THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

AS A CRITICAL JOURNAL

1815-1860

by

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PREFACE

It has been said that whoever undertakes to write the history of American thought in the nineteenth century and to trace the gradual development of literary and scientific independence in this country, must first study the early series of the North American Review if he would get an adequate foundation for such a study. Such a student will conclude that all the American scholars connected with the Review during its early history, considered it to be their mission to raise the standard of culture in America, to inspire more men of talent to write, and by wise, sympathetic, and just criticisms, to encourage struggling young writers to greater effort.

In order to show something of its critical ideals, methods, activity, and its work in aiding the development of a national American literature, the writer, having made an intensive study of the issues of the North American Review during the years, 1815-1860, purposes to set forth in this work the most prominent
critical opinions, expressed in this periodical, of its contemporary writers, as well as those of former times.

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CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW
1815-1860

The North American Review was founded in 1815 by William Tudor, Junior, and a group of Harvard scholars who had been the chief contributors and promoters of the Monthly Anthology. This magazine, which is generally accepted as the forerunner of the North American Review, had been founded in 1803 by Mr. Phineas Adams, but within six months control of it had passed into the hands of the Rev. William Emerson, the father of Ralph Waldo Emerson. With the aid of a few friends, including John Quincy Adams, George Ticknor, and William Tudor, Mr. Emerson founded the Anthology Club, which assumed responsibility for the new monthly—a form of publication which was then a novelty in America. The rule was that every member should not only write for the magazine but also face the obligation of helping finance the undertaking. Eventually this became


The North American Review will be referred to in footnotes by the initials, N. A. R., and in the body of the thesis, as the Review, or the North American.
too burdensome financially and publication was suspended in 1811. Short as was the career of the Anthology, it had been long enough to create a demand for literature and for literary opportunity such as it had supplied, and a new periodical was soon projected which was intended not only to take its place but also to occupy a broader field in American letters.

This was the North American Review, the prospectus of which was issued in 1814 by Mr. Tudor. The first number of the North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal, as it was then called, appeared in May of the following year. Mr. Tudor was well qualified for such a literary venture as this promised to be. He enjoyed among his contemporaries a high reputation as a scholar, a writer, and an amiable and accomplished gentleman. He was a tireless worker, and a master of a clear, correct style, and he happily blended the character of scholar with that of the man of affairs. He became the first editor of the North American and remained as such until 1818. During this time, he wrote three-fourths of all the articles which appeared in its

pages. The North American Review was frankly modelled after the Edinburgh Review and the Quarterly Review and sought to be to American readers what these great journals were to their readers. Henry Cabot Lodge, in writing of the early days of the North American, says, "The foundation of the Review was a sort of Literary Independence from the too overwhelming influence of the intellectual life of the lands overseas. From the very first, the result due to the practical encouragement that it gave to American letters was quite incalculable."

From the outset, the Review was emphatically American and never assumed such severe attitudes toward aspiring authors as the great English reviews did. It always sought to encourage rather than to condemn and it endeavored to foster in the minds of American scholars the idea that America could and should have a literature of its own unsupported by British ideals and models. One of the Review's

3. A few other magazine ventures had been tried in America before this---Dennie's Portfolio, Charles Brockden Brown's Literary Magazine, and Irving and Paulding's Analectic Magazine---but none of these had the significance or the aim of the North American Review.

chief ambitions was to build up a sentiment against the prevailing idea that every American author must be first recognized by the English reviewers before he could be approved by his own countrymen.

The interest in the early numbers of the North American Review lies partly in the subjects treated and partly in the contributors, who were among the first to give American Literature a truly national cast while the popular taste was still English and Continental. The early editors were all Harvard scholars and followed the general policy laid down by Mr. Tudor. Very little real literary criticism appeared in the first volumes. The aim of this criticism was to encourage more men of learning to write, as up to this time America had produced little pure literature. There existed an abundance of political and theological writings, but as a rule Americans had been content to let England furnish the belles-lettres.

An examination of the first issue of the North American Review gives an impression of the general

5. In the second number of the North American we find Dr. Walter Channing, in an Essay on American Language and Literature, even going so far as to advocate a new language for America so that the literature could be kept distinct from that of England. p. 307
characteristics of succeeding issues for the first few years. It contained a review of several numbers of books under the heading, Books Relating to America, and gave a large number of excerpts from them as it also did from Baron de Grimm's Memoirs. There were miscellaneous writings on religious worship and on various social topics. In an article, The United States and England, the custom of depreciating America was rebuked sharply. The poetry of Miss Lydia Huntley (later Mrs. Sigourney) was reviewed rather favorably by the editor and her first volume was declared to have much promise. There were two original, unsigned poems which were published without comment. The editor closed the number with several chapters which he had written concerning topics of general interest. These were headed General and Literary Intelligence and this department became an established feature of the magazine during its early career.

The North American Review was published bi-monthly until 1818, when it became a quarterly. During the three years, 1818-1820, the editorship changed hands three times; Willard Phillips, assisted by Jared Sparks, was succeeded by Edward Tyrrell Channing who in turn was followed by Richard Henry Dana.
During these years the chief contributors were George Ticknor, Daniel Webster, Dr. W. H. Gardiner, Edward Everett, Alexander H. Everett, Jared Sparks, and Richard Henry Dana. Dana was preeminently a critic and it was through his influence that the attention of American readers was first directed to the new school of English poets represented by Wordsworth and Coleridge.

The next editor was Edward Everett. His leading contributors were John C. Gray, Sidney Willard, and Edward T. Channing. Gray was the first American to write a critical article on Dante. Everett was very successful in this work. When he first took up his duties, he "pronounced the magazine to be in a languid state". The subscription list was under 600 and not increasing. He changed it from a bi-monthly to a quarterly journal. The circulation increased very rapidly and it became necessary to print a second and a third edition. The Review became more national in character while it still maintained the same liberal, scholarly position. Perhaps the most notable contributions during this period were Professor Channing's

6. Ward, _op. cit._, p. 123
7. _N. A. R._ CCI, 629
review of the novels of C. B. Brown and R. H. Dana's Review of Hazlitt's English Poets. The Review was the leading organ for all important public discussions, though it never assumed any political bias. Through Everett's management it had become a first-class review.

Jared Sparks now became editor and served as such until 1830. Prominent among the contributors were Caleb Cushing, William H. Prescott, whose first literary venture was a paper on Essay Writing published in the Review, George Bancroft, and F. W. P. Greenwood, who was the first American to recognize the excellence of Wordsworth's poems. During Sparks's editorship, the department of the short book review was established. While the magazine lost none of its prestige as the literary dictator of America at this time, it did fall off somewhat from the high reputation it had gained under Everett's efforts. Sparks, however, did perhaps even a

8. Wordsworth in 1827 says that the best article upon the Reform Bill appeared in the North American Review. This shows that the North American Review was not only read in England but that it had acquired there a recognized standing and reputation. (Summarized from Lodge, The N. A. R. - A Reminiscence. N. A. R. CCI, 752)

9. Poems of Wordsworth, XVIII
greater service in putting it on a sound financial basis.

The circulation of the Review increased in foreign countries as well as at home. No contributors had ever received pay for their work, but Mr. Sparks instituted a change, paying a dollar a page for articles. In 1830, he retired from the editorship and was succeeded by Alexander H. Everett who, like his brother Edward, infused great vigor and excellence into the magazine so that it prospered anew. One of his first articles was

10. "Sparks purchased the Review, partly with borrowed money, and carried into the management of the enterprise so much business and editorial ability that the periodical gained subscriptions and influence rapidly. It was evident that the United States at last had a review worthy of comparison with the leading reviews of Great Britain. When he retired from the editorship in 1830, Sparks received $9,100, more than he had given for the property. Considering the times, it was a very satisfactory result of his venture." (Bassett, J. B., Correspondence of George Bancroft and Jared Sparks, 1823-1832, Illustrating the relation between editor and reviewer in the early 19th century. Smith College Studies, II, 69)


The Tone of British Criticism, in which he rebuked Sydney Smith for his famous taunt, "Who reads an American Book?" which had lately appeared in the Edinburgh Review. During his regime, he published the work of such writers as Longfellow, who wrote the first article of its kind, The Origin and Progress of the French Language, and A. P. O. Peabody, who reviewed the works of Sir Walter Scott. There was no important subject which failed to receive notice in the pages of the Review. Mr. Everett evidently felt the importance of his mission for he had written to Jared Sparks in 1826, "I doubt whether the President of the United States has a higher trust to be accounted for than the editor of the North American Review." He certainly did not allow the interest to lag and he maintained the dignity of the periodical.

In 1836, John G. Palfrey became editor. He was conservative in his management and the magazine became somewhat lifeless. He leaned more toward historical interest, although he had some very eminent contributors, among them Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wrote articles on Milton, and Michael Angelo.

13. N. A. R. XXXI
14. N. A. R. CCI
Andrew Peabody, and H. T. Tuckerman, who wrote about Italy.

Professor Francis Bowen was editor from 1843 to 1853. Although he was a man of great general ability, he lacked creative power. He contributed largely to the *Review*, which during his period of control was conservative in policy. No notable activities were undertaken and the magazine was being overshadowed in live topics by *The Dial* just as the *New York Review* had overshadowed it during Dr. Palfrey's editorship. It had been gradually losing its power during the last ten years and lacked a decided policy. There continued to be, however, eminent writers among the contributors, such as Edwin Whipple, J. L. Motley, Dr. Asa Gray, J. R. Lowell, who first wrote on Browning's earliest work and prophesied greatness for him, Dr. Peabody, who wrote on Hawthorne and Niebuhr, C. C. Everett, who wrote on Ruskin, and Francis Wayland, who wrote about Dr. Arnold. One innovation Professor Bowen did make—he invited writers outside the Harvard group to contribute, thus giving more variety to its pages. A. P. Peabody succeeded Mr. Bowen and served from 1853 to 1861. He was well known for his scholarly attainment and spiritual breadth and
he took up this work as a mental stimulus while carrying on his other work. The policy remained conservative and there was no marked improvement. It was not until some years later that the magazine took on new life and regained its eminent standing of the early years.

Thus in following the fortunes of the North American Review for some fifty years, one finds it holding its own with other publications which arose from time to time during its career. Mr. Lodge in his Reminiscence of the Review says, "If we compare the early numbers of the North American Review with its English Prototypes and Contemporaries, we shall find after setting aside Macaulay, Carlyle, and Hazlitt, that the average work in the North American Review was quite up to if not beyond the level of the average of like work in England. It was certainly more sober and decent, for it never descended to the brutal violence of Christopher North or to the vulgar personalities of the reviewers of Keats." We may accept Mr. Lodge's view of its worth and usefulness; "So it came to pass that the Review prospered in a modest way and attained to a

15. N. A. R., CCI, 752
high position of dignity and authority in our little world of letters to which and to American Literature, it rendered real service when such service was sorely needed."

CHAPTER TWO

TYPES OF LITERATURE CONSIDERED IN THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

"Under Mr. Tudor and his immediate successors—William Phillips, E. T. Channing, and Richard H. Dana, the elder, (1815-1820)—the North American Review offered to American readers a more critical treatment of literature than had ever before been attempted on this side of the Atlantic. The contributors during this period were the first to give our literature a native handling, while the tone of culture was distinctly English and European." Scholars and others interested in the founding of a national literature were especially concerned in encouraging the writing of poetry, as this department had been neglected. Nearly every early number of the Review contained some exhortation or encouragement to scholars to express their thoughts.

in verse. F. W. P. Greenwood, a frequent contributor, in commenting on the charge made by British critics that American reviewers and those of the North American in particular had been accused of loading all American writers with thick and indiscriminate praise, for no other reason than because they were Americans, said that it was mainly true; the reviewers did hail with delight a good American production.

In the earliest numbers of the Review, very frequently the poems of Americans were published without comment, leaving the judgment of them to the good taste of the readers in the belief that the public in the end would pronounce just verdicts on them. Richard H. Dana, said in regard to the criticism of American poetical efforts, "We hesitate in pronouncing an opinion on what has not received judgment in England and dare not confess where we have been offended or pleased lest her tribunals of criticism should, by and by, come down upon us and tell us we were wrong." He greatly deplored the neglect of American productions and


the timidity of opinion in regard to their merits. The reason for the small interest taken in poetry he thought was owing to the trend toward the practical good and the idea prevalent in America, that poets were looked upon as intellectual idlers and unnecessary to the best interests of the community. Francis C. Gray, in speaking of the possibilities of literature in America, expressed his belief that America lacked educational facilities and thought it hard for a native writer to be compared with a foreigner and that it was not worth while for an American to compete with the British in belles-lettres although in Natural History he might do so. Other reasons given for so small an output of poetry were that there was no time, little encouragement, and that too many scholars considered England a part of their own country and consequently her literature was also that of America.

From the foregoing statements, it is evident that the state of poetry in America was not prosperous, that its growth was slow and retarded by the

20. An Address Pronounced before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1816. N. A. R., III
21. Ibid.
general assumption of the lack of poetical ability among Americans. While it was evidently the purpose of the Review in its early career to encourage the writing of more native poetry, it by no means discouraged the study or enjoyment of the work of foreign poets. It did aim to discourage servile adherence to foreign models and opinions.

All the important contemporary British productions were noticed more or less extensively. Sir Walter Scott's Lord of the Isles was reviewed in the first volume of the Review in an article of over thirty pages, in which excerpts were given and such points as versification, subject-matter, setting, and like matters were given due attention. A good proportion of earlier British poetry was reviewed, especially in the later numbers, and the length of the critical articles continued to increase until it was not uncommon for a review to contain fifty or sixty pages. Similar treatment was accorded to noteworthy productions of poets of other nationalities. The range of poetical compositions discussed was varied; not only contemporary works were noticed but a good proportion of those of preceding periods. Somewhat less attention was paid to the ancient classics.
Next to British poetic compositions, the French writings probably received the most attention in the pages of the Review. It seems likely that French literature was rather widely read in America at that time. However, less attention was paid to French poetry than to the other types of French literature. The Italian, German, Spanish, and other foreign poems were discussed in the Review, although the treatment given them varied according to the degree of interest manifested by American scholars in these literatures. The number of articles devoted to a discussion of poetry in these pages would indicate that an appreciation of poetry was not lacking in America, even though the writing of it was. There is scarcely a phase of poetry which was not discussed as occasion or need demanded and all criticisms were formed on the same comprehensive, just, and discriminating lines. During the early years, the attitude was lenient and encouraging toward American productions, and just and appreciative toward foreign productions. Later there appeared a more scholarly criticism which always displayed a sincere, earnest, and sympathetic love of intellectual excellence and moral beauty.

The treatment of the novel was quite different
from that of poetry. Americans were not encouraged by the Review to spend more time writing novels.

It might even be surmised that some of the early reviewers considered the novel somewhat in the light of a necessary evil. There is no doubt that the novel was widely read by the American public, and so the Review attempted to improve the taste of novel readers by bringing to their notice all noteworthy productions.

Native novelists were urged to use American settings for their plots—the early settlements, wars with the Indians, the Revolution, are three epochs in American history deemed worthy of attention and use by novelists. While they were discouraged from using the British novels as models for style or subject-matter, this imitative tendency did not seem as important in the case of the novel as it did in regard to poetry.

The realistic novel found most favor with the reviewers from first to last, though Scott's novels were held in high esteem by them all. Cooper was considered the most national of American novelists and his use of native scenes and traditions was

praised as being the most desired characteristic for this type of writers. He was rebuked, however, for his intense bitterness against European customs and manners and his rigid beliefs in democratic institutions. Of American novelists, probably more attention is given to him by the *Review* than to any other.

The early method of reviewing novels was to give very little real criticism. The aim of the reviewers seemed to be to give a synopsis of the story containing copious excerpts. Such a procedure would not be acceptable to modern readers. Occasionally comments were made as to style, characters, or plot, and frequently the author received some attention. The moral tone of the novel rarely failed to meet with adequate attention by the reviewers---in fact, this was characteristic of the *Review* at all times.

In later years, the reviewing of the novel became more elaborate, more sympathetic, and more scholarly. More attention was finally given by reviewers to the structure of the novel and less to telling the story. Yet it was a habit of the *Review* to prolong such articles into long discussions frequently forty or fifty pages in length. Women novelists were not
esteemed as a rule, although it was conceded that a woman might succeed with the domestic novel. In the later numbers of the Review, adequate praise was given to such novelists as Jane Austen, Susan Ferrier, and Maria Edgeworth.

The general purpose or raison d'etre of the novelists, as held by the reviewers, appears to have been that of instruction, although this term had a somewhat wide and varied significance. As one writer in a later issue expressed it, "Novels are to be regarded as vehicles of instruction, as the means of enlarging our experience—as an opportunity for increasing our knowledge of men and things. This effect is not the chief object of the writer but he aims at it as subsidiary to his main purpose and it is essential to his success." 23

24 Another reviewer admits the joy of novel reading and calls the novel a royal road to much genuine and substantial knowledge. Novel writing was held to be better developed among English-speaking people. The Spanish "picaresco tale" was rated low—as it had little variety, its range

23. Anon., Romans de Paul de Kock, N. A. R., LVI

of characters was extremely limited and of the meanest sort. Don Quixote was, naturally, given the highest place in tales of this class.

The Italians were given the credit for naturalizing the "novelle", the forerunner of the modern novel. Foreign novels, however, did not find favor generally with the reviewers. The French were criticised as being unable to write the domestic novel. The moral tone of their novels moreover was rated low although the authors' cleverness was praised. The successful novel was held to be "strictly a work of art, amenable to all the laws of art. When tried by the rules of criticism and tested by severe analysis it must be able to prove that its conclusions follow fairly from its premises, and to show that its effects proceed from sufficient causes. Too many liberties with probability are inadmissible for the purpose of bringing about the catastrophe. Artistic beauty of style must accompany creation, development, and completion of the plot."

In contrast to the somewhat indifferent attitude of the Review towards the novel, historical writings

25. Anon., Review of Three Recent Novels. N. A. R., LXXXIII, 342
from the first were accorded a very important place. History occupied a large space in the magazine but it was not generally classified or treated as the other types of literature were. The fact that much of the early literature was closely related to the history of America perhaps made the interest in this field keener, and also the fact that scholars sometimes doubted their ability to equal British contemporaries in the belles-lettres, but considered their skill in historical writing quite equal to the best. Another important reason for the prominence given to history was that some of the editors were primarily historians—Tudor, Sparks, Palfrey, and Bowen—and some of the leading historians of America were frequent contributors. Among these were Bancroft, Prescott, and Motley. The Review was proud that America could boast of several standard historians and in the absence of any superior quality of belles-lettres the historian was given adequate attention; furthermore, a greater national pride was desired and therefore public spirited editors and contributors considered it a good policy to keep before the readers historical events and the exploits of the great national characters by means of biography and memoirs.
In an article which was published in 1821, the requisites given for an historian were that, "though perfectly impartial toward all persons, he was not to be indifferent to the moral qualities of actions or their influence on the happiness of men. The modern historian must possess all the qualities of the ancients and in addition, must be a philosopher, a political economist, and well versed in the arts and sciences." A later contributor regards as a good historian one who loves his theme—his love, though, must be chastened with a sound philosophy, a spirit of research, with a store of learning and with a fund of common sense. It was better that a history of a country be written by a native. "Lofty patriotism must take possession of his soul while learning and judgment instruct and guide him."

As these opinions as to the qualification of a good historian were rather typical of the times, they show how the judgment of these changed from time to time; and consequently the treatment by reviewers was changed accordingly. In the early


27. Anon., History of the United States by George Bancroft, N. A. R., XL
Reviews there is comparatively little criticism of the historical method.

Numerous extracts were usually given to show the style of the author and to give the reader an idea of the contents of the work. These were frequently supplemented with explanations as to events and characters more after the manner of reviewing novels. A good and agreeable style of writing was always commended but this was held second in importance to accuracy and fidelity to fact. It was evidently the object of the editors of the Review to keep its readers informed of the important events in the history of America and to some extent of other countries, while the historical method was given less prominence.

In connection with history, the editors devoted space to biography as well as to personal memoirs. Different treatment was accorded to two types of biography which may be characterized as historical and literary. The reviews of the latter type were usually supplemented with critical analyses of the authors' works and numerous digressions on subjects more or less connected with the subject of the review. Sometimes this developed into a mere discussion of the author's works. The biography of
an historical character was reviewed both from the standpoint of the merits of the writer and also from the standpoint of the facts related concerning the subject of the work. A good biographer was considered to be one who told more about his subject than about the history of the period. He must also tell neither all the good nor all the bad qualities of his subject and must keep himself out of the portrayal. It was a custom of the Review to notice all important American biographies both on account of their literary merit and also in order to keep the readers interested in America and her great men.

Spark's biographies naturally held the most important place of American writings of the kind. All his productions were given considerable attention, though his ability as a biographer was not discussed by the reviewers. All the world-famous biographies were noticed in the Review. As might be expected, Boswell was given first place as a writer of this type of literature. American writers were urged to acquire more skillful methods by a study of the great biographies of the world, of which Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men was recognized as the greatest. It is interesting to note the requirements one critic laid down in this
matter: "A good biographer should be an able literary workman, also a good and wise man---industrialious and scholarly in collecting materials and wise in their use".

The numerous books of travel which were discussed by the reviewers were rather closely connected with history and biography because travelers from abroad generally recorded their impressions of America in book form for the benefit of their countrymen. These based their ideas of America largely upon such works; therefore, the Review noted first the accuracy of the productions, secondly, the method of writing. The whim of the traveler often determined the bias of the book. This was especially true in the earlier years of the Review and reviewers complained greatly about such prejudiced writings and their authors. The travels chiefly noted were those of people from England or France writing about America or journeys to less frequented places the knowledge of which might be valuable or at least interesting to the reading public. The fact that travel was difficult, and possible to only a limited

number during this time, made such records more in demand. The books of travel reviewed were varied as to contents. Sometimes they treated of geography and natural history; sometimes, of the incidents of travel and of the people, their customs, manners, life, and so on, and sometimes of political and historical matters. "The business of a traveler is to see and describe; the less he meddles with speculation, the better for himself and his readers." In this brief sentence may be summed up the attitude of the Review toward writers of travels.

Another type of literature which held an important place in the Review was the essay. Reviewers thought that the art of essay-writing was closely associated with the periodical, which had been instrumental in bringing the essay to the attention of the public and popularizing it. Essays which appeared in the early periodicals had a very great influence, as their "object was to resist a vicious age, purify the sources of pleasure, to divert and soften party hostilities, to elevate and refine familiar conversation by a colloquial elegance of

29. Anon., Incidents of Travel in Yucatan. N.A.R., LVII
their own, and to bring literature near to a people apparently little versed in books". All the important contemporary essayists and their works were noticed in the Review. As to style, it was generally conceded that Cowley was the beginner of the "sweet, easy, and perfectly natural manner which was followed by Addison". Reviewers generally looked for and approved such a style of writing, although it was thought that the style should fit the subject and be characteristic also of the writer. A moral purpose was not usually held to be necessary to good essay-writing—the subject matter might be widely varied although it should be wholesome, entertaining, and natural.

Closely associated with the writing of essays was that of letters. These were reviewed to a certain extent because letter-writing as an art was still flourishing, at least during the early years of the Review, and in America especially it had formed an important part of the early literature. Reviewers generally noticed the contents rather than the style of letters although the letter, like the essay, was expected to have a graceful, easy style

30. Anon., The Tatler, N. A. R., XLVI

and to reflect the personality of the writer.

The sermon, notwithstanding the important part which it played in the colonial period and the great influence it had upon later writings, has no distinct place in the critical reviews which appeared in the Review during this period. It is chiefly noted in connection with memoirs and reminiscences of the great preachers such as Timothy Dwight, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards. Some of the contemporary preachers were given slight notice, and a few of the great English divines were also mentioned. The style suitable for sermons or "pulpit eloquence" was duly outlined and the style of the various great preachers was commented upon but this is hardly to be viewed as distinctly apart from consideration of the essay or the oration. The two seem to overlap so far as the Review is concerned.

The oration was given a distinct place, for oratory was held to be particularly well suited to the citizens of a democracy. It had flourished in America and our orators were given more space in the pages of the Review than were the British. Some space was given to the ancient orators and their influence upon modern oratory. It was thought
to be beneficial to all students to study the great orations whether they intended to be orators or not. All the great American orators and their works as well as a few of other countries were commented upon. Quite extensive discussions of the oration's most desirable characteristics were given from time to time by the critics, with the object of helping aspiring orators in their studies by giving them proper examples of excellent oratory and the fundamental principles upon which they might rely. In a certain sense, reviewers held that an orator must have such natural ability as strength of character and individuality, literary merit, and to these qualities he must add such other accomplishments as scholarship, a good style, and great knowledge of men and affairs.

