

All the Kembles fell within his span. He heard the first remarks on the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' and read, damp from the press, all the fiction that has appeared since, from the Burneys, the Edgeworths, the Scotts, the Dickenses, and the Thackerays. As for the poetry, he was aghast at the rapidity with which the Scotts, Byrons, and Moores poured out their works; and even Campbell was too quick for him—he, with all his leisure, and being always at it, producing to the amount of two octavo volumes in his whole life. Somebody asked, one day, whether Rogers had written anything lately. Only a couplet, was the reply—(the couplet being his celebrated epigram on Lord Dudley). 'Only a couplet?' exclaimed Sydney Smith. 'Why, what would you have? When Rogers produces a couplet, he goes to bed, and the knocker is tied, and straw is laid down, and caudle is made, and the answer to inquiries is that Mr Rogers is as well as can be expected.' Meantime, he was always substantially helping poor poets. His aids to Moore have been recently made known by the publication of Moore's Diaries. It was Rogers who secured to Crabbe the £3,000 from Murray, which were in jeopardy before. He advanced £500 to Campbell to purchase a share of the *Monthly Magazine*, and refused security. And he gave thought, took trouble, used influence, and adventured advice. This was the conduct and the method of the last of the patrons of literature in England."

"For half a century," says the *Times*, "his house was the centre of literary society; and the chief pride of Mr Rogers lay not so much in gathering round his table men who had already achieved eminence as in stretching forth a helping hand to friendless merit. Wherever he discerned ability and power in a youth new to the turmoils and struggles of London life, it was his delight to introduce his young client to those whom he might one day hope to equal."

If we turn for a moment from the congenial arena of literary life to the scene of noise and strife which the politics of the early years of the reign of George III. present, we find the poet already enlisted on the side of progress, and associating with men whose names are foremost on the pages of British history in that eventful age, when the foundations of empire were laid on this continent by the colonists who then dictated terms to the mother country. "Let us carry back our minds," says the biographer last quoted, "to the days of Wilkes and the Duke of Grafton, and remember but the mere names of the statesmen who have administered the affairs of the country from that time to the present, and we will have present to our recollection a list of the associates and friends of Rogers. It is, however, to the literary history of the century we must mainly look for a correct appreciation of Rogers's career. He not only outlived two or three generations of men, but two or three literary styles. The Poet of Memory, as he has been called, must not be rashly judged by the modern student, whose taste has been partly exalted, partly vulgarized, by the performances of later writers—we are speaking of a cotemporary of Dr. Johnson. Rogers must have been a young man some 20 years old when the great lexicographer died, and, therefore, a great portion of Johnson's writings must have been to him cotemporary literature. Let those who are inclined to cavil at the gentler inspirations of Rogers think for a moment what English poetry was between the deaths of Goldsmith and Johnson and the appearance of Walter Scott's first great poem. Cowper redeems the solitary waste from absolute condemnation at the most unfortunate epoch in our literature. Rogers no doubt formed his style upon earlier models, but he was no servile copyist; he could feel, without any tendency to apish imitation, the beauties of such authors as