,000 copies at £4; "Hume's England," 5,000, at £4 18*s.*; "The Gazetteer," 4,000, at £4 10*s.*; "The Oxford Encyclopædia," 4,000 at £6 (and the £24,000 only barely covered the original outlay); "The Geography," 30,000 at £4 4*s.*; and the "Architectural Works," 50,000, at an average of £1 13*s.* To these may be added "The Life of Christ," of which, in folio and quarto, not fewer than 100,000 copies were distributed, at prices varying from £1 1*s.* to £2. No wonder, with figures like these (for which we are indebted to Mr. Fell's volume), that the trade objected to this method of transacting business, but the difference was confined merely to business relations, for every one of the numerous booksellers in the Ward signed the request asking him to stand as Alderman.

In 1836 he received the highest honour to which a citizen of London can aspire, for he was elected Lord Mayor. His year of office was a memorable one, and the first entertainment of Queen Victoria occurred on the very day of his retirement from office, and thus he narrowly escaped the honour of a baronetcy, for he had the good sense to decline the requisition to stand a second time.

His appearance in his robes of office is thus described by M. Titus Perondi, a French traveller: —"The new Lord Mayor appeared in a gilded chariot, almost as grand as the King's, drawn by six bay horses, richly caparisoned.... He does not seem to be more than sixty-two years of age, and his figure, slight as it is, is still imposing—for the flowing wig and ermine mantle, which encircled all his person,

added not a little to the dignity of his presence.... A thriving bookseller, yet a perfectly honest man, and very charitable." The last sentence is an admirable summary of his character.

The attainment of this honour terminated his commercial and public life, for after this date he relinquished, in a great degree, his business cares; but to an extreme old age he retained his faculties, and he retained also his habits of quiet and discriminating charity, doing good by stealth, and blushing to find it known. On the 20th October, 1854, he paid his last visit to his parent's grave, and was there heard to murmur, "How very happy I am." His failing health compelled him to visit Margate, and here, on the 7th of September, 1855, he died in a ripe old age. A letter, written just before his death, evidently betrays a lingering fondness for early childish days:—"We are surrounded by fields of fully-ripening corn—some cut, some cutting," babbling, like Falstaff, of green fields, till the sixty years of town life were forgotten.

Thomas Kelly was one of those men of whom the London citizens are so proud—men who come to the mighty centre of commerce utterly friendless, and worse still, penniless, and whom industry, labour, and good fortune exalt to the very pinnacle of a good citizen's fondest dreams. But he was more than a Lord Mayor—he was a true friend; he was a loving, dutiful, and tender son—qualities not always insured even by commercial success.

Mr. George Virtue was another of those men of whom, in this history, we have had not a few examples, who, beginning life without any fictitious advantages, have made success their goal, and, in attaining it, have not only amassed princely fortunes

for themselves and their families, but have opened up new branches of industry, and have afforded employment to hundreds whose bread depends upon their daily labours.

His father was a native of Fogo, in Berwickshire, who first at Coldstream, and afterwards at Wooler, in Northumberland, let out for hire carts and carters to the neighbouring farmers. In the year 1793, his second son, George, was born at Coldstream, and there and at Wooler, he passed the early years of his boyhood. In 1810, his father met with an accident, which caused him to relinquish the business he had hitherto been engaged in. His eldest son, James, who had a good engagement in London, gave up his employment and hastened home, and removing with the family to Coldstream, commenced business there as a mason, taking his brother George as an apprentice.

Mrs. Somerton, their married sister, had a large house, near the Houses of Parliament, in London, which she let out, much on the plan of the club-chambers of the present day. George had come up to London, partly on business, partly on a visit to his sister, and not wishing to return to the North, he made an arrangement to remain with Mrs. Somerton.

The house was chiefly frequented by members of Parliament and men in the higher grades of life; and one of the former, who had taken a fancy to George Virtue, asked him what he would like to be. George at once replied, “A bookseller,” and his patron assisted him in stocking a shop in the neighbourhood. This was about the year 1820. At first his trade consisted entirely in the retail business, but by degrees he was able to purchase entire remainders of that distinct class of religious

publications which were then sold chiefly in numbers. These he re-issued; and as he did his own canvassing, no zeal was wanting in the service, and his success was by no means indifferent. Once established, he was able to canvass for the books of other publishers; and on the 15th July, 1821, the first number of a work was published, which took the town by storm. Whether Mr. Virtue's canvassing powers were acknowledged by the trade at this early period, or whether his peculiar class of customers was considered as most amenable to the work in question, we know not, but he was given an interest of one kind or another, either as part proprietor or as a purchaser on unusually liberal terms in the famous "Life in London; or, the Adventures of Tom and Jerry," issued by Sherwood, Neeley, and Jones, of Paternoster Row. The book was written by Pierce Egan, afterwards the founder of *Bell's Life*.

Works describing country sports and pastimes had proved so acceptable that it was imagined that a volume issued in numbers, setting forth the humours of town life would be equally taking. The illustrations by J. R. and George Cruikshank proved irresistible. The work was so successful that innumerable imitations appeared, one of which ("Shade of Lackington!") was published by Jones and Co., who occupied his former place of business, the "Temple of the Muses" in Finsbury Square. There was absolutely a *furore* for the work. Dibdin, Barryman, Farell, Douglas Jerrold, Moncrieff, and others adapted it for the stage. It was on the boards of ten theatres at one time; and at the Adelphi, where Moncrieff's adaptation was produced, it enjoyed the then unparalleled run of three hundred nights. At last, Pierce Egan, declaring that no less than sixty-five separate publications had been

derived from his work, brought forward his own characteristic version, which, however, proved a failure.

All the world bought "Tom and Jerry," and having roared over the plates, tossed them not unnaturally aside; so that a work, which, in popularity, had been the "Pickwick" of its day, became so wonderfully scarce that when Mr. Thackeray, with whom it had been an early favourite, wanted a copy for a review he was writing upon Mr. George Cruikshank's works, he applied at all the libraries, including the British Museum, in vain. The work was advertised for in the *Times* with like result, and he had to depend upon his memory for his description. However, twenty years after, when he wished to make it the subject of one of the most charming of the "Roundabout Papers," he found that it had been added to the Museum Library.

It was, however, with the contemporary popularity that Mr. Virtue was concerned, and by it his business was largely increased.

In 1831, his affairs warranted an important move to the vicinity of Paternoster Row, and about this time he married a Miss Sprent, a lady from Manchester. From his new abode the works which he at first issued were of much the same stamp as those which Messrs. Kelly, Hogg, and Cooke had previously spread abroad; but he soon struck out into a higher class of literature. His first very successful book was "A Guide to Family Devotion," by Dr. Alexander Fletcher. The work was undertaken by Mr. Virtue, as Dr. Fletcher says, "at great expense and some hazard, during the years 1833–1834." The volume contained 730 prayers, 730 hymns, and 730 selected passages of Scripture, suitable for Morning and Evening

Service, throughout the year, and was illustrated by engravings by the best artists. The popularity it achieved was enormous: thirty editions of a thousand each were soon issued, and, as the *Times* said, "30,000 copies of a book of Common Prayer, recommended by twenty-five distinguished ministers, cannot be dispersed throughout England without effecting some change in the minds of probably 200,000 persons."

In America, the "Guide to Family Devotion" was as successful as at home, and upwards of one hundred ministers there sent in testimonials to its worth. By 1850, the sale is said to have exceeded 50,000 copies.

Mr. Virtue, about this time, entered into an engagement with W. Henry Bartlett, who, pencil in hand, travelled over the four quarters of the globe, making sketches, which that enterprising publisher issued in volumes, illustrated with beautiful steel engravings and descriptive letterpress. The first of these was "Switzerland," published in 1835, in two quarto volumes. This was followed by Scotland, Palestine, the Nile, and America. Of the Switzerland, 20,000 copies were sold; and in the production of the two volumes on Scotland, upwards of one thousand persons were employed at a cost of £40,000. The number of engraved plates in these volumes amounted to a thousand.

When Mr. Virtue commenced these illustrated volumes, the Fine Art tastes of the public were in a very uneducated condition; but, selecting the best artists and employing the best engravers, he set a good example, which was speedily followed by others. In 1839, Messrs. Hodgson and Graves had started a cheap periodical devoted to Art, under the

title of the *Art Union*, intended chiefly as an organ of the print trade; but it was not till the year 1849 that this publication passed into the hands of Mr. Virtue, who changed the title to the *Art Journal*, and devoted it to the development of Fine Art and Industrial Art, with illustrations on steel and wood by the first artists of the day. The *Art Journal*, it is admitted, has done more than any private venture or corporate body to disseminate true ideas of Art in England. The *Art Journal*, though among the very earliest of those periodicals in which Art was brought to the aid of Literature, still towers proudly above all. Since its foundation, the *Art Journal* has presented the public with between eight and nine hundred steel engravings and above 30,000 engravings on wood.

No less than one hundred illustrated volumes were issued from Mr. Virtue's establishment, and for their production it was found necessary to erect a large establishment in the City Road. Almost every engraver of any reputation in this country has been employed on one or other of Mr. Virtue's illustrated works. Indeed, had it not been for the field of labour opened by the *Art Union*, in their yearly distribution of engravings, and for the encouragement held out by Mr. Virtue in the production of his illustrated works and the *Art Journal*, it is said that the art of line engraving would have quite died out in England; and for his services to the public, and, through them, to the profession, he is certainly entitled to be regarded as the first Art publisher of his time.

To go to a very different branch of his business, Mr. Virtue was not idle in the production of any book likely to win the favour of the public. In 1847, Dr. Cumming, then widely known as a preacher only, delivered a series of lectures at Exeter Hall upon the

Apocalypse, which riveted public attention. He was urged by his friends to publish the lectures upon their completion, and said that he would be willing to do so, if he was sure that the proceeds would suffice to pay for putting up stained glass windows in his church. Mr. Virtue heard this, ascertained the value of the windows, and offered their outside cost down in hard cash in exchange for the copyright. Dr. Cumming eagerly accepted the offer, and by the "Apocalyptic Sketches" the publisher realized the handsome sum of four thousand pounds. He afterwards made the author a present of a hundred pounds, and engaged him to write a continuation, at an honorarium of five pounds per sheet of thirty-two pages, which eventually proved to be equally successful.

Many years before his death, Mr. George Virtue parted with the business to his son, Mr. James Sprent Virtue, the present head of the firm.

On the 8th December, 1868, George Virtue, senior, died in his seventy-sixth year, having earned the respect of all the hundreds to whom he afforded employment, and of the outside world; for all recognised that integrity and strict justice to his *employés* was a main cause of his success, while his prosperity had been aided by thorough business habits and intense application to his duties.

He had been one of the representatives of the ward of Farringdon Without in the Common Council of the City of London for many years, and was held in the highest esteem by his fellow-citizens. It was in his civic capacity that he was invited by the Viceroy of Egypt, with other members of the Corporation, to pay a visit to that country, an honour which his constant attention to his public duties had fully

merited in selecting him as one of the representatives of the City of London on that occasion.





# *THOMAS TEGG*:

## BOOK-AUCTIONEERING AND THE "REMAINDER TRADE."

Thomas Tegg[28] was born at Wimbledon, in Surrey, on the 4th of March, 1776. His father was a grocer, who not only was successful in business, but "wore a large wig," was a Latin scholar, and something of a mathematician; he died, however, when his son was only five years old, and was speedily followed by his wife, and the poor little lad "found it to be a dreadful thing when sorrow first takes hold of an orphan's heart." For the sake of economy, he was sent to Galashiels, in Selkirkshire, where he was boarded, lodged, clothed, and educated for ten guineas per annum. This severance from all home ties was at first more than the little orphan could bear, and many a time, he tells us, did he steal off to the quiet banks of the Tweed, and cry himself to sleep in his loneliness. A scrap of paper, which had been given him before leaving home, bearing the magic word "London," was carefully treasured in all his wanderings, and in the

associations it called up, in the hopes it excited in all his wondering, childish dreams, proved a soothing solace to his troubles. His schoolmaster, too, was a kind-hearted man, who made a point of studying each boy's individual character, and of educating each for his individual calling. Ruling by "kindness rather than by flagellation," he frequently took his pupils for country rambles, and taught them lessons out of the great book of Nature. Nor was he wholly forgotten by his relatives, for we read that he was sent a parcel of tea—then a wonderful luxury. After much consultation as to the best method of cooking the delicacy, one-half of it was boiled in the "big pot," the liquor strained off and the leaves served up as greens; "but," he adds, "it was not eaten." After staying at Galashiels for four years, he was given the choice of being apprenticed either to a saddler or a bookseller; and his fondness for books, and the desire already formed of being at some time a bookseller in the London he pictured to himself every night in his dreams, led him at once to select the latter alternative. His dominie at parting, gave him a copy of "Dr. Franklin's Life and Essays," a book he treasured in all times of prosperity and adversity, and kept to the day of his death.

On a cold, raw morning in September, he started on foot for Dalkeith, with only sixpence in his pocket; some friendly farmers on the road gave him a lift in their cart, and in his gratitude he confided to them his boyish hopes of being by-and-by a great book-merchant in London. At Dalkeith he was bound apprentice to Alexander Meggett, a bookseller, and "from this humble origin," says Tegg, proudly, "I, who am now one of the chief booksellers in London, have risen." His master, kindness itself before the

indentures were signed, turned out to be "a tyrant as well as an infidel." "Every market-day he got drunk and came home and beat the whole of us. Once I said, 'I have done nothing to deserve a beating.' 'Young English rascal,' said he, 'you may want it when I am too busy, so I will give it to you now.'" Tegg's fellow-apprentice had, like him, an ambition, but it was to become the first whistler in the kingdom.

Tegg's apprenticeship had by this time become intolerable, and, as he had been latterly engaged in reading "Robinson Crusoe" and "Roderick Random," he resolved to run away and lead an adventurous life himself. Though it was in the depth of winter, he travelled along on foot, sleeping sometimes under hedges laden with hoar-frost. But soon his little hoarding of ten shillings was exhausted; at Berwick, therefore, he tried to make a livelihood by selling chap-books, but was recognised for a runaway apprentice and had again to fly. At this period he tells us he found out the utility of pawnbrokers' shops, and discovered, also, the value of small sums. "He who has felt the want of a penny is never likely to dissipate a pound." Another lesson, too, he gathered from his wanderings, which was always when in trouble to apply to a woman. "Never," he says, "did I plead to a woman in vain." At Newcastle he made the acquaintance of Bewick, the engraver; there he might have remained, but his heart was set upon reaching London. At Sheffield he was seized by the parish officer for travelling on Sunday, but when he told his story the severity of Bumbledom itself relented, and the beadle found him a home, and even paid the requisite eighteenpence a week which defrayed the cost of lodging, bread-making, and a weekly clean shirt. Here he was engaged by Mr.

Gale, the proprietor of the *Sheffield Register*, at seven shillings a week, a wretched pittance, but sufficient for his small wants, even enabling him to purchase new clothes. At the *Register* office he met some men of note, among others, Tom Paine and Dibdin. Paine was "a tall, thin, ill-looking man. He had a fiend-like countenance, and frequently indulged in oaths and blasphemy." After a nine months' sojourn, Tegg left Sheffield, and having visited Ireland and North Wales, entered the service of a Mr. Marshall, at Lynn, where he remained for three or four years.

Early in 1796, however, he mounted the London and Cambridge coach, and, with a few shillings in his pockets, with a light heart in his breast, he bade good-bye to friends, telling them that he would never come back till he could drive down in his carriage.

On the coach he met some other young men, who, like himself, were going up to London in search of employment, but who intended to spend the first few days in sight-seeing, and asked him to join their party. But Tegg resisted the temptation, and when London, the London of his dreams—but how black, smoke-filled, and inhospitable!—was really reached, he alighted at the Green Dragon in Bishopsgate Street, and, struggling through the busy stream of men who filled the city streets, he went straightway in search of employment, to the first book-shop that met his eyes. This happened to be Mr. Lane's "Minerva Library," in Leadenhall Street. "What can you do?" asked Lane. "My best," rejoined Tegg. "Do you wear an apron?" Tegg produced one and tied it on. "Go to work," said Lane, and thus, "in less than half-an-hour from my arrival, I was at work in one of the best houses in London." Early next morning, map in hand, he took an exploring walk, and was

astonished and delighted with all he saw, for to the young bookseller, with his mind wrapt up entirely in his projects of success, the perpetual rush of unknown faces—that he had never seen before, would never see again—the jostling eagerness of crowds, going incessantly this way and that, the noisy din of carts and carriages, the vastness of the buildings, and the vagueness of the never-ending streets, did not bring that feeling of utter loneliness which so many of us remember in our first solitary entry into London. Nor was the country lad to be beguiled by any of the myriad temptations that were ready on all sides to divide his attention from his business. “I resolved,” he writes, “to visit a place of worship every Sunday, and to read no loose or infidel books; that I would frequent no public-houses, that I would devote my leisure to profitable studies, that I would form no friendships till I knew the parties well, and that I would not go to any theatre till my reason fortified me against my passions.” This perseverance did not immediately meet with its deserved reward, for having been sent, with the other shopmen, to make an affidavit as to the numbers of an election bill that had been struck off, before the Lord Mayor, he said boldly, that he did not even know that they had been printed; the Lord Mayor was pleased with the answer, and censured Lane severely for tempting the boy to commit a perjury; and Lane, in his rage, dismissed him forthwith. Tegg walked out of the shop, down-hearted for the moment, perhaps, but self-possessed and reliant, and entering the shop of John and Arthur Arch, at the corner of Gracechurch Street, the kindly Quakers took him at once into their employ, and here he stayed until entering into business on his own account. His new masters were strict but

affectionate. He soon asks for a holiday, “We have no objection, but where art thou going, Thomas?” “To Greenwich fair, sir.” “Then we think thou hadst better not go. Thou wilt lose half a day’s wages. Thou wilt spend at least the amount of two days’ wages more, and thou wilt get into bad company.” At two, however, he was told he might go; but as soon as he reached London Bridge his heart smote him, and he returned. “Why, Thomas, is this thee? Thou art a prudent lad.” And when Saturday came, his masters added a guinea to his weekly wages as a present. From this, Tegg says, he himself learnt to be a kind though strict master, and during his fifty years of business life, he never used a harsh word to a servant, and dismissed but three.

Having received £200 from the wreck of the family prospects, Tegg took a shop, in partnership with a Mr. Dewick, in Aldersgate Street, and became a “bookmaker” as well as a bookseller; and his first book, the “Complete Confectioner,” though it contained only one hundred lines of original matter, reached a second edition. After a short time he indulged in a tour to Scotland, where he found that his old schoolmaster had died from the effects of an amputation; and in this same journey he honestly bought up the unlapsed time of his apprenticeship. On returning to London he re-entered the service of the Messrs. Arch, and took unto himself a wife. The story of his courtship is pleasantly and naïvely told. Coming down the stairs of his new lodgings, “I was met by a good-looking, fresh-coloured, sweet-countenanced country girl; and without thinking of the impropriety I ventured to wink as she passed. On looking up the stairs, I saw my fair one peeping through the balusters at me. I was soon on speaking terms with her, and told her I wanted a wife, and

bade her look out for one for me; but if she failed in the search she must take the office herself. After waiting a short time, no return being made, I acted on this agreement. Young and foolish both, we were married at St. Bride's church, April 20, 1800.... I was most happy in my choice, and cannot write in adequate terms of my dear partner, who possesses four qualities seldom found in one woman—good nature, sound sense, beauty, and prudence."