Of all the forms of literature, the drama received the least attention. No reason is apparent unless it be that the drama had been frowned upon by the Puritans and had not yet attained respectability. Another reason may be that the eighteenth century drama was considered too indecent for models of writing, and also that no good drama

32. Summarized from a review of Daniel Webster's Speeches and Forensic Arguments. N. A. R., LIX
was produced in America. The Review probably held that there was little need for criticism. Of all dramatists, Shakespeare as might be expected was given the most attention. The discussion usually dealt with the editing of his plays and the views held by various emendators and critics. Some critical articles of non-English dramas appear, the French and German receiving most prominence. The works of ancient dramatists were discussed more critically than the modern and a thorough knowledge of the classics was manifested by the reviewers.

"The great principle of excellence in dramatic compositions was that they should be faithful and vivid copies of human life and action whether written for closet or stage."

The foregoing types of literature constitute the bulk of the writings which were discussed in a critical way by the North American Review. Many other articles which cannot be classified as general types appeared; these were of educational and literary nature and some of the most prominent are those

pertaining to the study of language, the new textbooks of grammar, different articles about schools and colleges, especially Harvard, the publications of new dictionaries, discussions of a religious and moral nature, and many other articles. These contained no literary criticism but are interesting because they were representative of all the important subjects taken from the active life and movements of the day, subjects which were being discussed at home and abroad by scholars and students of public affairs. Thus it is evident that the North American Review was primarily a journal devoted to literature but at the same time its numbers always contained articles bearing upon all important topics of current interest.

34. These included such articles as: Dictionary of Americanisms, a Glossary of Words and Phrases usually regarded as peculiar to the United States, by John Bartlett. N. A. R., LXIX; Lectures on the English Language by G. P. March. N. A. R., LXXXIX; A Vocabulary ....Supposed to be peculiar to the U. S. by John Pickering. N. A. R., III

35. Mason, Thaddeus, Natural History of the Bible. N. A. R., XIX
CHAPTER THREE

THE DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN LITERATURE IN
THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, 1815-1860

A POETRY

As stated previously, in the field of pure literature poetry received the most attention at the hands of the reviewers. Their criticism, however, in this field, was not more scholarly than that accorded other types. The early critics seemed to be somewhat at a loss to know how to proceed. They wished to encourage the writing of poetry; yet they wanted excellent quality and the attainment of this was difficult. In the first few volumes of the Review, various opinions were expressed as to the value of critical judgments. One critic expressed doubt as to the function of criticism—whether it was best to censure poor poetry as it deserved or to remain silent. It

was feared that encouragement would only produce more poor poetry. Another stated that writers ought not to be hampered by judges. In general, reviewers adopted a middle course between these two views.

Good advice regarding the writing of poetry abounded in the early issues of the Review but the actual criticism of individual poets was not exact. The first criticism of American poets was founded on corrective lines and considered such matters as versification, choice of words, treatment of natural objects, and setting. Contemporary poets were urged to regard the writing of poetry more as a business and less as a pastime. The besetting sins of these poets were "eccentricity and haste, a vehement desire to think and talk as nobody ever did before---that it was more desirable to say a strange than a true thing and draw startling images than to paint nature". The earliest poetry published in the Review was assigned to a department of the magazine called Original Poetry. These pieces rarely received comment, and were frequently unsigned except by the initials of the writer. Some were published anonymously.


Miss Lydia Huntley (afterwards Mrs. Sigourney) was one of the first poets to receive comment. Her volume was favorably discussed and judged to contain, "Trifles, but not bad".

Richard Henry Dana reviewed Washington Allston's Sylphs of the Seasons in an article which also set forth the characteristics of good poetry. Classifying Allston's work with the lighter poetry, the critic both praised it for its natural treatment of nature and recommended it as desirable reading.

The first important poem published in the North American was Bryant's Thanatopsis, which was attributed by the reviewer to Bryant the elder. A little later, To a Waterfowl appeared without comment. Two years thereafter, Bryant wrote for the Review an extended article in criticism of Solyman Brown's Essay on American Poetry. In this essay, Bryant noticed all the important American poets who had preceded him and stated his

40. N. A. R., V
41. Dana, R. H.
42. N. A. R., VI
43. N. A. R., VII
views on the art of poetical composition. He maintained that American poetry began with national independence and mentioned many writers now forgotten. A few of his conclusions are worthy of mention. He discussed Freneau as a "writer of inferior note" because he employed too much satire and because his poems were of the occasional type. 44 Of the Hartford group, Trumbull, Dwight, and Barlow were mentioned most prominently. They were credited with "a pervading spirit of nationality and patriotism—a desire to reflect credit on their country as much as honor to themselves". However, they were charged with having little taste because they copied the poets of England in trying to attain "a certain, measured, declamatory manner—an artificial elevation of style which allows no freedom to an author". Of this group, Barlow was considered the best while Dwight was dismissed as unworthy of the name of poet.

In America, Bryant was considered the pioneer poet and an important literary influence. His first volume of poems was the occasion of many favorable comments. His reviewer declared him to

44. Discussed in an anonymous review of R. W. Griswold's Poets and Poetry of America. N. A. R., LVIII
be of the school of Cowper, or of nature, "of the school which aims to express fine thoughts in true and obvious English without fearing or attempting to write like anyone in particular". His poems were considered in order in regard to such matters as versification, tone, and sympathy. On the occasion of the appearance of his first complete edition of poems in 1832, E. P. Whipple, in discussing his poetic quality, attributed to him great power and originality, in his way, and said of him: "The bent of his mind is especially contemplative. He loves to muse in solitude, in the depths of the forest, and on the high places of the hills. His thoughts go beyond external appearances to dwell upon things not visible to common mortals."

Bryant's poetry was cited as "always correct, easy flowing, eloquent, and, at the same time, spirited and vigorous in its versification. His imagery is the true and lively expression of nature not transmitted through the pages of a thousand preceding writers. His tone of thinking is pure and elevated. While he sometimes lacks passion and fire, his calm,

46. Poems by W. C. Bryant. N. A. R., XXXIV
simple beauty, loving description of nature and lofty moral tone are not excelled." He was regarded as a model for less skillful versifiers to follow. During his early career, he was often compared to Dana and to Percival and was judged by some critics to be inferior to these writers in certain ways. The consensus of opinion, however, agrees rather well with the modern idea, showing that his contemporaries had foresight as well as judgment. In the capacity of critic he was esteemed most highly and in his critical judgments he was actuated

47. Anon., Review of G. B. Cheever's The American Common-Place Book of Poetry with Occasional Notes. N. A. R., XXXIII. In his work, Cheever places Dana above Bryant because of his affectionate, domestic feeling which fitted him to influence more readers than Bryant would, as not all readers could appreciate the latter. The reviewer disagrees with Cheever.

48. Anon., The Poetical Works of James Gates Percival. N. A. R., XCI. Reviewer compares him to Shelley as to love of nature and poetical theory. Early reviewers gave Percival a place which seems surprising to modern readers. Most reviewers, however, rated him lower than Bryant, especially in workmanship.

49. Gulian C. Verplanck in the New York American, Oct. 4, 1821, uses this language with reference to Bryant's poems: "of exquisite taste, keen relish for the beauties of nature,....their magnificent imagery, and their majestic morality".
by an urgent desire to help the cause of American letters.

Longfellow was regarded very favorably by reviewers, one of whom predicted that "his poetry will not be easily forgotten; some of it will be remembered with that of Dana and Bryant". Some named him as the most popular American poet. He was regarded as a truly national poet, though his knowledge of German literature was commented on as giving "a perceptible tincture to his poetical style". His romantic impress as distinguished from the classical was noted, although his works were credited with being scholarly and finished, marked by a classical severity of taste while also abounding in "that richness of expression and imagery which the Romantic Muse is supposed to claim as its especial attribute". His versification received more attention than that of any preceding poet. It was considered something of a triumph that he was able to use the dactylic hexameter measure successfully. It was believed that he had acquired this art while in Germany by

50. Review of Cheever's work. N. A. R., XXXIII


52. Ibid.
the study of Voss, Goethe, and Schiller. Modern hexameter was declared to work out well in minute delineation and picturesque narrative. Evangeline was cited as an example in which the dactylic hexameter was managed with wonderful skill. This piece was thought to be one of rare beauty, tenderness, and moral power, and constructed with more art and skill than any other of his poems. "Some of his stanzas sound with the richest and sweetest music of which language is capable." The homely scenes of Acadian life were painted with Homeric simplicity while the luxuriance of a southern climate was magnificently described with equal fidelity and minuteness of finish. The character of Evangeline was declared to be exquisite. The Skeleton in Armor, The Wreck of the Hesperus, and Excelsior were quoted without comment. Hiawatha, it was stated, was the first permanent contribution to the world's belles-lettres made

54. Anon., Ballads and Other Poems. N. A. R., LV
55. Anon., Hiawatha. N. A. R., LXXXII
from Indian authorities. It was described as exquisite by the Review. No other American poet received such unqualified approval from the reviewers as did Longfellow.

Lowell met with much criticism, both favorable and unfavorable, from 1840 to 1860—when he became editor of the North American. His little volume entitled A Year's Life was pronounced to be of unquestionable poetical merit—sufficiently so "to make us hope well of the author's literary progress, in spite of the defects with which nearly every page is more or less alloyed". The reviewer thought Lowell had more of the "vision" than the "faculty divine" and his conceptions were superior to his powers of execution, but his genuine love of nature, vivid imagination, purity, and elevation of feeling were recognized. Such pieces as Irene and Threnodia were quoted. His Conversations on Some of the Old Poets was noted mainly in regard to style. He was credited with being a good

56. His Hyperion, a Romance was reviewed by C. C. Felton in volume L.

57. Anon., A Year's Life by J. R. Lowell., N. A. R., LII

58. The reviewer commended to him the study of Pope, Gray, and Rogers in order to perfect his form. Anon., Review of A Year's Life. N. A. R., LX

59. Anon., Conversations on Some of the Old Poets. N. A. R., LX
student of the old poets and it was alleged that his style, in both poetry and prose, was influenced by them. His inexperience and youth were commented on and his reviewer accused him "of criticising things which are established only because they are established". Later, when his 1848 volume of poems was published, it was acknowledged that Mr. Lowell's productions showed a marked progress and the reviewers hoped for a rich harvest when he reached the full maturity of his genius. The swift movement of his verses, and the daring energy of his conceptions, showed that his genius inclined to the lyric form of poetry. His sustained freedom and vigor in contrast to the "dreamy tenderness, the exuberance of sweet diction" of certain contemporary poets was appreciated. The Changeling was quoted as a favorite, while The Present Crisis was described as a poem full of stirring energy and fiery appeals, though its leading purpose was not apparent to the reviewer. On the whole, Lowell, while not exactly meeting with the approval of the Review, was considered an important figure in the poetical field.

60. N. A. R., LXVI

61. Lowell himself was a frequent contributor to the Review but his prose is not commented on by reviewers.
Poe was not a favorite with the Harvard group of scholars if one is justified in forming this conclusion by the scarcity of opinions concerning him which appeared in the *North American*. Aside from brief book reviews, only one article appeared concerning this remarkable versifier. This article discussed Griswold's *Memoir* and the comments on Poe's works by N. P. Willis and J. R. Lowell. The article was unsympathetic and unappreciative. It was evident that Poe was not the type of literary personage approved by Bostonian critics. His best poems were said to be *The Raven* and *Annabel Lee*. He was credited with displaying poetic capacity, opulence of imagination, power of production, and skillful combination, especially "in that delicate perception of the true harmonies of thought and expression which is the soul of

62. Anon., Review of The Works of the late Edgar Allan Poe; with Memoirs by R. W. Griswold and Notices of his Life and Genius by N. P. Willis and J. R. Lowell. *N. A. R.*, LXXXIII. Three phases of his literary career, three distinct branches, were noticed ..... his work as a poet, as a critic, and as a writer of fiction. 'In the south, his fame rests on fiction, in the north on criticism, and on the continent his poetry is most appreciated.'
physical aesthetics". But he lacked in spontaneity, according to his reviewers, and employed too much word-manoeuvring, except in the case of Annabel Lee. Moreover his readers "have no sympathy—they are admirers only, not lovers." It was thought that his theory of poetry was too limited. As a critic, he was thought to be unsafe. "The theory of criticism, according to Poe, is to detect faults only—not to hunt for beauties. He was considered master analyst, but, though his criticism was acute, it was not comprehensive.

Like Longfellow, Whittier met with almost unqualified praise and generosity from the reviewers. His edition of poems, published in 1849, Margaret Smith's Journal (1849), Old Portraits and Modern Sketches (1850), Songs of Labor (1850), and the Chapel of the Hermit and Other Poems were all noticed in the same review. These works were discussed as to content and praised for their American settings and characters. His prose was divided by reviewers into four classes: "the simply horrible, the grotesque, the illusive, and the semi-scientific or philosophical"; and their general characteristics as: "much of drime, more of sin, and horror the soul of the plot!" His best prose was declared to be The Fall of the House of Usher and Ligeia.

63. If his poetry was hardly appreciated, certainly his prose, at least as regards subject-matter, was not. His prose was divided by reviewers into four classes: "the simply horrible, the grotesque, the illusive, and the semi-scientific or philosophical"; and their general characteristics as: "much of drime, more of sin, and horror the soul of the plot!" His best prose was declared to be The Fall of the House of Usher and Ligeia.

64. Anon., Review of Whittier's Works. N.A.R., LXXIX
Megone, a Tale of Indian Life, was described as a work of real and distinguished power, with some considerable defects—both of plan and of execution—but with much strength and vividness of conception, truth of description, and beauty of verse. Many excerpts were given so that the readers could judge for themselves. His genius was pronounced to be essentially lyrical and his versification various and well-managed. He displayed great vividness and intensity in both thought and expression. Though sometimes careless and hasty in workmanship, this fault was overbalanced by his strength and simplicity. The reviewers remarked that "Whittier could not write for art's sake alone—he must have a purpose". His earlier poems were sometimes too declamatory but the later ones were temperate. His sentiments were pronounced thoroughly American and his productions contained the genuine American doctrines of freedom and humanity brought up to the latest and highest standard. "His unmeasured sympathy for his kind has led him into a field new and entirely his own and given him an unquestionable title to the name of an original author."

Ralph Waldo Emerson seems to have been somewhat of a mystery to his critics. One expressed the opinion that "his mystical effusions have been for some years the delight of a large and increasing circle of young people and the despair of the critics." He was called a "chartered libertine", who had long exercised his prerogative of writing enigmas both in prose and verse, sometimes with meaning in them and sometimes without. Many of his "fragments of verse", said the critic, "put at defiance all laws of rhythm, metre, grammar, and common sense." Furthermore, it was claimed that "only in his prose was Emerson a poet and that his poetry contained the most prosaic and unintelligible stuff that ever was".

The "female poets", as they were termed by reviewers, were not as a rule held in high esteem but certain ones occasionally were given favorable mention. Mrs. Sigourney, first reviewed by

66. Anon., Nine New Poets. N. A. R., LXIV. One of the poets was Emerson; the others noticed were: W. E. Channing (Poems); C. W. Brook (Shiller's Homage of the Arts); T. B. Read (Poems); W. W. Story (Poems); J. F. Colman (The Island Bride and Other Poems); Frances E. Brown (Poems); Epes Sargent (Songs of the Sea); Harriet Farley (Shells from the Strand of the Sea of Genius).

67. Anon., Illustrated Poems by Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney. N. A. R., LXVIII
William Tudor as being a writer of some promise, was later commented on more favorably. Her reviewer stated that she, like most female poets, possessed those powers which act with intensity only on those subjects which have fallen within her own experience. She did not evince that masculine imagination by which the mind passes out of its own individual relations of sex and person and animates numerous and widely different modes of being.

Other women poets discussed were: Anne Bradstreet, Jane Turell, Mercy Warren, Elizabeth Ferguson, Susanna Rowson, Sarah Porter, Anne Charlotte Lynch, Sarah Helen Whitman, Alice and Phoebe Cary, Mrs. Oakes Smith, Mrs. Francis S. Osgood. There were others whose names have long since been forgotten. No special importance was given to these writers beyond considering them worthy of notice because of popularity, or in some cases because of some particular excellence.

68. Anon., Review of Caroline May's The American Female Poets, with Biography and Criticism; Read's Female Poets of America; Griswold's The Female Poets of America; N. A. R., I.XVIII Miss May was also noted as a writer of pleasing verse.
Several poets at one time popular but now known perhaps for one or two of their productions, or in some cases known only to students of American Literature, occupied considerable space in the *North American Review*. Among these were Fitz-Greene Halleck, who was styled a favorite though not rated highly. He was thought to excel alike in the serious and in the comic style but to be unfortunate when he attempted to combine the two. N. P. Willis was considered to be a poet of much promise and was given much attention by reviewers. E. C. Pinckney received notice but was criticized adversely because he imitated Byron. Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Alfred B. Street, and S. Dryden Phelps were reviewed in a single article. Garrison was held to have little of the poetical element because he dwelt continually on a single theme. His sonnets were preferred as they were thought to have "music, fancy, and point". Street was looked upon as somewhat promising while Phelps was thought to have no talent.


Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* received a brief notice. The work was judged to be "odd and out of the way". The critic said of his verse, "These pieces are read and enjoyed just as a tired man lying on the hill-side in summer, enjoys the leaves of grass around him—enjoys the shadow,—enjoys the flecks of sunshine—not for what they suggest to him but for what they are".

The *Review* claimed that there were few wits or humorists in the lists of American poets, as life in this country had always been a very serious thing. Americans, it was charged, wrote burlesque very poorly. Satire was given considerable attention as to its character and its importance—which was of little moment. The Revolutionary efforts were compared to Hudibras as a model of excellence in that type of writing. Trumbull's McFingall was called a tolerably successful imitation of Hudibras while his Progress of Dulness was pronounced "sprightly and harmonious".

73. Anon., *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman. N. A. R., LXXXII

74. Trumbull, Barlow and other Revolutionary writers mentioned in the following reviews: Homer Wilbur's *The Biglow Papers; A Fable for Critics* by a Wonderful Quiz; and Poems by Oliver W. Holmes. N. A. R., LXVIII

75. Ibid.
Joel Barlow's Hasty Pudding was called an admirable mock-heroic in blank verse and Halleck's Fanny was credited with more ease and sprightliness than Lord Byron's Beppo, though with less wit. A Fable for Critics was not rated very high though it did have "flashes of brilliant satire edged with wit". The framework of the poem was too slight for notice and the sketches were drawn in a very free and bold manner, though they have the defect of being caricatures. The reviewer took exception to some of the sketches, especially the one of Bryant. In fact, Lowell was styled a poor critic and the opinion given that poets made poor critics. It was surmised that this piece was modelled on Goldsmith's Retaliation although it did not reach Goldsmith's standard. The reviewer was uncertain whether The Bigelow Papers was humorous on account of its political bias, but he considered it a good delineation of Yankee wit and a good imitation of Yankee dialect. The rhymes were said to be as "startling and felicitous as any in Hudibras".

76. Trumbull, Barlow and other Revolutionary writers mentioned in the following reviews: Homer Wilbur's The Bigelow Papers; A Fable for Critics by a Wonderful Quiz; and Poems by Oliver W. Holmes. N. A. RL, LXVII
Of all the humorists, Holmes was given the highest praise. His wit, reviewers claimed, was all his own; "so sly and tingling, but without a drop of ill-nature in it", and incapable of leaving any sting. His style, it was declared, was unrivaled for point, idiomatic propriety, and terseness. Holmes' more thoughtful poems were given less attention, for he was considered a writer more useful for entertainment than for deep thought.

An important poetical influence in the production of poetry in America was the number and quality of Phi Beta Kappa addresses and poems. The addresses were all of literary merit and the early ones especially made exhaustive discussions of poetry and its prospects in America, gave inspiration to struggling versifiers, and helped to nationalize the literature.

77. Anon., Poems by Oliver W. Holmes. N. A. R., LXVIII. Holmes' work was discussed several times in the Review. Two other articles were: Poems, by Oliver W. Holmes. N. A. R., XLIV, and Urania, a Rhymed Lesson, LXIV

78. The most noteworthy of these were those of William Tudor, published in the Review, II; J. C. Gray, XIII; Prof. Frisbie, VI; Chas. Sprague, XXX; Jas. Story and J. A. Hillhouse, XXIV.
Another important activity benefitted the reading public and helped to encourage poets. This was the fashion during the early years of publishing collections of verses. The North American usually noted such publications and called its readers' attention to them.

During the period from 1815 to 1860, all the worth-while poetic productions written by Americans received notice in the North American Review. During this time, American poetry had advanced from very humble beginnings to its zenith, for at the time when this discussion of the Review as a Critical Journal closes the poets of America's golden age were writing.

Throughout, the North American did its part in aiding the development of this field of literature and in bringing recognition to those poets who deserved it. This progress was greatly aided by the efforts of those scholars and critics whose combined efforts made the Review the influential organ which it became.

79. Some of the most prominent of these collections were: The Atlantic Souvenir; The Token, ed. by N. P. Willis; The Talisman, ed. by E. Bliss; New Library of Poetry and Song, ed. by W. C. Bryant; Household Book of Poetry, Collected and Edited by C. A. Dana.
B. THE NOVEL

On the other hand, as has already been said, the early reviewers were not as enthusiastic over a new American novel as they were over a new poem, perhaps because novels were more abundant. Noah Webster is said to have declared in 1792 that "a hundred volumes of modern novels might be read without acquiring a new idea". But such as they were, the best of the novels were noticed in the Review in its attempts to assist its readers in their choice of fiction and also to encourage or discourage certain traits or characteristics of the contemporary novelists. From the first, the reviewers showed a growing tendency toward realism. In the third volume, Rhoda, a contemporary novel, was commented on favorably as to interest, picture of life, virtue, and duty, and the critic said: "It belongs to the numerous and constantly increasing class of productions, in which fiction is brought home to daily occurrences and observations". This tendency was commended and it was further claimed

80. W. J. Long, American Literature, p. 175

81. Anon., Rhoda, a Novel, by author of Things by their Right Names. N. A. R., III
that "modern novels are generally better calculated to produce delight and improvement than wonder and agitation".

Critics did not, however, condemn productions of a more romantic nature, such as Scott's works, but held that these were better for enjoyment than as models for young writers. In general, they did not confine their approval to any one type but appeared to welcome any good production. A great many of the early novels, such as Charlotte Temple and similar sentimental productions, were noticed and excerpts given, although the reviewers saw in these efforts only weak copies of English originals. The writers of this early period were classed among the minor novelists, and of these Miss Sedgwick received the most attention. Her stories were regarded as wholesome and the teachings well brought out but not too obviously. Her delineation of character and descriptions of nature were spoken of as being well executed. Then, too, she used American materials and managed the domestic novel very well, showing, according to the critics, that

82. Anon., Hope Leslie, or Early Times in Mass. By the author of Redwood, Miss Sedgwick. N. A. R., XXVI
The Poor Rich Man, and the Rich Poor Man. XLV
Live and Let Live. XLV
Married or Single. LXXXV
America had resources for work of this nature. Elizabeth Wetherell also showed skill in writing this kind of fiction in her Queeschy. One reviewer compared the novels written by her and her sister to the Vicar of Wakefield, in respect to delineation of country life and character depending for interest partly on ordinary joys and sorrows of our common humanity and partly on lifelike pictures of individual loveliness and virtue. This article also included a discussion of the value of the domestic novel and explained how it helped in the understanding of the national character.

Mrs. Childs, it was alleged, had given promise of a brilliant literary career but had not fulfilled that promise. Her novel, Philathea, an attempt to paint the manners and life of Grecian classical times, was not natural because she could not recall for her readers the spirit of classical times. Her reviewers agreed that she understood the harmonious construction of language and described both nature and society with liveliness and truth. Her style, as was fitting for a novelist, was generally simple, energetic, and impressive, though sometimes too dazzling.

During this period, many novels were called to the attention of the readers of the *North American* with notices such as the following: In commenting on Miss Oliphant's novel, *Zaidee*: "It teaches no lesson; has some piquant touches, some vivid and picturesque descriptions of nature. The dénouement is decidedly hackneyed and the characters uninteresting."

Of *Talla*, a Tale of Modern Rome, by Edmund About: "Its characters are commonplace. If it be a painting of Roman society—then it is not worth painting." Of *Rachel Gray*, by Julia Kavanaugh, "Miss Kavanaugh should wait until she has something to write". There are too many notices similar to the above for the present writer to attempt to classify them or to find any special mode of review, as each work seemed to be in a class by itself and was so considered by the review-

84. Anon., *Zaidee* by Miss Oliphant. *N. A. R.*, LXXXIII


Charles Brockden Brown was not given the attention which might be expected. His life, written by William Dunlap, was reviewed by G. C. Verplanck, who discussed the American character and the classes of society à propos to considering the possibility of depicting interesting American characters. He also considered Brown’s lack of popularity and thought it was owing to the fact that American life was too far removed from anything approaching romantic surroundings. Brown’s writings, therefore, being of the romantic type, were not liked.

A few children’s books were noticed in the Review. The writing of such books was quite a novelty at this time. Among those mentioned are: Kate and Lizzie, or Six Months out of School by Anne W. Abbot, N. A. R., IX; The Tamed and Untamed and Other Stories by Miss Abbot, (Her characters were praised as being suitable for children.); Evenings in New England—Intended for Amusement and Instruction, by an American Lady. (It is praised as combining instruction, moral precepts, and amusement, but it has no plan.)

He commented on Brown’s courage in laying the scenes of his stories at home, but said that he generally chose characters who had been educated abroad and that his scenes were rarely those of common life. His power was usually of a moral kind and he established an inquisition to put the mind to torture; looks, tones, persuasions, threats and dark insinuations were his instruments. Verplanck asserted that the reader’s mind was not in the events, nor at all dependent upon the conviction that he ever saw the place or the man. A spell was thrown over his imagination and his belief was at least strong enough for sympathy. Brown’s mind was distinguished for strong, intense conceptions, but he thought too much in one way, and that a narrow one. His accounting for everything was pronounced very irksome. His style was declared to be clear, simple, and nervous, with very little peculiarity, and not the slightest affectation, or even consciousness of manner. He was an ardent admirer of Godwin, but Brown was not a man of genius. No other distinctive review of him was written for the Review during the period under discussion.

Of the novelists discussed in the pages of the Review from 1815 to 1860, James Fenimore Cooper
received the most attention; probably because his works were widely read abroad as well as at home and also because his novels were contemporaneous with the Review of this period. While different opinions were offered concerning him as a man and as a writer, all agree on certain points. He was acknowledged by all to be the first real literary representative of American nationality. He had certain deficiencies, the most important of which were; he was careless in composition; his women characters were insipid and did nothing; his Indian characters were far above the natural—too ideal for the real Indian; his plots were too improbable for real life; the characters did not talk naturally; he had a tendency to extravagance and confusion arising from a plenitude of material which he did not manage with skill. Although his

89. These conclusions are based on the following reviews:
Anon., The Spy, a Tale of the Neutral Ground. N. A. R., XV
Anon., The Pilot, a Tale of the Sea. N. A. R. XVIII
Gardiner, W. H., Cooper's Novels: The Pioneer; the Last of the Mohicans. N. A. R., XXIII; The Red Rover. N. A. R., XXIV.
Anon., Gleanings in Europe. N. A. R., XLIV
Anon., The Ways of the Hour. N. A. R., LXXI
Anon., The Works of J. F. Cooper. N. A. R., LXXIV
faults seemed to be many, reviewers did not concede that they overbalanced his good qualities, which were thus summarized: "great skill in narration—the first requisite of a novelist, which fastening the reader's attention on the issue of events immediately before him, will not allow him to observe any improbability in the plot or incongruity in the character or actions of the agents". His work was redeemed by a power, animation, bold invention, vigorous hold and masterly delineation of realities, intense sympathy with heroic action, with brave endurance, and with the grand, fresh, and true in nature and experience. In brief, he had the power of attracting his readers and carrying them on, sometimes with breathless interest, despite their sense of his faults and errors. Of his sea stories, which were given especial attention, The Pilot and The Red Rover were considered his best. Critics agreed that his best delineations of character were Long Tom Coffin, and Leatherstocking.

Cooper was compared to Sir Walter Scott some-
what unfavorably—-it was thought that "he had not the humor and pathos, the fine perception of beauty and delicacy in character nor compass and variety of power which could deal alike with forms of humanity so diverse but yet have marked affinities."

The reviewer said that the two novelists were similar in that both liked to deal with real people and had a genuine love of nature. Cooper's popularity, it was decided, paved the way for the ripening of American genius but this genius was not developed as it should be and Americans still had too little intellectual independence.

William Gilmore Simms received an important notice in the Review in which he was referred to as a writer of great pretensions and some local reputation. He was considered as having many of Cooper's faults and not as many excellent qualities. In addition, he was accused of borrowing from British writers and of being deficient in originality.

Hawthorne was given almost unqualified praise by the critics. His Scarlet Letter and House of Seven Gables each received special attention. In

93. Anon., Works of J. F. Cooper. LXXIV
94. Ibid.
95. LXIII
the review of the former, it is said, "No one who has taken up the Scarlet Letter will willingly lay it down till he has finished it; and he will do well not to pause, for he cannot resume the story where he left it. He should give himself up to the magic power of the style, without stopping to open wide the eyes of his good sense and judgment and shake off the spell or half the weird beauty will disappear like a dissolving view." The characters were also discussed and little Pearl pronounced a real child. The subject matter was not given entire approval although the New England life was thought well portrayed. His style was without fault. He had universal sympathy with nature and his themes were chosen among the traditions of New England and yet his tales were national in their character. His reviewers agreed that his plots were not devised skillfully and his conversation unnatural, yet his tales were read in spite of these limitations. He was a philosopher

96. Anon., Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter. LXXI

97. The Vision of the Fountain, Sunday at Home, The Great Carbuncle, and The Rill from the Town Pump were given especial attention. XLV
with a strong sense of the humorist, whose field of 
98 
speculation was human life and society.

The last important contribution to American 
fiction before 1860 was Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom's 
Cabin, which the North American reviewers hailed as 
"a masterly delineation of a social state about 
which the whole world was curious". It was char-
acterized as most hearty, spontaneous, and natural. 
Moreover, it was hailed with welcome by the British 
public as being distinctively American.

In the foregoing pages are discussed the most 
notable specimens of the American novel which were 
reviewed in the North American Review during our 
period. Although the names as a whole rank lower 
than those of English writers at the time, it was 
an important period for the novel for it showed 
that America could produce great works of this 
nature independently of foreign influence.

98. Anon., The House of Seven Gables. LXXVI. 
His reviewer declared he "had defamed the 
fathers of New England by locating his 
pictures of gross impurity and sacrilegious 
vice where no shadow of reproach and no 
breath but of immaculate fame had ever 
rested". Other reviews: are: Twice Told 
Tales, XLIV; Blithedale Romance, LXXVI.
The reviewers appear to have displayed rather good judgment in regard to their criticism of fiction for, while they perhaps praised some productions beyond their worth, in most cases they proved very good prophets and later opinion has upheld their judgments.
C. HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, AND MEMOIRS

In the field of history, the Review held that American writers were the equal of any English or continental historians. Therefore, its attitude was quite different, especially since history was not regarded as belonging to belles-lettres. During the period from 1815 to 1860, every volume of the magazine called to the attention of its readers different historical works which dealt with fields in which interest existed or might be stimulated. This was particularly true of works by Americans, although the English and continental productions were also discussed.

The method of discussion of such writings differs markedly from that used with respect to more literary types. Reviewers gave copious extracts and commented on the method of research employed by the writer; and viewed the work as to judgment used in arrangement and use of data so gathered; attention was also given to the writer's style and manner and conclusions stated as to whether the work would receive public approval and be widely read. These latter points were of minor
importance when compared with the author's purpose and the contents of his work.

Among the chief American writers whose efforts received greatest attention was George Bancroft, whose History of the United States received notice in several different issues. The critic stated that he had been guided by the spirit of historic faith—the work was liberal yet not impartial—his style was brilliant and daring—in fact, the work contained picturesque sketches of character and incident and showed acute reasoning and compass of erudition. In an earlier review of his history, the critic summed up the characteristics for a good historian.

Other general histories of the United States

99. Bancroft also contributed regularly to the Review, assisting Sparks as one of his reviewers. Poole in his compilation of the writers in the Review, 1815-60, states that Bancroft wrote 19 articles for the Review. H. B. Adams, op. cit., I, 366


101. Ibid., Vol. XL

102. a. Fred Butler., Complete History of U. S. of America 1492-1820, XVI. The Review thought very lightly of this and stated not enough time had been spent on it.

b. Ezekiel Sanford, History of U. S. before the Revolution, IX. This work was unfavorably regarded by the reviewer.
or special phases thereof were commented on in different issues. Pitkin's Statistical View of the Commerce of the U. S. was given an extensive treatment and its importance was recognized. The work was judged valuable and useful and it was recommended to the public. His Political and Civil History of U. S. from 1763 to March 1797 was noted as a "new venture in historical writing---the first attempt to write a history of U. S. disconnected from military operations and the general thread of events". Extracts were given but there was no criticism of style or of the methods used.

Francis Parkman's works were also commented on quite favorably. In speaking of his History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac, the critic called it a labor of love and stated that it was not only interestingly written and in good style but was also authentic and its materials were welded with much skill. A number of similar works dealing with

103. III

104. XXX

frontier life and the Indians were reviewed from time to time. Some of these were praised while others were censured as being unfair from the historical standpoint. In this connection, some works written by British and continental writers were subjected to severe criticism. Histories

106. Anon., Manners and Customs of Several Indian Tribes by John Hunter, XXII. Hunter's work had been praised by the reviewer of the Quarterly Review but the errors of that review were exposed in the North American Review and his whole story proved to be false. It was shown that his descriptions were false, in fact that he was an impostor.

Anon., An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations who once inhabited Pennsylvania and the neighboring States by Rev. John Hackewelder. IX. This was highly praised by the reviewers.

Anon., The Aborigines of North America by M. de Pau. II. This work was criticised as unfair and the reviewer makes mention of a two volume work by Dom Pemety which refutes his statements.

Anon., Notes respecting the Indians of North America. J. J. Halkett. XXII
of the various states of the union were reviewed, occasionally without criticism, the article consisting largely of excerpts. Especially were the local histories of New England regions given space in the Review.

Cotton Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana or Ecclesiastical History of New England was declared to be more amusing than authentic and it was recommended for a general view of society and manners of colonial times. Histories of Harvard were discussed. The one by Quincy was declared to be enter-


Anon., History of Kentucky by M. Butler. XLII


Anon., History of Connecticut by Benj. Trumbull. VIII

Anon., History of Massachusetts Bay, 1749-1774, by Thomas Hutchinson. XXXVIII

Anon., History of the State of Maine by W. D. Williamson. XXXVII

108. VI


Anon., History of Harvard University by Josiah Quincy. LII
taining and useful. It was discussed critically and his sources of information mentioned. General histories of New England were mentioned from time to time—generally the subject matter alone was given attention by the reviewers, although occasionally the writer's style was commented on. The Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society were spoken of time and again in connection with the work which the Society was doing and extracts from its volumes were given by the reviewers.

The review of Botta's American Revolution is worthy of notice because it gives an additional statement of what history should be—"perfectly impartial toward all persons, and not indifferent to the moral qualities of actions or their influence on the happiness of men". The historian must be


Rev. Wm. Hubbard, a General History of New England to 1680. II and III

Sam Penhallow, The History of the Wars of New England. III


Three Colonial Histories of New England were reviewed in Vol.

111. II. Vol. 13 of Proceedings quoted from.

112. XIII
also a "philosopher, a political economist and show
ability in the arts and sciences". Botta's chief
fault lay in the fact that he lacked minuteness of
detail and deviated from the truth in reporting
speeches. There was no criticism of his work from
the literary standpoint. J. Fenimore Cooper wrote
a History of the Navy of the United States of
America which the Review declared to be a work
marked by accuracy and a valuable addition to Amer-
ican History.

American scholars did not confine their work to
researches in the history of their country and their
ability is indicated by such works as Motley's Rise
of the Dutch Republic and Prescott's History of
the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. The
reviewer declared Motley's history of lasting value—
depending upon"an intimate acquaintance with all the
original and authentic sources of information with
a scrupulous fidelity to the facts derived there-
from. With commendable style, the narrative
proceeds with a steady and easy flow---scenes
portrayed with almost the minute accuracy of a
daguerreotype."
Prescott was mentioned a number of times by the reviewers. His excellence as an historian is very aptly described by a critic in a discussion of J. G. Palfrey's History of New England.

"They are alike in their minuteness and thoroughness of investigation, in their unimpassioned impartiality of narrative, in their accurate presentation of remote historical causes and more recondite motives, in their independence of commonplaces and conventionalities, in their judgment of men and transactions, in their constant references to an elevated standard of right and in gravity, purity, and precision of style."

In general, the attitude of the Review required judgment in an historian in preference to a facility in collecting facts. "The study should be approached conscientiously with no preconceived theory, no utopian scheme of final and absolute happiness through institutions alone. If there is anything in the philosophy of history more than a continual approximation through human agencies, imperfect and

Anon., Conquest of Peru.
Anon., Prescott as an Historian, History of Reign of Philip II. LXXXIII
117. Anon., LXXXVIII
changeable as they are, to a recognition of the proposition that it is for man to solve the problem of human government with the data only of his own reflection of the Divine justice and truth, we have failed to perceive it." Moreover, "a work of this sort must not be tested by style".

Doubtless Sparks was one of the preeminent American historians of this period. While his work is, strictly speaking, largely biographical, its aim is to develop the history of America by centering the events around the subjects of his biographies. These are invaluable contributions and his ability as an historian is spoken of repeatedly by reviewers.

Jared Sparks said that there are three kinds of biographical writing. "First, historical biography, admits of copious selections from letters and other original papers. Second, memoirs, which method is somewhat allied to the above, but more rambling and relating more to affairs of a private nature. Third, personal narrative, in which the individual is always kept before the readers and the incidents are made to follow each other in consecutive order. The last is the most difficult to execute, because it requires a clear and spirited style, discrimination in selecting facts, and judgment in arranging them.
so as to preserve just proportions."

The historical biography was the one most common in America or at least the one most noticed by the North American Review. "The two principal objects to be attained," said Mr. Sparks, "in all biographical composition are accuracy as to facts and finish in the literary execution. The former demands research; the latter, labor and skill."

The reviewers of American biography, from the first, were particular to note the accuracy of biographers as to truth and whether they had used good judgment in the discussion of character, motives, and actions and whether the style was attractive. One criticism of considerable importance in regard to this type of writing was that it was likely to be too eulogistic. It was held that a biographer had no right to omit the blemishes, that he must be like a painter of portraits and portray a character with correct proportion of good and bad qualities.

Very often the reviews of biographical productions were freely interspersed with long excerpts, thus enabling the reader to judge for himself as to the merit of the writer as well as the character

118. Adams' Life and Letters of Jared Sparks. II, 199

119. Ibid., 194
under discussion. Most of America's great men were discussed in the pages of the *North American Review*. This was a patriotic measure as much as anything else. It was considered proper that the public should learn about America's great men and encouragement was given to all endeavors to write the historical biography. The *Life of Patrick Henry* by Wm. Wirt was one of the first to receive especial attention by reviewers. It was not approved of highly, as biography, as it contained too much irrelevant matter, too much about the state of Virginia and not enough about Patrick Henry. It was thought that a smaller book containing more about Henry would have been acceptable. It was also stated that Wirt had added nothing to his reputation as a writer and that it was inferior in style to his other writings, showing that his talents were not suitable for this type of writing.

The *Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence*, by John Sanderson, was spoken of as being a praiseworthy effort but the work as written was not commended as it was ill-proportioned and the style dull. Another work similar in scope to

120. J. Sparks, *The Life of Patrick Henry* by Wm. Wirt. VI

this was The Lives and Times of the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. The reviewer of this work confined his remarks to a discussion of how a good biography should be built, the most important point made being that the attitude of a biographer should be impartial. He then gave a few important points concerning the career of John Jay. Another Life of John Jay by his son William was commented on as being just. The Life of John Adams by his grandson, Charles F. Adams, was noticed and made the opportunity for an elaborate discussion of Adams and his importance as one of America's statesmen. Similar treatment was given the Memoirs, Correspondence, and Miscellaneous Papers of Thos. Jefferson, edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph.

122. Anon., The Lives and Times of the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court by Henry Flanders. LXXXI

123. XXXVII. By Wm. Jay.


125. XXX
Many productions similar to the foregoing were reviewed in like manner. They generally contained copious extracts supplemented with additional material on the career of the person discussed or on the history intimately connected with the period.

Such biographies were: Life of @bridge Gerry, with Contemporary Letters, to the close of the American Revolution by James L. Austin. XXVIII; The Life of James Otis of Massachusetts, containing also notices of some contemporary characters and events from 1760 to 1775, by Wm. Tudor. XVI; A Biographical Memoir of Hugh Williamson, by David Hosack. XI; Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene, by Charles Caldwell. X; Life of Henry Clay, by George Prentice. XXXIII; Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy Jr., by his son, Josiah Quincy. XXII; Memoirs of the Life of Wm. Wirt, by John P. Kennedy. LXX; Memoir of Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence with the most distinguished men in America and Europe, illustrative of their characters and of the Events of the American Revolution, by his grandson, Richard H. Lee. XXII

Lafayette en Amerique en 1825 et 1826. ou Journal d'un Voyage aux Etats-Unis, Par A. Levasseur. XXX. The Life of Lafayette from a French viewpoint was given attention. It had been translated and extracts given to show the feeling in France with regard to America. Another biography was reviewed also by a Frenchman, M. Regnault. In actual criticism, no distinction was made by reviewers between the memoir and the biography, although they conceded that a difference should be made.
Most prominent among biographical works during the period from 1815 to 1860 was Jared Spark's Library of American Biography. Although the subjects were not different from those already mentioned, the work was considered not only the largest but also one of the most valuable of the collateral aids for the study of American History which had been published. George Bancroft.

128. In this collection are to be found some of Mr. Sparks' best contributions to American history. The library consists of two series of duodecimo volumes. The first series of ten volumes was published during the years, 1834-1838, and embraces twenty-six lives. The second series of fifteen volumes was issued during the years, 1844-47, and includes thirty-four lives. Of the entire number, the eight which were written by Mr. Sparks are: Life of Ethan Allen, I; Life and Treason of Benedict Arnold, III; Life of Marquette, X; Life of La Salle, XI; Life of Count Pulaski, XIV; Life of John Ribault, XVII; Life of Charles Lee, XVIII; Life of John Ledyard, XXIV. Other biographies which were written for the Sparks' collection and commented on in the North American were: Roger Williams and Timothy Dwight.

129. An appreciative notice of the first volume of the Library of American Biography was written for the Review, XXXVII, by O. W. B. Peabody, who also later reviewed the eleventh volume in volume LIX. Francis Bowen, in a review in LXIV, similarly discussed the Biography when it had grown to twenty-one volumes.

130. George Bancroft, Life of Washington by Jared Sparks. XLVI. This notice included an account of Bancroft's work by J. G. Palfrey.
in writing of the Biography said, "The great merit of Mr. Sparks, giving him the first rank among the critical students of our history, consists in his candor and his completeness. In the selection of documents he appears ever to have been guided by the highest reverence for historic truth. But more than all, he perceived clearly that the history of our revolution, could not be derived from American sources alone; and with a wide grasp which proves his mind to be enlarged not less than accurate, he has sought materials in England and on the continent of Europe." Sparks' Life of Washington was also given much attention by reviewers who declared that America had produced no work of higher value.

Two other notable productions of Sparks which were credited by reviewers as being of value were the Life of Gouverneur Morris and that of John Ledyard, explorer and traveller. Copious extracts were given of both but very little criticism was made of the works.

131. A. H. Everett, Review of Life of Washington by Jared Sparks. XXXIX
Edward Everett, Life of Washington by Jared Sparks. XLVI

132. XXXIV

133. XXVI
A biographer of a very different character was Washington Irving. He belonged more to the popular type and was so considered by reviewers. Nothing was said of Irving in the *North American Review* except in praise. Although it is known that Irving was not very painstaking in historical research and, according to the standards set up by the *Review* for historians and biographers, Irving could not qualify as a first-rate biographer, yet, because of his attractive style, great popularity, and influence, reviewers found no fault with his biographies. His *Life of Washington* was especially noted as to its sympathy, and for the fact that he made Washington seem more human, more like a real person than earlier biographers had done. His *Life of Columbus* was noted as superior to other writings of the kind. He was credited with having established the first purely literary reputation of the first order in America.

Several biographies of Indians were noticed in the *North American Review*, among which were the *Collections of the Maine Historical Society, Life*...

134. LXXXIII. Other biographies of Irving noted were: Mahomet and his Successors, LXXI: A History and Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus, XXVIII.

135. Edited by N. P. Willis; Others by Gov. Lincoln. XL.
of Black Hawk, and others. The chief merit considered by reviewers in productions of this kind was their authenticity. Different phases of Indian life, character, and literature were noted and seemed to be considered of interest to the public.

A few literary biographies were given considerable attention by reviewers. Benjamin Franklin was first mentioned by Wm. Tudor, in the first volume of the Review, in his translations of Grimm's Memoirs, which referred to Franklin's conversational skill among his friends in France. Later Norton revised Franklin's Memoirs and Private Correspondence which had been edited and published by his grandson, Wm. Temple Franklin. Mr. Norton was not inclined to recommend the Autobiography as proper reading for young people because he considered Franklin an unbeliever. As to style of writing,


137. Those reviewed were: Memoir of John Cotton by John Norton, XXXVIII; Life of Cotton Mather by W. B. O. Peabody (Sparks VI). This review contains no criticism of the biographer but of Mather's son Samuel who first wrote his father's biography; Memoir of John Lowell Jr., by E. Everett, LI; Life and Character of the Rev. Sylvester Judd, Anon., LXXX; Life and Letters of Wm. Person, written as a stimulus to young writers.
he was compared favorably with Addison and Goldsmith in wit and humor, in ease and naïveté of language, and might have attained the highest reputation as a writer had he wished. Later, Jared Sparks edited his works, which were noticed in the *North American Review*. This review was more favorable and discriminating than former notices. His Autobiography was referred to as "the greatest literary work written for the purpose of giving young people his own experience." What he achieved as a writer was, the reviewer thought, incidental, and not premeditated as "he valued the pen for its direct tendency to diffuse knowledge, comfort, utility, and settled principle of inference and action".

Letters played an important part in memoirs and biography. Franklin's letters as edited by Sparks received little comment except that the excerpts which were given were intended to show his honesty, generosity, views on religion, and, on the whole, to show his intellectual activity. The letters of Mrs. Adams were noticed especially for their

**References**

138. LXXXIII

139. XXXVII

140. *Letters of Mrs. Adams, with an Introduction Memoir by her grandson, Charles Francis Adams*. LI.
charm, naturalness, and information concerning events of her times. Copious extracts were given but there was no real criticism of the letters from a literary viewpoint.

Biography, as discussed in the *North American Review* is worthy of more extended study, but inasmuch as the majority of biographical works are historical and political and few of them of the literary type, the present consideration deals only with the most prominent examples.

Travelers recorded their impressions in various ways: by letters, diaries, novels, and informal accounts printed in book form. These accounts varied widely both as to style and subject-matter, and seemed to be very popular reading for Americans, and a large number of them were mentioned in the *North American Review*. The manner of reviewing these productions was very lenient. It was thought "proper for the eye of criticism to pass lightly over the pages of the traveler, to be content with gazing on what is new and interesting from its intrinsic value, although it might not be dressed out in so good a taste and under so attractive a form as could be desired". There was but one requisite for this type of writing and that was veracity. These travels might be classed as those
written by the British or other foreigners, and those concerned with manners, customs, or people of foreign lands. The manner of review was generally to give excerpts from the most interesting parts and comment on the style and correctness of the observations. It was not considered proper for a writer of travels to use imagination in his compositions but to record what he actually saw and experienced.

Among the books of travels by Americans given most attention were: An Account of an Expedition from Pittsburg to the Rocky Mountains (1819-1820) commanded by Major Stephen H. Long and the notes compiled by Edwin James, botanist and geologist of the party; The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith, in Europe, Asia, Africke, and America (1593-1629); Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of United States to the Sources of the Mississippi River, by Henry Schoolcraft. Schoolcraft's writings were considered important as he made studies of a geological and geographical

141. XVI
142. Ibid.
143. XV
nature, but his descriptions were criticized as being too inexact. His Indian Fairy Book and other books on Indian affairs were considered important as sources of authentic information.