After his marriage, he again opened a shop in St. John's Street, Clerkenwell, and here he "wrote all night and worked all day," while his partner was drinking himself to death. His wife was ill, two of the children died, and the future looked terribly gloomy; for a "supposed friend" prevailed upon him to discount a bill for £172 14*s.* 9*d.* out of his little capital of two hundred pounds, and the bill, of course, turned out to be utterly worthless. In this strait he acted with much energy, dissolved his partnership, called a meeting of his creditors, and found a friend who nobly came forward as a security; and he left his home, declaring he would never return until he could pay the uttermost farthing. "God," he writes solemnly, "never forsook me. A man may lose his property and yet not be ruined; peace and pride of heart may be more than equivalents."

Tegg now took out a country auction licence, and determined to try his fortune in the provinces.

A few words on the book-auction trade may have a passing interest here. According to Dibdin, the first book auction of which we have any record in England occurred in 1676, when Cooper, the bookseller, prefixed the following address to his catalogue:—"Reader, it hath not been usual here in England to make sale of books by way of auction, or

who will give most for them; but it having been practised in other countries, to the great advantage of both buyers and sellers, it was therefore conceived (for the encouragement of learning) to publish the sale of those books in this manner of way." The innovation was successful. Cooper established a reputation as a book-auctioneer, and in London such sales became common. In a few years we read of the practice being extended to Scotland, and to the larger towns in England, such as Leeds and York. John Dunton, with his usual versatility, took over a cargo of books to sell at Dublin, and after that date attendance at the country fairs with books to sell by auction became quite a distinct branch among the London booksellers. The leading auctioneer in Dunton's time was Edward Millington. "He had a quick wit and a wonderful fluency of speech. There was usually as much wit in his 'One, two, three!' as can be met with in a modern play. 'Where,' said Millington, 'is your generous flame for learning? Who but a sot or a blockhead would have money in his pocket, and starve his brains?'" At this time it appears that bids of one penny were very commonly offered and accepted. Book-auctioneering soon became a distinct trade altogether, and required not only much fluency of speech and power of persuasion, but a very exact knowledge of the science of bibliography. For this latter speciality Samuel Paterson, of King Street, Covent Garden, was particularly famous. Perhaps no bookseller ever lived who knew so much about the contents of the books he sold. When, in compiling his catalogues, he met with an unknown book he would sit perusing it for hours, utterly unmindful of the time of sale, and oblivious of the efforts of his clerk to call his attention to the lateness of the time. Baker, Leigh,

and Sotheby, all of York Street, Covent Garden, were also eminent in this branch of the trade; but the prince of book-auctioneers was James Christie, whose powers of persuasion were rendered doubly effective by a quiet, easy flow of conversation, and a gentle refinement of manners. At the close of the century, the booksellers' trade sales were held at the Horn Tavern, in Doctors' Commons, and were preceded by a luxurious dinner, when the bottle and the jest went round merrily, and the competition was heightened by wine and laughter.

Tegg, to retake the thread of our story after this digression, started with a very poor stock, consisting of shilling political pamphlets, and some thousands of the *Monthly Visitor*. At Worcester, however, he purchased a parcel of books from a clergyman for ten pounds, but when the time for payment arrived the good man refused to accept anything. At Worcester, too, it was that he held his first auction. "With a beating heart I mounted the rostrum. The room was crowded. I took £30 that first night, and in a few days a knife and fork was provided for me at many of the houses of my customers. God helps those, I thought, who help themselves." With his wife acting as clerk, he travelled through the country, buying up the duplicates at all the gentlemen's libraries he could hear of, and rapidly paying off his debts. This led him to return to his shop in Cheapside, but his ardent desire for advancement involved him again in difficulties. "One day I was called from the shop three times by the sheriff's officers (a few years afterwards I paid a fine of £400 to be excused serving sheriff myself). Bailiffs are not always iron-hearted. I have met with very kind officers; some have taken my word for debt and costs, and one lent me the money to pay both" (O rare bum-bailiff! why

is not thy name recorded?).

Still Tegg was making gradual way, in spite of occasional difficulties which again led him to the pawnshops, but with more precious pledges than when at Berwick he asked a rosy-cheeked Irish girl how he might best raise money on a silk handkerchief, for now his watch and spoons could accommodate him, when needful, with fifty pounds. About this time one of the most interesting episodes of his life was commenced. He had purchased a hundred pounds' worth of books from Mr. Hunt, who, hearing of his struggles, bade him to pay for them when he pleased. Tegg, in the fulness of his gratitude, told him that should he, in his turn, ever need aid he should have it; but the wealthy bookseller smiled at the young struggler's evident simplicity. We will tell the rest of the story in Tegg's own words. "Thirty years after, I was in my counting-house, when Mr. Hunt, with a queer-looking companion, came in and reminded me of my promise. He was under arrest, and must go to prison unless I would be his bail. I acknowledged the obligation, but I would first take my wife's opinion. 'Yes, my dear, by all means help Mr. Hunt,' was her answer. 'He aided us in trouble; you can do no less for him.' Next morning I found I had become his surety for thirty thousand pounds. I was sharply questioned in court as to my means, and, rubbing his hands together, Mr. Barrister remarked that Book-selling must be a fine trade, and wished he had been brought up to it. I answered, 'The result did not depend on the trade, but on the man; for instance, if I had been a lawyer I would not have remained half this time in your situation—I would have occupied a seat with their lordships.' There was a laugh in court, and the judge said, 'You may stand down.'"

When success first really dawned, Tegg began to feel poignantly the want of a more complete education; however, he determined to employ the powers he possessed as best he could. His earliest publications consisted of a series of pamphlets, printed in duodecimo, with frontispieces, containing abridgments of popular works; and the series extended to two hundred, many of them circulating to the extent of 4000 copies. As an instance of his business energy, we may cite the following:—Tegg heard one morning from a friend that Nelson had been shot at Trafalgar. He set an engraver to work instantly on a portrait of the hero, purchased the *Naval Chronicle*, found ample material for a biography; and, in a few hours, "The Whole Life of Nelson" was ready for the press. Such timely assiduity was rewarded by a sale of 5000 sixpenny copies. On another occasion, when on a summer jaunt to Windsor with a friend, it was jocularly resolved that, as they had come to see the king, they ought to make his Majesty pay the expenses of the trip. Tegg suggested a Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, with a coloured portrait. 13,000 copies were sold at seven-and-sixpence each; and, as he observes, the "bill was probably liquidated."

Among his other cheap books were—"Tegg's Chronology," "Philip Quail," and—perhaps the most successful and useful of all—a diamond edition of "Johnson's Dictionary," published when the original edition was selling at five guineas.

In 1824 he purchased the copyright of Hone's "Every-Day Book" and "Table Book;" republished the whole in weekly parts, and cleared a very large profit.

"I like you and your book, ingenious Hone!

In whose capacious, all-embracing leaves
The very marrow of traditions shown,
And all that History, much that Fiction weaves."

So sang Charles Lamb; and Southey says of these two delightful works:—"The 'Every-Day Book' and 'Table Book' will be a fortune a hundred years hence, but they have failed to make Hone's fortunes." However, Tegg gave him five hundred pounds to compile the "Year Book," which proved much less successful than the others.

Hone had been a bookseller in the Strand, where he probably acquired his miscellaneous stock of quaint knowledge about old English customs, and all that appertained to a race fast dying out. After the famous trial, in which his "Parodies" were charged as being "blasphemy," he immediately stopped the sale of them; and, though at that time in urgent need of money, he resolutely refused tempting offers for copies. "The story of my three-days' trial at Guildhall," he writes, "may be dug out from the journals of the period; the history of my mind, my heart, my scepticism, and my atheism remain to be written." It is said that he was first awakened to a better way of thinking, in the following manner:—One day, walking in the country, he saw a little girl standing at a doorway, and stopped to ask her for a drink of milk; and, observing a book in her hand, he inquired what it was. She said it was a Bible; and, in reply to some depreciatory remark of his, added, in her simple wonder—"I thought everybody loved their Bible, sir!"

By this time Tegg was thriving;—he bought his first great-coat, and the first silk pelisse for his wife, and was able to make a rule of paying in cash, which he found an immense advantage. The book auctions,

continued nightly at 111, Cheapside, formed the immediate stepping-stone to his wealth. He visited all the trade sales, and bought up the "remainders," *i.e.*, surplus copies of works in which the original publishers had no faith;—"I was," he writes, "the broom that swept the booksellers' warehouses." At one of the dinners preceding these trade sales, he heard Alderman Cadell give the then famous toast —"The Bookseller's four B's"—Burns, Blair, Buchan, and Blackstone. In the auctioneer's rostrum he was very lively and amusing, and the room became well known all over London. At one of the last sales, a gentleman who purchased a book asked if "he ever left off selling for a single night?" Fifteen years before, on his road to the dock to embark for Calcutta, he found Tegg busy, and as busy still on his return. "If ever man was devoted to his profession, I am that man," says Tegg; and again—"I feel that my moral courage is sufficient to carry out anything I resolve to accomplish."

Now that his own publications were proving very lucrative, Tegg resolved to abandon the auctioneering portion of the business, and confine himself to the more legitimate trade; and, at his last sale, he took upwards of eighty pounds. The purchase and sale of remainders, however, still formed a very important branch of his traffic.

About this time he took another journey to Scotland, and had an interview with Sir Walter Scott, who had, he says, "nothing in his manner or conversation to impress a visitor with his greatness." Immediately on his return he made his final remove to the Mansion House, Cheapside—once the residence of the Lord Mayor—and the annual current of sales rose in the proportion of from eighteen to

twenty-two. Now a popular as well as a wealthy man, he was elected a Common Councillor of the Ward of Cheap, took a country house at Norwood, with a beautiful garden attached—"though I scarcely knew a rose from a rhododendron"—and set up a carriage.

It was, of course, from the Mansion House that his well-known publications were dated. In 1825, the year after the purchase of the "Table Book," he published the "London Encyclopædia;" it was a time of great financial difficulty (as we have, indeed, seen in almost all our lives of contemporary publishers); his bills were dishonoured to the extent of twenty thousand pounds; and the work was began solely to give employment to those who had been faithful in more prosperous years. The public, however, supported the undertaking, and Tegg was rewarded for his courage.

The time of the panic, in 1826, was a season of severe trial, in domestic as well as pecuniary matters; and Tegg, though he maintained that few men were ever insolvent through mere misfortune, began to fear that despondency would deprive him of his reason. And now it was that he appreciated more than ever the brave qualities of his wife, who roused and manned him again to the struggle; till, in the end, he became a gainer rather than a loser by the crisis, for the best books were then sold as almost worthless; and at Hurst and Robinson's sale he purchased the most popular of Scott's novels at fourpence a volume.

Among his other great "remainder" bargains we may mention the purchase of the remainder and copyright of "Murray's Family Library" in 1834. He bought 100,000 volumes at one shilling, and reissued

them at more than double the price. His greatest triumph of all was, however, the acquisition of "Valpy's Delphin Classics," in one hundred and sixty-two large octavo volumes, the stock amounting to nearly fifty thousand copies, the whole of which were sold off in two years.

To return to his own publications, we find that, up to the close of 1840, he had issued four thousand works on his own account, and "not more than twenty were failures."

Tegg's reputation as a bookseller chiefly rests upon his cheap reprints and abridgments of popular works; and, in connection with these, his name is mentioned in Mr. Carlyle's famous petition on the Copyright Bill. Though we have failed to ascertain to what general or particular works Mr. Carlyle refers, the petition is of such curious interest to all concerned in the writing and selling of books, that we do not hesitate to quote it in extenso[29]:—

> "To the honourable the Commons of England, in Parliament assembled, the Petition of Thomas Carlyle, a Writer of Books,
>
> "Humbly sheweth,
>
> "That your petitioner has written certain books, being incited thereto by various innocent or laudable considerations, chiefly by the thought that the said books might in the end be found to be worth something.
>
> "That your petitioner had not the happiness to receive from Mr. Tegg, or any Publisher, Re-publisher, Printer, Book-buyer, or other the like men, or body of men, any encouragement or countenance in the writing of said books, or to discern any chance of receiving such; but wrote

them by effort of his own will, and the favour of Heaven.

"That all useful labour is worthy of recompense; that all honest labour is worthy of the chance of recompense; that the giving and assuring to each man what recompense his labour has actually merited, may be said to be the business of all Legislation, Polity, Government and social arrangement whatsoever among men;—a business indispensable to attempt, impossible to accomplish accurately, difficult to accomplish without inaccuracies that become enormous, insupportable, and the Parent of Social Confusion which never altogether end.

"That your petitioner does not undertake to say what recompense in money this labour of his may deserve; whether it deserves any recompense in money, or whether money in any quantity could hire him to do the like.

"That this labour has found hitherto in money, or money's worth, small recompense or none; but thinks that, if so, it will be at a distant time, when he, the labourer, will probably be no longer in need of money, and those dear to him will still be in need of it.

"That the law does, at least, protect all persons in selling the productions of their labour at what they can get for it, in all market-places, to all lengths of time. Much more than this the law does to many, but so much it does to all, and less than this to none.

"That your petitioner cannot discover himself to have done unlawfully in this his said labour of writing books, or to have become criminal, or to have forfeited the law's protection thereby. Contrariwise, your petitioner believes firmly that

he is innocent in said labour; that if he be found in the long-run to have written a genuine, enduring book, his merit therein, and desert towards England and English and other men will be considerable, not easily estimated in money; that, on the other hand, if his book prove false and ephemeral, he and it will be abolished and forgotten, and no harm done.

"That in this manner your petitioner plays no unfair game against the world: his stake being life itself, (for the penalty is death by starvation), and the world's stake nothing, till it see the die thrown; so that in every case the world cannot lose.

"That in the happy and long-doubtful event of the game's going in his favour, your petitioner submits that the small winnings thereof do belong to him or his, and that no other man has justly either part or lot in them at all, now, henceforth, or for ever.

"May it, therefore, please your Honourable House to protect him in said happy and long-doubtful event, and (by passing your Copyright Bill), forbid all Thomas Teggs, and other extraneous persons entirely unconcerned in this adventure of his, to steal from him his small winnings, for a space of sixty years, at shortest. After sixty years, unless your Honourable House provide otherwise, they may begin to steal.

"And your petitioner will ever pray.
"THOMAS CARLYLE."

Tegg did not confine his business to these cheap reprints, but issued many books which were altogether beyond the popular taste and purse, such as "Blackstone," edited by Price; Smith's "Wealth of

Nations," Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Locke's Works, (in ten volumes), Bishop Butler's Works, and Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," &c. Out of Dr. Adam Clarke's "Family Bible" he is said to have made a small fortune; the work was stereotyped, and re-issue after re-issue was published.

In 1835 he was nominated Alderman of his Ward, but was not elected; in the following year he was chosen Sheriff, and paid the fine to escape serving, having resolved to forego any further civic distinctions. To the usual fine of £400 he added another hundred, and the whole went to found a "Tegg Scholarship" at the City of London School, and he still further increased the value of the gift by adding thereto a very valuable collection of books.

On 21st April, 1845, Thomas Tegg died, after a long and painful illness, brought on by over-exertion, mental and physical. His third son, Alfred Byron Tegg, a youth of twenty, then studying at Pembroke College, Oxford, was so affected by the shock of his father's death that he died almost on receipt of the news, and was buried the same day as his father at Wimbledon—Thomas Tegg's native village.

At the commencement of his autobiography, Tegg says, and the narrative bears the veracity of the statement upon every page:—"In sitting down to write some account of my past life, I feel as if I were occupied in making my will. I feel at a loss to express fully my emotions. I write in a grateful spirit. What I have acquired has been acquired by industry, patience, and privation," and he adds elsewhere, "I can say in passing through life, whether rich or poor, my spirit never forsook me so as to prevent me from rallying again. I have seen and associated with all ranks and stations in society. I have lodged with

beggars, and had the honour of presentation to Royalty. I have been so reduced as to plead for assistance, and, by the goodness of Providence, I have been able to render it to others."

He was generally believed to have been the original of Twigg in Hood's "Tylney Hall."

From the commencement of his career, Tegg made commercial success his one aim in life; and with much patience, much endurance, and much labour, he achieved it thoroughly, and, in the achieving of it honestly, he conferred a great and lasting benefit upon the world; for the book merchant holds in his hands the power to do good, or to do evil, far beyond any other merchant whatsoever. Rising from a humble position in life, he never forgot his early friends, never left unrewarded, when possible, his early encouragers and assistants. And if he was proud in having thus been the architect of his own fortune and position, this pride surely was a less ignoble one than that which leads one-half the world to go through life exultantly, with no other self-conscious merit than having, by a simple accident, been born in wealthier circumstances than the other half.

Tegg left behind him a large family who inherited something of their father's energy and vigour. With his friendly aid and encouragement they, many of them, went elsewhere to seek their fortunes—two to Australia and two to Dublin; and with native perseverance, with a name that was known wherever books were sold and bought, with their father's connection to support them, and their father's stock to fill their shops, they have not failed to reap something of their father's success.

Thomas Tegg was succeeded in London by his

son and late partner, Mr. William Tegg, and under his management the business of the house has assumed a graver and more staid appearance. In the preface to the twelfth edition of Parley's "Tales about Animals," Mr. William Tegg claims the authorship of the whole series published by him under the pseudonyme of "Peter Parley,"[30] a *nom de plume*, we believe, that has covered more names than any other ever adopted by English writers.





# *THOMAS NELSON*:

## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND "BOOK-MANUFACTURING."

Had we space—we have all the will—to be garrulous, we should infallibly have commenced this chapter by a long account of John Newberry, the celebrated publisher of children's literature. His books were distinguished by the originality and the homeliness of their style, and were wonderfully adapted to the capacities of the little readers to whom, in one instance, at all events, "The History of Little Goody Two Shoes," they were specially dedicated: "To all young gentlemen and ladies who are good, or intend to be good, this book is inscribed, by their old friend, Mr. John Newberry, in St. Paul's Churchyard." Mr. John Newberry was himself, in many cases, the author of these volumes, "price 2*d.*, gilt," which he produced; but he was assisted by men who were distinguished in other walks of life, especially by Mr. Griffith Jones, editor of the *London Chronicle*, the *Daily Advertiser*, and the *Public Ledger*,

and by Oliver Goldsmith, who makes Dr. Primrose, when sick and penniless at an inn, pay a hearty tribute to a traveller who had succoured him. “This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul’s Churchyard, who had written so many little books for children: he called himself their friend, but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted but he was in haste to be gone, for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one, Mr. Thomas Trip.” Newberry purchased the copyright of the “Traveller” for twenty guineas, and eventually offered a hundred guineas for the “Deserted Village,” which Goldsmith wished to return when he found that he was receiving payment at the rate of five shillings a line.