A Journal of Travels into Arkansas Territory in 1819 by Thomas Nuttall, was commented on as to the botanic studies of the party. A number of works similar to the above were noted, but were of little importance except to show the extent of activity in this field of writing and their reception by readers.

Irving and Parkman were not noticed as writers of travel though they were more worthy than many who received attention. Irving's Astoria or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains was treated as a narrative and his Adventures on the Prairie was treated for its good prose style. Parkman was mentioned in the same article and his style commended; moreover, his story was referred to as "in good taste and having all the air of truth with the attractiveness of fiction".

144. XVI

145. Others were: Natural and Statistical View or Picture of Cincinnati by Daniel Drake, III; Journal of a Voyage in 1811, by H. M. Brackenridge, IV; Letters from the South by author of John Bull and Brother Jonathan, VI
Rather interesting were the reviews of books on America written by foreign travelers in America. These were often of a superficial nature written after a brief sojourn to the section written of or else the facts were distorted for some reason. Usually the writer, having scant knowledge, proceeded to write as if he had studied the subject and gave a wrong impression to his own countrymen concerning America and things American. Reviewers were very hostile to such productions and attempted to set their readers right in regard to them. One of the most offensive books of this kind was that entitled Domestic Manners of the Americans, by Mrs. Trollope. It was called an "ill-natured account— not founded on fact, and not representative".

Another example was the Men and Manners in America by a gentleman from Edinburgh. This writer, the reviewer said, showed prejudices usual to the English in regard to American habits of language, manners, and life. It was written in a hostile and

146. XLIV

147. LXIX

148. Ibid.

149. XXXVI

150. XXXVIII. Another book of this type was: Travels in Canada and United States by Lieutenant Francis Hall. IX
malignant spirit without trying to promote good feeling between the countries. Some books written by foreigners were praised for their broad-mindedness, fairness, and interest but these were not written by British writers. It seemed impossible for a British traveler at this time to give an impartial report of America. Even Charles Dickens was not above ungenerous criticism. His tour of America was discussed in a delightful manner under the title, American Notes for General Circulation. The reviewer maintained that Dickens' genius was understood by Americans, and only casually mentioned his criticism as being overdrawn and mistaken.

The class of books of travel written about strange, obscure places, seldom visited by ordinary people, found great favor with reviewers. Some of these were written by Americans but the majority had been written by foreigners and later translated into

151. Such books were: Reise seiner Hoheit des Herzogs Bernhard zu Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach durch Nord-America in den Jahren, 1825-6. Herausgegeben von Heinrich Luden. XXVIII

Also Voyage aux Regions equinoxiales du Nouveau Continent, fait en 1799, 1800, 1802-4 par Alexandre de Humboldt et A. Bonplaud. Rédigé par Alexandre de Humboldt. XVI

152. LVI
Among the most eminent of American travelers mentioned by reviewers was Bayard Taylor, who was praised as being correct and spirited in his writing. Excerpts of his work were given.

Another writer praised for his entertaining qualities was John L. Stevens, who wrote of his travels in Yucatan. The extracts given were intended to give an idea of the peculiarities of the people and places visited. Rambles in Italy was commented on and criticized adversely as to style and method.

It was observed that the author never forgot his own country and compared scenes visited with those in America so as to show the value of American scenery. These writings of travel were so numerous and all so similarly treated that it does not seem

153. Views Afoot; or Europe seen with Knapsack and Staff by Bayard Taylor. LXIV

154. Incidents of Travel in Yucatan by John L. Stevens. LVII. In this review the business of a traveller is given as follows: "The business of a traveller is to see and describe; the less he meddles with speculation, the better for himself and his readers".

155. Rambles in Italy in the years 1816-17 by an American.
profitable to continue the discussion of them. They were not considered as other than light literature though it was thought proper for them to be written in an instructive manner, and to be entertaining enough to be popular. The leading rule for this type of writing as expressed by one reviewer was: "The traveller should give distinctly and particularly his own observations upon men, and things, and keep his individual style of expression in an attractive and lively style, with a manly and liberal tone, with no irrelevant matter, and a strict adherence to truth".

156. Among the more prominent ones mentioned were: Sketches of Algiers, Political, Historical, and Civil. By Wm. Shaler, American Consul. XXII

Travels in the North of Germany 1825 and 1826. By Henry E. Dwight. XXIX

A Year in Spain. By a Young American. XXX

Iceland. By Ebenezer Henderson. XXXV

Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia, and the Holy Land. By George Stephens. XLVIII

Switzerland, or A Journal of Tour and Residence in that Country, 1817-1819. By L. Simond. XV

Travels in Malta and Sicily with Sketches of Gibraltar. By Andrew Bigelow. XXXV

Scenery and Philosophy in Europe. By Horace B. Wallace. LXXXI
D. THE ESSAY
E. THE SERMON

Though the essay as a form of composition had flourished rather vigorously in America, its purpose had been usually utilitarian. The style, too, that had commonly predominated in the compositions of men of education had been better fitted to give information than delight; well suited to an intelligible disclosure of facts, but foreign to all the ambitious purposes of fine writing. Still, it was maintained, there had been "examples of this in more than one name that would be remembered with gratitude by posterity", Franklin, Dennie, Ames, and Buckminster, as well as others, "have left evidence of the distinctive physiognomy of their minds no less in the peculiar merits of their style, than of their sentiments."

The more general tone of the popular form of essay writing had been showy and declamatory; a natural result, reviewers thought, of the influence

Edited by R. H. Dana. XIV, 320
of free and independent forms of government upon the buoyant spirits of a young, enterprising, and prosperous people. As examples of good essay writing of this type, The Idle Man and The Club Room were cited but no particular distinction was attached to them.

Irving was held to be the pioneer in this type of writing. His importance to the cause of American Literature was not overestimated by reviewers when they claimed first place for him among American writers of his time. He was appreciated by his countrymen because he was the first American writer to gain the approval of the British reviewers and readers, and he was also appreciated because of his "amiability, his humor, his fanciful playing with common things". It was agreed that "he commended himself to all readers of refined taste by the remarkable chastity of his English style, uncommon delicacy of his moral sense, and his unwearying pleasantry". Irving's subjects were commented on as being generally foreign but it was stated that he made them his own by investing

158. XIV, 319

159. Dana, The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. IX; Everett, Bracebridge Hall, or The Humorists, a Medley, By Geoffrey Crayon, XV; The Alhambra, A Series of Tales and Sketches of the Moors and Spaniards. By Washington Irving. XXXV
them with his fascinating individuality. Dana, one of his reviewers, said that Irving's success did not rest wholly on his merit, however great, but that his personality was responsible for it to a great extent. Dana praised him for originality, for taking things as he found them and treating them according to his own humor. He dealt with the foibles and affectations of men, never with their vices; moreover, he was without sarcasm or bitterness. The fact that Irving wrote without other aim than to give pleasure to his readers was commented on by all of his reviewers and, as this had not been commonly done, especially in essay writing, it was regarded as a foundation or precedent for all subsequent artistic writing in America. Hardly any phase of Irving's career as a writer, not only as an essayist, but also in other fields of composition, was left undisussed by his reviewers and the discussion was always sympathetic and approving.

161. XV, Edward Everett discusses Irving's writing like an Englishman and not like an American well acquainted with English life. He mentions the abuse which England has bestowed on American writings and thinks that English critics are not well enough informed to criticize American books. It was only occasionally that bitterness in regard to British criticism appeared in the \textit{North American Review}.

Among other writers of the essay receiving notice occasionally in the *North American Review*, 162 was N. P. Willis. Though he had varied activities in the field of literature, his prose style was one of his most excellent attributes. It was claimed that he wrote a "prose style, which for splendor of diction, brilliancy, and tastefulness of ornament, and musical flow, will bear a favorable comparison with that of any author in the walks of elegant literature whether in England or America". 163

Emerson was reviewed both as a poet and as an essayist. He seems not to have been appreciated by his reviewers. The structure of his essays came under the displeasure of the critics as, it was alleged, they lacked that unity which comes from the presence of a dominant idea, a thesis to be supported, or a point of view steadily maintained. They left the reader's mind confused by the array of unrelated reflections. However, it was conceded that his essays, though enigmatical and frequently absurd in doctrine and sentiment, sometimes contained flashes of better things.

Also *Pericillings by the Way; Inklings of Adventure*. XL

163. Anon., *English Traits*, By R. W. Emerson. LXXXIII; also *Nine New Poets*, LXIV
Margaret Fuller, while not exactly treated as an essayist, was considered an important prose writer. The only review of her life and works appearing in the Review during this period considered only her life, character, and influence, with only slight allusions to her essays, or any particular writings.

George William Curtis was mentioned briefly as a popular essayist, one who was bound to interest and please as his work was quaint, tender, and had individuality. Dr. J. G. Holland, writing under

164. Caroline Dall, Life and Works of Margaret Fuller. XCI

Anon., Memoirs of M. F. Ossoli, By R. W. Emerson, W. H. Channing, and J. F. Clark. Also the works of Margaret Fuller as follows:

Anon., Women in the 19th Century.

At Home and Abroad, or Things and Thoughts in America and Europe.

Art, Literature, and the Drama.

Life, Without and Within.

All the foregoing are mentioned in Caroline Dall's article.

165. Anon., Prue and I, By George William Curtis. LXXXIV

166. Anon., Gold-Foil, Hammered from Popular Proverbs, By Timothy Titcomb. XC. This is a series of essays on various subjects, ethical and religious.
the title "Timothy Titcomb," was pronounced one of the most racy and vigorous of essayists. He untied common sense, high moral principle, thoroughly grounded religious convictions, with trenchant wit, general humor, and unaffected quaintness of diction.

Nearly all the critical writings appearing in the *North American Review* during this period can be viewed from the standpoint of essay-writing. However, the writer has, from necessity, limited the discussion to the criticisms of those essayists whose aim was purely literary and has excluded from the discussion all writers whose aims might be considered utilitarian.

167. Among the latter were political essays, such as John Adams' works; Religious discussions, such as Timothy Dwight's Theological discourses, Reverend J. S. Buckminster's discussions on Pulpit Eloquence.
F. THE ORATION

It was thought by reviewers that America's representative system of government was peculiarly adapted to bring the talent of public speaking into exercise at every stage of its operation and, this being the case, critics attempted to promote the study of oratory in order that better orators might result. Nearly every discussion on this subject urged those aspiring to become orators to study the methods and works of the ancients. Demosthenes' work was held to offer the best opportunity for study in this regard although the character of his eloquence was less known and less easily understood than that of Cicero. It was thought that his oratory could not be appreciated from reading extracts nor from translation, but must be read in the original. The distinguishing quality of his oratory was his constant and complete forgetfulness

168 Anon., Demosthenis Opera, ad Optimorum Librorum Fidem accurate Edita.
of himself in his subject. "His remarks center on a single point but are drawn from a wide circumference." His subject matter was of universal interest and his eloquence impressed one as the true eloquence of nature, the language of a strong mind under high excitement, hence his work was suitable as the inspiration for aspiring orators. Some methods were suggested for improvement of oratory in America by giving some discussion of how the Ancients prepared themselves for speaking. "They learned their profession of actors, sophists, rhetoricians, and philosophers; they shut themselves up in caves for solitary exercise; made voyages that they might get access to the best teachers; practiced before looking glasses, and trained their voices by declamation."

The conditions, it was noted, were quite different in America, where a successful speaker attains his art more by accident than by any order prescribed by system of rhetoric. He generally attained, however, "fulness of matter, without exhaustion, perhaps without the most skillful disposition of topics; and vigor and impressiveness of style,

169. Anon., Speeches of Henry Clay, with Biographical Memoir. XXV
connected with occasional inaccuracies of language." Of this type was Henry Clay, who was the first American to have his speeches published. It was observed that in no more advantageous way can the political history of any period be studied than in the parliamentary expositions of prominent statesmen. This type of oratory was the most prevalent in America, it was stated, though a few speakers excelled in other types as well.

Webster and Everett were the two most eminent orators discussed in the Review. Everett, because of his prominence in connection with the Review as editor and contributor, might be expected to receive more space than he deserved but such was not the case. His speeches were reviewed by Caleb Cushing, by C. C. Felton, and by G. S. Hillard.

170. Anon., Speeches of Henry Clay, with Biographical Memoir. XXV

171. Anon., Speeches and Forensic Arguments, by Daniel Webster. LIX

Anon., The Works of D. Webster. LXXV. Cushing, A Discourse Delivered at Plymouth. XV.

172. Anon., Orations and Speeches on Various Occasions, by Edward Everett. LXXXI. Also, An Oration...at Cambridge before the Phi Beta Kappa Society. XX Compare also Volume XLIV
The subject matter was given attention and praised as being suitable for the occasion. It was noted that Everett had a fund of wide information which he made use of in his speeches. His refined scholarship, his ability and taste were always in evidence in his speeches. His method, as given by his reviewers, was that he searched for the fundamental principle underlying his subject, and developed it with unerring logic to its great practical conclusions. Above all, it was stated, he always sounded the national tone. Webster was given the greatest praise and the most attention of any American orator. The judgments concerning him have been approved by posterity. His works were reviewed by Caleb Cushing in a review of the Plymouth Address. He was regarded as fitted in every way to become a great orator; he had scholarship, knowledge of men and affairs, strength of character, moral purpose, and such natural gifts as necessarily assist a public speaker. His reviewers thought Webster should be placed high among American writers. "It is true", it was stated, "that a man who has acquired fame as an

orator and statesman is rarely considered in the light of an author as he is responsible for no book. The records of what he has said and done, though perhaps constantly studied by contemporaries, are not generally regarded as part of our national literature. The fame of the man of action overshadows that of the author. Cushing affirmed that, "The speeches of Webster have a value and interest apart from the time and occasion of their delivery for they are storehouses of thought and knowledge. He descended to no rhetorical tricks and shifts and indulged in no parade of ornament. He rarely compounded the processes of reason and imagination, even in those popular discourses intended to operate on large assemblies. He betrayed no appetite for applause, no desire to win attention by flashing declamation. He possessed earnestness, solidity of judgment, elevation of sentiment, broad and generous views of national policy, and massive strength of expression." In reading his works, it was averred, one must feel that Webster was a man of principles, not a man of expedients; that he never adopted opinions without subjecting them to stern tests and that he receded from them only at the bidding of reason and expedience. He never seemed to be playing a
part, but acting a life.

Among other prominent American orators mentioned by reviewers were R. H. Lee, Patrick Henry, Josiah Quincy, and others of Revolutionary fame. Usually these orators were considered as animated by some particular purpose and came under the class of political and deliberative orators.

A class of orations given much attention, especially in the early issues, was that of the Phi Beta Kappa discourses which have been referred to previously in this discussion in regard to opinions expressed concerning literary affairs. They were really types by themselves and examples of the more literary oration. One of this type was the Anniversary Discourse Delivered before the New York Historical Society by Gullian C. Verplanck. It was given the highest praise for the refined entertainment which it afforded.

Critics in general believed that the value of a speech must be decided according to whether it was correct in taste and style. It should not be judged by applause, or by good opinions of it expressed by ignorant persons. The object orator should work for was to produce conviction on a
a given subject, or to inculcate particular opinions, or to impel his hearers to a particular course of conduct. The style of address best suited to the orator's purpose was that which correct taste would most approve. Such in general are the canons which governed the Review in its criticisms of oratory. However, since the occasion and the person influenced the reviewer in his viewpoint, it is difficult to establish a criterion which will serve in all cases. The majority of the reviews are rather unsatisfactory in their evaluation of the orator's work under discussion. Cushing's criticism of Webster is the notable exception to this.
G. THE DRAMA

The North American Review devoted such scanty notice to drama, especially to that of American writers, that it scarcely merits notice. It would seem, from the few slight remarks made, that America had promising material but, aside from what the reviewers called dramatic poems, only one drama was reviewed. This was Percy's Masque by James Hillhouse.

Comments were made concerning the scarcity of this kind of authorship in America, and its difficulties, especially that of tragedy. "Tragedy", it was stated, "demands great powers of invention, deep knowledge of human heart, and a strong and manly judgment. The great principle of excellence in dramatic compositions," the reviewer thought, "is that they should be faithful and vivid copies of human life and action, whether written for closet or stage."

175. Anon., Percy's Masque, a Drama in Five Acts, by James A. Hillhouse. XI. Also Dramas, Discourses and Other Pieces, by the same. L.

176. Ibid.
Percy's Masque was reviewed by giving the story and discussing the characterization, dialogue, and plot. The reviewer approved the style as not being declamatory and florid but thought it would have been better if more simplicity had been observed. It is noticeable that no discussion as to the adaptability of the piece for the stage or likelihood of its popularity with the public was spoken of. Hadad, a dramatic poem by the same author, James A. Hillhouse, was reviewed briefly. Excerpts were given and the subject praised as being bold and the scene favorable.

Plays and Poems, by George H. Baker, was noticed with the admission that no very decided success in the department of drama had been made in America. Boston Prize Poems and Other Specimens of Dramatic Poetry was reviewed because these selections had been considered prize pieces. They were considered as to imagery, diction, simplicity, beauty, and whether there was unnatural effort displayed. Several other efforts of this type were noted but nothing distinctive was observed.

177. Greenwood, F. W. P., Hadad, a Dramatic Poem, by J. A. Hillhouse. XXII

178. XIX

179. Such productions as: Miriam, a Dramatic Poem, Anon., XLV; Charicles, A Dramatic Poem by Quincy. LXXXIV
It was declared by one reviewer that "proud would be the triumph of him who, at this day should overcome its difficulties, and take his place by the side of those great ancient masters of the drama."

180. XI, 286
The discussion of British poetry by the *North American Review* was scholarly, comprehensive, and, in most cases, sympathetic. American critics proved themselves familiar with all types of British verse from the early ballads to contemporary works and in very few cases did they fail to estimate contemporary productions correctly. Some of the most notable early reviewers of the poets, their works, and the history of the language were C. C. Felton, E. T. Channing, O. W. B. Peabody, H. W. Longfellow, W. C. Bryant, and R. H. Dana. Some later eminent reviewers were A. P. Peabody, C. C. Everett, E. P. Whipple, F. W. P. Greenwood, and J. R. Lowell. These scholars were interested in promoting the cause of literature in America and it was toward this end, chiefly, that their criticism was directed.
During the whole period from 1815 to 1860, various histories of the beginning of English poetry were written for the Review and discussions made of those written by Englishmen. Besides these were the reviews of the works of the chief poets of the time and the more important of the earlier writers. The reviews were written in good taste and with the familiar knowledge of the scholar everywhere visible in them. They show an absence of exaggeration, of personal intrusion, of partial estimates, of narrow prejudices, and critical assumption. The critics were "of that wise and liberal school which seeks to determine with a large justice, the true, intellectual position of the authors criticized, and to judge them by a fixed and generous standard".

The discussions of English poetry went back to the Anglo-Saxon period and discussed such productions as Beowulf, Caedmon's Songs, Battle of Brunanburgh, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, The Robin Hood Ballads, and nearly all the early fragments.

nothing remarkable appeared in these discussions, they were interesting as showing that American critics had a wide range of scholarship and did not confine their efforts to any particular periods exclusively.

Medieval poetry was also discussed to some extent in a number of reviews. Gower, Langland, Wyclif, and a few others were briefly reviewed, generally as to their influence on the language or literature. The French influence, through the Normans, was given some attention, as was also the Italian. Chaucer was not given the attention which might be expected but he was considered the first real English poet. The Italian and French influences upon his writings were discussed and his influence upon following writers was thought to be important. His descriptions of natural scenery were noted and approved as having local truth and freshness, "which gives the very feeling of the air, the coolness, or moisture of the ground". The early poets, it was declared, did not think to make us more moral by cold teaching nor to make the corrupt heart sound by ridiculing the fopperies of fashion. They worked with instruments of more power and with mightier hands. They are as another
race, of a taller growth and broader spread, and stand among those who shot up after them, like old oaks among slender and prim poplars, rough, irregular, gigantic, and dark."

The poetry of the court or *vers de société* was discussed rather briefly. Not much distinction was attached to the work of such writers as Wyatt, Surrey, and John Skelton. Donne was given more importance but his verse was said to be "deformed by pedantry, crowned with puerile conceits", and, as a whole, lacked naturalness and simplicity. Waller was spoken of as the "maker and model of melodious verse". He was called a brilliant wit but was thought rather lightly of because he displayed no deep feeling. All the writers of this type were praised and appreciated for their gracefulness, gaiety, and delicacy of sentiment but were censured for lack of real feeling. George Wither was considered somewhat superior to the other writers of this class in versification, feeling, and thought. He was said to possess "loftiness of sentiment, integrity of purpose, and moral grandeur".

182. Dana, Hazlitt's English Poets. VIII
184. Anon., Poetical Works of Edmund Waller. XCI
185. Anon., The Shepherd's Hunting and Other Poems by George Wither. XC
Robert Herrick was praised for his lyrics, of which the chief merit was thought to be "the play of fancy expressed in choicest language". His phraseology was compared to Keats and Tennyson and noted as marked by "rich simplicity". The note of melancholy pervading this class of writers was thought, by reviewers, to be somewhat of a defect.

Spenser's work received important mention by critics. It was said to be a faithful mirror of the times, filled with the prevailing sentiments of loyalty, gallantry, bravery, wit, learning, patriotism, and piety which distinguished literature during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Spenser's classical allusions were said to be natural and well known to the reading public. It was thought that scholars had dissected Spenser too closely in trying to trace classical references in his works. Another critic compared Spenser to Shakespeare and discussed the reason for the neglect of Spenser. He thought it might be because of Spenser's use of the allegory and the obscurity

186. Anon., Hesperides; or the Works both Humane and Divine of Robert Herrick. LXXXIV

arising from his mythological allusions. In some respects, Spenser was considered superior to Shakespeare—\textit{in that, "he wields the rod of enchantment with a more soothing and insinuating effect and throws on the colorings of his description, a brighter flood of light, as well as a softer body of shade".} The stanza of Spenser was criticized and its finished style praised. The final conclusion was that, "if we would fill ourselves with poetry in all its nativeness and beauty, in all its richness and plainness, gorgeousness, and simplicity, we must study Spenser".

The Review regarded Shakespeare as a dramatist but since his works are poetical in form the writer will consider him among the poets rather than with the other dramatists discussed, \textit{as these were mostly prose writers. It seemed that as Shakespeare's genius was recognized universally, there was no need for any special consideration of his excellencies. Therefore, the reviewers turned upon critics and criticism. He was used many times for purposes of comparison with other writers but there were no real reviews of his works. Several 188}

\begin{quote}
188. Dana, Lectures on the English Poets. V
\end{quote}
reviews considered the various editions of his works, their editors, and the manner of criticism which had been given concerning him. It was claimed that the substitution of a philosophy of criticism for an anarchy of dogmas was especially seen in recent editions of Shakespeare. The old critics, it was said, judged the form of his works by certain external rules, before they had interpreted the inward life which shaped the form.

Of American critics, Hudson and Verplanck were regarded most favorably; Verplanck was praised

Anon., Notes and Emendations to the Text of Shakespeare's Plays, from Early Manuscript Corrections, by J. Payne Collier

Anon., Lectures on Shakespeare, by H. N. Hudson. LXVII

Anon., Shakespeare's Plays, with his Life, by Gulian C. Verplanck. LXVII

Anon., Shakespeare. Von G. G. Gervinus. LXXXV

Anon., The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare, by Delia Bacon. LXXXV


Anon., The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare. Notes by Samuel Waller Singer. LXXXIV

Mrs. Jameson is commented on for her scholarly criticisms but no review of her work is given.
as a Shakespearian critic because he showed much strength and catholicity of mind in not being embarrassed "by the varying opinions of acute trifles". His introductions to the plays were considered as really additions to the higher Shakespearian criticism, not so much for any peculiar felicity in analysis of character as in the view, partly bibliographical, partly philosophical, which he took of the gradual development of Shakespeare's mind and the different stages of its growth. Richard Grant White's edition was praised for its purity and the character of its notes. The reviewer thought his work was marked by simplicity and common sense and contained much that was new. Hudson was regarded as best for analysis of characters. It was held that he used the same method as Coleridge and Mrs. Jameson but that he had improved on them.

A great deal was said concerning the criticism of Shakespeare by the Germans. The Germans, it was claimed, studied Shakespeare and analyzed him while the English read and enjoyed him and indulged in superficial criticism. Gervinus's views were

discussed and the general tendency of his criticism was thought to be the appreciation of Shakespeare as a portrayer, not merely of individual characteristics but of organic human society whose fundamental laws of development he had seized and pictured.

The appreciation of Shakespeare seemed to our reviewers to be a test of the genius of an age or a people. "Each, according to its state, uncovers, in time, some particular stratum of thought and life and no one has, like Shakespeare, attained to the perfect dramatic form; no one has so truly lived in his representations of life. He obeyed a law of creation within him, instead of holding before himself any specific moral, social, or religious dogma to be inculcated from without; and therefore it must be possible for minds and hearts, sufficiently cultivated, to deduce the central principle, and trace the minutest threads of development. On account of his wholeness, Shakespeare is healthful, sound, 191 truly human—not many sided, but spherical." 192

Milton was reviewed in several important


Anon., Keightley's Life of Milton. LXXXII.

Anon., A Selection from the English Prose Writings of John Milton. XXIV

Milton was also mentioned frequently in general discussions of English Literature.
discussions by critics as it was thought that he had exerted great influence on contemporaries and posterity. "He is", thought his critics, "identified in the mind with all select and holy images, with the supreme interests of the human race." "Throughout his poems one may see, under a thin veil, the opinions, the feelings, even the incidents of the poet's life still appearing." This autobiographical element appeared in all his writings, his critics decided, and they stated that: "L'Allegro and Il Penseroso are but a finer autobiography of his youthful fancies." Comus is but a transcript, in charming numbers, of that philosophy of chastity which he declares to be his defense and religion. Samson Agonistes is too broad an expression of his private griefs to be mistaken and is a version of the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce. Furthermore, the most affecting passages in Paradise Lost were said to be personal allusions and in Paradise Regained the critics saw the most distinct marks of the progress of the poet's mind in the revision and enlargement of his religious opinions. Milton's purpose was "to ascend, by the aids of his learning and his religion, to a higher insight and more lively delineation of the heroic life of man."
The Restoration period was not favored with the approval of the North American. Poetry of this age was criticized adversely because it consisted of far-fetched conceits, ideas oddly brought together, and quaint turns of thought. The principal criticism was of Pope and Dryden and their influence on the thought of their times both in England and America. Dryden was considered an important literary influence, though it was thought that his poetry lacked elevation and showed no originality. His facility of versification was thought well of, but his poetry was considered artificial and possessed of too little feeling. Not much was said of Dryden's plays in particular but in general, his indecency was considered to be his chief fault in regard to his influence on his readers.

Pope was given more attention than any other poet of his period. The question was raised as to whether he was really a poet, but it was not fully decided though it was held that he was not a true poet in that "he never touches the

193. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets. VIII. Dryden was praised as the best translator English literature can boast of, and was noticed as a critic.

heart and never fires the passions, nor bursts with a glory over our heads". He was credited with being a man full of good sense, of infinite wit, but more conceited, curious, and ingenious than poetical. As a satirist he was judged to be inferior to Swift, because Swift was able to bring his scenery and images poetically before the reader and now and then to produce a picturesque description.

Butler's Hudibras was referred to many times by reviewers because of its influence on American writers during the Revolutionary period. No great merit was attached to it, however, because Satire, in general, was thought to be an inferior type of writing. The poetry of the Restoration age was regarded as being very analogous to prose---sensible, correct, polished, and epigrammatic. The writers were acknowledged as men of wit, but it was said that they looked at little more than the outside of things, that they spoke truths, but these truths "do not fasten upon us and we are soon weary of mannered wit".

The critics welcomed the Romantic Movement, and the poets of this period received the highest praise and the most discriminating judgments. Among the early romanticists to receive attention
was the poet who was praised for his true poetic qualities, his originality, simplicity, and independence---Thomson. His diction was regarded unfavorably as it was cumbrous and overloaded and his meaning was at times obscure. The influence of Spenser on Thomson was noted, as well as the influence of Milton on Young and Gray.

The principal discussion of Young concerned his Night Thoughts, which was summed up as having "too much rant, scolding, and fury". Young was regarded as being "magniloquent, eloquent, vigorous, simple, and vulgar and the transition from one to the other is his chiefest secret of power".

It was thought by reviewers that Gray lacked truth and closeness of description for the eye to dwell upon, that he was vague at times, that he

195. Dana, Lectures on English Poets. VIII
196. The Complete Works, Poetry and Prose of the Rev. Edward Young. LXXIX
This discussion takes up Night Thoughts in three different editions and gives as the reason for the article, that there had lately been a revival of interest in Young.
197. Hazlitt's English Poets. VIII
The British Poets. LXXXIV
was not in love with nature and the character of his fellow men—that he studied them too little and books too much. Moreover, he would have been a better poet if he had been less of a scholar. His Elegy was not regarded as his best poem. His reviewer preferred The Bard and On a Distant Prospect of Eton College.

Later romantic poets considered were Crabbe, Cowper, and Burns. Crabbe was said to be successful in making "perfect portraiture of the actual, as it exists in God's creation and man's experience with the lights and shadows of eternity interpenetrating its every aspect". He was regarded as one of the first successful poets of the common life. His Village was especially mentioned. Cowper, his reviewer asserted, domesticated nature—"the scenes he carries us to are our own homes, our hearts are opened to the kindlier influences, and there are happy emotions within us. All who have taste for poetry whether natural or refined, admire his faithful descriptions,

198. Philo: An Evangeliad, by Sylvester Judd. LXX. In this article was a comparison of Judd and Crabbe as to their delineations of village and pauper life. Judd was said to be inferior to Crabbe in this respect.

199. Life of Wm. Cowper, by Thomas Taylor.

200. O. W. B. Peabody, Works of Robert Burns, by Allan Cunningham. XLII
his familiar truths to nature and the manly grace and English freedom with which he walks in the path where those before him went with measured step and manners suited to prevailing taste, which they either worshipped as perfect or had not enterprise enough to alter." His Task and various shorter poems were discussed in detail.

Burns was commented on as a Scotch poet and his influence on later writers was considered. It was said that he laid open the new character, to other and more fortunate adventures, and thus enabled Scott "to gather an unfading laurel harvest from the heaths and mountains of his country". Burns' secret of attraction was given as fidelity to nature—by which "he touches the most delicate chords of sympathy". It was said that "his genius was as bold and original as his character was pure and humble, and that not one of the poets of his country owed less to those who went before him. Under all circumstances he awakened a deep interest in the welfare of the race, and the loftiest aspirations for their intellectual and social freedom."

Another Scotch poet of the same school as Burns was Thomas Campbell whose Pleasures of Hope

201. The Poetical Works of Thomas Campbell. L
received special mention as having energy and an air of eloquence.

Sir Walter Scott received many favorable comments in the *Review*. His chief poems—The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Lady of the Lake, Lord of the Isles, and Marmion, were discussed. He was reviewed in the first volume of the *Review* by Wm. Tudor, who commented on the setting, the Scotch scenery and subject matter. A later reviewer comments on his development and his use of the old ballads and the introduction of the medieval element. His spirited verse forms, brilliant description of scenery, music of the verse, and stirring story element were noticed and praised. He was compared to Byron and it was thought that he might have equalled Byron had he continued with poetry.


Also mentioned in the *Songs of Scotland*, by Allan Cunningham.

The reviewer takes up the old Scottish Ballads and their influence on writers of Scotland.
Lord Byron received more attention at the hands of reviewers than any other English poet. Nearly every phase of Byron's character, career, and works was discussed in the Review. He was placed first among the poets of his day. The reviews were, in general, favorable to him both as to character and to writings. Reviewers seemed

Anon., Letter to--- on the Review of W. L. Bowles' Stricture on the Life and Writings of Pope, by Lord Byron. XIII. This article is chiefly interesting and valuable for its discussion of what poetry should be and on criticism of poetry. It was thought that a poem must be judged by calculation founded on a ratio compounded of the quality of the material and of the skill of the artist in working it up. Tragic or epic poetry was held much higher than lyric because it presents greater impediments to complete success.

Lord Byron and his Contemporaries, by Leigh Hunt.

Lord Byron's Poems. XX

Life and Characters of Byron from 1808 to 1814, by R. C. Dallas. XXI

The Works of Lord Byron in Verse and Prose. LX

Besides the above-mentioned, several discussions of Byron's writings appeared in collections in which many authors were criticized.
to be more lenient in regard to moral standards in his case than in other instances. His great popularity seems to have extended to his reviewers to the same extent that it did to his readers. His misanthropy was acknowledged even by his admirers and it was stated that his character was contradictory, his craving passion was to gain the sympathy of the public. His works bore the impress of the French Revolution. His excellencies were considered to be depth of thought, power, brilliancy, felicity of style, and miraculous facility of production. He was compared to Pope to Pope's disadvantage in both satire and lyric quality. His defects were given as an occasional extravagance of thought and language, and want of finish and care in his versification. Childe Harold was pronounced his masterpiece, though all his writings were fully discussed and nearly all were praised in one way or another. The criticism of him taken as a whole, was sympathetic and fair, and in some cases, much too eulogistic.

Byron's friend and biographer, Thomas Moore, was not so fortunate with his reviewers. While he

204. Lalla Rookh, an Oriental Romance, by Thos. Moore. VI
The Loves of the Angels, by Thos. Moore.
was praised for great ease, sprightliness, and melody of language, it was said that his works did not have a moral influence and lacked depth of thought. Lalla Rookh was reviewed as to subject matter, verse form, and brilliancy of its figures. Also his poem The Loves of the Angels was reviewed and pronounced superior to Lalla Rookh. It was thought that he was unsuccessful at writing long poems. He was called the greatest song writer of his day.

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The poets Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth were considered as to their influence on English poetry. It was stated that new spirit had been infused into English poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century—that before the days of Crabbe and Cowper, poetry had sunk to the level of smooth conceits and clever epithets, having wholly


The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge. XXXIX

Some attention was given to Coleridge's translations, which were pronounced excellent and in accord with his ability. Southey was reviewed and praised for his power of description. It was stated that he illustrated the sober pleasures of domestic life.
lost the nerve and force of the Elizabethan writers; these poets returned to native and simple sentiment. According to reviewers, much of their merit arose from the fact that they were leaders of a great reform in literature, that they first gave expression to feelings long held as beneath the dignity of letters. Following Cowper and Crabbe, Wordsworth and Coleridge were leaders in this reform. With Coleridge, it was held, the spirit of reform penetrated every thought, while in Wordsworth, the change was no less radical but he was not so richly endowed as Coleridge.

Coleridge was given an important consideration by reviewers. He was admired for his extraordinary mental powers and for his scholarship, his versatility, and powers of language, his benevolent spirit, and religious feeling. His German studies were thought to be an important addition to his critical work and his influence on both English and American writers was acknowledged. In his poetry, the critics found perfect truth. He represented nature "as it really is, not dry and dead, but full of meaning". "His works are full of ideal and moral beauty, of pure, deep, and elevating sentiment, now conveyed to us by the soft and silvery music of
sweet song and now swelling in organ peals from his more elaborate and lofty pieces." Remarks were made on all his important poems with sometimes full discussions of their merits or meaning. The Ancient Mariner received a long review with an explanation of its meaning. The final verdict was, "The works of such a writer are of no country—they are of the world".

Wordsworth's poetry was at first better appreciated in America than in England. The American reviews were quite different from those published in the Edinburgh Review and other British publications. From the first, his poetry was given sympathetic attention by reviewers. One of the most notable reviews of Wordsworth was that of F. W. P. Greenwood who declared that he, more than any other living writer, had restored to poetry the language of feeling, nature, and truth. His theory of poetry, "that poetical language is that of nature and of life", was held to be correct.

A later reviewer gave attention to the influence of the French Revolution and the transcendental philosophy on Wordsworth, and held that he was the chief writer of this school. His intense spirit-

207. Anon., The Complete Poetical Works of W. Wordsworth, (LIX) Edited by Henry Reed, whose notes are said to "exercise an intelligent and genial appreciation of the author and tend to cultivate the like quality in others".
ualism, theory of imagination, delicacy of sense of sound and his high views of poetry were considered. His Lines Written at Tintern Abbey was reviewed for these elements.

Another reviewer considered his development as a poet and said that Wordsworth was the greatest poet since Milton, and founder of a nobler and loftier school of poetry than any which had before appeared---not because of the pre-eminence of his power as of the direction which he gave them. The long period of his development was discussed and the fact that he believed himself called to be a poet was held as being largely responsible for his self-concentration and his gradual growth. In discussing The Prelude it was stated that his style was "simple but elegant, often flowing along in a quiet philosophic strain, but rising ever and anon into glowing eloquence". All the remarks made concerning Wordsworth and his poetry were discriminating and scholarly. He was not praised unduly nor censured by critics without real understanding.

The Brownings were spoken of as modern writers whose literary reputations were not yet

208. The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind, by Wm. Wordsworth. Edited by Henry Reed.

209. Anon., Poems, by Elizabeth Barrett Browning LXXXV; Another review appears in volume LV
established. Mrs. Browning received several notices and was ranked among the "first female poets". Although the reviewer thought women unfitted by education and environment for the highest literary career, he ranked Mrs. Browning among the highest poets, as few had greater power of expression. The meaning of her poems was obscure at times, and her verses were often unfinished; nevertheless their internal structure was almost perfect. It was stated that her temperament was not suited for the writing of blank verse. Aurora Leigh was ranked as her finest work but not reckoned among the works destined for immortality, as "the universal element was too much mingled with the peculiarities of our time to admit of its becoming naturalized in another age". Robert Browning was reviewed by Lowell, who raised the question as to Browning's being a poet. This question was thought proper because of the difference between Browning's views of poetry and those of other poets. Lowell considered several of his poems and concluded that there was a "wholeness and power of thought" in them and that he had the

210. Ibid.

211. Lowell, Paracelsus, a Poem; Sordello; Bells and Pomegranates. LXVI
elements of greatness.

The last great poet to be reviewed during the time of this study was Tennyson, who received adequate praise and attention. His Maud, and Other Poems were spoken of as a "charming rosary, a string of beads, very unlike one another, of playful, or sad, or meditative poetry, always poetry and always natural, true and new". It was predicted that his Charge of the Light Brigade would be known to posterity. The Idylls of the King was thought to express the longings of the soul and was a record of its battles with unseen foes. His earlier poems indicated his realization of his inability to express all he felt. The Princess was considered as an indication of his growth, and as marking a transition period. In Memoriam was an example of the third stage in his intellectual growth and moral development.

In comparison with other British poets, the intellect predominated—that is the great problems which beset him and the development through which he had passed, were intellectual. In Mr. Browning the emotional predominated—"thus the two poets stand over against each other. The problem that

212. Anon., Maud and Other Poems, by A. Tennyson. LXXXI
213. In Memorian, by A. Tennyson. LXXXIII
works itself out through the poems of Robert Browning is the reconciliation of the two—of the intellect and the emotion in the outward world. Thus, they together, the complements of each other, form the crown of the modern British poetry. Thus, Tennyson is the Age's truest prophet and is worthy to be its laureate."

The foregoing discussion of British poets reveals something of the literary pursuits and tastes of the readers of the *North American Review*. It also shows that American critics formed their opinions and judgments independently of the great reviews in Great Britain. Some of the minor writers have been omitted in the present discussion and a great many detailed references to authors' works have been slighted as having no special interest or value in this work. The writer has attempted to give representative names for the different periods during the era (1815-1860) and the general attitude toward them held by American reviewers.

B. THE NOVEL

Reviewers thought the importance of the novel had its beginning with the rise of Scott as a novelist. Since then, it had become the illustrator of history, the mirror and satirist of manners, the vehicle of controverted opinions in philosophy, politics, and religion. It seemed that the critics found very few universal traits belonging to the novelist. Almost every one had a standard of his own, but a few individual preferences might be noticed, such as moral teachings, naturalness of characters, ready sympathy with human nature, and truth to life as it exists.

Reviewers covered the field of English fiction rather thoroughly beginning with Defoe, who was called a model narrator. His devoting his narrative time to low life was considered repellant to modern readers, but his object was moral and his graphic and lucid diction was noted and praised. He was credited with being the precursor of the present

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215. Anon., The Novels and Miscellaneous Works of De Foe. LXXVII
day novel. Richardson, Smollett, Sterne, and Fielding were discussed by Professor Frisbie in an address at Harvard when he declared the novels of Smollett to be examples of low morality. Fielding, he thought, was a writer of more genius than Smollett as he had more wit, more character, and more thought. Sterne was thought to be often artificial and forced but kept a hold upon intelligent sympathy by the originality of his manner. His characters, Uncle Toby, Vicar of Sutton, and Yorick, showed his diversity of characterization. He was credited with being suggestive to later writers.

Fielding was credited with more genius and power than any of the early novelists—in fact he was said to deserve greater praise in his various literary activities than Pope, Addison, Goldsmith

216. Frisbie, Inaugural Address. VI, 232

217. Anon., The Works of Laurence Sterne. LXXXI


Fielding was considered as a dramatist, lawyer, journalist, magistrate, novelist, and man of wit and pleasure about town. It was stated that, "Of all English authors, the two most exclusively English and the two into whose very being the life of their age and country passed most completely, are Ben Jonson, and Henry Fielding."
and Swift. His greatest work was Tom Jones, concerning which it was stated, "As an expression of power and breadth of his mind, it is altogether his greatest work and in the union of distinct pictorial representation with profound knowledge of practical life is unequalled by any novel in the language."

Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield was commended for its humor, its memorable style of narration, and its simplicity. Goethe was quoted as saying that it was the best novel ever written.

The novel was held by reviewers to be a form of literature in which women might excel, and several women novelists of the period received favorable mention. Miss Burney was called "a phoenix in her way, a marvel of adventurous naturalness for those times; but she called in the aid of rank and wealth and depended not a little on the dazzle of high life". Miss Edgeworth was given favorable criticism in several reviews. She was ranked second to Scott. Critics found in her works true philosophy of life and considered her analysis of

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220. Anon., Novels and Novel-writing. LXXVI

221. Ibid., Also Harrington, a Tale and Ormond, a Tale, by Maria Edgeworth. VI, 153.

Other references in comparison with others.
character as full of discrimination. Her power of moral impression was said to be unrivalled. Her style of composition deserved particular notice, it was thought, for its copiousness, flexibility, and finish and, except for a far-fetched illustration now and then, it might be safely adopted as a model. Jane Austen and Susan Ferrier, it was said, tried the power of everyday life and everyday character to interest the general heart. The sensible and amusing novels of these ladies, it was stated, are the product of much knowledge of society, and sharp, though not ill-natured, observations of its motives and pretences.

Charlotte Brontë was not understood by her reviewer as he thought that Jane Eyre was written in part by a man since no woman could have portrayed the character of Mr. Rochester. The reviewer further stated that the secret of the charm of Jane Eyre was the clear, distinct, decisive style of its representation of character, manners, and scenery, and this continually suggested a male mind. A later reviewer

222. Anon., Novels and Novel Writing. LXXVI

commenting on Mrs. Gaskell's Life of Charlotte Bronte shows better understanding and more appreciation of the author. In this article it was maintained that a critic should know the life of an author before giving real criticism. The autobiographical element in the works of the Bronte sisters received comment as did their moral purpose and their serious view of fiction.

Only one reference was made to George Eliot. This was a notice of her novel Adam Bede, which was proclaimed as one of the best of the class of novels of the common life, thoroughly simple and natural. Its truthfulness was full of strength, and its simplicity that of reality. "There is a quiet atmosphere permeating the whole work, as the warm June sunshine fills the air. The rural scenes, the honest daily work, the home talk of shrewd and hearty men and women are all managed with skill and show the writer's own thorough appreciation of a quiet country life."

Reviewers paid very little attention to the Gothic school of writing; William Godwin was the only writer of this type reviewed, though Horace

224. Anon., Adam Bede, by George Eliot. LXXXIX

Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe were mentioned. The reviewer of Godwin neglected to deal with his novels but deviated from his literary criticism to a discourse on a history of changes in society, and what brought them about, with the ultimate object, no doubt, of showing that Godwin's principles were wrong.

It is interesting to note that Scott's Rob Roy, Waverley, and Guy Mannering were reviewed while the identity of the author was yet only conjectured. The reviewers gave it as their opinion that the author was Scott and predicted for him great success as a novelist. Rob Roy was examined as to characterization. Scott was praised for taking his characters from all stations of society and portraying them as real people. His imperfect execution was noticed and deplored. His plots were not discussed to any extent though it was claimed that his stories "interest more by the nature of the incidents that compose them than by the skill with which they are combined". Very little was said of Scott's romanticism except that it was not desirable for an author to introduce the marvellous into a plot of recent times. Another reviewer

226. E. T. Channing, Rob Roy, by the author of Waverley. VII
spoke of the illusions of old romance being, for a time, revived, while the splendid magic of Scott ruled the hour. "Pageant and tournament, presence chamber and battlefield, dizzy turret and fell oubliette, imprisoned the willing imagination in turn, while over all alike hovered the sweet spirit of humanity, and not far in the background, beamed the hallowed face of religion, consecrating our pleasure." His works, it was said, "blended in such exquisite harmony together that as in some beautiful model of architecture we are struck rather with the effect of the whole than with the prominence of any particular part".

Next to Scott in popularity, the Review placed Bulwer-Lytton. His work as a writer of the historical romance was called a "brilliant and gorgeous succession of pictures but with none of the calm and majestic strength of the old masters". "To revive the scenes of historical or classical interest with a fidelity which shall satisfy the imagination and heart, demands a power of intellect that few novel-writers possess," and it was thought

227. Anon., Novels and Novelists. LXXVI

228. Anon., Eight New Novels. LXVII
Bulwer's Last Days of Pompeii. XLIV (Book notice)
The Last Days of Pömpeii, by E. L. Bulwer. XL
that Bulwer-Lytton did not have that power. His Last Days of Pompeii was commented on favorably, however, and it was agreed that this work was successful in the difficult attempt to give its readers the feeling of inspiration of the sublime poetic creations of ancient genius. Bulwer-Lytton was regarded as more a man of books than was Scott, who depicted the life about him. Considerable discussion was found in the Review concerning the writing of the historical novel. It was maintained that the classical novelist must know how to go beyond the circle of his daily associations and lay aside the feelings of the modern. He must contemplate life, art, society, and religion under an aspect wholly different from that to which his mind has been accustomed. He must renounce himself and transform his being, for the time, into the great original he draws. Scott was held to be successful at writing the historical novel though he did not display all the qualities which reviewers held to be desirable for such a type of writing.

Lowell wrote a rather flippant criticism on Disraeli's Tancred, in which he stated that "the

229. Lowell, Tancred, or the New Crusade, by B. Disraeli. LXV
world of the conventional novel is peculiar and apart" and the most accurate delineation of it was to be found in the works of Bulwer and Disraeli. His opinion of Tancred was that it had no dramatic interest, no teaching, no good characters. The novels of Charles Reade received several short notices by reviewers but no great merit was attached to them. The opinion was expressed that he had no good reason for writing books as his forte was in action, not narration. He was thought to write for the public taste because of the money in it.

Charles Kingsley was commended for his energy as a scholar, his pure diction, and his compact, forcible style. His versatility was noticed and the different fields of his literary activity discussed. It was stated that each of his productions was different in character from all the others.

230. Anon., Peg Woffington, Christie Johnstone, Clouds and Sunshine, by Chas. Reade. LXXXII

231. Anon., Westward Ho! by Charles Kingsley, LXXXI

In this review his Village Sermons were described as plain, simple, practical discourses, with a fresh and healthy tone, not infrequently exhibiting the characteristics of free, bold thought. "His poems", it was said, "bear evidence that their author is no less at home in the higher walks of imaginative literature than in prose."
His Westward Ho! was a "lively picture of those remarkable events in the reign of Elizabeth which were the germ of the future maritime supremacy of England". Alton Locke and Yeast were not given any special comment except that they were attempts to present the social problems of English life.

Dickens and Thackeray both received adequate attention by the reviewers. In comparing the two, both were said to have made human folly and weakness the object of study, and both were keen in unfolding to the world the intricacies of the mingled warp and woof of the soul. But Dickens was held to be a caricaturist, while Thackeray was regarded as a great social satirist. It was thought that Dickens' works would not live because of the faults in style and because the author too often descended from the level of his own dignity to provoke merriment. Bleak House was considered not so good as his other works. His Dombey and Son was held to be one of the most effective, if not the most perfect form of composition through which a comprehensive mind can communicate itself to the world, "exhibiting as it may, through sentiment, incident, and character,

232. Whipple, Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son, by Chas. Dickens; Also, Bleak House. LXXVII
a complete philosophy of life and admitting a


dramatic and narrative expression of the abstract


principles of ethics, metaphysics, and theology." Though Dickens had many faults and was not wholly


approved, still he was classed in the front rank of


novelists. It was declared that he revived the


novel of genuine practical life, that his characters,


like those of Fielding and Smollett, constituted a


world of their own, whose truth to nature every

reader recognized.