However historically interesting and bibliographically curious, Newberry’s business, measured in bulk, was as a molehill to a mountain when compared to the enormous trade carried on by the largest of our modern publishers of juvenile literature—perhaps, also the largest book-manufacturer in the world.

Thomas Nelson was born at Throsk, a few miles east of Stirling, in the year 1780, and was brought up in the very bosom of that strong, stern, unwavering religious faith, which has so often seemed the fitting complement to the ruggedness of the Scotch character; and which, among the other worldly advantages of its system of training, has often prepared its votaries for a successful career in business. His father led a quiet, retired life upon a small farm, not far from the famous field of Bannockburn, and was so satisfied with the content of his humble lot, that he repeatedly refused to take

advantage of offered opportunities of making money, by permitting a pottery to be erected on his land. In those days, great gatherings of those known as the Covenanters took place in many parts of Scotland, at the sacramental seasons, and Nelson's father thought but little of travelling forty miles in order that he might enjoy the privilege of the communion service. Upon the mind of the young lad, who often accompanied his father, these meetings, all probably that varied the monotony of a rustic life, made an indelible impression. When, like many youths of his time who had their own paths to clear in the world's jungle, he resolved to leave Scotland and to seek his fortunes in the West Indies, his father accompanied him on the road to Alloa, the place of embarkation, and during the journey asked him, "Have you ever thought that in the country to which you are going, you will be far away from the means of grace?" "No, father," replied the son, "I never thought of that; and I won't go." And immediately the scheme was abandoned, and they retraced their steps homewards.

When, however, he was about twenty years of age, young Nelson tore himself from the parental roof, and went to London, and after passing through all the difficulties that are so familiar to young lads who have to fight their own battles unaided, he entered the service of a publishing house—an event that determined, doubtless, the course of his after-life. One of his early associates in business was Thomas Kelly, and, like his friend, Nelson, while diligent and conscientious in his daily duties, still found time for intellectual and religious culture. With a few young Scotchmen, he established a weekly-fellowship meeting, which was held every Sunday. One of the association was employed at the

dockyard, during Lord Melville's administration at the Admiralty, and lost his situation through his refusal to work on Sundays. Lord Melville, however, who had often seen him in the dockyard, enquired the cause of his absence, and on learning the fact of his dismissal, severely rebuked the officials, and shortly afterwards advanced him to a higher post.

In the latter years of Nelson's residence in London, he was engaged in obtaining orders for the Stratford Edition of "Henry's Bible," a work issued in shilling parts, to be bound up in six large folio volumes, which was held in high repute, and attained a large circulation. Nelson secured the names of a great number of subscribers, chiefly in the northern district of London.

After having thus received the necessary business training, and acquired the necessary commercial experience, Nelson determined to make a start upon his own account, and left London for Edinburgh. Here at first he rented a small apartment, which he occupied as a book-warehouse, stocked chiefly with second-hand books, and from this little establishment he issued the "Scots Worthies," and one or two other works, in monthly parts. In a few years afterwards he removed to the well-known small shop at the corner of the West Bow. Here he commenced his cheap issues in 24mo., of such works as Baxter's "Saints' Rest," Booth's "Reign of Grace," "Mac Ewan on the Types," and some of Willison's works. Indeed, we have been told, epigrammatically, that Nelson, in this little corner shop of the West Bow, commencing with a humble reprint of "The Vicar of Wakefield," arrived in time at the more ponderous honour of "Josephus." In his early publishing career, he and Peter Brown, another bookseller engaged in the same

line of business in Edinburgh, were of considerable service to each other, for though they were not in partnership, they contributed jointly to defray the cost of composing and stereotyping a considerable number of octavo volumes, comprising the works of Paley, Leighton, Romaine, Newton, and others. Thus, half the cost of production was saved to each, while the stock of each was doubled. These books were not at first sold through the booksellers, but vacant shops were opened in the evenings in the large towns, where single copies were sold by auction, and the same practice was extended to smaller places, chiefly on the periodical recurrence of the Scotch fairs. This innovation, of course, excited a strong feeling of animosity among the trade, who, for some years, did their best to thwart the sale of Nelson's publications. Indeed, in 1829, when Nelson, encouraged by the success of his auction sales, engaged Mr. James Macdonald to travel Scotland regularly, his mission, owing to the stigma attached to the auction business, was a failure. At Aberdeen the booksellers rose up in arms, and only one bookseller, Mr. George King, had the courage to give Macdonald an order.

Though opposed in the country, and though for many years he did not accumulate much capital, yet, from his well-known and strict integrity, Nelson never wanted funds to carry out his plans. At the very time that Macdonald was suffering defeat in each country town, Nelson was enabled to purchase from a printer, at a comparatively low price, "Macknight on the Epistles," in four volumes, octavo; and the popularity of that work forced a quick sale throughout the trade, and gave his business a very considerable impulse.

Nelson was still convinced that the only method

of extending his business to any considerable importance, was by means of a regular system of travelling, and Macdonald was succeeded by Mr. Peters, whose success was considerably greater; but it was not until Mr. William Nelson, the eldest son of the founder, took to the road, that the trade business was really consolidated, not only in Scotland, but also in London and the chief towns of the united kingdom. In fact, it may be said, that Mr. William Nelson was the real builder of the business, working upwards from a foundation that was certainly narrow and circumscribed. Mr. Thomas Nelson, the younger brother, was soon after this admitted to the firm, and undertook the energetic superintendence of the manufacturing department, and was the originator of the extensive series of school-books.

Johnson of Liverpool used to narrate that he remembered young Nelson on his first (English) journey, and that he gave him what Nelson called a "braw order." Shortly after this he was, according to the same authority, joined by Mr. James Campbell, who left the carpenter's bench to become a "bagman," and was soon the chief assistant in the firm's employ.[31]

Before this, however, the energy displayed by Mr. William Nelson had thoroughly consolidated the business, and had entirely dissipated the previous prejudice excited by the auction sales, the more especially as the lowest prices were at once fixed to the trade upon every book issued by the establishment. Mr. Campbell's success as a commercial man was considerable, and by his subsequent energy and integrity as an agent, at home and in the colonies, the demand for Messrs. Nelson and Sons' books began to assume a considerable

magnitude.

In 1843, the firm removed their place of business to Hope Park; we shall refer to this establishment subsequently—and upon the death of Peter Brown (he had for some years ceased to co-operate actively with them), the stereotype plates which had been the joint property of both firms, became by purchase the exclusive possessions of Messrs. Nelson, and this gave them an advantage in the market they did not formerly possess.

Even while in London, Nelson had collected the works of his favourite divines for his private use, and he now carried out more thoroughly the scheme, commenced in conjunction with Peter Brown, of publishing cheap editions of such books that they might be brought within the easy reach of thousands. Such cheap issues are now a common feature of the trade, but he was one of the first Edinburgh booksellers to introduce the new order of things. The series was very popular, but still it was by the publication of juvenile literature that Nelson's great commercial success was achieved. The works of this special, and apparently inexhaustible class were distinguished by a good moral tendency, purity of diction, and elegance of production, and were laudably free from sectarian bias, and extreme opinion. It will, perhaps, suffice our present purpose to instance, among his many authors, R. M. Ballantyne, as a favourite with his boyish, and A. L. O. E. with her girlish, readers. One of Nelson's periodicals attained a large circulation; this was the *Family Treasury*, edited by Dr. Andrew Cameron, and numbering among its contributors such writers as Dr. Guthrie, Dr. Vaughan, Dean Trench, and Brownlow North; in its columns the charming "Chronicles of the

Schönberg Cotta Family" first appeared.

Among the greatest of the more recent triumphs of the firm in the way of books for children, was the introduction of coloured illustrations upon a black background—a striking and emphatic method of throwing the coloured pictures into strong relief; the books illustrated upon this principle proved so successful that a host of imitators adopted the same method. The firm are also well known as extensive publishers of a greatly improved series of schoolbooks, of maps, embracing new and ingenious features, and of gift and prize books. Latterly, however, they have entered into a wider and more liberal field, and their current catalogue embraces works in most departments of literature.

For the last five-and-twenty years of his life, Nelson was more or less of an invalid; though from 1843 to 1850 he enjoyed a kind of respite; but during this whole period his sons were associated with him in the business, and during the latter and greater portion of it, the management devolved entirely upon them. Thomas Nelson, the founder, died on March 23rd, 1861, and showed upon his death-bed the effects of that strong piety to which, since a child, he had accustomed his mind. When it was thought proper to announce to him that his end was near, he received the intelligence with the calmest equanimity:—"I thought so; my days are wholly in God's hands. He doeth all things well. His will be done!" and then he took up his Testament again, saying, "Now I must finish my chapter." He was buried in the Grange Cemetery, among many Scottish worthies, and lies side by side with Hugh Miller.

Thomas Nelson was distinguished not only by his

energy and strict integrity, but by a generous hospitality of the genuine Scottish type. Even when his business was of very small dimensions, his old-fashioned dining-room was generally filled by the Scottish clergy, when any general meeting brought them to the metropolis.

Messrs. William and Thomas Nelson, of course, continued the business, and we cannot, perhaps, convey a better idea of the magnitude to which the trade has in their hands extended than by giving a description of their establishment in all its branches, and for this description we are indebted chiefly to Mr. Bremner's "Industries of Scotland."

Taking printing, publishing, and bookbinding together, Thomas Nelson and Sons, of Hope Park, are the most extensive house in Scotland. They removed to their present establishment a quarter of a century ago, and were compelled, after a lapse of ten years, to build a new range of offices far exceeding anything of the kind in the city of Edinburgh, and probably unparalleled out of it. The main part of the building consists of three conjoined blocks, forming three sides of a square. Part of the surrounding ground is laid out as an ornamental grass-plot, and a new machine-room has been recently erected upon another portion.

In the main building there are three floors apportioned to the various branches of the trade. Machinery is used wherever it is possible, and by its aid, and by a well-organized system of division of labour, the number of books manufactured is enormous. Everything, from the compilation of a book to the lettering of its binding, is done upon the premises, and for the founts of type and the paper alone are the proprietors indebted to outside help.

The letterpress department consists of a spacious composing-room, a splendidly fitted machine-room, a press-room, and a stereotype foundry. As very large numbers of the works are issued, they are almost invariably printed from stereotype plates—a process said to have been invented by William Ged, a goldsmith in Edinburgh at the beginning of the last century; the Dutch, however, with some justice, claim the discovery for one of their countrymen, a very long time before this date; at all events, the process was still almost a novelty when, as we have seen, Kelly first utilized it in London. In the machine-room and the press-room there are nineteen machines and seventeen presses constantly at work. Here large numbers of children's books are produced, and a number of machines are devoted to colour printing.

From the machine-room the sheets are taken to the drying-room, where they are hung up in layers upon screens, which, when filled, are run into a hot-air chamber, where the ink is thoroughly dried in six or eight hours.

The bookbinding department occupies several large rooms, and employs two-thirds of all the work-people engaged. Although machines are provided for a great variety of operations, a large amount of hand-labour is found to be indispensable. As soon as the sheets have been thoroughly dried, they are folded by young women, as the machine-folding is only suitable for the coarser kinds of work. After this process, the sheets are arranged by another staff of girls in the proper order for binding, compressed in a powerful press, and notches for the binding cords are cut by a machine. They are then passed on to the sewers, who sit upon long benches plying their deft

needles.

The case-makers have by this time prepared the cases, and in connection with this department there is a cloth-dyeing and embossing branch, where the cloths are prepared; the coloured and enamelled papers for the insides are also made upon the premises. The case-makers are divided into half-a-dozen different sections, each of which performs a certain and distinct portion of the work. The pasteboard and cloth are first cut to the required size, and then one girl spreads the glue upon the cloth, a second lays the board upon its proper place, a third tucks the cloth in all round, a fourth smoothes off the work, and the covers are now taken to the embosser, who puts on the ornamental additions, and finally the books are fixed in the cases, and sent down to their warehouse, whence they are despatched to all corners of the world, principally, of course, to the London and New York branches.

The lithographic establishment comprises a number of rooms. Sixteen machines and presses are constantly engaged, principally in the production of maps, book illustrations, coloured pictures, and the beautifully-tinted lithographic views, which Messrs. Nelson were mainly instrumental in introducing to the notice of the public. Among the artists employed here in executing preliminary work are photographers, draughtsmen, steel, copper, and wood engravers, and electrotypers. By a process patented by Messrs. Nelson, in conjunction with Mr. Ramage (to whose services they owe much of the superiority of their illustrations), a drawing or print may be converted into an engraving suitable for printing from by the simple action of light, and these

engravings, either for copper-plate or letter-press printing, may be multiplied and made larger or smaller at will. The storerooms are said to contain upwards of fifty thousand wood-cuts and electrotypes.

Even the inks and varnishes are manufactured upon the premises.

Messrs. Thomas Nelson and Sons employ some four hundred and fifty work-people in their establishment, about one-half of whom are young women.

The whole of Scotland is of course supplied from the head-quarters in Hope Park; but they have also large branches in London and New York. The former —situated in, or rather forming, Warwick Buildings, at the corner of Paternoster Row—is, though a branch, as large a bookselling warehouse as any in London, and in its interior arrangements is unrivalled. The basement storey is devoted to the stowage of wholesale stock and the execution of export and country orders, and over the shop there are four lofty floors.

The Scotch have during the century especially cultivated the trade of printing and bookselling. In the former branch alone, ten thousand persons are employed in Scotland, five thousand of whom are engaged in the capital. In 1860 there were in Edinburgh no less than thirty firms, who combine the united business of publishing and bookselling, besides ninety who confine themselves to bookselling alone. The eight or nine leading houses, with one exception, print themselves the books they sell; a practice which is almost indigenous to Edinburgh, or, at all events, does not obtain in London. The advantage of cheap labour, which includes, of

course, cheap paper, are here so great, especially in the issue of large editions, as to more than counteract the drawback in the shape of transit cost to, and agents' commission in, London. We have already entered into the history of several of these leading Edinburgh houses, and as our space is growing scanty, we can scarcely now do more than mention the firm of Oliver and Boyd; and though, from their long standing and importance, the career of the house would afford material for an interesting chapter, we must hope to have an opportunity of recurring to the subject at a not very distant time. Formerly Oliver and Boyd enjoyed a very large share of the Scotch country business, and occupied indeed much the same position in the northern, as is held by Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., in the southern, capital. Of later years, however, their attention has been more exclusively fixed upon the publication of educational works, and among the writers whose books have been issued by them, the names of Spalding, Reid, Morell, White, and McCulloch, are known to every schoolboy. "The Edinburgh Academy Class-Books" have also attained a very wide circulation far beyond the walls of the Edinburgh Academy; and "Oliver and Boyd's Catechisms," published at the low price of ninepence each, are used in nearly all elementary classes where science, in any form, is taught. As a book of reference for students of every grade, of a larger growth, *Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanac* is, perhaps, unrivalled for the fulness and yet conciseness of every branch of official information, at all essential to the inhabitants of Scotland.



# *SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.*:

## COLLECTING FOR THE COUNTRY TRADE.

We have, by this time, given historico-biographical notices of publishers and booksellers, representing very various phases of the "trade;" but we have still to show how, in the economy of publishing, and through an ingenious division of labour, the smaller booksellers in town, and all the booksellers in the country and the colonies, are kept constantly supplied with books and periodicals.

Before a new book is published, the work is taken round to the larger houses in the "Row," and other parts of London, and "subscribed," that is the first price to the trade, and the actual selling price to the public are quoted, and orders at the former price are given, according to the purchaser's faith in the expected popularity of the work in question.

The wholesale houses, in their turn, supply all the country, colonial, and smaller London orders, reaping, of course, a due advantage from having the volumes demanded already stowed in their

warehouses.

By far the largest business in this branch of the trade is executed by the old-established firm of Simpkin, Marshall, and Company, and though they by no means confine their attention solely to the commission-paying business of middlemen—for they are themselves publishers of educational and other widely-circulating works—yet their name has long, throughout the length and breadth of the land, been held synonymous with this wholesale supply of the requirements of other houses.

The real founder of this enormous traffic was, Benjamin Crosby. The son of a Yorkshire grazier, he came to London to seek his fortunes, and was apprenticed to James Nunn, a bookseller in Great Queen Street. As soon as his indentures had expired, he obtained a situation under George Robinson—the "King of the Booksellers"—and, in a few years after this, succeeded to the business of Mr. Stalker, of Stationers' Hall Court. Crosby was one of the first London booksellers who travelled regularly through the country, soliciting orders for the purpose of effecting sales and extending his connections. In a short time he acquired a pre-eminence as a supplier of the country houses, and also as one of the largest purchasers at trade sales, especially when publishers' stocks were sold off. The extension of the business had been very materially assisted by the unremitting exertions of two assistants—Simpkin and Marshall—and when, in 1814, he was stricken by a sudden attack of paralysis, he made over a certain portion of his stock and the whole of his country connection to Robert Baldwin, and Cradock and Joy, he left the remainder, with the premises and the London connection, to Simpkin and Marshall. Soon after this,

a second attack deprived him of his speech, and for a time of his reason, and he died in the following year, 1815.

Under Simpkin and Marshall, which was now, of course, the new title of the firm, the business soon began again to expand, for they retained most of their London connections, and following Crosby's example, attracted the attention of many country clients, whom they not only supplied with books, but for whose publications they became the London agents—a business without speculative risk, and consequently profitable. For instance, in 1827, an unpretentious little volume—"Poems by Two Brothers," having the modest motto, *Hæc nos novimus esse nihil*, published by J. and J. Jackson, Louth, was also stamped with the imprimatur of Simpkin and Marshall, and thus they had the signal honour of being Mr. Tennyson's first London publishers, though very probably the honour in this case was greater than the profit.

In 1828, Simpkin retired, or rather was bought out of the business by Mr. Miles, who immediately took the financial management of the whole concern, and the firm adopted the new title of "Simpkin, Marshall and Co." Simpkin, however, did not die until the 25th of December, 1854, and thus enjoyed a long period of peaceful superannuation.

The practice of lending their names to the works published by their country clients, though free from business venture, was not unattended by legal risk, for in 1834 they had an action brought against them for libel, which at the time attracted a very general and lively interest; though they were indicted solely as the London agents of *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, in which a series of articles had appeared, reflecting on

the conduct of Richmond, a man notorious as a spy, and who, as an instrument of the Government, had procured the execution of Hardie and his companion at Glasgow in the winter of 1819–20. Richmond laid the damages that his character had sustained at the absurd figure of five thousand pounds, but Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, to whom the defence was entrusted, so thoroughly exposed the antecedents and present means of livelihood of the plaintiff that before the trial was over he was absolutely fain to withdraw his action and elect to be non-suited.

In 1837 Baldwin and Cradock failed, and handed over the country connection they had derived from Crosby, to Simpkin, Marshall and Company. This occurred on the October "Magazine day" of that year; for three days and three nights the partners and their assistants never left the establishment at Stationers' Hall Court, and Baldwin's country clients were so pleased that they had been spared so much expected delay and annoyance that one and all resolved to keep their business in the hands of their new agents; and with this addition to their trade, the business relations of Simpkin, Marshall and Company were now infinitely beyond anything that even Crosby had before experienced.

In 1855, Richard Marshall retired from the business, and consequently, the management of the concern remained almost entirely in the hands of Mr. Miles's two sons. Marshall died at the ripe age of seventy-five, on the 17th of November, 1863.

In 1859 the premises were rebuilt and enlarged, and every possible improvement, to save trouble and economise time, was introduced into the new establishment. Among the gentlemen who had been employed in the old warehouse was Mr. F. Laurie, a

barrister-at-law, who afterwards served in the printed-book department of the British Museum, and who was widely known as the author of a "Life of Henry Fielding," and as a frequent contributor to periodical literature. As none of the country booksellers have more than one London agent, by him they are supplied with the books and periodicals of all the London publishers, an arrangement that saves an infinity of trouble, expense and delay. A century ago, in the days of small things, the agent made himself useful to the provincial bookseller in many other ways than in the mere supplying of publications. In many cases he was expected to forward the newspapers, but other and stranger commissions often fell to his lot. A great wholesale house in London at the present day would be rather surprised to receive the following orders, which, however, all occur in a bookseller's records late in the eighteenth century:—"1 sliding Gunter from some of the instrument makers;" "two-eighth share of lottery-tickets;" "1 oz. of Maker's Cobalt, as advertized on the cover of the *Gentleman's Magazine*;" or a direction "to please and send on Saturday, and pay Mr. Barratt, Parliament Place, Palace Yard, Westminster, £1 0*s.* 6*d.*, King's Rent, due 10th of October last, for the Vicarage of Holy Cross, Shrewsbury."

We cannot, perhaps, convey a better idea of the manner in which business is conducted by these wholesale houses in the "Row," than by giving a description of "Magazine day,"—by far the busiest time in each month. Very quiet is Paternoster Row generally, and its solitude is broken only by the fitful and fleeting appearance of publishers, their agents, and literary men—the latter, as a rule, in clerical costume, with white neckties which betray their

avocation as lying in “the religious publication line of business;” while its silence is broken by some venturous barrel-organ player, or by an old blind fiddler, whose music is appreciated and encouraged by the young shop-boys, lurking behind each alley corner to enjoy the furtive pipe. But on “Magazine day” all this is changed, the street is now a struggling scene of bustle and confusion; now every house is in a thrill of agitation from the garret to the cellar, and now every business nerve is strained. Owing to the inconvenient innovation of magazine proprietors, in publishing their periodicals on different days, “Magazine day” has lost much of its pristine glory, but even now the work commences on the eve of the chief day of publication, which is known consequently as “late night,” for the assistants are generally kept busily engaged till twelve or one o’clock. By the morning’s post of this preceding day the country orders arrive, and the invoices have to be made out from the lists received. Every regular customer has his allotted pigeon-hole, into which the invoices are put as soon as copied, together with such of the books he has ordered as are on the premises; for the majority of the smaller country booksellers take advantage of their monthly parcels, and to save expense of frequent railway carriage, include also in their orders such recent books as they may require. Early in the morning, or sometimes on the night before, the magazines arrive, and it is on this morning that the real work begins, for though as large a stock of current literature is kept in each warehouse as is possible, there are still many publishers to be sent to. While the assistants are busily engaged sorting out the books, and supplying each order with the works they have in hand, the “collectors” are furnished with lists of the books

required from other houses. The “collector” is by no means an unimportant person in a publisher’s establishment; though “seedy” in attire and suspicious in general appearance, he is entrusted with large sums of money, for the cheaper publications are all paid for in ready cash. Bag in hand he rushes in hot haste all over London, and with an impudent tongue and a pair of brawny shoulders, thrusts himself to the front place before each publisher’s counter. As we listen for a moment to the reply he receives as to the price of a cheap periodical, we may gain an insight into the middleman’s system of profit. “Sixes are fours and twelves are thirteens!” yells the shop-boy, the which being interpreted means that the wholesale price of the sixpenny periodical in question is fourpence, and that thirteen copies go to the dozen.

The bustle at each establishment is, of course, greatly increased by the fact that each house has to supply the wants of others, as well as to satisfy its own—all the counters of the wholesale booksellers being filled with screeching collectors, with greedily-gaping bags. Early in the afternoon, however, the collectors return, and now the books, magazines, and invoices are carried into the packing department, and such works as could not be obtained are written off as “out of print,” &c. Packing is an art not easily acquired, and necessitates the patient and skilful use of much brown paper, and, in many houses, of paper-pulp stereo-moulds, by way of stiffening. The smaller parcels are finished first, and as soon as all are ready for removal the carriers’ carts and vans arrive; all entering the Row in regular order from the Ludgate Hill end, and leaving it in the direction of Cheapside. By the time that peace and quietude are restored to the neighbourhood, some two and a half

millions of volumes and periodicals (Simpkin, Marshall and Company alone having probably despatched from six to eight hundred different parcels) are flying from London to all parts of the kingdom—to be greedily devoured and depreciatingly criticised on the morrow.

Not the least profitable portion of the business done by Simpkin, Marshall and Company lies in their Colonial trade, for in this branch, in common with other houses, they insist upon ready money payments, and consequently all bad and doubtful debts are avoided.

Besides holding many valuable copyrights in educational works, and publishing to a large extent upon commission, they, as we have previously shown, are the London agents for all works published by their country clients. Nothing, perhaps, is more curious among modern "literary curiosities" than the sudden and unparalleled popularity of a small pamphlet entitled "Dame Europa's School," written in a style and manner not unfamiliar to us in Swift's inimitable "Tale of a Tub;" witty, certainly, and undeniably apropos to the times, this clever skit was taken by its author, Mr. Pullen, a minor canon of Salisbury Cathedral, through the usual round of the London publishers, and, as usual with pamphlets, they one and all declined even to read the manuscript. Mr. Pullen, in despair, gave it to Mr. Brown, a bookseller of Salisbury, to publish on commission—that is, the author undertook all the risk, and the publisher charged merely a certain percentage on the sales—and limited the amount that was to be spent in advertising to two or three pounds. As Simpkin, Marshall and Company were Mr. Brown's London agents, the metropolitan sale

was entrusted to their care. Without any further trouble or expenditure, the little venture was launched, and in something like a week had created such a *furore* that the printing had to be transferred to London, and Mr. Pullen is stated to have cleared a handsome sum from the extraordinary sale of his pamphlet, and the commissions gathered by the London and the country publishers were certainly unprecedented in connection with a little venture of this description. The London booksellers to whom it had been offered now began to bestir themselves, and in a few weeks there were no less than seven-and-thirty imitations of "Dame Europa's School" in the field, more than one of which are said to have been written by very high dignitaries of the Church. All of these have, however, already disappeared from circulation, though it seems probable that the marvellously clever illustrations to the original "Dame Europa's School," by Mr. Nast, one of the few really humorous artists that America has produced, will preserve it for a time from the usual fate of ephemeral literature.





# *CHARLES EDWARD MUDIE*:

## THE LENDING LIBRARY.

Leaving for a while the publishers and vendors of books, we come now to the truest disseminators of literature among those who would otherwise have formed a non-reading, non-thinking, untaught class in the community—a class who, originally at all events, were shut out from the inheritance of the precious garnerings bequeathed by long generations of writers having aught of genius, wit, or industry to leave behind—for they were debarred from all enjoyment of such heritage through their sheer inability to pay the literary legacy duty demanded by the appointed tax-gatherers, the booksellers.

In former times, of course, the very capability to read was confined to the student, and to the poor student especially were the early circulating libraries addressed. The first circulating library of which we have any authentic history—for most history is much other than authentic—was, according to Dr. Adam Clarke and other eminent antiquarians, founded at

Cæsarea about the year 309 A.D., by St. Pamphilus, who united in his character the best attributes of the Christian and the philosopher. In a few years the library contained upwards of 30,000 volumes, an enormous number, considering the age at which it existed. The collection was, however, intended only for religious purposes, and the loan of the books was distinctly confined to "religiously disposed persons." At Paris and elsewhere traces of this collection are still said to exist.

In the middle ages, the practice of lending out books, or exchanging them between monastery and monastery, was not uncommon, and by the early stationers of Paris the manuscripts were cut up into small portions (much as the present librarian's novel requires to be divided into three volumes), to the greater profit of the lenders; but we come to very modern times before we find that circulating libraries, in the modern acceptation of the term, were established.

The first circulating library in London was founded by Wright, a bookseller of 132, Strand, about the year 1730. Franklin, writing of a time some five years previous to this, says:—"While I lodged in Little Britain, I formed an acquaintance with a bookseller of the name of Wilcox, whose shop was next door to me. *Circulating libraries were not then in use.* We agreed that for a reasonable retribution, of which I have forgotten the price, I should have free access to his library, and take what books I pleased, which I was to return when I had read them." Among Wright's earliest rivals were the Nobles, John Bell (the cheap publisher), Thomas Lowndes, and notably Samuel Bathoe, who died in 1768, and to whom, erroneously, the credit of the innovation has been

very generally attributed. As late, however, as 1770, there were only four real circulating libraries in the capital.

The practice soon spread through the country. Shortly after Wright's death, Hatton established a circulating library at Birmingham. In 1745, Watts introduced a circulating library into Cambridge, greatly extended afterwards by John Nicholson, known by the *sobriquet* of "Maps," who used to carry a sack of books to each undergraduate's rooms, in case they felt a sudden inclination for reading something newer than Homer, Xenophon, or Euclid. By the year 1755 we find that circulating libraries had extended to the extreme north of England, for Newcastle then boasted the possession of two.

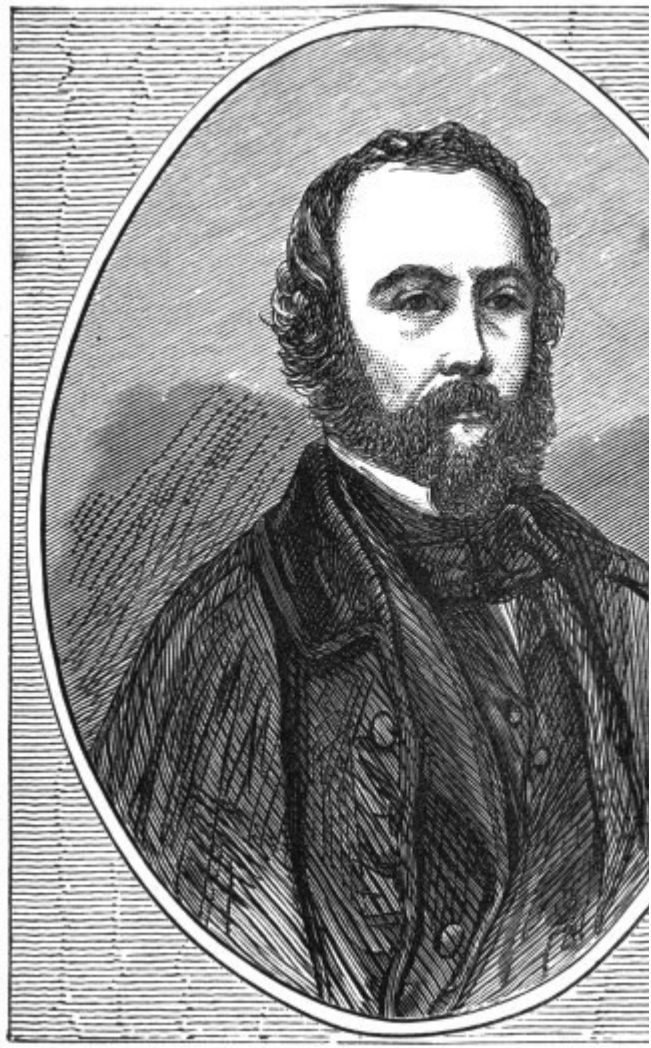
Though the custom was rapidly obtaining in town and country, the books lent out to read were generally very similar in title to those in the famous list in the "Rivals," which caused Sir Anthony Absolute's condemnation—"A circulating library in a town is an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge; it blossoms throughout the year. And depend on it, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last." We have still only to go to our little country towns and petty watering-places—few now, fortunately, still beyond the arm of "Smith" or "Mudie"—to see the circulating library in its pristine form.

At first the benefits that must inevitably accrue from the movement to the publishers as well as to the public were by no means recognized. Lackington tells us that "when the circulating libraries were first opened the booksellers were most alarmed, but experience has proved that the sale of books, so far from being diminished thereby, has been most

greatly increased."

Under the care of Hookham and Eber, these circulating libraries did undoubtedly improve, for the proprietors now began to consider the wants of students as well as the idle pleasure of loungers who thought with Gray that the acmé of human happiness consisted in lying upon a sofa reading the latest licentious novelties of Crébillon *fils* and his genus. The movement was further accelerated by the foundation of book-clubs, the first of which is said to have sprung out of Burn's "Bachelor's Club." For forty or fifty years these book-clubs did good service in the cause of education and progress, especially under the fostering care of Mr. Charles Knight and the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; but soon an organizing genius arose who was not only to render book-clubs, save those affiliated to his own, unnecessary, but was to develop the full power of co-operation in the circulating library itself. And his advent was favoured by a wonderfully extended system of transport through the agency of the railways.

Charles Edward Mudie was born in the year 1818, in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, where his father kept a little newspaper shop, at which stationery and other articles were retailed, and where books of the fugitive fiction class could be borrowed at the usual suburban charge of a penny the volume.



**Charles Edward Mudie, founder of Mudie's**

Mr. Mudie's education was, as he says, "properly cared for," and he stayed at home assisting in his father's business until he was twenty-two years of

age; and even in his early days he made it his great ambition to possess a circulating library of his own, declaring that when once he was started he would be second to none.

In the year 1840, he opened a little shop in Upper King Street, Bloomsbury, and he carried on precisely the same trade as his father did in Cheyne Walk. By degrees, however, he neglected the newspaper and general stationery business, and devoted himself more exclusively to the circulating library, which he increased at such a rapid rate that the father became alarmed at the speculative spirit of his son. In 1842, Mr. Mudie commenced his system of lending out one exchangeable volume to subscribers at the rate of a guinea per annum; and as he made the addition of every new work, immediately upon its publication, a feature in his establishment, he produced an entire revolution in the circulating library movement, and was rewarded by a rapidly increasing number of subscribers. Nor did he at this early period confine his dealings solely to circulating the books of other publishers. He was himself in some instances a publisher, and from his establishment issued the first English edition of James R. Lowell's "Poems," and Mr. George Dawson's first "Orations."

In 1852 the library had grown too large for the house in Upper King Street, and he removed his business to two houses which form part of his present establishment—the penultimate house in New Oxford Street, and the penultimate house in Museum Street; and though the corner house intervened, the two were connected by a passage. Gradually, as the business grew, the houses on either side were absorbed. In 1860 the large hall was

opened, and inaugurated by a festive gathering of literary men and publishers; and the entire block of building, as it stands at present, occupies the sites of eight houses, and even now great additions are being made to the rear of the premises. As the popularity of the library increased, branch houses were opened in the city, in Birmingham and Manchester, and arrangements were made with literary institutions, provincial libraries, book-clubs, and societies.

The magnitude of the business had, however, now grown beyond the limit of individual capital, and, in 1864, Mr. Mudie found it desirable to form his library into a limited liability company. The value of the property was estimated at £100,000; of this he reserved £50,000, and the remaining £50,000 was immediately subscribed by Mr. Murray, Mr. Bentley, and other publishers; Mr. Mudie's services being, naturally, retained at a salary of £1,000 per annum, in addition to his half interest in the business.

This change, and the increase of capital, proved in every way beneficial to the expansion of the library; and since penning this account we have received a circular announcing an enormous increase of business. From the 18th August, 1871, the Directors of Mudie's Select Library (Limited) became possessors of the English and Foreign Library and its large connection. This library, which was originally known as "Hookham's," at one time possessed one of the finest collections of rare and valuable standard works in London.

On entering Mudie's Select Library, from New Oxford Street, we pass through the show-rooms devoted to the sale of bound books; for though the directors do not enter into the usual speculations of

the bookselling trade, the clean copies of popular works are put into ornamental bindings, and in this manner a very extensive business is done in works adapted for presents and prizes. Behind these show-rooms stands the Great Hall, a large room, on the wall of which 16,000 of the current works most in vogue are shelved. What most strikes us here is the great order and method that everywhere obtains. The volumes are arranged in alphabetical order, and every attendant goes straight to the required book, without hesitation or delay. For each London customer a card is reserved bearing his name, and these cards are kept, like the books, in an alphabetical system. The books taken out are entered on the card, the books brought back ticked off, and the method is found to be as successful as it certainly is simple. The longer lists of large and country subscribers are still, however, entered in the ledgers. Proceeding upstairs to the first floor, we find books, still current, but not quite so incessantly called for. On the first floor, too, we have the private offices for clerks, and the foreign department. Mudie's collection of German works is the best of any of the London circulating libraries, and the German books are said to be much more earnestly read than the French, occasional and popular novels, of course, excepted. On the higher floors the standard catalogued works are stowed, their popularity diminishing as the altitude of their resting place increases. As soon as a book is published in a shilling or other cheap edition, it ceases to be much demanded here. For instance, Lord Lytton's novels are in very little request. On the contrary, we were told that no sets of books are so rapidly "worn out" as the works of Charles Dickens.

The stock of books is so incessantly varying

through the sale of old and the purchase of new volumes, that we were told that it was impossible to give anything like an estimate of the numbers. Some idea of the magnitude of the library may, however, be gathered from the following:—

Of the last two volumes of Macaulay's "History of England," 2400 copies were taken, and the public demand for them was so extraordinary that a whole shop, now the large room on the left as one enters, was devoted to their stowage and exchange. There were taken, of Dr. Livingstone's first African Travels, 2000 copies; and of Mr. Tennyson's "Enoch Arden," 2500 (the largest number required of any poetical work); of Mr. Disraeli's "Lothair" 1500 copies were at first subscribed, but it was soon found necessary to increase the number to 3000. The demand was, however, as brief as it was eager, and the monumental pile of "remainders" in Mr. Mudie's cellar is the largest that has ever been erected there to the hydra of ephemeral admiration. About 600 copies of each of the two great reviews—the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*—are required as a first instalment; but should any article prove more than usually attractive to the public, a large addition is made—this was notably the case with that number of the *Quarterly* containing the famous article on the "Talmud;" 100 copies of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* are required fortnightly to satisfy foreign students; and we believe that, of all novels which are likely to prove ordinarily popular, as many as 400 are at once ordered. The onus of selecting the books rests entirely in Mr. Mudie's own hands, and it has often been objected that his decisions are somewhat arbitrary;—for instance Mr. Swinburne is tabooed, while M. Paul de Koch is made free of the establishment—that, in short, the subscribers should

be considered as responsible judges of what books they do, and do not, desire to read. However, as it is, Mr. Mudie's principles of selection are broad enough to satisfy very various classes of readers. Of course the largest class of all are the novel-devourers, and it is said that, as the coarser novels of the day are almost exclusively written by women, so it is by women that they are chiefly patronised. The large field opened to female labour in the manufacture of library fiction is worth a moment's consideration, for the road has been cleared towards it, not by platform gatherings of stentorian amazons, but simply by the ordinary laws of supply and demand.