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Thackeray was compared to Fielding in his


attempt to represent the world as it is, especially


the selfish, heartless, and cunning portion of it,


and also as to his manner of talking to his readers


in the pauses of narration and his taking his


characters from ordinary life. In his earlier


works, his critic thought he allowed the scornful

to take precedence over the humane element. His

aim was given as the satirizing of pretension, folly,


and fashionable vice, rather than the presentation


of anything for admiration or deserving of imitation.


Of his novels, The Newcomer's was the favorite though


Vanity Fair was thought to have many points of ex-


cellence. It was a cosmopolitan novel and, though


233. Whipple, Vanity Fair, by W. M. Thackeray. LXVII


The Book of Snobs, and The Luck of Barry Lyndon, by A. M. Thackeray. LXXVII
it had no plot, was a big canvas of the world,—moreover, it contained the character of Becky Sharp which was recognized as his greatest woman character. In his range of observation, it was thought Thackeray was unrivalled by any other novelist. On the whole, Thackeray was regarded as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of English novelists.

The criticism of the novel in the North American Review was, from first to last, rather unsatisfactory. Certainly not so much space was given to the novel as to other types of literature. The later reviewers showed more appreciation of a work of fiction than the earlier ones did and did not display so many narrow prejudices. A change in the manner of regarding the novel was also shown. It was at first regarded as light literature but in one of the later reviews it was claimed that "the novel is the most difficult of all modes of composition for, in its perfection, it requires a mind capable of perceiving and representing all varieties of life and character, of being tolerant to all, and of realizing them to the eye and the heart, with vivid and vital truth. The great novelist should be a poet, philosopher, and man of the world, fused into one!"

234. Whipple, Dombey and Son, by Chas. Dickens.

LXIX
The novel was finally regarded as a reflection of social life and consequently of more importance than a work of mere entertainment. Reviewers deemed it necessary in considering the novel, to study the author's life and personality, the influence which the work was likely to exert on its readers, and on aspiring writers. In considering a work, they usually judged as well as interpreted it, for the benefit of the reading public. As to structure, there was no universal method. The novel was regarded as having no established rules, such as poetry has. The criticism of the novel was written according to the reviewers' own ideas of what a novel should be.
C. PROSE WORKS OTHER THAN THE NOVEL

The essay received more attention than any other type of British prose with the exception of the novel. The reason for this was, perhaps, because it was thought to have more influence upon the general reading public. The progress and development of the essay were traced in detail. Much attention was devoted to its style, and the reviewers mentioned Tillotson, Jeremy Taylor, Sir Wm. Temple, and Sir Thomas Browne as stylists who influenced later writers. It was noted, by one critic, that the gay, colloquial graces of the French tongue had a favorable influence upon the cumbrous pedantry of the English in respect to prose, although its influence upon style of verse was not so good.

English prose composition, it was claimed, reached its meridian during the last half of the eighteenth century. Bacon was said to have first made this species of writing popular with the English by a

235. Anon., The Club Room and The Idle Man. XIV
series of essays which would always be reverenced as a textbook among English classics, for the compact yet simple form in which he embodied the results of a deep observation in moral and social science.

Another essayist held in high esteem by reviewers was Milton, though his prose was held to be less effective for practical results than Swift's or Burke's because he demanded an ideal justice. It was said that his writings had rhetorical excellence and were wonderful for their truth, learning, subtlety, and pomp of language, although the main arguments did not stand out. His influence was discussed and he was considered the greatest inspirer of all English writers because of his high ideals.

The Review devoted its attention chiefly to the period dominated by Addison and Steele and to their connection with periodical literature. Steele

236. Greenwood, The Poetical Works of John Milton. XXV. Also, Milton's Works. XLVII

237. W. B. O. Peabody, The Life of Joseph Addison by Lucy Aitken. LXIV

Works of Joseph Addison. Edited by Geo. W. Greene. LXXIX

Anon., Periodical Essays of the Age of Queen Anne. XLVI

Comparative Merits of the Earlier and Later English Writers. X

Dana, The Club Room and The Idle Man. XIV
was given credit for originating the Tatler and its purpose was given as the inculcation of moral truth. A great deal of discussion was concerned with the relations between Addison and Steele. Their characters were fully discussed, somewhat to Steele's disadvantage. The influence of these two writers on both their readers and on the style of English literature was given much space. Reviewers considered that through the medium of the periodical their influence had been incalculable.

Dryden was credited with doing much toward bringing the language nearer to the tone of ordinary life and improving upon the Latinized phraseology of the older writers. By the variety and flow of his periods, he was the first to bring into disrepute the staid formalities of his predecessors. But Cowley, who "was perhaps never more a poet, than in his prose compositions", excelled Dryden in the use of popular English. Addison was thought to have modelled his style almost exclusively upon Tillotson; but he was "neither so feeble nor so prolix" and he bore a nearer resemblance to the naïveté and elegant simplicity of Sir Wm. Temple. Addison was said to have had the sense to choose the one type of writing in which he could excel. He was given credit for
refining the style of the writers of the period.

The character of the literature of this period, it was stated, was not marked by the exuberant imagination, or intense feeling, or bold, hardy energy of the preceding age; but by a subtle and ingenious wit, shrewd observation, and acute delicacy of taste. The turn of thought naturally disclosed itself in a style best suited to the exhibition of its peculiar beauties; a style, which, by its simple, conversational, and idiomatic character, was well adapted to light familiar topics, or to calm, philosophical reflection, or to sober dispassionate reasoning; which—although not powerful or adventurous, and exceedingly loose and incorrect—might yet rise by an easy flow into a high pitch of graceful eloquence, and which, free from inversion, pedantry, and art of any kind, might win its way to the heart by the expression of natural sentiment in the most natural manner. These qualities constitute the substratum, the primitive basis on which the style of Queen Anne's day was formed. 238

Dr. Johnson, on the other hand, retained the Latinized style of the preceding age. His reviewer

238. Anon., Periodical Essays of the Age of Queen Anne. XLVI
thought he could not have succeeded with the style of Addison. His Rambler was regarded by the Review as having made a permanent impression on the character of English style, and it was stated that Johnson had done much to preserve the energies of the language. He also, it was claimed, furnished the best key to the literary character of the time as "no despot ever ruled with more lordly sway the courts of criticism, though none in the province of ornamental literature had less real pretension". It was the opinion of the reviewer, that he was insensible to the beauties of sentiment as well as those of external nature. He was destitute of imagination and taste, as is shown by his cumbrous and pedantic style and by the perversity of his criticisms on some of the higher specimens of English poetry.

Charles Lamb, Wm. Hazlitt, Thomas de Quincey, and Leigh Hunt, followers of Coleridge in the matter of criticism, were all considered, mainly as to their criticisms.

Lamb was given considerable attention by

239. Anon., The Letters of Chas. Lamb, by Thos. Talfourd. XLVI
In this review, it was claimed that Talfourd was a brilliant writer, that the"thread of narration which runs through these vols. is like a thread of gold in a tissue of embroidery". A great deal was said of Talfourd and not much of Lamb. It was thought that Talfourd was too lavish in his praise of Lamb.
reviewers but his reviewer used more space in telling what he lacked than in giving his excellencies. He was not highly esteemed as a critic, though it was thought that several of his criticisms were exquisitely conceived and expressed. His remarks on Shakespeare's Othello were "admirable but not philosophical or profound". Some of his letters were noticed as being clear and correct in their opinions on the literary merits of contemporaries. The reviewer called Lamb a singularly "imperfect man". His genius was peculiar, the product of a highly artificial state of society. He was charged with having whims and humors that could only be developed in the midst of a great capital. As he was a thorough cockney, he had no sympathy with rural nature and his interests could not go beyond his own narrow sphere and therefore he could not sympathize with the great philanthropic movements of the age. However, great Lamb's shortcomings were as a critic, he was held to be unrivalled in his own field. This was the short, humorous essay which he "carried to a point of excellence never before attained". His style was judged to be ever happy and original; his wit of the rarest and most pungent description; "a suitable spirit pervading all his
writings and reaching the reader's mind by a thousand different avenues".

De Quincey was given the highest praise as a scholar and as a writer. It was asserted that as a literary artist he had no rival. The reviewer declared that he could excel in any kind of writing as his learning was boundless and his style perfect. He was possessed of a profound and religious feeling and had a tone of philanthropy and withal, a fine vein of humor. It was stated that he was a faithful and loving biographer to Wordsworth—that his judgment of him was just and philosophical. Other good examples of his criticism were his judgment of Lamb, Southey, and Godwin. His papers on Shakespeare, Pope, Goethe, and Schiller showed his powers, both geographical and historical, to good advantage. His German studies received comment and it was asserted that German thought had influenced his criticism.

Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets has already been referred to several times. Though Hazlitt's personality was disapproved of and his

240. Willard Phillips, Confessions of an English Opium-Eater, by Thomas De Quincey. XVIII

Anon., Confessions of an English Opium-Eater and Biographical Essays, by T. De Quincey. LXXIV
criticism held to be at times prejudiced and unjust, in the main, he was judged an interesting critic because of his personal attitude—because he gave his own impressions. His miscellaneous essays received no mention by the North American.

Coleridge received the most attention, as well as the greatest praise, of this group of writers. The reviewer regarded it a pleasure and a privilege to express admiration of the genius, character, and writings of Coleridge. It was declared that he never affected greatness and that he was ever ready to acknowledge ability in others. The autobiographical element in his Biographia Literaria was noted and his ideal in considering works of literature—"to interpret and not to judge"—was made prominent and approved as a concrete canon of criticism. This work, it was declared, would remain a masterpiece of philosophical criticism, coeval with the English language.


Anon., Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge. XLIII

The criticism of Coleridge's letters was unfavorable. It was stated that his letters did not do him justice—that he was inferior, as a letter-writer, to Cowper, Swift, Bolingbroke, Byron, and Scott, all of whom were excellent in this art.
Macaulay was discussed as critic, essayist, and biographer. As a critic, he was regarded as just, impartial, and acute. His learning, combined with good sense, wit, and eloquence, were expressed in writings of great force and merit. As a biographer, he was considered admirable as he showed keenness of analysis, closeness of reasoning, and a liberal cast of mind. The biographies of Goldsmith, Johnson, Rogers, Atterbury, and the younger Pitt were cited as examples of his ability in this type of writing.

References to Carlyle in the North American are numerous but only one review of him was written. His style was unpopular with reviewers. "His mannerisms have grown more offensive, while he has repeated in new forms, rather than enlarged and multiplied the fresh and bracing thoughts by which a quarter of a century ago, he made us all so strongly his

242. Anon., New Biographies of Illustrious Men, by T. B. Macaulay. LXXXV

Anon., The Miscellaneous Writings of Lord Macaulay. XCI

Anon., Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, by T. B. Macaulay. LI

243. Anon., Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, by Thomas Carlyle. XCI
debtors". Special mention was made of Sartor Resartus, which was said to be a work "more full of seed-thoughts than any single volume of the present country". Comment was made concerning the German influence on his philosophy and writings. His ethical principles were highly approved by reviewers. Mention was made of his popularity among American readers, especially in his miscellaneous essays. Although Carlyle was regarded by reviewers of the *North American Review* as an important literary figure, the discussion of his works was unsatisfactory, leaving too much to the reader.

Several other prose writers who might be classed as essayists were mentioned by reviewers at different times but no distinctive comments were made in regard to them. Among these were: Ruskin, whose reviewer stated he would rather direct the reader to his works than review them. The *Review* discusses Ruskin's life, ideals, and teachings rather than his style and writings. Others were Peter Bayne, whose *Essays in Biography and Criticism*

244. Anon., *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, by John Ruskin. LXXII

245. LXXXV
was briefly mentioned as a critical work marked by comprehensiveness, depth of insight, candid appreciation, and judicial integrity; Thomas Noon Talfour, who received extravagant praise in a long article which also discussed nearly every eminent English writer as well as giving a discourse on criticism.

The discussion of British literature included some notable specimens of biography as well as eminent essays. The most famous biography reviewed was Boswell's Johnson. It was praised as one of the most attractive books in the English language. Another excellent biography mentioned was Southey's Life of Nelson, which was called a model of its kind. It is interesting to note that the reviewer considered that a hero like Nelson, a doer of deeds, required the more simple, literal, and authentic chronicle of his actions. Carlyle's Life of Sterling was regarded as another excellent

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246. Anon., Critical and Miscellaneous Writings of T. Noon Talfourd. LVII
247. Anon., The Life of Samuel Johnson, by James Boswell. XXXIV
248. LXXXIII
249. Ibid.
example of biographical writing. It was thought that whatever method was adopted, the object should be to impart a clear, definite, harmonious revelation of the subject, written in a conscientious spirit and in an unambitious style. The above mentioned works fulfilled this requirement, according to the reviewer.

More examples of the purely literary biography were found in the discussion of British literature than in that of the American. Among works given attention was The Life and Correspondence of Southey, by his son. The reviewer praised Southey as the greatest prose writer of his time; his style was a perfect model of purity, transparency, and vigor. His biographer was thought lightly of however, because he remained silent on points of personal interest and did not write sympathetically. Southey's own biographical writing of this type was given considerable attention. His biographies of Cowper and of Bunyan were reviewed and the author praised for his fairness, patience, sagacity, and truth, in forming his judgment. His biography of Cowper was called an "elaborate, skillful mosaic".

250. LXXXII
251. XLIV
252. XXXVI
The reviewer, in considering Southey's Life of Bunyan, commented profusely on Bunyan's life, works, and influence, but said very little of his biographer except that the work was skillfully done.

Prescott reviewed Lockhart's Life of Scott and declared Lockhart to be a very competent biographer, having beauty of style in composition and good arrangement of a mass of interesting details.

Macknight's Life of Burke gave the reviewer opportunity for discussing other biographers of Burke—Dr. Bisset, Craly, and Prior, all of whom were pronounced unsatisfactory. Macknight's work was said to be incomplete but of solid and enduring excellence. It was praised for its clear forcible style and for its comprehensiveness, including, as it did, both the public and private life of Burke. The reviewer took occasion to give a resume of Burke's political career and to comment on his Speech on Conciliation, calling it the "highest flight of genius under the guidance of taste". A number of

253. XLVI

254. LXXXVIII
biographies of this literary type were reviewed in much the same way—slight attention being given to the biographer but adequate discussion of the subject of his work.

The discussions of the lives of both Francis Jeffrey and Sydney Smith are interesting because the reviewers discuss their critical methods. Jeffrey's manly conduct as editor of the Edinburgh Review was discussed and his "candor and fearlessness" were praised. Sydney Smith was given even more generous notice. His reviewer asserted that he was liberal, frank, and practical but that he lacked a sense of beauty. Biographies of a more historical type were those of Wm. Pitt.

255. Such reviews were: The Life and Remains of Douglas Jerrold, by his son, B. Jerrold, LXXXIX; Memoir, Journal, and Correspondence of Thos. Moore. Edited by Lord Russell, LXXVI; Memoir of the Early Life of Jeremy Taylor, by G. L. Duyckink, XCI; Memoir of Richard Lowell Edgeworth, by Maria Edgeworth, XI; Life and Times of Sir Philip Sidney, by Lord Brooke, LXXXVIII

Reminiscences of Chas. Butler, and Lives of the 258
Queens of Scotland.

All of these reviews were concerned with the subject of the biography and give only short, unsatisfactory comments as to style or method of the biographers. The necessary characteristics of a good biography have already been given and need not be repeated. As there was nothing distinctive in a great many of the biographies noticed, it does not seem profitable to continue the discussion.

257. XX

LXXIV
D. THE DRAMA

British, like American drama, was slighted by reviewers, though not to so great an extent. Still, considering the rich field of British drama, it seems inexplicable that scholars did not care to review the drama for the *North American*.

A great admiration for Elizabethan dramatists existed among American reviewers, though not many of the great dramatists received more than a passing comment here and there. It was stated that the Elizabethan writers had been thrown in the shade by the writers of the Queen Anne period; that of Shakespeare's plays, not more than half a dozen were acted during the period and those so disguised that they were scarcely recognized. Furthermore, so artificial had the taste become that Addison's *Cato* was welcomed for a greater number of performances than had probably ever been given to any one play before. This play was condemned as being "completely un-English in its whole conception and
The plays of Dryden and others of his school were condemned for their lack of moral teachings as well as for their too artificial form.

The Elizabethan plays were spoken of as the highest type of drama but no detailed criticism of them appeared in the Review during this period. Shakespeare is the one exception, and he has already been discussed. The cleverness of such playwrights as Farquhar and Wycherley, Congreve, and others was referred to, but no distinctive criticism of them appeared.

It seemed to be the impression that the drama had deteriorated and would never again be what it had been. One review of Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer and his Good Natured Man criticized these plays favorably as being the easiest and most entertaining of modern comedies, seemingly well adapted for the stage. It was stated that Goldsmith's fame would rest mainly on his two plays and his Vicar of Wakefield. Another play reviewed was Ion, a Tragedy, by Thomas Noon Talfourd, with extravagant praise.

259. Anon., English Literature of the 19th Century. XXXV

260. Ibid.

261. Anon., Ion, A Tragedy, by T. N. Talfourd. XLIV
in both reviews given of him. This piece was said to have the simplicity and completeness of Sopho-
cles.

Leigh Hunt reviewed the dramas of J. Sheridan Knowles and pronounced his characters untrue to life as "the common characters used grand language". They were reviewed as to the story, the plot, but very little comment on the style or structure was given. Sheridan's Rivals was called an exhilarating comedy---a revival of the plays of Farquhar and the old school of comic dramatists. Its attractiveness was said to be, not in its dramatic excellence but in its stage effect, and its merit was in its fun and farce, while the serious portions were lugged in to make it appear more like a real drama. The final verdict on Sheridan was that he "had enriched English letters with a series of plays which are to English prose what Pope's satires are to English verse".

The discussion given to drama seems entirely out of proportion to that of other types of literature.

262. Hunt, Select Works of Jas. Sheridan Knowles. XL

263. Anon., The Dramatic Works of R. B. Sheridan, by Leigh Hunt. LXVI
and, owing to the backward state of American drama, it would seem natural for the *North American Review* to attempt to build up interest in this type of writing as it attempted to do in the poetical field, but such was not the case, during the period under study.
CHAPTER FIVE

ROMANCE LITERATURES

A. ITALIAN LITERATURE

Interest in Italian Literature was manifest in America at an early date. A course in it was introduced in William and Mary College in 1779, and by 1799 articles began to appear in magazines and reviews with appropriate passages in Italian. In the first volume of the North American Review, William Tudor said, "The sublimity of the Italian poets very often cannot be translated because it is connected with the charm of the language which gives it a grace and force unknown to the other languages of Europe." In the fourth volume of the Review, eighteen pages of an article, The Augustan Age of Italian Literature, were devoted to a discussion of why Italian Literature was important and why neg-

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264. See The Dawn of Italian Culture in America.
The Romantic Review. July-September, 1919
lected. Its excellencies were pointed out and the readers encouraged to take up its study.

Every phase of the field was covered in various articles which appeared from time to time. A History of the Italian Language and Dialects was reviewed by one critic who explained in detail the various theories regarding the origin of the Italian language and traced its development to modern times. Excerpts were given from the works of various writers to illustrate the changes. The authors' work was not subjected to any criticism as to style, but rather as to content. One work dealing with the history and literature of Italy was declared by its reviewer to give nothing new. Having given a number of extracts, the critic then discussed the different literary epochs of Italian Literature.

Italian literature attained its highest development in the period extending from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. The Review devoted much space to the brilliant writers of this period and chief among those noticed was Dante Alighieri.

265. By L. Nardini and S. Buonanti. XXXV

266. Anon., Italy: General Views of its History and Literature in reference to its Present State, by L. Mariotti. LIV
His Divine Comedy was reviewed in four different articles in addition to being mentioned from time to time in comparison with other pieces of literature. Perhaps the most scholarly review was that by A. H. Everett, who discussed it in the original and also as it had been translated by the Rev. H. F. Cary. Mr. Everett discussed Dante's standing as the greatest Italian poet, the founder of Tuscan poetry and of Romanticism, and commented on the fact that he had been "almost wholly neglected by the French and though read by several of the English is mentioned by none as he deserves and by many more with the most general and contemptuous

267. A. H. Everett, La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri, and The Vision, or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise of Dante Alighieri translated by the Rev. Cary. XIII The latter was later reviewed in volume LXII

Anon., L'Ottima Commento della Divina Commedia Testo Indito d' un Contemporaneo di Dante, Citato degli Accademici della Crusca; Pisa. XXXVII

Anon., Dante's Divine Comedy, Translated in the Original Ternary Rhyme, by C. B. Cayley. LXXXIV
His conclusion was that most of the unpopularity of Dante was due to ignorance. The only parts of the Divine Comedy which were generally admired, the review stated, were the inscriptions over the gate of hell and the stories of Francesca of Rimini and Count Ugolino. The rest of the poem was considered as owing the high character it had acquired at home to its obscurity (paradoxical as this may seem).

Cary's ability as a translator was discussed in connection with that of Boyd, to whom he was held to be superior; and he was censured for having adhered to a literal translation—in fact to the extent of forcing English into Italian idioms with a license which outrages taste and almost violates grammar. However, he was commended in that he had succeeded in making the poem available to the English reader and in doing justice to the striking merits of the original. Everett further analyzed the Divine Comedy and followed the custom of the Review in pointing out the defects before taking up its

268. Everett stated that the heroic rhyme seemed to be the best adapted to use as a means for rendering Dante's work in English. "Any other kind of English measure would be, if more rapid, too gay; or if more grave, fatiguing."
merits. He considered the influence Dante had upon later Italian poets and the extent to which they imitated him and then compared him to Shakespeare, Milton, and Cowper. In the later reviews of Dante's work, the critics discussed the fidelity of the translators, Cary and Carley, to the original, but these reviews were not as comprehensive as Everett's.

Petrarch was the subject of a review which gave an account of his life and writings and a discussion of his purity of taste and language. His fondness for Greek and Latin literature was noted. The article included translations of one of his sonnets and one of his odes. It was thought that existing translations of Petrarch's works were inadequate. There was no scholarly criticism of his works in this review. Boccaccio, the third great writer of the Renaissance, was noticed by a critic who discussed the respective merits of Dante and Petrarch as well as Boccaccio. "Dante," he

269. Anon., Petrarch. XL

270. Il Decameron di Messer Giovanni Boccaccio, Giulio Ferrario. XIX
declared, "had a mind of the most sublime and original cast and gave to the world the first great poem after the revival of letters. Petrarch created lyric poetry anew and Boccaccio, that rich, easy, mellifluous, flexible prose which is so finely adapted to the national character of the Italians." Boccaccio was the least celebrated because his department of literature lacked the elevation of lyric or heroic poetry and because his writings are licentious. His stories the critic approved in that they went directly to domestic life and the human heart for their sources of interest. The Decameron, while not supposed to be original, had become famous because of the elegance of style, felicity and choice of expression, rich variety of subjects, the spirit and faithfulness of delineations, unaffected naïvété of narrative, dramatic eloquence of dialogue, and poignancy of satirical touches. In fact, Boccaccio gave a panorama of life in all its complicated varieties. The reviewer closed his article with a discussion of the authors who had imitated Boccaccio—chief of whom were Chaucer, Dryden, and Shakespeare.
Machiavelli is another writer of this period who was noticed in the Review. The article is a defense of the author of the Prince and states that his contemporaries of all parties considered him the resolute supporter of a republican form of government although he is accused of being the partisan and teacher of despotism. Evidence to support this viewpoint is given by the reviewer from The Prince and Discourses on Livy. Attention is called to the fact that the former constitutes not one thirtieth part of his writings now extant. His works are not criticized from a literary standpoint.

Another reviewer discussed the work of Michelangelo as a writer who had not received justice.

271. Anon., Opere di Niccolo Machiavelli, Cittadino e Segretario Fiorentino. V Guicciardini and Machiavelli, as historians, were compared to the great Latin historians, Livy, and Tacitus. "The Augustan Age of Italian Literature", IV Botta's History of Italy from 1789 is commended for its clearness and animation.

Anon., Italian Literature in the 19th Century. I

272. Anon., The Life of Michel Angelo Buonarroti, with Translation of Many of his Poems and Letters, by John S. Harford; Life of Michel Angelo, by R. Duppa; Rime e Prose di Michelangelo Buonarroti. LXXXIX
His poems were praised highly and were said to treat of the highest phases of thought. Many extracts of his poems were given by the reviewers, who ranked them with those of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton, and Dante.

W. H. Prescott, in a very scholarly review, discussed Italian Narrative Poetry in general and our discussion will follow his order in treating this type of poetry. He pointed out the fact that Politian gave hints to Goldsmith and Gay and that Pulci furnished Milton and Lord Byron with suggestions.

Boiardo, the author of the epic Orlando Innamorato, Prescott stated, surpassed all Italian writers in fancy. Ariosto's excellencies as a poet were discussed and the review stated that no poet was so universally read by Italians. His narrative poems, satires, and comedies were described as complicated and interrupted, but with a beauty of style. His fiction was said to be often borrowed from the Ancients.

273. W. H. Prescott; The Orlando Innamorato, translated—from the Italian of Francesco Berni, and The Orlando Furioso, translated—from the Italian of Ludovico Ariosto, by W. S. Rose. XIX
The names of Ariosto and Tasso are linked together in all discussions of either. One critic states, "In the works of Ariosto and Tasso together, they (the critics) have discovered every imaginable excellence of which poetry is capable. They find in Ariosto, clothed in the most enchanting dress, all that is wild and extravagant in Gothic fiction, combined with a rich variety of beauties drawn from every department of nature, from the storehouses of human knowledge, and a deep penetration into the character of man. In Tasso, besides these qualities, they discover dignity, pathos, originality of thought, unity of design, boldness of conception, accuracy of description, and whatever else is requisite for making a great epic poet after the most approved Aristotelian directions.

Alfieri, the greatest writer of tragedies in Italy, was declared to be the last of the classics in regard to form and style of drama, but not in regard to spirit. His work was noticed in a review of Romantic Poetry in Italy in which the

274. Anon., The Augustan Age of Italian Literature. IV


276. Anon., Romantic Poetry in Italy. XLVII
Romantic school was discussed. The critic named Dante as the founder, together with Petrarch, Boccaccio, Ariosto, Tasso, and Alfieri as the illustrious writers of this group and stated that they had enriched the language by renouncing pomp and magnificence. Through their efforts, classicism died, but Italian literature was revived.

Italian drama in general was discussed several times in the *North American Review*. In a review of Ginquene's *Literary History of Italy* (VI), it was stated that Italians during the 15th and 16th century developed the drama. All great writers of the period had ambitions to write dramas but their tragedies were deficient both in style and versification and were rather more in the tone of lyric poetry. Their lives were too uniform and monotonous. Maffei began the verse and style of tragedy and Alfieri brought it to perfection and has the true style of Italian tragedy. The Italians were credited with restoring tragedy among the moderns.

In the nineteenth century, Italian Literature underwent a change induced by influences from abroad. Mme. de Staël's works did much to lead writers to

277. Anon., *Italian Drama*. IV
This reviewer also states that Musical Drama was an invention belonging to Italy.
throw off the fetters of classicism and awake to the possibilities of life in all its fulness. Of these, the crowning light is Alexander Manzoni, the foremost Italian figure of the century. He was noticed in several reviews in connection with discussions of various types of literature and in reviews of his own works. He was discussed as a tragedian, a poet, and a writer of fiction. His reviewer called him the most distinguished living poet of Italy and said that his Ode Upon Napoleon was "the finest that has ever been written upon that most attractive but difficult subject". His plays were thought "to lack the compass, variety, fire, deep insight into human passions that belong to a master in this most arduous field of invention. Their structure was simple and spirit quiet. They neither possess the severe beauty of the classical nor catch the wild graces of the romantic school."

It is, however, in connection with his novel, I Promessi Sposi, that Manzoni is entitled to highest praise. In a review of this work and a history of Lombardy in the same period, the critic

278. Anon., The Italian Drama. XXXIX

Anon., Tragedie ed altre Poesie di Allessandro Manzoni. LI

called Manzoni the brightest ornament of historical romance in Italy. The problem the author of an historical romance faced was discussed in detail. Manzoni was declared to have studied contemporary writers of the seventeenth century. He was said to have faithfully portrayed human nature, as well as historical events. His descriptions were fine; the language was beautiful and adapted to the needs of the work. The only adverse criticism was that the stories were too long and his characters did not act enough.

Other authors were reviewed, but the writer will close this section with a few general conclusions about Italian literature drawn from Prescott's review. "Italian literature in its most national branch was devoted to purposes of amusement.... The ennobling sentiment was lacking.... (It abounds) with brilliant inventions, delicate humor, and beautiful coloring of language".

280. Prescott, W. H., The Orlando Innamorato. XIX
B. FRENCH LITERATURE

The reader of today marvels at the number of critical notices which dealt with French Literature in the North American Review during the period of our study. From the first, articles of this nature appeared and, early in its history, the Review established a department in the magazine whose object was to treat of Modern French Literature. The critics discussed this field in such a way as to lead us to the conclusion that the average cultured American had an intimate acquaintance with current French productions in the original as well as in translations. As in their other criticisms, the moral viewpoint was ever present and very scathing denunciations may be found in these reviews. Typical of this attitude, their attack upon Victor Hugo's dramatic works is especially vituperative when the reviewer states that his works are "immoral, of

281. Anon., Drames par Victor Hugo. XLIII
baneful influence, alike devoid of moral truth and sane feeling,—and unfit to be exhibited or read".

A general review of the whole field of literature is to be found in an article criticizing the works of the poets, Delavigne, Béranger, and Lamartine. In this, the reviewer stated that "The French—sought their materials of fiction chiefly in the past; and the genius of the past, the spirit of classical antiquity, was adopted by them. Nature played a subordinate part. They seemed to have a natural talent for perverting objects from their original tendency,—a natural futility of imagination—but they lack a creative faculty and are chiefly borrowers and tolerably successful imitators but not entitled to admiration, the deserved meed of originality". Having attained resemblance to the Greeks, before Corneille's time, no change took place until the days following the coronation of Louis Philippe (1830). "In this artificial and monotonous state, the poetry of France long remained". After 1830, the popular writers appeared, having in many cases thrown off even the pretense of respect for the ancient School.

"Although they call themselves Romantic, they deserve another name expressive of the widest degree of license...for they disdain utterly the laws prescribed by nature, morality and good taste."

The change from the classical to this "romantic school" was perhaps due to the influence of the song-writers. No rules had governed them and they introduced the most startling innovations which undermined the affections of the people for the models of antiquity as well as developed an attitude of license.

Among the earlier writers mentioned was Boileau, several of whose satires were translated and published entire and without comment. His work in general as the outstanding critic of the second half of the seventeenth century, and as poet, was discussed in another issue of the Review in which it was said that various English writers such as Pope, Goldsmith, and Leigh Hunt had copied his work.

La Fontaine's work as a writer of fables was highly praised. He was declared "a great and peculiar genius", who had "great originality, fascination, thoughts fresh and natural, pictures of

283. E. G., VIIIth Satire, On Man. VI

284. Anon., Translation of the IIIrd Satire of Boileau. IV The reviewer called Boileau's IXth Satire the best satire in modern literature and perfectly in the taste of Horace. Anon., Original Poetry. IV
human life perfectly drawn, moral worked out with a clearness, distinctiveness, and force that made an indelible impression on the mind, with an abundant humor which was never cynical". A translation of his works by Elizur Wright, Jr., was praised but said to lack the elegance of the original. A second translation was highly praised.

The three lyric poets, Delavigne, Lamartine, and Béranger, were noticed time and again. Delavigne was judged to be a poet "not of first rank...not original, patriotic, but too extravagant" but Lamartine's work was highly praised. His lyrics were said "to have vigor, purity of thought and feeling, richness and graphic beauty of imagery, the be mastery of versification, and expressive of true sentiments. His La Chute d' un Ange was regarded as unnatural. Another critic declared him to be "a true poet "and reviewed his Cours familier de Littérature, and the best of his poems, saying of these, that they were real, alive, and self-inspired. Béranger was declared to have

285. Anon., Fables of La Fontaine. Translated by Elizur Wright, Jr. LIII

286. Ibid.

287. Anon., La Fontaine, A Present for the Young. From the French, L
originality, newer themes, and to be a writer who tried to please the multitude. At times, his satire was playful; again, his work was serious and solemn. The great popularity of his songs was attributed to their national character.

Victor Hugo's poetry, novels, and other works received a great deal of attention at the hands of the critics. In the main, it was unfavorable, due to his general viewpoint of life. However, he was deserving of credit in that he had succeeded in rendering the cramped versification to which his language condemned him, naturally and pathetically.

289. Anon., La Chute d'un Ange: Episode. XLVIII
290. Anon., Lamartine: Cours familier de Littérature. LXXXIII
291. Anon., Modern French Poets. XLIV
292. Anon., Chansons de P. J. de Béranger. XXIX
293. A late reviewer praises his work and states that he was equally distinguished as a lyric and dramatic poet. That his dramatic poetry introduced a new era in French Literature.
Anon., Oeuvres Complètes de Victor Hugo. LXXXI
293. Anon., Drames, Par Victor Hugo. XLIII
Voltaire is spoken of very highly as a poet. In fact, one reviewer stated that he did not care for French poetry but that Voltaire's Tragedies constituted the most solid foundation of the poetical fame of his own country. Much attention was devoted by the reviewers to the discussion of French drama. In one article, the critic pointed out the debt of French Drama to English dramatists and stated that La Prude had made use of Wycherley's Plain Dealer. Voltaire and Destouches were accused of using some of Shakespeare's plans. Roscommon, Rochester, Dennis, and Savage were also familiar to the French.

Molière's biography was the subject of a review in which the critic discussed his work and influence more than the work of the biographer. "While the French put him at the head of all comic writers, others call him a writer of buffoon farces and say that his characters are not drawn from nature but from fleeting forms of fashionable life." He

294. Anon., Life of Voltaire. XII
295. Anon., Cours de la Littérature Française, par M. Villémain et Histoire de l'influence de Shakespeare sur le Théâtre Français jusqu'à nos Jours par A. L. Lacroix. LXXXVI
296. Anon., Life and Writings of Molière by J. Taschereau. XXVI
was said to have a vein of broad, homely humor rather than elevated comedy and the Review compared him with Shakespeare to his great disadvantage.

Corneille was noticed in two articles— one, a review of Early Literature of France in which the Cid was discussed in connection with the thought of how literature was affected by political affairs. Cardinal Richelieu's relations with the dramatist were discussed, as well as the fact that with Corneille came a revival of drama in France. In the other article, a biography, no specific criticism of either the work or Corneille is given. Guizot was declared by the critic to have attempted to account for Milton, Dante, etc., by a study of the Middle Ages and to do the same for Corneille.

As stated previously Victor Hugo's dramatic works were discussed and criticised unfavorably. His language, feelings, and spirit were said to be theatrical, not dramatic. Synopses of several of his plays were given together with a number of excerpts. Le Roi s' amuse was declared "to be unfit

297. A. H. Everett. XXXVIII

298. Anon., Corneille and his Times, by M. Guizot. LXXXVIII
to be exhibited or read; an absurd, immoral, and indecent composition". His women characters were all bad and the reviewer advised him to read Shakespeare so that he might learn how a master could place women in circumstances quite disastrous to moral rectitude and yet have them stand out pure and worthy of our greatest admiration and sympathy. Hugo was also spoken of as a novelist. He was said to be a writer of romantic novels which exhibited much genius but were disfigured by monstrous creations of fancy. His greatest romance was Notre Dame de Paris, a work of great originality, with faults of execution, full of extravagance of style and sentiment, yet displaying much energy and grace, passion, and power.

Motley reviewed the works of Balzac very favorably as an artist who was not well known in America. He was judged to be neither moral nor immoral, a writer who portrayed life as he found it. His calm, scientific study of nature was compared to that of Goethe. The world furnished him

299. Anon., Drames par Victor Hugo. XLIII
300; Anon., Oeuvres Complètes de Victor Hugo. LXXXI
301. Motley, Les Oeuvres de M. de Balzac. LXV
with materials for his art but he was not a reformer. A lover of minute details, he was given to brilliancy and yet, there was absurdity in his work. Another realist, St. Pierre, was reviewed in an article which was chiefly concerned with his life. His writings were said to deal with the great problems of life and his belief was that writers "are to tell the truth to those who can receive it".

George Sand was somewhat of a problem to the North American. Her writings were thought to be affecting not merely the literary taste, but the political, religious, and social opinions of her countrymen and were "deeply interesting as a study whether we consider them as producing or produced by the general fermentation of spirits that is now going on in France". All her works were pervaded with one purpose—"the same morbid imagination, the same gloomy and passionate spirit, at war with the world and the allotments of providence and discontented with itself," appear everywhere in her writings and give a sad image of the temperament and feelings of the author—In point of vigor and


303. Anon., Oeuvres de George Sand. LIII
originality of genius, she might be compared with Rousseau. Extracts were given from two of her novels---Valentine and Mauprat. The latter was said to be "beautifully written and in a delicate and gentle spirit." She was judged to excel Mme. de Staël in genius.

Dumas' works were dealt with in two articles in the first of which the critic stated that he fell far short of George Sand in inventive genius and mastery of style. While his plays and novels showed much genius, he was too much of a hack writer. He left no strong and distinct image of individual character upon his works. His great aim was evidently to startle his reader. "He was endowed with a strong nervous imagination, great inventive faculty, and keen perception of contrasts and theatrical ability---He had no style." His critic accused him of borrowing, saying, "wherever patient research, analytical investigation profound reflection betrays itself in a passage, we may tolerably sure that he is not its author".

Other French novelists were discussed from time

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304. Anon., Oeuvres d' Alexandre Dumas. LVI

305. Anon., Oeuvres Complètes du Alexandre Dumas, LXXVII
to time such as Paul de Kock, Edmond About, Sismondi, and Amedée Achaid. Achaid was a writer in the average style of the English novelist. His reviewer summed up the general criticisms frequently made of French novelists in talking of Achaid—"His manner is different from the extravagance of Dumas, the satire of About, and the philosophic passion of George Sand".

The North American called to the attention of its readers the works of various French historians in addition to noteworthy biographies and memoirs. The French were considered proficient in the writing of history. Guizot was declared to be among the most distinguished individuals of the age—a philosophical historian whose reputation was second to none in Europe. He was commended for citing parallels in the past and present. The History of Civilization was thought to be a production of great originality and power which would have great influence on the public mind. Thierry's History

306. Anon., Romans de Paul de Kock. LVI
307. Anon., Le Roi des Montagnes by Edmond About. LXXXVI
308. Anon., Julia Severa, par J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi. XV
309. Anon., Maurice de Trevel, par Amedée Achaid. LXXXVI
of Attila was praised as interesting as well as instructive. Ampère was called a brilliant writer and a great historian. Thiers was considered inferior, a writer of poor style, with no veneration for the past. Michelet was not thought to be a true historian for the critic stated that his thoughts had never found their real form but that he would be able to write good historical romances. Among the memoirs which the reviewers commended, was M. Compan's Mémoires sur la Vie privée de Marie Antoinette. This was recommended to all the readers as a delightful book and many extracts were given. A biography


Also Anon., Guillaume Guizot, Alfred le Grand. LXXXIV

311. Anon., Modern French Literature. LXXXIV

312. Ibid.

313. Ibid.

314. Anon., Michelet, La Ligne et Henri IV. LXXXIV

315. XVIII
of Abelard was praised because it revealed a minuteness of research, a breadth of view, masterly power of grouping facts and conceiving scenes, diction masculine and musical, with a great deal about the learning of Abelard and his relations with Héloïse. Two Memoirs dealing with General Lafayette were deemed worthy of notice. Two biographies of Rousseau were reviewed in the same article but no criticism was made. Many extracts were given to reveal Rousseau's character and the available evidence regarding his death. Baron de Grimm's Memoirs were reviewed in the first volume of the Review by William Tudor who gave a biographical sketch of the author and explained how the collection came into existence. He then gave various excerpts which he himself had translated from the French. Most of these were anecdotes dealing with personages who were known to the

316. Anon., Abelard, Par Chas. de Remusat. LXXXVIII


readers of the Review. Later Madame de Grafigny's Private Life of Voltaire was noticed but the reviewer devoted little space to a discussion of her work. On the other hand, he gave a criticism of Voltaire's works. This criticism is also characteristic of that on the biography of Montaigne which was declared to be well worked up but uninteresting to those who were interested in Montaigne as a writer of essays.

Madame de Staël was a personage who was given much space in the early numbers of the Review. One reviewer pronounced her a "most extraordinary woman, and the greatest female that has ever written, with an imagination which was luxuriant to success. A posthumous work, Considerations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française, was discussed at much length. The review was a lengthy discussion of the causes of the Revolution together with extracts from her book. She was thought to have described with great force of eloquence the most interesting events of the period from 1789-1816. Her

319. XII

320. Anon., La Vie Publique de Montaigne, Par Alphonse Grun. LXXXVII

321. Anon., La Vie et les Oeuvres de Mme. de Staël, par Mme. Necker.
remarks on the Constitution, laws, and manners of the English were commented on. The critic thought her gifted with uncommon powers of understanding and mistress of a style of a very rare energy and beauty; "one who unites female ease, vivacity, and grace, to the strength and decision of men, while her faults, we cannot but acknowledge, are common to both sexes. A later work published by her son was treated less kindly by the critic, who censured her manner as too affected, and credited her with too much striving after brilliancy and effort. Yet her language was pronounced flowing and easy. Much of the space in this review was devoted to the details of her enmity with Napoleon.

Various other prose writers and their productions were mentioned from time to time. Chief among the essayists was Montaigne, who was said "to be the first writer in France to popularize knowledge and to lure even the uncultivated to observe and to think." A man who owed little to his age but to whom his age owed much in the improvement of the language and the development of a new

322. Anon., Considérations sur les principaux événements de la révolution française, ouvrage posthume de Madame la Baronne de Staël, publié (1818) par M. Le Duc de Broglie et M. Le Baron de Staël. VII
source of intellectual interest. "He originated the pleasant and colloquial in literature and had a marked influence on English writers." Renan was cited as a famous Oriental scholar and his Essais de morale et de critique were mentioned as a remarkable set of essays judged by literary merit alone. The reviewer praised him for his candor, insight, originality, breadth, and beauty. Constant's Mélanges de littérature et de politique was discussed by a critic who gave no criticism of Constant and his work but a lengthy discussion about Mme de Staël.

French Oratory was discussed at length in a criticism of Mirabeau's works. The writer contrasted Mirabeau with Bonaparte and Robespierre and gave extracts from his speeches. His judgment was that Mirabeau had great eloquence in the proper sense; i.e., he had the faculty of extemporizing with power and effect.

323. Anon., Oeuvres inédites de Mme. la Baronne de Staël, publiées par son fils. XIV

324. Anon., La Vie Publique de Montaigne, par Alphonse Grum. LXXXVII

325. XC

326. XXXVII

327. Anon., XV
This discussion by no means considers all the articles treating of French literature, which appeared in the North American. The nature of this study precludes any such completeness, but the foregoing paragraphs introduce the foremost of those whose works were deemed worthy of review in this magazine. Moreover, since the criticism meted out to French Literature was not as scholarly as that of American or British works, the writer has paid more attention to the material reviewed than to the critics and their work.
C. SPANISH LITERATURE

Spanish literature was little known to Americans during the period under discussion. Many difficulties arose in connection with researches in Spanish. The language was little studied in America and the character of the Spaniards—their bigotry, egotism, and backwardness in learning—made Spanish studies difficult for those of other countries.

Ticknor's History of Spanish Literature was reviewed rather elaborately as being the first real work of the kind that had been made. Other slight attempts in this direction had been attempted. Spanish literature occupied one volume of Sismondi's popular work on the culture of Southern Europe.

Boutewek had also written one chapter on Spanish literature in his work on the Literature of Modern Europe. Boutewek's account was said to be written with acuteness, perspicuity, and candor but the

328. Anon., LXX
author was said to have displayed some German prejudices.

Ticknor's methods were explained and the peculiarities of the Castilian character were discussed in order to give an idea of the difficulties underlying such a work. His observations were said to be acute and at the same time accurate and imbued with a spirit of sound philosophy. All these excellences were thought to give Ticknor's work a distinct value and to raise it above the ordinary level of literary criticism. Ticknor's translations of Spanish literature were distinguished by their fidelity to the original and the ease with which he overcame the difficulties of the meter and versification of the Spanish verse. His style was described as "clear, classical, and correct, with sustained moral dignity that not infrequently rises to elegance". As a critic, his work was said to be conducted in a truly philosophical spirit—not a bare record of books, but illustrated by a personal history of their authors and this again by the history of the times in which they lived. In connection with Spanish literature, he gave a record of Spanish civilization both social and intellectual. The tone of his criticism was both candid and temperate. This literary work was looked upon with
great pride by Americans and was regarded as "doing honor to English literature". Another history of Spanish literature mentioned was one written by a Spaniard, D. Thomas Antonio Sanchez. This work was not criticized but its contents given, among which was a collection of Castilian poems prior to the 15th century.

The most famous Spanish author reviewed was Cervantes. Regarding this work, the reviewer said, "The publication, in this country, of an important Spanish classic in the original, with a valuable commentary is an event of some moment in our literary contributions to the history of continental literature". Cervantes' works were pretty thoroughly examined and some mention of contemporary criticism concerning them given. His masterpiece, Don Quixote, was not reviewed but mentioned for its satire and popularity. His earlier works received attention—his pastoral fiction regarded as affording him no scope for that power of depicting human characters in which he excelled. His plays were said to have perished with the exception of The

329. Anon., Spanish Language and Literature, by D. T. Antonio Sanchez. XXXVI

330. Anon., Works of Cervantes, by M. Sales. XLV
Siege of Numantia which was described as displaying the work of the consummate artist. Cervantes excelled most in his novels, it was thought. They gave ample range for his dramatic talent in the contrivance of situations and the nice delineation of character. His diction was uncommonly rich and attractive.

Spanish Devotional and Moral Poetry was discussed and the reviewer concluded that the general and prevailing characteristics of Spanish devotional poetry were warmth of imagination, and depth and sincerity of feeling. "Its conception was always striking and original and when not degraded by dogmas and the poor puerile conceits arising from them, beautiful and sublime". This defect was thought to result from the frame and temperament of the Spanish mind and was a general characteristic of the Spanish poets, not only in this department of song but in all the others.

The other works noted were those discussing the literature of the Mohammedans. These comprised, it was thought, the work of six centuries, extending from the middle of the eighth to the middle of the


332. Anon., Historia de la Dominacion de los Arabes en España, por el Don José Antonio Conde. LXXX
fourteenth. Their romantic fiction was said to consist of glowing inventions and their poetry was rich in sensuous imagery. From their brilliant literature, it was said, sprang the amorous love conceits of the Provencal troubadours in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It was claimed by the reviewer that the legends of Arthur and Launcelot came from the Arabs.

A discussion concerning who wrote Gil Blas was given considerable attention. The contention was that the work was of Spanish origin. The Cid, the national hero of Spain, was mentioned in different reviews. He was considered important because various foreign writers used the folklore centering about him in their productions. Corneille's Cid was the most famous of these works.

Though very little had been written concerning Spanish literature, the American interest in it was growing. It was stated that a few works published in the United States had shed some light on the interior organization and intellectual culture of the country and had stimulated Spanish study. Such works were the writings of Irving, the travels of

3333 XXV
334 XLV
Lieutenant Slidell, Caleb Cushing's Reminiscences of Spain, Longfellow's Coplas de Manrique, and Eliot's Translation of Quevedo's Visions.
CHAPTER SIX
GERMAN LITERATURE

The *North American Review*'s interest in German literature was manifest from the first, though it is evident that American scholars were not so well informed in German literature as in the French and the Italian. The two German writers given most attention by the *Review* were Goethe and Schiller.

Several translations of Goethe's poems were published in early issues and the opinion was expressed in a review of Goethe's life, written by himself.


      Anon., *Faust, a Dramatic Poem*, by Goethe. LI
      Anon., *Life of Goethe*, by Himself. IV
      Works of Goethe, by F. H. Hedge. XIX


      Anon., *Schiller's Minor Poems*. XVII
      Wm. Tell and Other Poems, from the German of Schiller, by Wm. Peters.
      Life of Schiller, from the London Edition. XXXIX
that "would one see a pure model of the German language, in its best form, it is to be sought in these volumes". The work was recommended to Americans with the remark that Goethe was little known to American readers. The same article contained an eulogy of Faust and spoke of the inadequacy of Mme. de Staël's translation, as it was thought that the German could not be well rendered by the French. Another translation of Faust by A. Hayward Lowell was said to have such merit that it had given to its author an eminent literary rank, as a review of a foreign author had never been more laboriously or conscientiously performed. By a third critic, it was declared that Faust was the most original production of the German must; that it exhibited vice in all forms as mean and hideous yet the work was not one of purely moral tendencies; that it contained some levity and extravagance, but as a whole was characterized by the dignity, composure, and deliberation which distinguished all Goethe's works.