On analysing Mudie's clearance catalogue for August, 1871 (and this catalogue is one of the best guides to the popular novel literature of the last few years), we find that there are 441 works of fiction written by authors under their own names, or by authors whose pseudonymes are perfectly well known. Of these 441 distinct works, 212 are written by men, and 229 by women; so that, by what seems to us a not unfair test, actually more than half the novels of the day are written by female authors. To another large class of readers (the good people who go to Mr. and Mrs. German Reed's entertainments, and not to the theatre), the ordinary novels are *caviare*; and they require their fiction seasoned, not by sensation, but by religious precept. Scientific books, once asked for only by students, are vastly increasing in popularity; and the "fairy tales of science," as narrated by a Huxley or a Darwin, are beginning to be as eagerly demanded as the latest productions of Miss Braddon or Mr. Wilkie Collins.

In the basement cellars, extending under the whole building, the "remainders" are stowed in huge

bales, ready for sale or export. These are principally purchased by the country circulating libraries, and by shippers to the colonies and British possessions; and thus the name of Mudie—and the well-known yellow label, familiar in every English household—is carried wherever the English tongue is spoken.

About eighty assistants are employed in the central house alone, without reckoning those engaged in the city and the country branches. The system of leaving books at the subscribers' own homes, recently introduced, is becoming more and more popular: five vans go out daily on their respective rounds, and 8000 calls are generally made in the course of the week.

Mr. Mudie's services as a public benefactor in the cause of extended education, were some years since publicly recognized by the ratepayers of Westminster, in his election to the London School Board; and it is to be hoped that his knowledge of the practical use of the boon conferred upon the higher classes by the increased facilities of book-hiring, may lead him to urge upon his colleagues the advisability of establishing free circulating libraries for the use of those whose educational guardians they have recently become. The gift of tools is of very little moment to any one, if there is to be no occasion for their use; and in many instances it will be an absolute cruelty to teach children to read, and then to hurl them back on the atrocious literature of slum shops. At present, the fact that London is still without any pretence to a free circulating library, or indeed to an absolutely free library of any kind, is doubly disgraceful to our pachydermatous local authorities, because several provincial towns have shamed us by a good example. When the

schoolmaster first began to bestir himself abroad in England, a taste for reading was encouraged, which soon spread in every direction, and by degrees a loud demand, satisfied at present only in a very limited degree, began to make itself heard for the establishment of free libraries.

In 1845, Mr. William Ewart succeeded in passing a bill through the House to encourage the establishment of museums, and, legally intended, to include also libraries. By this act the local authorities, in towns with a population exceeding 10,000, possessed the power of levying a halfpenny rate for this purpose; and the sum so raised was to be spent in providing buildings, and in paying the expenses of conservation, not of accumulation. At this time, an official inquiry shows us that Manchester, with a population of 360,000 persons, was the only town in the kingdom which possessed a perfectly free library—this was the Chetham *Endowed* Library (said to be the oldest in Europe), which consisted of only 19,000 volumes. A further act was passed in 1850, distinctly referring to libraries, under the title of the "Public Library and Museum Act," by the provisions of which a majority of the ratepayers, at any properly summoned meeting, can levy a halfpenny in the pound for the establishment of free libraries.

In 1852, chiefly owing to the exertions of the late Sir John Potter, the Manchester Free Library was opened, and is supported by the ratepayers. Since that time, four additional free lending libraries, with newspaper-rooms attached, have been affiliated to it. In 1869 the main library contained upwards of 84,000 volumes. A guarantee from any householder is all that is required by those wishing to partake of

the benefits of the Manchester libraries.

The Liverpool Library, the best used of all these institutions, was founded chiefly through the munificence of Mr. William Brown, who, at its opening in 1860, was created a baronet. It consists of a reference and two lending libraries, and in 1867, though there were only 45,668 volumes in the reference library, the daily issue of books actually averaged 2041.

At Bebbington, a suburb of Liverpool, or, more justly, of Birkenhead, a very excellent free circulating library has been established by Mr. Meyer, the eminent goldsmith and antiquarian, and its advantages are duly appreciated by the residents for miles around.

At Birmingham there are five different libraries and reading-rooms, containing, in all, 52,269 volumes. In 1869, 300,031 volumes were borrowed by 9688 persons, of whom no fewer than 5607 were under twenty years of age.

The “lending library” at all these towns appears to be of a more popular character than the “reference library,” though both are essential.

After this short survey, it does indeed seem disgraceful to the London authorities that now, when the State is absolutely preparing its weapons to battle with Ignorance, when Education is to be made possible to all, patent to all, Mr. Mudie should be allowed, unrivalled, to supply so admirably the literary wants of the wealthy, and that the poor should be refused the cheapest and most remunerative of all boons—a free opportunity of gaining knowledge.





# *W. H. SMITH AND SON*:

## RAILWAY LITERATURE.

W. H. Smith, the originator of the enormous traffic in the sale and loan of books, and in the sale of newspapers and periodicals, in connection with our extended railway system, was born on the 7th of July, 1792. As he was, from early years, intended for entirely different pursuits from that which he eventually followed, he cannot be said to have received a special business training. While still a boy, family circumstances rendered it desirable that he should take the control of a small newspaper establishment at the West End of London, and though his inclinations were decidedly opposed to a petty trade of this nature, he made duty paramount to likings or dislikings, and gave all his attention to his business. In a short time he was able to move to a larger shop in the Strand, and here he added the sale of stationery to the newspaper traffic. At that time the mails were conveyed from London by coaches leaving at night only, so that the morning papers could not be received in Liverpool or Manchester

until forty-eight hours after publication. Smith now conceived the idea of forwarding the newspapers by express parcels by the coaches leaving London in the morning, and as these coaches generally left before the delivery of the morning papers, he kept a relay of swift, long-legged horses, which started as soon as the papers came to hand, and caught up the coaches where they could. By this means he actually secured the delivery of the news in the large Northern towns four-and-twenty hours in advance of the mail. For some years the returns from this business were altogether inadequate to the cost and trouble incurred, and many men would have abandoned so desperate an enterprise, but Smith had faith in the scheme, and his perseverance was rewarded by the largest newspaper business in Europe. His attention was almost entirely given to the newspaper branch of his trade, and after a time everything else gave way to it.

When railways first began to supersede coaches, Smith at once availed himself of the new facilities thus afforded in the transit of his newspapers. Up to 1848 no systematic arrangements had been made to supply passengers at the stations with either papers or books. The privilege of satisfying public requirements had not been regarded as possessing any value, and the only idea those who had the right of selling books there put into actual execution was to avoid all risk whatsoever in providing for their possible customers. The result was, of course, very far from satisfactory, and it occurred to Smith, in 1848, to tender for the exclusive right of vending books and papers on the Birmingham Railway. The general satisfaction which this innovation afforded, induced the Directors of other companies to open the

way to similar arrangements, and thus the newspaper trade of W. H. Smith and Son (for he had by this time taken his son into partnership), was established at almost every station of importance in the kingdom; but the original cost of organization was enormous, and two or three years elapsed before any actual profit was realised.

Soon, of course, at the railway stalls, books as well as papers were vended, and the special requirements of passengers called into being several cheap series of light works of fiction, calculated to while away the tedium of a railway journey. By degrees, too, a circulating library was formed and extended, and, as Smith and Son possessed unparalleled advantages in the way of cheap transit of goods, and in their already-established branches, extending throughout the kingdom wherever the iron horse had previously cleared the way, they were able to supplement Mudie's Library most efficiently.

In 1852 W. H. Smith, senior, first felt the symptoms of a diseased heart, and in 1854 he retired from business altogether, spending the remainder of his days at his country residence at Bournemouth, and here he died on the 28th of July, 1855.

Upon Mr. W. H. Smith, son of the founder, the business now devolved, and, while extending its ramifications in all directions, he found time and opportunity to embrace a career of more general utility. Elected by the householders of Westminster as a member of the House of Commons, to the exclusion of Mr. J. S. Mill, he has won the good opinions of all parties by the active part he has always taken in Metropolitan matters, and by the staunchness with which he has defended the privileges of London citizens. The confidence of the

public was again expressed in his favour when he was chosen a member of the School Board for London. It is understood that of late years a great part of the management of the business establishment has devolved upon Mr. Lethbridge, the junior member of the firm.

As we have already, in our chapter on Mr. Mudie, devoted ourselves especially to the circulating library, we will endeavour here to give only a short account of the newspaper business of W. H. Smith and Son.

If we walk down the Strand at four o'clock in the morning, we find the whole street deserted and dull until we reach a row of red carts, bearing the name of the firm. When, however, we enter the establishment by which they are waiting, all is business and bustle. The interior of the large building is, in shape, not unlike a bee-hive; the ground-floor forms, as it were, the pit, and the two galleries the boxes, of a theatre. In these galleries nearly two hundred men and boys are already busy folding papers.

At five o'clock the "dailies" begin to arrive, and the advent of the *Times* is hailed with a consternation of enthusiasm. The huge bundles are fiercely attacked, and folded off in a shorter time than one could imagine possible; and then the *Telegraph*, *Daily News*, and *Standard* are assaulted. As soon as the folding has been partially completed, a portion of the assistants are told off to make the proper assortment for each country place, and each packer has now a boy to wait upon him, who shouts out his individual wants.

At the door the carts are waiting ready to drive off with the parcels to the different railway termini,

and by about a quarter to six all the first trains out of London are supplied, and in less than two hours the whole kingdom has been fed with morning newspapers, including between 20,000 and 30,000 copies of the *Times*.

This scene occurs every week-day morning, but on Friday afternoon, on the arrival of the weekly papers, the bustle of business is even greater, and the parcels (those for the post only) are removed by fourteen vans sent from the General Post Office.

In connection with the "Railway Libraries," it may be interesting to learn something of the publisher who has identified them with his business. Mr. George Routledge is a native of Cumberland—a county, perhaps, as much as any other, famous for the commercial success of its natives—who, after serving his apprenticeship at Carlisle, came up to London, and obtained employment in the house of Baldwin and Craddock. Soon, however, he opened a little shop of his own in Ryder's Court, Leicester Square, for the sale of cheap and second-hand books. Here, however, at first he had much spare time on his hands, and he managed to procure a subordinate position in the Tithe Office. The work was not heavy, and the extra salary enabled him to increase his legitimate business. During the holiday time granted him by the Office, he made two or three journeys of exploration into the country, and found that a wide field existed there for a venturous and indomitable bookseller. Accordingly, he set to work to buy remainders, and having by degrees established agencies in the country, the young and almost unknown bookseller of Ryder's Court was able to compete in the auction-rooms, and generally with success, against Mr. Bohn and other influential

members of the trade—much to their astonishment, and not a little to their consternation. It was now time to give up the aid of the Tithe Office, and in 1845 Mr. Routledge moved to larger premises in Soho Square, and in 1848 Mr. William Warne, his brother-in-law, and for long his assistant, was admitted into partnership, being joined by Mr. F. Warne, three years later, when the firm moved again to Farringdon Street.

While at Soho Square, the publications of Messrs. Routledge and Warne had consisted chiefly of reprints, and here the remainder trade had been vastly extended, but now they began to enter into direct dealings with noted authors on a scale that fully equalled the transactions of the first publishing firms. Perhaps the boldest of their early ventures was the offer of £20,000 to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton for the right of issuing a cheap series of his works for the term of ten years, from 1853–1863. In spite of the enormous outlay they were very willing, on the expiry of the time, to take a fresh lease of the popular volumes; so that an offer originally deemed by the trade to be Quixotic, if not ruinous, must have reaped the success that its liberality and boldness deserved; and by their association with Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, a great *prestige* was at once acquired. Similar arrangements were made with other distinguished novelists, nearly all of whom we have met before in our previous article on Colburn—Mr. G. P. R. James, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, and Mr. Howard Russell; while these successful re-issues were quickly followed by the publication of original works by Mayne Reed, Grant, and others, and by the first English edition of many of Prescott's and Longfellow's productions.

The various popular series known as the "Railway Library," the "Popular Library," &c., comprising many hundred volumes of standard works, afforded the chief business at Smith's bookstalls, and were, through Mr. Routledge's complete network of agents and connections, scattered broadcast over the country. Among the first books they brought out at a shilling were the works of Fenimore Cooper, Captain Marryat, Washington Irving, and Mrs. Stowe. Of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" half-a-million copies are said to have been sold. Of Russell's "Narrative of the Crimean War," 20,000; of Soyer's "Shilling Cookery," 250,000; and of "Rarey on Horse Training," 150,000 copies were disposed of in a very few weeks. As an example of the energy and enterprise of the firm, it is stated that when the copy of "Queechy" was received upon one Monday morning, it was at once placed in the printer's hands; on Thursday the sheets were at the binder's, and on the Monday following 20,000 copies had been disposed of to the trade.

Besides these cheap works, Mr. Routledge has issued a multitude of more expensive volumes, illustrated by the best artists, and "got up" in the most luxurious styles. Among these it will be enough here to mention his numerous Shakespeares, Wood's "Natural History" and Wood's "Natural History of Man," and Routledge's "English Poets." How extensive the Fine Art business of the firm must have been may be gathered from the fact that before 1855 they had paid one engraving house—the Messrs. Dalziel Brothers—upwards of £50,000.

In 1854, Mr. Routledge established a branch house at New York, and in 1865, Mr. F. Warne—his brother had previously died—on the termination of

the partnership, established a fresh business in Bedford Street, Covent Garden. With his two sons—Mr. Robert and Mr. Edmund Routledge—the founder now carries on the business at Broadway, Ludgate Hill, having removed thither when the railway improvements took place in Farringdon Street.

NOTE.—For these statistics and much of our sketch we are indebted to a writer in the *Bookseller*, who "obtained the information from trustworthy sources."





# *PROVINCIAL BOOKSELLERS.*

*York*: *Gent and Burdekin.*

*Newcastle*: *Goading, Bryson, Bewick, and Charnley*.

*Glasgow*: *Fowlis and Collins.*

*Liverpool*: *Johnson.*

*Dublin*: *Duffy*.

*Derby*: *Mozley, Richardson, and Bemrose.*

*Manchester*: *Harrop, Barker, Timperley, and the Heywoods.*

*Birmingham*: *Hutton, Baskerville, and "The Educational Trading Co."*

*Exeter*: *Brice.*

*Bristol*: *Cottle.*

In this short chapter on provincial bookselling, we shall be necessarily obliged to confine our notice to those representatives of the trade in the larger country towns who were characteristically as well as bibliopolically famous—who, with their native

talent, determination, and endurance, would have succeeded in any walk of life, had they not, fortunately for the interest of our history, embraced the profession of bookselling.

In old days, York was the natural capital of the North of England; a position acquired, of course, in times of ecclesiastical supremacy, but still retained for centuries after the Reformation. When the cost and difficulty of transit were great, the country folk looked to their own capital cities to supply them with literary food, and the annals of bookselling at York go back to nearly as ancient a date as those of London; and, indeed, Thomas Gent, whom we select as our representative of the York booksellers, might have figured in the earlier portion of our introductory chapter, had he not been reserved for a more fitting place here.

Thomas Gent, though of a Staffordshire family, was born in Dublin, and was apprenticed by his parents, poor though industrious people, to a printer in that city. In 1710, after three years' brutal treatment from his employers, he ran away to London, where, as he was not a freeman of the city, he lived upon what he calls "smouting work" for four years, and then accepted a situation with Mr. White of York, who, as a reward for printing the Prince of Orange's declaration when all the London printers were afraid, had been created King's printer for York and five other counties. White must have enjoyed plenty of business, there being few printers out of London at that time—"None," says Gent, "I am sure at Chester, Liverpool, Whitehaven, Preston, Manchester, Kendal, and Leeds." When Gent, terminating his long walk from London, arrived at York, the door was opened by "Mistress White's head

maiden, who is now my dear spouse," but he had to wait nearly as long a time as Jacob served for Rachel before he could claim "my dearest."

Gent was as happy in York as he could well be, was earning money and respected by all, when his parents bade him come back to Dublin, and what made his departure grievous?—"I scarce knew, however, through respect of Mrs. Alice Guy.... Indeed I was not very forward in love or desire of matrimony till I knew the world better, and consequently should be more able to provide such a handsome maintenance as I confess I had ambition enough to desire.... However, I told her (because my irresolution should not anticipate her advancement) that I should respect her as one of the dearest of friends; and receiving a little dog from her, as a companion on the road, I had the honour to be accompanied as far as Bramham Moor by my rival" (his master's grandson).

At Dublin he was soon threatened with seizure for having broken his apprenticeship, and though his friends offered to buy his freedom, he had received a letter from his dearest at York, saying he was expected there, and he could not resist the opportunity of meeting her again. His friends were much concerned at parting with him so soon, "but my unlucky whelp that had torn my new hat to pieces seemed no wise affected by my taking boat; so I let the rascal stay with my dear parents, who were fond of him for my sake, as he was of them for his own."

After a stay of a few months at York, he came to London, resolved to scrape and save money enough to warrant him offering a home to "Mrs. Alice Guy," and in 1817 he became free of the City of London,

and set to work in grim earnest, “many times from five in the morning till twelve at night, and frequently without food from breakfast till five or six in the evening, through hurry with hawkers;” for at times he was in a ballad-house, now toiling at case, now writing “last words and confessions,” now reporting sermons “for a crown piece and a pair of breeches”—(profitable penny-a-lining that!)—again printing treasonable papers, for which he was seized by the authorities; and pirating and abridging “Robinson Crusoe,” the first part of which appeared in 1717, for which greater crime he went scot free. Occasionally he went home, but scarcely found it worth his while to stay in Dublin, and his parents’ “melting tears caused mine to flow, and bedewed my pillow every night after that I lodged with them. ‘What, Tommy,’ my mother would sometimes say, ‘this English damsel of yours, I suppose, is the chiefest reason why you slight us and your native country! Well,’ added she, ‘the ways of Providence are unsearchable.’”

Gent, however, “provident overmuch,” made the heart of his English damsel sick with hope deferred—and “yet” he writes, “I could not well help it. I had a little money, it is very true, but no certain home wherein to invite her. I knew she was well fixed; and it pierced me to the very heart to think if through any miscarriage or misfortune I should alter her condition for the worse instead of the better. Upon this account my letters to her at this time were not so amorously obliging as they ought to have been from a sincere lover; by which she had reason, however she might have been mistaken, to think that I had failed in my part of those tender engagements which had passed between us.”