337. Goethe was declared to be the hardest of all German writers to translate for the "charms of his lyrical fragments consist in their exquisite finish and in that airy grace of style and delicacy of execution which a translator cannot render. Dwight's Translations. LXVII
Lewes' Life of Goethe was considered more as an appreciation of Lewes' skill as a biographer and critic, than of Goethe as an author. He was said to have shown more than ordinary knowledge of the German language and literature and was characterized by "philosophic candor, patient investigation, and conscientious fidelity".

In another review of the Works of Goethe the reviewer took up the national literatures and decided that Goethe was the most national poet of Germany, the most fit representative of their literature, and most nearly the universal favorite. His style was distinguished for ease, grace, and variety, and all his poetical compositions were characterized by truth, gravity, and eloquence. It was declared by reviewers that Goethe was equally distinguished in all his literary undertakings—as a dramatist, novelist, lyrist, and even as a scientist.

George Bancroft, the reviewer of Schiller's works, placed Schiller above both Goethe and Wieland in merit. He stated that all his writings were distinguished by a pure morality and an elevated tone of thought and feeling. His dramas received more attention than his other works. His Wallenstein was said to be the beginning of a new series
of dramas, as nearly ten years had elapsed since the publication of Don Carlos. Wallenstein (in three parts) was said to have cost Schiller much labor and two years of time. But the care and study bestowed on this work, besides making it his masterpiece and the grandest poem of his age, facilitated greatly his subsequent dramatic labors. Other plays referred to were Mary Stuart, The Maid of Orleans, The Bride of Messina, and William Tell. In regard to William Tell, it was declared that the author had presented a name which had become a watchword for bravery and patriotism. Schiller's minor poems were considered as to their choice of subject and general characteristics. Examples of these poems were given to show his purity and morality, his sincerity and love of truth, his enthusiasms and nobility. It was said that he produced for the world works, "That will live forever to instruct, delight, and elevate mankind".

Gervinus's History of German Poetry received a noteworthy review. The critic praised Gervinus

for his extensive and profound erudition, and the evident fact that he had studied not only German poetry but that of other contemporary European nations. The work (five large octavos) dealt with "the songs of the bards of heathen antiquity, the Christian poesy of knight, monk, burgher in the middle ages, and the immortal productions of the great masters of modern verse". The work was said to be purely historical, with the author in the background, "elaborate in its style without being pedantic, rich in significant facts, and instructive principles, free from the details of minute criticisms, with a higher artistic merit than is usually found in the productions of his countrymen".

The reviewer attempted to give the readers "some account of Gervinus' work and followed quite closely in the track of the author, expressing his opinions rather than the reviewer's own. He closed his review with a discussion of Goethe and Schiller, though reluctance was expressed at being compelled to omit a discussion of many other German writers. "Gervinus closed his history with the death of Goethe. Since that event, German poetry has degenerated, and become technical in form, and
subjective in spirit. The fountains of poetic inspiration are called up." In these words the reviewer sums up the attitude towards the poetry which had appeared since that time.

Among the works discussed by Gervinus are the two epics, The Nibelungenlied and Gudrun. The former is said to have treated the legends of the heroes of the great Northern migrations with that simplicity of manner, purity and sentiment, and magnanimity of thought, which belong to the heroic age of German literature. The Minnesingers were also given attention but their value was thought of rather lightly. It was said that, "In manliness of character, as well as in originality of genius, the Minnesingers of Germany were decidedly inferior to the Troubadours of Provence". (Grimm called their art womanish.) The Meistersingers were judged to be inferior in matter, but more perfect in form than the Minnesingers.

In regard to the influence which English Literature had exerted on German writers, it was stated that the Gudrun was called the Odyssey, as the Lay of the Nibelungen was the Iliad of Germany.

339. The reviewer stated that the Gudrun was called the Odyssey, as the Lay of the Nibelungen was the Iliad of Germany.

340. Influence of the English Literature on the German.
Anon., Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung.
that it seemed very strange "that no Englishman had been prompted by national pride or by scholarly zeal to record the triumphs which English literature has won beyond the shores of its island home". It was claimed that Milton's Paradise Lost lent inspiration to Klopstock and helped to call into being the modern literature of Germany. The reviewer thought it should be pointed out with peculiar pride that the poems of Thomson, Young, Milton, and Shakespeare "had shed a radiance over the whole land, from the lakes of Switzerland to the German Sea, kindling an enthusiasm and a love for the beautiful, and evoking into life a national literature which scholars of all countries and all tongues delight to admire". It was stated that the German formed literary associations and published weekly papers in imitation of the Spectator. A new era began in German literature, it was claimed, when men began to comprehend, to admire, and to love Shakespeare. It was said that Wieland himself did not perceive the merits of Shakespeare, till they were pointed out by Lessing. It was he that suggested to Wieland the idea of translating his plays. This was said to be only one of the many services which Lessing rendered to the literature of his country. From the moment he
appeared, order began to come out of the chaos of
German poetry and to reconcile the ancient and
modern forms of the drama and make it a better
mirror of national customs and habits.

Lessing, it was stated, was no poet, but
was perhaps the greatest critic of modern times.
His Laocoön had for its object to show that the
isolation of the several fine arts from each other
is essential to their perfection, and that their
common aim is the production of beauty. The pecu-
liar province of poetry is proved to be entirely dis-
tinct from that of both morality and philosophy,
being limited, strictly speaking, to the exhibition
of ideal actions. By his plays, written in prose,
and by marking out the boundaries between prose and
poetry, first establishing the true relations between
them, Lessing was said to have freed German poetry
from the yoke of French dogmatism.

Lessing, it was stated, found an earnest
coadjutor in Herder, who had an intimate acquain-
tance with all the principal English writers from
Chaucer down to Thomson. Mention was also made of
the German knowledge of Swift and Locke; and the
great popularity of Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson,

LVIII
Moore, Burns, and Longfellow. The novelists, Bulwer, Dickens, and Thackeray, it was stated, were almost as well known in Germany as they were in America. Cooper's novels, too were widely read in Germany and a great demand had been made for Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. Some Germans, it was stated, had been mere imitators but the great men whose works compose the literature had never been servile copyists but had used the master-spirits of other lands only to gain new activity for their powers. Thus, did Goethe attain to his "many-sidedness", Lessing to his comprehensiveness of view, and Herder to his love of universal humanity.

A few historians were given rather brief attention. Among these were Gerlach, Schwegler, Mommesen, and Niebuhr. Niebuhr was considered the leader and model for other historians. It was


Römische Geschichte. Von Dr. A. Schwegler. LXXXIV

Römische Geschichte. Von Theodor Mommesen. LXXXIV


Römische Geschichte. Von B. G. Niebuhr. LXI
said that Gerlach's idea differed from that of Niebuhr and his school in that he would not have judgment or criticism applied to the writing of history. Gerlach's book was criticized as being "fine and genial but not good history". Schwegler's work was pronounced to be clear, well-arranged, passionless, and logical. It was a complete contrast to Gerlach's as he applied a searching criticism to all, with wearisome minuteness at times. Mommossen was acknowledged as "first authority in history writing". Niebuhr was praised for his vast knowledge—it was said that "he overlooked the entire realm of things cognizable".

Mrs. Jameson's Social Life in Germany was reviewed in an article which discussed her as a Shakespearian student. It was asserted that she was the most brilliant European woman writer since Madame de Staël and that she possessed "taste, fine appreciation of the beautiful, a keen insight into the mysteries of art, and a high style of aesthetic criticism". In this article some information was given concerning the German people and their intellectual influence upon Europe and America.

344. Anon., Beiträge zur deutschen Schaubuhni. Translated from the German, by Mrs. Jameson. LII
Mention was also made of the German influence on English thought and writings. Reference has already been made to the German influence in regard to Shakespearian criticism. German impress upon such English writers as Carlyle, Coleridge, and Wordsworth was discussed, while Margaret Fuller and R. W. Emerson were the Americans said to be the most profoundly imbued with German thought and study. Longfellow's German studies, it was thought, influenced his literary compositions comparatively little. 345

Henry T. Tuckerman declared that America had not been wanting in excellent translators of German literature, that our scholars and poets had admirably used their knowledge of the language in this regard. "The first experiment was Bancroft's translation of Heeren and since then some of the choicest lyrics and best philosophy of Germany have been given to the American public by Professor Longfellow, George Ripley, R. W. Emerson, John S. Dwight, S. M. Fuller, George H. Calvert, Rev. C. T. Brooks, W. H. Channing, F. H. Hedge, and others."

The reviews of German literature and writers were few in number, but these few sought to cover the entire field of German productions. As a

consequence, the reader gets no very distinct impressions of important epochs in their true relations and comparisons. However, it is evident that American scholars and reviewers were progressive in their German studies, as in all others, and they would pursue their small beginnings to a successful close.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CLASSICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURES

In the articles discussing the translations of the Greek and Roman masterpieces which appeared from time to time in the issues of the North American Review, the attention of the critics was devoted primarily to the translation rather than the content of the original. The value of the ancient classics was universally recognized and, from time to time, the merit of Greek and Latin and their value to an educated man of culture was affirmed. Occasionally a reviewer would discuss the age-old question as to the authorship of Homer's poems; again it would assert definite requirements for a good translator.

Such a standard is found in a review of the Prometheus and Agamemnon of Aeschylus appearing in 1849: "a translator is one who adhering closely to
the words of the original renders them at the same time with idomatic spirit and ease into his mother tongue, unenfeebled by dilution and undistorted by being wrought into forms foreign to the genius of the author; who makes a spirited work under all the disadvantages of transplantation to a foreign tongue,—such a translator—has solved the highest problem of his art". Again, "a faithful translation can be made only by the mind that can take full cognizance of the subject matter of the work translated. A man can translate, only what under altered circumstances, he might have written; and between the version made by a man of taste and genius and that wrought to order by a bookseller's serf, there is vast difference".

In a review of a translation of Ovid's Tristia, the critic declared that "Latin is the hardest of all tongues to translate into English because it lacks conciseness and vivacity". Greek grammars, translations of the great dramas, and other writings were noted frequentlyEdward Everett was commended

346. LXIX, 409 A review of the Prometheus and Agamemnon of Aeschylus by Henry Wm. Herbert.

347. Anon., Review of Prose Writers of Germany by Fred H. Hedge. LXVII

348. Anon., a Translation of the First Book of Ovid's Tristia—by Francis Arden. XV. Dryden, Cowper, and Pope are mentioned as translators, the best being Pope.
for translating a Greek Grammar from the German, for it would aid students. The reviewer stated that the reading of Greek literature brought impressions favorable to virtue and liberty and the ability to understand the tragedians. John Hookham Frere was commended for his translations of Aristophanes' works and declared to be a good Greek scholar.

A number of articles appeared which dealt with translations of Homer. One of these dealt with the discussion of Homeric poetry and the question as to its authorship and paid no attention to the merit of the translation. In the review of Munford's translation of the Iliad there appeared one of the characteristics of the reviewers of this period—space is given to a discussion of Geo. Sandy's translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses and to a biography of Munford, before any attention was given to his work. This work was highly praised, "The great conceptions of the original are so thoroughly rendered with every heightening felicity of epithet, rhythm,

349. Anon., Greek Grammar, translated from German of Philip Bultman by Ed. Everett. XVIII

350. Anon., Aristophanes, A Metrical Version of the Acharneans, the Knights, and the Birds. LXXXVI

351. Anon., The Iliad of Homer from the Text of Wolf, with English Notes and Flaxman's illustrative Designs, Ed. by C. C. Felton. XXXVII
and sound that echoes the sense. His style is not uniformly so well adapted to render the Homeric poetry."

The work of Euripides and Sophocles was reviewed in an article which described the ability of the English translator, T. D. Woolsey, as exact, precise, and acute; and declared him to be at home in the whole circle of Greek history and fable, beside having a taste trained to feel the delicate blending of shades of meaning, in the finely linked constitutions of poetry. "The exactness with which he renders single particles and combinations of particles by good English equivalents is really surprising." The plots of Alcestis and Antigone are briefly set forth, excerpts are given and other dramas of the two Greek writers are mentioned.

The North American reviewers impress the modern reader with their ability as classical scholars. Not only did they have a deep and abiding love for

352. Anon., Homer's Iliad, translated by Wm. Munford. LXIII

353. Anon., The Alcestis of Euripides with Notes.
Greek and Latin but they also wished that such knowledge might be held more widely. Reviews have been cited in earlier pages which urged men of culture to recognize the great value of the classics. They were ready to criticize writers who failed to meet their standards but also equally willing to oppose unjust criticism. Such a case was that concerning an article in the *Knickerbocker* or *The New York Magazine* for June 1847. The article, by Charles A. Bristed, had severely and unjustly censured C. C. Felton's edition of the Agamemnon of Aeschylus. The *Review* arraigned Mr. Bristed for his comments in a manner which proved the reviewer "no mean scholar and also a just critic".

The works of Livy, Horace, Tacitus and others were called to the attention of the readers of the *Review*. A collection of translations

354. LXV

355. Anon., Titi Livii Historiarum Liber Primus. XXX

356. Anon., Horace, Ode II, Book I, Ode IX, V. Also II, III

357. Anon., Well's Edition of Tacitus. VI

from the Greek and Latin Classics made by leading scholars of Cambridge University was commented on and made the occasion for a lengthy essay on the advisability of the study of the classics by English scholars.

E. A. Andrews published a Copious and Critical Latin-English Lexicon founded on the larger Latin-German Lexicon by Dr. Wm. Freund, supplemented with additions, and corrections from other lexicographers' works. The Review praised him highly for his work and in approving of his drawing upon various sources stated that "no complete dictionary can be made by one man, the work needs several".

Various editions of Cicero's orations and essays were noticed in a number of reviews. One reviewer enumerated Cicero's ideas as to requisites for an orator. Others praised highly his De Senectute and De Amicitia; his philosophical writings were declared to "approach near to Christianity". One critic expressed great admiration for his "freshness and nobility of soul".

359. LXXIII


Mr. Dillaway was praised for his editorship of this work. One of Cicero's manuscripts was discovered during this period and the North American reviewed at length the continental work which gave the essay and told the history of the manuscript. Cf. Anon., M. T. Cicero, de Re Publica. XVII
Frequently, the reviewer would devote all of his criticism to a discussion of the original, mentioning very slightly the one who had edited or translated the edition which was the occasion of the review. Again, in telling of the merits of the writer under discussion, he would compare him with some other classical author. The review of Well's Edition of Tacitus illustrates this tendency: "When we compare Livy with Tacitus, Livy is only an historian, Tacitus is also a philosopher; Livy gives you images, Tacitus impressions; Livy produces his effect by completeness and exact particularity, Tacitus by selection and condensation".

Charles Anthon's Classical Dictionary offered an opportunity to the reviewer to discuss similar works which had been published. Hoffman's was declared the best. While Dr. Anthon's work revealed learning and industry on his part, the verdict was that it did no honor to his judgment and accuracy.

In another discussion of Anthon's edition of

361. Anon., Well's Edition of Tacitus. VI

362. Anon., LIV


364. Anon., De Senectute, et De Amicitia by Charles Anthon. LXVIII
Cicero's De Senectute and De Amicitia and also Tacitus's Germania and Agricola, the Review stated that these editions were censured because he borrowed too much from other authorities. Extracts were cited to prove this point.

In addition to meeting the needs of Greek and Latin scholars, the reviewers a number of times directed their attention to the ancient literature of the Hebrew race. If a new translation of the Bible appeared, it was viewed from the standpoint of conforming to the "common version", its "exactness", "beauty", and "power". Professor Willard's Hebrew Grammar was praised in an article which also gave some facts of Jewish history. Frequently, the critic pointed out the difficulties of translation and commented on the individual who was the author of the original.

In addition to the national literatures which have been heretofore discussed there appeared from time to time in different issues of the Review articles which called to the attention of its readers


noteworthy productions of other peoples. Longfellow's collection, Poets and Poetry of Europe, was highly praised for giving to the English reading public access to additional pieces of literature. His reviewers discussed the fact that Italian and German productions had been done into English by a great number of hands and with every degree of excellence, while other fields were new and much of French literature had been neglected. Longfellow's work contained translations of noteworthy poems in Anglo-Saxon, Icelandic, Danish, Swedish, German, and Dutch, as well as in French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. The critic entered into a long discourse on the question of what constituted a good translation and discussed Longfellow's ability as a translator.

Perhaps the Swedish literature received as much attention as any in this group. Two articles

366. Anon., The Poets and Poetry of Europe, by H. W. Longfellow. LXI The work is an honorable memorial of his great attainments as a linguist, in which character, rather than as a poet, his fame will be sustained and advanced by this publication.

367. Anon., The Bondman and Others, by F. Bremer. LXIII

The President's Daughter and the Home on Family Cares and Joys, translated from the Swedish, LVII
reviewed Swedish novels, another, the Edda, while a fourth reviewed Swedish popular poetry. Slavic literature was noticed in respect to the works of Servian, Russian, and Polish writers. Two reviews of Servian popular poetry appeared in different issues of the Review. In one, the critic praised the translator for his excellent work and gave a description of the country life and manners of the people together with his conclusion that though such poetry, the history of a country might be studied. A similar collection of the Songs of the Polish and Russian People of Galicia was discussed in a review in which readers were given directions for understanding its exotic character. These were to be judged by their short songs, as their productions were not bold and dramatic, nor divisible into lyric and epic. Another critic

368. Anon., Edda Saemundar hins Froda, Edda Rhythmica, by E. G. Eijer. XXVIII


Servian Popular Poetry, translated by John Bowring. XXV

370. Anon., ".....Collected by Wenceslaus Olesky. XLIII
considered Bowring's Specimens of Polish Poets and stated that he was a benefactor to mankind through his work as a translator. A work published in Paris, 1835, Living Writers of Poland was said to discuss the serious and earnest literature of Poland and the comment was made that the writer showed a minute and thorough knowledge of the literature of Poland.

The Review called the attention of its readers to an Essay upon the Maltese Language in order to discuss its possible origin in the ancient Punic language. This article shows the interest of the periodical in scholarly research. The works were not discussed from the critical standpoint. Another reviewer discussed the language and literature of the Magyars as offering an interesting field of study and stated that the work under criticism betrayed the national character and love of freedom.

Asiatic literatures were not entirely neglected

371. XXVI
372. LXVI
373. X
374. Anon., Kisfauldi: Kisfaludy Karoly Menden Munkai. LXX
for Lescallier's translation of The Enchanted Throne from the Persian, was criticized because he had suppressed needless and unmeaning passages and in some cases corrected, reformed, and improved the text in his attempt to present an example of oriental manners and to change them to suit western taste. This spoiled the whole. Extracts were given in French. Two select specimens of the theatre of the Hindus were noticed in the North American. The stories of the plays were told but the reviewers made no literary criticism, maintaining that a translation was unlike the original style and hence ought not be subjected to such criticism.

The writer has by no means cited all the miscellaneous foreign works considered in the Review, but has attempted in this brief section to indicate the cosmopolitan range of the critics of the magazine in their attempt to keep the American public informed of important literary productions.

375. Anon., Le Trone Enchantée, conte Indien traduit du Perisan par M. Le Baron Lescalliere. XII

SUMMARY

The foregoing discussion includes the names and literary productions made most prominent in the pages of the North American Review. It has attempted to show how the reviewers, in considering these works, aimed to build up an interest in good literature among its readers and to stimulate American scholars to greater literary activities. It has brought out the fact that the Review improved the general culture by setting before the public the most worthy productions of contemporary writers, as well as a good proportion of those of former periods. Moreover, the Review set up standards for those young writers who were struggling for recognition and furnished a medium through which many of the unknown writers of America had an opportunity to try their powers.

The standards by which its reviewers judged literary productions necessarily varied, from the first to last, the first attempt being little more
than a review of the contents of the works under
discussion; but later, the critics ranged over
every type of criticism with no particular adher-
ence to any one type, unless it might be the his-
torical.

In conclusion, the writer, it is hoped, has
shown that the services of the *North American*
*Review*, through its work as a critical journal, were
invaluable to America. Through its efforts "by
faithful translations, able reviews, lectures, and
essays, the best characteristics of men of literary
genius, schools of philosophy, poetry, and science
have been rendered familiar to the cultivated minds
of the nation".
APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

EDITORS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW
1815-1860

William Tudor (1779-1830) ............. 1815-1817
Willard Phillips (1784-1873) ........... 1818
E. T. Channing (1790-1866) ............. 1818-1819
Richard H. Dana (1787-1879) .......... 1819-1820
Edward Everett (1794-1865) ........... 1820-1823
Jared Sparks (1789-1865) ............. 1824-1830
A. H. Everett (1792-1847) ........... 1830-1836
John G. Palfrey (1796-1881) .......... 1836-1843
Francis Bowen (1811-1890) ........... 1843-1853
A. P. Peabody (1811-1893) ........... 1853-1861

## APPENDIX II

### CONTRIBUTORS TO THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

1815-1860

Dr. W. F. Poole, Compiler

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378. Quoted in a footnote in H. B. Adams, Life and Writings of Jared Sparks. I, 366-371
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379. "The critical notices of books are not counted among the papers contributed. Many of these have been contributed by Professor Felton, Professor Sparks, Charles Folsom, and others, the names of whom are included in the above list." Adams, op. cit., I, 371
APPENDIX III

REPRESENTATIVE REVIEWERS AND THEIR REVIEWS

IN THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, 1815-1860

Bancroft, George, The Life of Schiller
Bowen, Francis, The Life and Writings of Sismondi
Bryant, Wm. Cullen, Solyman Brown's Essay on Poetry
du
Butler, F. A. K., Victor Hugo's Marion Lorne
Channing, Dr. E. T., Moore's Lalla Rookh; Milton and Napoleon
Channing, Dr. Walter, Reflections on the Literary Delinquency of America
Cushing, Caleb, Il Decameron di Messer Giovanni Boccaccio; Daniel Webster's Famous Discourse at Plymouth
Dall, Caroline H., Madame Ossoli-At Home and Abroad.

380. The writer does not attempt to include all the articles each contributed.

This list is compiled from various sources; among them, a list furnished to the writer by the North American Review; Adams' Life of Jared Sparks; Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, etc.

Note: No critical article which appeared in this magazine during the years, 1815-1860, was published with the name of the contributor.
Dana, Richard H., Irving's Sketch Book; Hazlitt's English Poets

De la Barca, Mme. C., Dante

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, Milton and Michel Angelo

Everett, A. H., Lord Byron's Poems; La Divina Commedia de Dante Alighieri

Everett, C. C., Poems by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Everett, Edward, Scott's Lord of the Isles

Felton, C. C., Hyperion, a Romance, by H. W. Longfellow

Gardiner, W. H., Cooper's Novels

Gray, J. C., Wordsworth

Greenwood, F. W. P., Wordsworth; Hillhouse's Hadad

Hedge, F. H., The Works of Goethe

Longfellow, H. W., Poems by Wm. Cullen Bryant; Sanchez's Spanish Language and Literature

Lowell, J. R., D'Israeli's Novels; Poems of Robert Browning


Motley, John L., The Novels of Balzac

Palfrey, James G., Lord Mahon's History of England

Peabody, A. P., Jeremy Taylor's Discourses on Various Subjects; The British Poets, Edited by Prof. Child

Peabody, O. W. B., British Poetry at the Close of the Last Century

Peabody, W. B. O., Essai sur Jean Jacques Rousseau, and others; Sir Walter Scott

Phillips, Willard, De Quincey's Confessions of an Opium Eater
Prescott, W. H., Taschereau's Life and Writings of Molière; Poetry and Romance of the Italians

Sparks, Jared, Augustan Age of Italian Literature; Prose by a Poet; Everett's Orations; Recent American Novels; Bowring's Servian Popular Poetry; Poinsett's Notes on Mexico; et cetera.

Tudor, William, Poems of Lydia Huntley (Sigourney); Grimm's Memoirs; Books relating to America

Tuckerman, Henry T., Essays, Biographical and Critical

Verplanck, Gulian C., Charles Brockden Brown

Waterston, R. C., The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge

Whipple, E. P., Griswold's Poets and Poetry of America; Thackeray's Vanity Fair; Charles Dickens' Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son
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