After serving some time with Watts, Tonson's printing partner, and also with Henry Woodfall, founder of a long line of famous printers, he purchased a quantity of old type from Mist, the proprietor of the well-known journal, and just as he was conning over his matrimonial prospects, "one Sunday morning as my shoes were japanning by a little boy at the end of the lane, there came Mr. John Hoyle. 'Mr. Gent,' said he, 'I have been at York to see my parents, and am but just as it were returned to London. I am heartily glad to see you, but sorry to tell you that you have lost your old sweetheart; for I assure you that she is really married to your rival, Mr. Bourne.' I was so thunderstruck that I could scarcely return an answer."

In this grief he betook himself to the Muse, and as he had formerly earned the title of the Bellman's Poet, he indicted the "Forsaken Lover's Letter to his Former Sweetheart," to a tune "much in request, and proper for the flute;" and not caring that his master should know of his great disappointment, he gave the copy to Mr. Dodd, "who, printing the same, sold thousands of them, for which he offered me a price; but as it was on my own proper concern, I scorned to accept of anything except a glass of comfort or so." "Proper concerns" in the shape of heartaches, disappointments, and miseries, have been traded in to better purpose by less modest singers, but Gent's mental anguish seems sincere; he "was then worn down to a shadow," and weary of his endless and now purposeless struggle. Work, however, a palliative if not a cure, was again eagerly resorted to, and Gent found employment first with Mr. Samuel Richardson, and afterwards, and more permanently, with Mrs. Dodd. Here he continued till on another "Sunday morning Mr. Philip Wood, a quondam

partner of Mr. Midwinter's, entering my chambers —'Tommy,' said he, 'all these fine material of yours must be moved to York,' at which, wondering, 'What mean you?' said I. 'Ay,' said he,' 'and you must go to, without it's your own fault; for your first sweetheart is now at liberty, and left in good circumstances by her dear spouse, deceased but of late.' 'I pray heaven,' answered I, 'that his precious soul may be happy; and for aught I know it may be as you say, for indeed I think I may not trifle with a widow, as I have formerly done with a maid.'" So he paid forthwith his coach fare down to York, and found his dearest much altered, for he had not seen her these ten years. There was no need of new courtship, "but decency suspended the ceremony of marriage for some time, till my dearest, considering the ill-consequence of delay in her business, as well as the former ties of love that passed innocently between us, by word and writing, gave full consent to have the nuptials celebrated."

But, alas! when he became a master instead of a servant, and she a mistress instead of a maid, he found her "temper much altered from that sweet natural softness and most tender affection that rendered her so amiable to me while I was more juvenile and she a widow. My dear's uncle, White, as he calls himself, who, as the only printer in Newcastle, had heaped up riches," was angry that he had not been chosen to manage his niece's shop, and actually came to York to found a rival establishment. Gent started a paper, and, though he persevered in its publication for many years, he was at length out-rivalled by White. In the publication of books he was much more successful. In 1726 he printed some books "learnedly translated into English by John Clarke, a schoolmaster in Hull," as well as two

editions of Erasmus. But the works by which he acquired most money and reputation were written as well as published by himself—"The Famous History of the City of York," "History of the Loyal Town of Ripon," and the "History of the Royal and Beautiful Town of Kingstown-upon-Hill." At this time his business is thus described by a card still existing: —"Within his well-contrived office aforesaid printing is performed in a curious and judicious manner, having sets of fine characters for the Greek, Latin, English, Mathematics, &c. He sells the histories of Rome, France, England, particularly of this ancient City, Aynsty, and extensive County, in five volumes; likewise a book of the holy life of St. Winnifred, and her wonderful Cambrian fountain. He has stimulated an ingenious founder to cast such musical types, for the common press, as never yet were exhibited; and has prepared a new edition of his York History against the time when the few remaining copies of that first and large impression are disposed off." He died, however, at York in 1778, in his eighty-seventh year, in somewhat reduced circumstances, solely, he alleges, through the animosity of his uncle White. The manuscript of his interesting autobiography was discovered casually in Ireland, and was published only in 1832. From its quaintness and simplicity, above all from its minuteness of detail, it is evident enough where the abridger of "Robinson Crusoe" borrowed his manner and style; and the reader will probably not quarrel with us for having given as much of the narrative as possible in the author's own words.

Chief among the more recent York booksellers was Richard Burdekin, who died only twelve years since. In his younger days he was a traveller to the local firm of Wilson & Sons, who at the beginning of

the century were well known as publishers of the works of Lindley Murray, which are said at that time to have achieved an annual sale of 100,000 copies. What Burdekin's efforts in his masters' service were, we can gather from the fact that he rode his favourite horse 30,000 miles in search of orders, which in a short time doubled the receipts of his employers. Soon he joined Spence in an old-established business, and eventually became senior partner of the firm. His trade extended to forty miles round York, and for fifty-five years he continued to sell, and in a lesser degree to publish, such books as might suit the inhabitants of the three ridings.

We have seen that Gent describes his dear's uncle White as having heaped up riches as the only Newcastle printer. He could, however, scarcely have been the only printer there, for we find that even when Charles I. made Newcastle his headquarters he brought with him Robert Barker, who had, as we have elsewhere noticed, enjoyed certain patents under the two preceding monarchs. If there were no previous printers at Newcastle in Barker's time, one, at least, must have started very shortly afterwards, for in 1656 we find the death of "James Chantler, bookseller," recorded, and in those times the booksellers were mainly supplied from local sources.

From Chantler's time we find that books and stationery were the staple commodities of Tyne Bridge, and for nearly a couple of centuries the "brigg" has been a favourite resort of the trade. We find the names of Randell, Maplisden, Linn, and Akenhead occurring in the list of the Newcastle Stationers' Company; and at the close of 1746 John Goading printed the first number of the *Newcastle General Magazine*. "For too long," said the preface,

"had the northern climes been deprived of a repository of learning; too long had those geniuses that now began to shine been consealed in darkness for want of a proper channel to convey their productions into light;" but in 1760 the northern geniuses were again "consealed in darkness," for the magazine came to an end. Four years later, however, Thomas Slack founded the *Newcastle Chronicle*, which has gone on continuously to the present day, being now one of the very best daily papers out of London. To its columns we are indebted for much of the preceding.

Goading had continued his general publishing business with some energy, and in 1751 he issued Blenerhasset's "History of England"—from the landing of the Phœnicians to the death of George I.—and in his list of subscribers we find no less than eight Newcastle booksellers, one of whom was Martin Bryson, the friend and correspondent of Allan Ramsay, the Scotch poet and Edinburgh bookseller, who addressed a letter to him in rhyme—

"To Martin Bryson, on Tyne Brigg,
An upright, downright, honest Whig."

Bryson's name occurs on a title-page as early as 1722. His house and stock were destroyed by the great Newcastle fire of 1750, and after this occurrence he took, William Charnley, the son of a Penrith haberdasher and one of his many apprentices, into partnership.

To diverge for a moment from this pedigree of bibliopoles, we come to by far the greatest name connected in any way with the production of books at Newcastle—that, of course, of Thomas Bewick; and though his life belongs more properly to the

history of engraving, for many years the books that were illustrated by his pencil gave the northern town such a world-wide reputation that we feel justified in devoting a page or two to his memory.

Thomas Bewick was born at Cherryburn, twelve miles to the west of Newcastle, in 1753, receiving a limited, but as far as it went a thorough education; his genius displayed itself in early childish days by such chalk drawings on barn-walls and stable-doors as have almost invariably discovered the bent of youthful artistic genius. At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to Mr. Beilby, of Newcastle, an engraver in copper-plate, and though Beilby's business lay rather in the production of brass door-plates, and the emblazoning of spoons and watches, than in Fine Art illustrations, the master soon appreciated and encouraged his pupil's wonderful talents. During the period of his apprenticeship, young Bewick paid only ninepence a week for his lodging, and brought back a coarse brown loaf in every weekly visit to his home at Cherryburn. As soon as his term of seven years had expired, he still continued in Beilby's service, but devoted himself henceforth to wood-engraving. Shortly afterwards he received a premium from the Society of Arts for a woodcut of the "Huntsman and the Old Hound," and this induced him in the following year to go to London in quest of labour and fortune, but he found the metropolis so little to his liking that he writes home: "I would rather be herding sheep on Mickley Bank-top than remain in London, although for doing so I was to be made the premier of England." With his distaste for town life and his strong love for the country—for its scenery changing with every season, for its living forms of animal and plant life, for all, in short, that incessantly appealed to a wonderful artistic instinct,

Bewick was easily persuaded by his old master, Beilby, to return to Newcastle, and enter into partnership with him—his brother John becoming their joint apprentice. The publication of the illustrations to "Gay's Fables," and the "Select Fables," by the brothers, spread their reputation far and wide, and placed them far above competition in the art. In 1785, Thomas Bewick began the cuts for his "History of Quadrupeds," though the work was not completed and published until 1790. The "text," or literary matter, was contributed by his partner, Beilby, but it was of course on account of the illustrations that three large editions were called for within three years. In this successful venture, the two partners were associated with a printer of the name of Hodgson, and unfortunately, after his death, the arrangement was made the grounds of dispute by his widow, and Bewick was compelled to remove the printing of the work to another establishment. In 1797 appeared the first volume of the "History of British Birds," and almost immediately afterwards, Beilby retired from the partnership, leaving Bewick to produce and compile the work alone. The tail-pieces in the first edition of the Birds are considered Bewick's *chefs d'œuvres*—as Professor Wilson says, "There is a moral in every tail-piece—a sermon in every vignette.... His books lie on our parlour, bed-room, dining-room, drawing-room and study tables, and are never out of place or time. Happy old man! The delight of childhood, manhood, decaying age!" After founding a famous school for wood-engravers at Newcastle—William Harvey was among his pupils—Bewick died in 1828, leaving the business to his son, Mr. R. E. Bewick.

Charnley left Bryson in 1755, and started a circulating library of 2000 volumes, the subscription

being twelve shillings a year, and though this method of disseminating books had only been practised in London within the previous twenty years, we find that one Barba, who dabbled likewise in prints and tea, had already been for some years in the field. When Bryson died, Charnley succeeded to his business on the bridge, and after having been washed out by an overflow of the river, he removed to safer premises in the Great Market in 1777. Charnley died in 1803. An anecdote connected with him is still gleefully told by the Newcastle pitmen, and is worth repeating. He was deaf and obliged to use an ear-trumpet; and on being accosted by a collier, he clapped, as usual, his instrument to his ear, in order to catch the words. "Nay, man," cried the pitman, not to be imposed upon; "thou's not gaun to mak me believe thou can play that trumpet wi' thy lug!"

Emerson Charnley succeeded his father, and was styled by Dibdin "the veteran emperor of Northumbrian booksellers;" till 1860 this old established business remained in the family, when it became the property of Mr. William Dodd, for many years its manager.

We have already referred so often to the Scotch publishers, that we can only find room for Glasgow as representing the Scotch provincial trade. Printing was introduced there in the year 1630 by George Anderson, who was succeeded in 1661 by Robert Saunders, and the whole printing business of the West of Scotland (except one newspaper) was carried on by Saunders and his son until 1730, when the art was further improved by R. Uric. Five years later it appears from Morrison's "Dictionary of Decisions of the Court of Sessions" that a new comer "was

debarred from any concern in bookselling within the city of Glasgow, because the place was judged too narrow for two booksellers at a time." In the teeth of this arbitrary decision Robert Fowlis, who as a young barber had attracted the notice of some of the university professors, and had been encouraged to attend the lectures, opened a book-shop in 1739. In 1743 he was appointed printer to the university, and in the following year he produced his celebrated immaculate edition of "Horace," which was hung up on the college walls with a reward appended for every mistake discovered. In the course of thirty years they produced as many well printed classics as Bodoni of Parma, or Barbon of Paris, and their books, in exactness and beauty of type, almost rival the Aldine series. They endeavoured to devote the money which their success brought them in to the establishment of an academy for the cultivation of the Fine Arts, but this grand, and then novel, project produced their ruin, without in any way affecting the artistic taste of Scotland. After the death of his younger brother, Robert was compelled to send the collection of pictures to London for sale, and as he was in immediate want of money he insisted upon the auction taking place at a time when the picture market was glutted. The sale catalogue forms three volumes, and yet after all expenses were defrayed the balance in his favour amounted only to fifteen shillings. He died on his way back to Glasgow in 1776.

The bookselling and book-manufacturing trades have changed strangely in Glasgow, since the time when the city was judged "too narrow" for two booksellers. At present these branches of industry are only surpassed in Edinburgh, and one Glasgow establishment at least is without a parallel in

London. Messrs. Collins, Son, and Co., actually give employment to about seven hundred hands. The ground-floor of their immense building is devoted to the warehousing of paper, account-books, copy-books and general stationery. On the main floor of the establishment one hundred binders are constantly at work, and on the floor above the folding and sewing of the sheets is executed by two hundred girls and women. In the rear stands the engine-house and printing office where sixteen platten and cylinder typographic machines are kept working at full steam, upon dictionaries, school-books, Bibles, prayer-books, devotional, and other publications. Seven lithographic machines are constantly employed upon atlases and their celebrated copy-books, and it has been found that the finest lithographic work can be better executed by the machine than, as till very recently, at press. Everything is done on the premises, which extend from Stirling's Road to Heriot Hill, except making the paper and casting the type.[32]

As further proof of the magnitude of the business, we may quote a recent statement of Mr. Henderson, one of the partners. In 1869 there were "issued from the letter-press section of the establishment, no fewer than 1,352,421 printed and bound works—equal to about 4500 per day, or 450 passing through the hands of the workers every working hour."

Little more than a hundred years ago the great seaport town of Liverpool was a little fishing village, and, consequently, the bookselling trade there is of a very recent growth. Among the first important members of the fraternity were Darton and Freer; but perhaps the most famous Liverpool bibliopole of his

day was Thomas Johnson. He started in Dale Street, in 1829, with a stock of books only large enough to fill the bottom shelves of his window; and at the back of his shop, scarce hidden, he kept his bed and household utensils. However, he had the happy knack of making friends in all quarters; and when at a large trade sale, offered on unusually advantageous terms, he had speedily emptied his meagre purse, and was looking wistfully at the bargains falling to all his neighbours, a Liverpool merchant bade him go on purchasing to the extent of £100 or £150, adding that he himself would take the risk. This timely aid set Johnson up in a comparatively princely manner, and after he had been in business a few years his periodical catalogue extended to 300 pages. At this time the country booksellers were chiefly dependent for their stocks upon the sales of private libraries, but the Liverpool booksellers possessed another large means of supplying their wants. The Bible Society in Dublin was very busy in distributing new Bibles in all directions, which the good Catholics at once carried to the pawnshops. These were purchased again by Mr. Duffy, who brought them over to Liverpool in huge sacks, and exchanged them for books more agreeable to the Irish taste.

By degrees Johnson combined publishing and auctioneering with the more legitimate business. His first venture in the former capacity was Abbot's collected works; but by far his most successful were the Lectures on "Revivals," and on "Professing Christians," by Mr. Finney, of which he sold 150,000 copies. As an auctioneer, he was a lesser, or Liverpool edition, of Tegg, and his rooms under the Liver theatre were crowded nightly. On one occasion Johnson is said to have purchased the entire contents of Baldwin's Bible room, and he was well known to

have been the largest consumer of Bibles out of London; and when Arnold left the Bagsters, and commenced Bible printing on his own account, Johnson was his favourite customer. Arnold's puffing hand-bills vie with the choicest pill-mongering productions. After a violent tirade against Puseyism he continues thus, *re* his "Domestic Bible," and "Bible Commentary:"—

"He has provided you the seed; He will help you to sow it, He will help you to reap it. Sow it then, sow freely—sow largely—sow bountifully—sow perseveringly. It may be bought cheaply—may be had in any quantity—has never been known to fail in its effects. There are agents for its sale in every town in Great Britain, you may obtain it from any bookseller in penny and threepenny packages. Sow it, men of Britain—sow it in schools—in families—in every town—in every village—in every hamlet of England, Wales, and Scotland. Sow it beyond the sea—for it will grow on foreign shores. Send it to Ireland, to the Colonies, to India, to China, and sow it there. Send it to the continent and to Africa and sow it there." And so on *ad nauseam*. The seed, however, proved very unprofitable to Arnold; and shortly after his failure Johnson was also obliged to give up business, having signed some unfortunate bills. He afterwards rejoined his father in Manchester.

Another well-known Liverpool bookseller was "Dandy" Cruikshank, of Castle Street, who maintained that he was the handsomest man in England, and whose vanity extended to his trade, for his specialities were books bound in pink and orange.

At the present time there are about sixty

booksellers in Liverpool; and Mr. Edward Howell, an apprentice of Johnson's, possesses the largest stock, consisting of 100,000 volumes, and is known also as a religious publisher. Mr. Philip, another leading bookseller, has two establishments in Liverpool, and a branch house in London, while Mr. Cornish, of Holborn, has an establishment in Liverpool, as well as in Dublin.

Crossing the Channel for a moment, we have an opportunity of saying something of the Dublin booksellers; but we shall not be detained long, as, in this branch of industry, the Irish capital presents a striking contrast to the Scottish. In the interval between the cessation of the licensing system and the Copyright Act of the 8th Anne, there was no legal protection for literary property, and book-pirates consequently abounded. One of the tribe has been celebrated by Dunton: "Mr. Lee, in Lombard Street—such a pirate, such a cormorant never was before—copies, books, men, ships, all was one; he held no propriety, right or wrong, good or bad, till at last he began to be known; and the booksellers, not enduring so ill a man among them, to disgrace them, spewed him out, and off he marched for Ireland, where he acted as felonious Lee (!) as he did in London." There, however, till the Act of Union, in 1801, book-pirates abounded, greatly to the discouragement of native talent, and even of native industry, for Gent tells us repeatedly that it was almost impossible for a journeyman printer to earn wherewithall to exist on in the Dublin printing offices. In 1753 we find Samuel Richardson publishing a pamphlet—"The History of Sir Charles Grandison before Publication by certain Booksellers in Dublin." It appears that sheets had been stolen from Richardson's warehouse, and that three Irish

booksellers each produced cheap editions of nearly half the entire novel, before a single volume had appeared in England. There was no legal remedy; but "what," asks the *Gray's Inn Journal* indignantly, "what then should be said of Exshaw, Wilson, and Saunders, booksellers in Dublin, and perpetrators of this vile act of piracy? They should be expelled from the Republic of Letters as literary Goths and Vandals, who are ready to invade the property of every man of genius." With the Act of Union, however, the Dublin booksellers were made amenable to English law, and a dolorous cry arose that their trade was ruined, and that the "vested right" they had inherited, to prey upon the Saxon, had been abolished by the cruel conquerors. From this moment, of course, Irish bookselling was obliged to take a higher tone. In a few years the *Dublin Review* and the *Dublin University Magazine* vindicated the intellectual powers of the natives, and for a long time were widely circulated in Ireland, and were then mainly indebted to the enterprise of Irish authors and booksellers. When the Commission of National Education was appointed in Ireland, Mr. Thom was selected as a publisher, and, through their pecuniary aid, was enabled to bring out a series of "Irish National School Books," that for cheapness and excellence are probably still unrivalled. These led, as we have previously seen, to petitions from the English publishers, complaining of state interference with the ordinary and commercial laws of bookselling, and to trials for infringement of copyright. However, in the long-run the Irish Commissioners were successful, and Mr. Longman, one of the complainants, eventually accepted their English agency. Besides his connection with the Commission, Mr. Thom has acquired a reputation in

the Bookselling world by his excellent "Irish Almanac," which, till recently, was unrivalled by the English almanacs of any London firms.

Latterly, however, Irish bookselling, as far as individual enterprize goes, has been commonly associated with the name of James Duffy. He was born in 1809, and after being apprenticed to a draper in the country, found employment in Dublin, and here, like Robert Chambers, he invested his spare coppers in picking up old books. At last he found trade so bad that he determined to emigrate, and accordingly, as he possessed no funds, he took his books to an auctioneer; at the sale, to his surprise, he found that the books he had purchased for pence, now produced as many shillings. Upon this he determined to drop the scheme of emigration, and to turn bookseller. As we have before mentioned, he collected the Bibles which the Catholics received from the Church of England propagandists only to turn into money, and took them over to Liverpool, where he exchanged them for books less unlawful in Papist eyes. At first he hawked these about the country, but eventually took a place of business in Anglesea Street, Dublin, and there began to publish the "Bruton Series" of thrilling tales of robbers, battles, adventures, and the like, at the low price of twopence each. In 1842 he was appointed bookseller to the Repeal Agitators, and produced, under their auspices, the "Library of Ireland," consisting of patriotic and national collections of poems, &c., edited or written by some of the most brilliant of the National party. However, the movement for Repeal collapsed, and before this Duffy had discerningly turned his attention to less ephemeral publications, and produced editions of Carleton, Banin, and other native celebrities. The famine of 1846 affected every

trade, and as the people had no money to buy bread, the sale of books was, of course, utterly hopeless, and Duffy found that he could not meet his engagements. His creditors granted him time, and the money was to be paid in instalments. He sold his copyrights in England, and paid the first instalment promptly. But when the time was due for the second he saw no prospect of meeting it. A neighbour, however, called John Donnegan, hearing that he was ruined, carried him a stocking full of money, his lifetime's hoardings, threw it down before him, with "Just take that, and see if it is any use to you! Pay me when you can," and refusing to take any receipt, rushed out again. The stocking contained nearly £1200, and Duffy was able not only to pay his creditors, but to turn his attention to the publication of more important works than he had hitherto attempted, such as the Douay Bible, Missals, Prayer-books, and many historical works, and it was not long before he was in a position to repay the kindly loan. About 1860 he opened a branch house in London, and at that period the success of his publishing career may be said to have culminated, for after the death of his wife he confined himself almost entirely to disposing of his old stock. He died on the 4th of July of the year 1871, regretted by his fellow-citizens in Dublin, and by his brother bibliopoles throughout the kingdom.[33]

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If it were not for want of space there are several towns in the Midland Counties which deserve notice here on account of their bibliopolical fame—none more so, perhaps, than Derby, which at present possesses no less than three large bookselling firms, which have also branch businesses in London,

Messrs. Richardson and Son having in addition another establishment at Dublin. As Roman Catholic publishers some of their productions have achieved an enormous circulation, notably "The Crown of Jesus," which, honoured with the approval of the Pope, and of all the English dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church, long since attained an issue of 100,000 copies. The works of Frederick William Faber, D.D., late of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, have also been among the most popular of Messrs. Richardson and Son's publications. The Mozleys, of Derby, have long been in the trade, and are represented both in the country and in London; one of the family was well known in connection with the editorial staff of the *Times* newspaper. The Mozleys publish the *Monthly Packet*, edited by Miss Younge, and also the majority of that lady's separate works. A third firm, Messrs. Bemrose and Sons, have gained a considerable reputation as archæological publishers, and as the proprietors of Mrs. Warren's "Household Manuals."

At Halifax, where the book trade is of a more recent date, Messrs. Milner and Sowerby, by their services in the cause of cheap publications of really good and standard works, have done much to counteract the effects of cheap and pernicious literature. "The Cottage Library" has long been known all over England, and was one of the first shilling series of really good books published—certainly the first in a neat form and with a neat binding, issued at this low price, and is still, in its extent and scope, unrivalled.

Manchester was one of the first provincial towns in England to which the printer and bookseller came, for it must be remembered that the trades were for

centuries almost synonymous. The art of printing is said to have been introduced here in 1588, when Penny went through the kingdom with an itinerant press, but his plant was seized and destroyed by the fifth Earl of Derby. However, the innovation was effected, and the new art was firmly lodged. Manchester, nevertheless, in these early days was a place of such importance that a mere catalogue of the members of the trade would more than fill the few pages at our command. Among the booksellers of the last century we can only mention Haslingden, who published "Tim Bobbin"—a book still famous; the Sowlers, one of the descendants of whom started the *Courier*, under the editorship of Alaric A. Watts, in 1825, and the journal still enjoys a wide popularity; Joseph Harrop, who originated the *Manchester Mercury* in 1752, published the "History of Man" in sixpenny numbers, but Harrop's well-known folio Bible was issued by his son and successor; the firm of Clarke Brothers amassed a large fortune in school books and stationery; and about the same time Banks and Co. were also doing an immense trade upon a thoroughly reprehensible system. Hayward, who was their managing partner, opened shops in various places, placed his own servants in possession, and made them accept bills to a very large amount. These bills were discounted at the Manchester Bank, and when the crash came the bank was a creditor upon the estate to the amount of £120,000, while the London publishers were indebted to the extent of £100,000. Among the shopmen in charge under Hayward's system was Timperley, a printer, and a man of considerable literary ability. To pay the debts contracted through this wholesale acceptance of bills, he consigned his stock to an auctioneer, who, after disposing of it by

auction, ran off with the proceeds of the sale. Timperley, heart-broken by misfortune, accepted a literary engagement with Fisher and Jackson, of London, and in their service he died. In early days he had been a soldier, had gone through many campaigns, had served at Waterloo, and had well earned his pension of a shilling per diem. He is now known chiefly as the author of the "Manchester Historical Recorder," and of "Timperley's Typographical Dictionary"—one of the most accurate, laborious, and voluminous compilations ever made, and one to be gratefully remembered by all students of the history of the printing press in this country. Another worthy of typographical fame was Bent, who, after doing a large bookselling business among the Manchester Unitarians, then, at all events, the most cultivated portion of the inhabitants, started "Bent's Literary Advertiser," the first bookseller's organ, and which latterly has been incorporated in the *Bookseller*. The *Bookseller* was started in 1857 by Mr. Whitaker, and among its earliest contributors were many men of some note, especially Alaric Watts. From the first it filled an acknowledged void, and, as a trade journal, has never been surpassed. From the interest of the notes and trade gossip contained in its pages, as well as from the more solid information in its lists of works and announcements, it has secured a wide popularity here and abroad, and has been the precursor of similar journals in America and elsewhere.

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Among other important Manchester publishers were R. & W. Dean, who introduced stereotyping into the city, and issued a large series of popular and useful books. From some cause or another, they

failed, and their stereos came into the possession of Samuel Johnson, the father of the Liverpool bookseller. Johnson now became a publisher on a very extensive scale, and is said to have been the originator of the royal 32mo. literature, which is now chiefly identified with Halifax.

In our own times, Manchester bookselling has been principally represented by the brothers Abel and John Heywood—a name almost as widely known as that of any London firm. The brothers were born at Prestwich, of very humble parentage; their father, indeed, is said at one time to have been in receipt of parish relief. Abel began life as a warehouse boy, on the scanty pittance of eighteenpence a week; but at the age of twenty he was summarily dismissed by his master in a fit of passion. He now obtained the wholesale agency for the *Poor Man's Guardian*, and was very shortly afterwards fined £54 for selling it without a stamp. He could not pay the fine, and was sent to prison for four months; but his family managed the shop during his incarceration, still selling the *Guardian* as before, but in a quieter manner. In 1834 and in 1836 he was again fined, but now he could afford to pay. The Government next tried to seize the papers while in the hands of the carriers, and they were obliged consequently to be sent through the country carefully concealed—embedded in a chest of tea or a hamper of shoes. As soon, however, as the duty was reduced from fourpence to a penny, the poorer classes were able to pay for stamped papers. Abel Heywood was, nevertheless, again the subject of a legal prosecution for the publication of a penny pamphlet by Haslam. Acting with vigorous promptness, he caused three or four copies of Shelley's works to be purchased from the chief

Manchester booksellers, and then contended that the poems were more blasphemous than his pamphlet. The Government did not care to excite the ill-feelings of the reading public by sending booksellers of position to prison, and as the cases were precisely similar, they relinquished the prosecution. Probably this decisive conduct suggested the same course to Hetherington, who was afterwards the cause of that famous trial, the Queen *v.* Moxon.

In 1838, Fergus O'Connor started the *Northern Star*, and for four years its prosperity at the time was unexampled. Heywood sold 18,000 copies weekly. By degrees his periodical trade increased enormously. In 1847 he joined some paper-stainers, and the firm soon became one of the largest in the world. In the year 1860 the paper duty paid by them amounted to more than £20,000. Among the most successful of his recent publications have been "Abel Heywood's Penny Guide Books." The series now embraces upwards of seventy-five numbers, referring to every place of importance or interest in the kingdom. He has also issued the whole of the popular tale, "The Gates Ajar," for the same price—one penny—giving in a pamphlet form what usually occupies a goodly volume.

Abel Heywood, however, was as well known as a distinguished public man as a successful bookseller. In 1835 he was appointed a Commissioner of Police, and during the Manchester riots in 1842 and 1849 he took a conspicuous part in quelling the disturbances. Elected to the corporation, he became an alderman in 1853, and in 1859 he was third in the list of candidates at the general Parliamentary elections. In 1862 he was elected Mayor of Manchester; in 1864 he took his son, Abel, into partnership.

John Heywood commenced life in the same lowly circumstances as his brother, and at the age of fourteen found employment as a handloom weaver. Within ten years his wages rose from half-a-crown to thirty shillings a week; and when in receipt of this latter sum he regularly allowed his mother a pound a week. At the age of four-and-twenty he married, and to improve his worldly position, accepted the management of a small factory at Altrincham, in Cheshire; but as the speculation proved a failure, he returned to his former occupation of "dressing" for power-loom weavers, at which he remained until his thirty-fifth year. Desirous of rendering even his spare time profitable, he had bought a paper-ruling machine, upon which he worked in the evenings; and Abel, who was now a successful bookseller in Oldham Street, offered him a situation in his establishment as paper-ruler, with a salary of two pounds a week: and in his brother's employ he remained for seven years. In 1842, however, determined to make a start for himself, he took a little shop in Deansgate, and, assisted by his son John, a lad of thirteen, the business, originally infinitesimal, increased rapidly and vastly. At first they confined their efforts almost entirely to the sale of weekly or Sunday papers, and they were able to carry abroad conveniently under their arms all the newspapers they could dispose of. In a few months, however, the aid of a wheelbarrow was required, and this, in turn, was discarded for a pony and trap. After adding every possible enlargement to the old premises, they were obliged in 1859 to take a shop on the opposite side of the street; and year after year, as the business expanded, addition after addition was made to the premises, until three buildings were rolled into one, and at the end of another seven years

a huge six-storey manufactory was built in the rear of the triangular shop. The increase of the working staff kept pace with the growth of the establishment, and now, instead of the armful or the barrow-load, a special railway truck, with a freightage of about two tons, comes down from London five times a week; some hundred and fifty assistants supply the place of the lad of thirteen, and nine spring-carts have been introduced in lieu of the little pony trap. A thousand parcels are made up each day, and between three and four hundred orders are received by every morning's post; for, besides being the largest newsvendors and booksellers out of London, the firm are the largest copybook makers in the kingdom. Fifteen hundred gross of copybooks are despatched from the warehouses every month; and it is stated that the weekly issue of newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals amounts to the almost incredible number of a quarter of a million.

In 1864, John Heywood, senior, died, and the business devolved upon his son, who had inherited all his father's energy and industry. In 1867 he introduced a platten printing machine, adapted to take impressions from the stereo-plates of his school-books—known as "John Heywood's Code," "John Heywood's Manchester Reader," &c.—and before long he resolved to become a regular printer as well as a publisher, and the "Excelsior Printing Works" were erected about a mile from Deansgate, where 355 people are constantly employed in the manufacture of books, in a manner very similar to that previously described in our accounts of the Messrs. Nelson and Collins, of Scotland. Among the books published by Mr. John Heywood are dialectic works, many of which are regarded, justly, as Lancashire classics. One of his latest triumphs has

been the issue of the "Science Lectures for the People," delivered at the Hulme Town Hall, and sold separately at a penny each—a fact that says something as to the good taste of the factory lads. Four monthly and three weekly periodicals are published by Mr. John Heywood. Of the former the *Railway Guide* is the most widely circulated, while the *Lithographer* is indispensable to the many decorative artists of the neighbourhood; and *Ben Brierley's Journal*, with its vernacular contributions, finds its way to every Lancashire fireside. Of the latter, the *Sphinx*, a satirical journal, is the most popular.

The career of the two Heywoods is a striking example of the labour, energy, and success which Lancashire folk are apt to think the true attributes of the typical "Manchester man;" and if they have not been instrumental in adding much to the higher literature of the world, their publications have very widely extended the taste for knowledge among the lower orders in the north of England.

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Even in Birmingham the trade of bookselling was introduced at a comparatively recent date. Dr. Johnson tells us that his father used to open a bookstall here on market days; and Boswell adds, in a note, that there was not then a single regular bookshop in the whole town. Elsewhere he tells us that "Mr Warren was the first established bookseller in Birmingham, and was very attentive to Johnson, who he soon found could be of much service to him in his trade by his knowledge of literature; and he even obtained the assistance of his pen in furnishing some numbers of a periodical essay, printed in the

newspaper of which Warren was proprietor." Mr Warren, however, though Johnson's first encourager, has long since been forgotten, and Birmingham bookselling is now universally identified with the name of William Hutton; and from his autobiography, published in 1816—perhaps the most interesting record of a self-made life that has ever been personally indited—we give a short sketch of his career.

William Hutton was born at Derby, in 1723. His father, a drunken wool-comber, scarcely brought home wherewithal to keep the wretched family from starvation, and "consultations were held (when the child was six years old) about fixing me in some employment for the benefit of the family. Winding quills for the weaver was mentioned, but died away. Stripping tobacco for the grocer, by which I was to earn fourpence a week, was proposed, but it was at last concluded that I was too young for any employment." Next year, however, the result of the consultation was otherwise, and he was placed in a silk-mill; the youngest, and by far the smallest, of the 300 persons employed, a lofty pair of pattens were tied on to his feet so that he might be able to reach the engine; and he continues:—"I had now to rise at five every morning, summer and winter, for seven years; to submit to the cane whenever convenient to the master; to be the constant companion of the most rude and vulgar of the human race; never taught by nature, nor ever wishing to be taught." Brutally treated, so that the scars of his chastisements remained on his body through life, he left the mill as soon as ever his apprenticeship expired; "a place," he says, "most curious and pleasing to the eye," but which had given him a seven years' heart-ache. He was now bound for another term to an uncle—a

stocking-maker at Nottingham. “My task was to earn for my uncle 5*s.* 10*d.* a week. The first week I could reach this sum I was to be gratified with sixpence, but ever after, should I fall short or go beyond it, the loss or profit was to be my own.” In this situation, he was not only thrashed by his master, but starved by his aunt; and, goaded by the taunts of the neighbours, he fled away, but was reluctantly compelled to return. In 1744 his apprenticeship expired, and for two years longer he remained as a journeyman in the same employment, but he now made the melancholy discovery—for all trade was in a very wretched condition at the time—that he had served two separate terms of seven years, to two separate trades, and yet could subsist upon neither.

A gradually acquired taste for reading led him to purchase a few books, and their tattered condition prompted him to try his hand at binding; and, as he could get no employment in his own avocations, he determined to start afresh as a bookbinder. His friends sneered at his ambitious hopes, but his sister supported him firmly. There were no binding tools to be purchased then in the country, so his sister “raised three guineas, sewed them in my shirt-collar, for there was no doubt but I should be robbed,” and put eleven shillings in his pocket as a sop to the expected highwayman, and off he started for London, walking fifty-one miles the first day and reaching it on the third. Here he invested his three guineas in tools, and stayed three days, seeing all that could be seen for nothing, his only paid entertainment being a visit to Bedlam, which cost a penny. Three days more, and he was back at Nottingham, terribly worn-out and footsore, but with fourpence still remaining out of his little travelling fund.

He now took a small shop, fourteen miles from Nottingham, at an annual rent of twenty shillings, and "in one day became the most eminent bookseller in Southwell," but he still lived at Nottingham. "During the rainy winter months," he says, "I set out from Nottingham at five every Saturday morning, carried a burthen of from three to thirty pounds' weight to Southwell, opened shop at ten, starved it all day upon bread, cheese, and half a pint of ale; took from 1*s.* to 6*s.*, shut up at four, and by trudging through the solitary night and the deep roads five hours more, I arrived at Nottingham by nine, where I always found a mess of milk-porridge by the fire, prepared by my valuable sister. But nothing short of resolution and rigid economy could have carried me through this scene."

There was little profit, however, in such a life, laborious as it was, and in 1750 he made an exploring journey to Birmingham, where he found there were only three booksellers—Warren, Aris, and Wollaston, and here he resolved to settle, hoping that he might escape the envy of "the three great men."

He obtained the use of half a little shop for the moderate premium of one shilling per week, but he had as yet to find wherewith to stock it. On a visit to Nottingham, he met a friendly minister, who asked, for the weather was inclement, why he had ventured so far without a great-coat, and who on receiving no reply, shrewdly guessed Hutton's impoverished condition, from his draggled, thread-bare garments, and offered him a couple of hundred-weight of books at his own price, and that price to be postponed to the future, and by way of receipt the young bookseller gave him the following: "I promise to pay to Ambrose Rudsall £1 7*s.*, when I am able." The

debt was speedily cancelled.

His period of probation was sufficiently severe: “Five shillings a week covered all my expenses, as food, washing, lodging, &c.,” but by degrees the better-informed and wealthier of the young clerks and apprentices began to frequent his shop, and were attracted by his zeal, and his evident love for the books he sold. With his skill in binding, he could furbish up the shabbiest tomes, and greatly increase their marketable value. By the end of his first year he found that he had, by the most rigid economy, saved up twenty pounds. Things were brightening, but the overseers, who at that time possessed a terrible power over the poorest classes, ostensibly dreading lest he should become chargeable to the parish, refused his payment of the rates, and bade him remove elsewhere. In this strait he exhibited much worldly wisdom, and invested half his little hoarding in a fine suit of clothes, purchased from one of the overseers, who happened to be a draper.

In the following year, 1751, he took a better shop, next door to a Mr. Grace, a hosier, and in a quiet, undemonstrative manner, fell in love with his neighbour’s niece. “Time gave us,” he says, “numberless opportunities of observing each other’s actions, and trying the tenour of conduct by the touchstone of prudence. Courtship was often a disguise. We had seen each other when disguise was useless. Besides, nature had given to few women a less portion of deceit.” The uncle at length consented to the match, and, with Sarah, Hutton received a dowry of £100; and, as he had already amassed £200 of his own, from this happy moment his fortunes ran smoothly upwards.

He now increased an otherwise profitable trade

by starting a circulating library—perhaps the first that was attempted in the provinces; and about this same time, 1753, he acquired a very useful friend in the person of Robert Bage, the paper-maker, and undertook the retail portion of the paper business. "From this small hint," he says, "I followed the stroke forty years, and acquired an ample fortune." And yet, though waxing yearly richer and richer, he adds, "I never could bear the thought of living to the extent of my income. I never omitted to take stock or regulate my annual expenses, so as to meet casualties and misfortunes." By degrees he became invested with civic dignities, and little by little he acquired the standing of a landed proprietor. Without neglecting his business he now found leisure for literary composition; and in his last work—"A Trip to Coatham"—he tells us, "I took up my pen, and that with fear and trembling, at the advanced age of fifty-six, a period when most would lay it down. I drove the quill thirty years, during which time I wrote and published thirty books."

His first work, the "History of Birmingham," appeared, and these thirty tomes of verse and prose followed in quick succession.

In 1802 he published his best-known work, the "History of the Roman Wall." Antiquarians had, before this, described the famous line of defence, but hitherto no one had attempted a personal inspection. Seventy-five years old, still hale and hearty, with an enthusiasm akin to that of youth, he started on foot for Northumberland, accompanied by his daughter on horse-back. Intent upon reaching the scene of his antiquarian desires, "he turned," writes his daughter, "neither to the right nor the left, except to gratify me with a sight of Liverpool. Windermere he saw, and

Ullswater he saw, because they lay under his feet, but nothing could detain him from his grand object." On his return journey, after every hollow of the ground, every stone of the Wall, between Carlisle and Newcastle, had been examined, he was bitten in the leg by a dog, but even this did not restrain him. Within four days of home "he made forced journeys, and if we had had a little further to go the foot would have knocked up the horse! The pace he went did not even fatigue his shoes. He walked the whole 600 miles in one pair, and scarcely made a hole in his stockings."

Almost to the last he preserved his physical powers comparatively intact. When he was eighty-eight, he writes—"At the age of eighty-two I considered myself a young man. I could, without fatigue, walk forty miles a day. But during the last few years I have felt a sensible decay, and, like a stone rolling downhill, its velocity increases with its progress. The strings of the instrument are one after another giving way, never to be brought into tune." Yet he did not die till 1815, at the ripe old age of ninety-two.

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At the close of the last century Hutton lost a valuable collection of books, and other valuable property, through the lawless riots that took place in his native city; of these disturbances the author of the *Press* says:—

"When Birmingham, for riots and for crimes,
Shall meet the keen reproach of future times,
Then shall she find, amongst our honoured race,
One name to save her from entire disgrace."

This “one name” was that of John Baskerville, a printer, a contemporary of Hutton, and one of the most famous English type-founders. Commencing life as a schoolmaster, his inclination for books turned his attention to type-founding, but he spent £600 before he produced one letter that thoroughly satisfied his exquisitely critical taste, and probably some thousands before his business began to prove remunerative; and, after all, his printing speculations yielded more honour than profit. Upon paying a heavy royalty to the University of Cambridge, he was allowed to print a Bible in royal folio, which, for beauty of type, is still unrivalled; but the slender and delicate form of his letters were, as Dr. Dibdin remarks, better suited to smaller books, and show to the greatest advantage in his 12mo. “Virgil” and “Horace.” His strenuous endeavours, and his large outlay, met with but little return; and he writes of the “business of printing” as one “which I am heartily tired of, and repent I ever attempted.” He died in 1775, and appears to have printed nothing during the last ten years of his life. By the direction left in his will, he was buried under a windmill in his own garden, with the following epitaph on his tomb-stone: “Stranger! beneath this cone, in unconsecrated ground, a friend to the liberties of mankind directed his body to be inurned. May the example contribute to emancipate thy mind from the idle fears of superstition, and the wicked arts of priesthood.” His fount of type was unluckily allowed to leave the country, and was purchased by Beaumarchais, of Paris, who produced some exquisite editions, particularly of Voltaire’s works, but who lost upwards of one million livres in his speculations.

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A successful modern bookselling venture in this city resulted from the establishment of the "Educational Trading Company (Limited)"—a novel phase in the trade—of which the chief proprietor and chairman was Mr. Josiah Mason. The business management was placed in the hands of Mr. Kempster, and, by a thorough system of travellers, who personally canvassed the proprietors of schools and colleges, offering them very liberal terms, a large connection was almost immediately established. The company's operations were, of course, confined to the publication of cheap educational works; and some of these, such as Gill's and Moffat's series, attained a wide popularity, and necessitated, in 1870, the opening of a London branch at St. Bride's Avenue, and another branch house at Bristol.

One of the most famous booksellers and printers of the West of England was Andrew Brice, who was born in Exeter in the year 1690. He was educated in early life with a view to the ministry, but family misfortunes obliged him to become apprentice to Bliss, a printer in that city. Long before the expiry of his apprenticeship the improvident young printer married, and, being unable to support a wife and two children upon the pittance he received, he enlisted as a soldier in order to break his indentures, and, by the interest of his friends, soon procured a discharge. He commenced business on his own account, and started a newspaper, but, possessing only one kind of type, he carved in wood the title and such capitals as he stood in need of. Becoming embarrassed through a law suit, in which heavy damages were cast against him, he was obliged to bar himself in his own house to escape the debtor's gaol. He spent seven long years in this domestic confinement, but still continued to conduct his business with assiduity,

and, as a solace, to compose a poem, “On Liberty,” the profits of which enabled him to compound with the keepers of the city prison. After regaining his freedom his business largely increased, and, in 1740, he set up a printing-press at Truro, the first introduced into Cornwall; the miners were, however, at that time in little need of literature, and he soon removed the types to Exeter. Among his chief publications were the “Agreeable Gallimanfly; or, Matchless Medley,” a collection of verses chiefly the production of his own pen; the “Mob-aid,” so full of newly-coined words that, in Devonshire, “Bricisms” were for long synonymous with quaint novelty of expression; and the folio “Geographical Dictionary,” which occupied ten years in publication and is still far from complete. Brice was at all times a shielder of the oppressed; and when the Exeter play-actors were purchased out of their theatre by the Methodists, who converted it into a chapel, and indicted them as vagrants, he published a poem—“The Playhouse Church; or, new Actors of Devotion,” which so stirred up popular feeling that the Methodists were fain to restore the place to its former possessors, who, under Brice’s patronage, opened their house for some time gratis to all comers. In gratitude the players brought his characteristics of speech and dress into their dramas, and even Garrick eventually introduced him, under, of course, a pseudonyme, in the “Clandestine Marriage.” At the time of his death, in 1773, he was the oldest master-printer in England. His corpse lay for some days in state at the Apollo Inn; every person admitted to view it paid a shilling, and the money so received went towards defraying the expense of his funeral, which was attended by three hundred freemasons, for he had not only been a zealous member of the fraternity, but at the period

of his decease he was looked upon as the father of the craft.

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Another West of England worthy, though he was only a bookseller for the short space of seven years, has perhaps higher claim upon our attention than any other provincial bibliopole. Joseph Cottle was born at Bristol in the year 1770, and at the age of twenty-one he became a bookseller in his native city. In 1795 he published a volume of his own "Poems"—and himself an author he was generously able to appreciate the work of better men. Through extraordinary circumstances he became acquainted with Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, and Lamb, when they were still unknown to fame, and with a rare perception of genius he was able to assist them materially towards the goal of success. From his interesting "Early Recollections," we gather that one evening Coleridge told him despondently that he had been the round of London booksellers with a volume of poems, and that all but one had refused to even look over the manuscript, and that this one proffered him six guineas for the copyright, which sum, poor as he was, he felt constrained to decline. Cottle at once offered the young author thirty guineas, and actually paid the money before the completion of the volume, which appeared in 1796.

To Southey he made the same bid for his first volume, and the offer was eagerly accepted. Cottle at once, however, added, "You have read me some books of your 'Joan of Arc,' which poem I perceive to have great merit. If it meet with your concurrence I will give you fifty guineas for this work, and publish it in quarto, when I will give you in addition fifty

copies to dispose of among your friends." Southey corroborates this account, and further says, "It can rarely happen that a young author should meet with a bookseller as inexperienced and as ardent as himself; and it would be still more extraordinary if such mutual indiscretion did not bring with it cause for regret to both. But this transaction was the commencement of an intimacy which has continued without the slightest shade of displeasure at any time on either side to the present day." Cottle ordered a new fount of type "for what was intended to be the handsomest book that Bristol had ever yet sent forth," and owing, perhaps, more to the party feelings of the periodical press, and the subject of the poem, than to any intrinsic merit, other than as holding out vague hope of future promise, the young author acquired a sudden reputation, which was afterwards fully sustained by his prose if not by his poetry.

Later on Cottle was introduced to Wordsworth, who read him portions of his "Lyrical Ballads." The venturous bookseller made him the same offer of thirty guineas for the first-fruits of his genius, saying that it would be a gratifying circumstance to issue the first volumes of three such poets, and (a veritable prophecy) "a distinction that might never again occur to a provincial bookseller." After mature consideration, Wordsworth accepted the offer; but the "Lyrical Ballads," in which also Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" first appeared, went off so slowly that he was compelled to part with the greater part of the five hundred copies to Arch, a London bookseller. We have already related how Cottle, and after him, Longman, rendered material assistance to Chatterton's sister, by an edition of the poems of the Sleepless Boy who perished in his Pride, and how in

1798 Cottle disposed of all his copyrights to Longman, and obtained his consent to return the copyright of the "Lyrical Ballads" to the author.

Though Cottle henceforth gave up bookselling, he did not forego book-making. In 1798 he published his "Malvern Hills," in 1801 his "Alfred," and in 1809 the "Fall of Cambria." These last effusions attracted the venom of Lord Byron's pen, who writes in bitter prose, "Mr. Cottle, Amos, Joseph, I know not which, but one or both, once sellers of books they did not write, now writers of books that do not sell, have published a pair of epics," and in bitterer verse:

"Bœotian Cottle, rich Bristowa's boast,
Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast,
And sends his goods to market, all alive,
Lines forty thousand, cantos twenty-five.

* * * * *

Oh, Amos Cottle!—Phœbus! what a name
To fill the speaking trump of future fame!—
Oh, Amos Cottle! for a moment think
What meagre profits spring from pen and ink!
When thus devoted to poetic dreams
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?
Oh, pen perverted, paper misapplied!
Had Cottle still adorned the counter's side,
Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,
Been taught to make the paper which he soils,
Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,
He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him."

Of course, this confusion of the names of the two brothers was intentionally meant to strengthen the gibe. Though Cottle was at best an indifferent poet

his name would have survived as a generous friend even if Lord Byron had not honoured him with his satire.

After having personally encouraged the youthful genius of such authors as Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth, and after having enjoyed their friendship and esteem, it was natural that Cottle, when their names had become familiar words in every household in England, should wish to preserve what he could of the history of their early days. In 1837 he published his "Early Recollections," but as he had felt compelled to decline to contribute them in any mutilated form to the authorised, and insufferably dull, life of Coleridge, the work was greeted by the *Quarterly Review* with a howl of contemptuous abuse, as consisting of the "refuse of advertisements and handbills, the sweepings of a shop, the shreds of a ledger, and the rank residuum of a life of gossip." This is certainly "slashing criticism" with a vengeance: Cottle based the value of his book upon the ground of his having been a bookseller, and to taunt him with the fact is as unmanly as the whole description of the work is false. He lays the slightest possible stress upon the assistance he had been able to render the illustrious authors pecuniarily, and only brings it forward at all as furnishing matter for literary history; and to most students the literary history of the early struggles of genius does possess the highest interest. Cottle was certainly unskilled in the art of composition, and was undoubtedly garrulous, but the gossip anent such writers, when prompted, as in this case, by truth and affection, is worth tomes of disquisitions upon their virtues or their faults. Joseph Cottle died as recently as 1854, and his memory is already half-forgotten, and yet had we wished to close our annals of the

"trade" by tributes paid by illustrious writers to the worth and integrity of its members, we could find none more fitting than the letters of two famous poets to an obscure provincial bookseller.

> "DEAR COTTLE,—On the blank leaf of my poems I can most appropriately write my acknowledgments to you, for your too disinterested conduct in the purchase of them.... Had it not been for you none, perhaps, of them would have been published, and some not written.
>
> "Your obliged and affectionate friend,
> S. T. COLERIDGE."

Again:—

> "Do you suppose, Cottle, that I have forgotten those true and most essential acts of friendship which you showed me when I stood most in need of them? Your house was my house when I had no other.... Sure I am that there never was a more generous or kinder heart than yours, and you will believe me when I add that there does not live that man upon earth whom I remember with more gratitude and affection.... Good-night, my dear old friend and benefactor.
>
> "ROBERT SOUTHEY."




**THE END.**

BILLING, PRINTER, GUILDFORD, SURREY.

# FOOTNOTES

[1] "Essai sur les Livres dans l'Antiquité."

[2] For a very interesting article on this subject, see *Cornhill Magazine*, vol. ix.

[3] Carnan is said, by Mr. Knight, to have been so frequently prosecuted that he invariably kept a clean shirt in his pocket, that he might lessen the inconvenience of being carried off unexpectedly to Newgate.

[4] D'Urfey was a music-master.

[5] This anecdote is often incorrectly related of Wilkes and the *Essay on Woman*.

[6] The *Daily Post*, Feb. 13, 1728.

[7] A most interesting and voluminous collection of "notes" in reference to Curll was contributed to "Notes and Queries" (2nd series, vols. ii., iii., and x.) by M.N.S. Many of our facts in relation to him have been taken from that source, and for a far fuller account, in the rough material, we refer the reader thither.

[8] West says he sat next Lackington at a sale when he spent upwards of £12,000 in an afternoon.

[9] *Bookseller*, June, 1865.

[10] As we shall have no other opportunity of referring to the third in rank of the leading quarterlies, we must, perforce, compress its history in a foot-note. The *Westminster Review* was started more than fifty years ago, by Jeremy Bentham, who was succeeded in editorship by Sir John Browning, in conjunction with General Perronet Thompson, whose labours in the cause of radical reform gave him considerable notoriety at the time. They made way for the accomplished statesman Sir William Molesworth, the editor of *Hobbes*. A profounder thinker still, Mr. John Stuart Mill, followed. Most of his philosophical essays appeared in its pages, at a time when Grote and Mr. Carlyle were both contributing. For more than twenty years now the *Review* has been in the hands of Dr. Chapman, who, beginning life as a bookseller in Newgate Street, was the first English publisher to recognise the value of Emerson's writings. Under Dr. Chapman, what is now the great feature—the Quarterly Summary of Contemporary Literature—was introduced. The *Review* has lately attracted much attention by the bold manner in which the "Social Evil" and the "Contagious Diseases Acts" have been discussed in its columns, and these articles are generally attributed to the able pen of the editor himself.

[11]

I. "On Dryden." (*E. R.*, 1828.)
II. "History." (*E. R.*, 1828.)
III. "Mirabeau." (*E. R.*, 1832.)

IV. "Cowley and Milton."
V. "Mitford's Greece."
VI. "Athenian Orator."
VII. "Barère's Memoirs."
VIII. "Mill's Essay on Government." (*E. R.*, 1829.)
IX. "Bentham's Defence of Mill." (*E. R.*, 1829.)
X. "Utilitarian Theory of Government." (*E. R.*, 1829.)
XI. "Charles Churchill."

Many of these may be found in the volume of *Miscellanies* published by Longmans. It has been denied that No. XI. is by Macaulay at all.

[12] For a further account of these extraordinary sales, see Allibone's *Dictionary of English Literature*, vol. ii., from which many of the above facts have been drawn.

[13] Among the sufferers by this failure was the family of Robert Watt, M.D., author of "Bibliotheca Britannica," for which £2000 had been given in bills, all of which were dishonoured. He was a ploughboy until his seventeenth year, wrote many medical treatises, and occupied his concluding years with a work precious and indispensable to every student. The whole plan of the "Bibliotheca" is new, and few compilations of similar magnitude and variety ever presented, in a first edition, a more complete design and execution.

[14] *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxx.

[15] Given to Dallas.

[16] Published by James Power, music seller.

[17] Written at Geneva, and published by John Hunt, London.

[18] This sketch was written before the publication of Mr. W. Chambers's life of his brother, but has been revised in accordance with that interesting memoir.

[19] Mr. Long has deposited in the Public Library at Brighton his private copy of the "Encyclopædia," interleaved with the names of the contributors, and other interesting information as to the progress of the work.

[20] Mr. G. W. M. Reynolds, of the "Mysteries of London" notoriety, commenced life also as a temperance lecturer, and was at one time editor of the *Teetotaller* Newspaper.

[21] Lockhart, in his article in the *Quarterly*, says that Hook's diary shows a clear profit of £2000 on the *first series*. This must be incorrect.

[22] The term *Conger* is ingeniously said to be derived from the eel, meaning that the association, collectively, would swallow all smaller fry.

[23] *Aldine Magazine*, p. 50.

[24] It was from the intricacy of thought of some few of the poems of the "Christian Year," that Sydney Smith christened it by the name of "The Sunday Puzzle."

[25] For the facts in the earlier portion of this memoir we are indebted to an interesting obituary notice in the *Bookseller*.

[26] For a very interesting bibliographical account of Mr. Tennyson's works, showing the various changes which the poems have undergone, see "Tennysoniana," by R. H. Shepherd (1856).

[27] For a full account of this interesting and successful bookseller *see* "Life of Alderman Kelly," by the Rev. R. C. Fell (1856).

[28] Tegg left a manuscript autobiography, which was published twenty years after his death, in the *City Press*; to this interesting memorial we are indebted for the facts in our present narrative.

[29] This "Petition" was first printed in the *Examiner*, 7th April, 1839, and afterwards republished.

[30] The *Bookseller*, June, 1864.

[31] The *Bookseller*, 1861.

[32] The above account is abridged from the *Bookseller* of November, 1869.

[33] To a timely notice in a recent number of the *Bookseller* we are indebted for the main facts in Duffy's life.

## Transcriber's Notes

Punctuation, hyphenation, and spelling were made consistent when a predominant preference was found in this book; otherwise they were not changed.

Simple typographical errors were corrected; occasional unbalanced quotation marks retained.

Ambiguous hyphens at the ends of lines were retained.

Arithmetic and date-sequence errors have not been corrected.

Page 22: The second illustration ("1547") may be part of the illustration just above it.

Page 93: "as the rious" was printed that way; may be a typgraphical error for "as the various".

Page 152: "Dr. Thomas Stewart Trail" may be a misspelling of "Traill".

Page 221: "looked up his pistols" may be a misprint for "locked".

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A HISTORY OF BOOKSELLERS, THE OLD AND THE NEW ***

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