

box, richly carved, lined with crimson velvet, and containing ink bottles, taper-stand, etc., in silver. The room had no space for pictures, except one, an original portrait of Claverhouse, which hung over the chimney-piece, with a Highland target on either side, and broad swords and dirks (each having its own story) disposed star-fashion around them. A few green tin boxes, such as solicitors keep their deeds in, were piled over each other on one side of the window, and on the top of these lay a fox's tail, mounted on an antique silver handle, wherewith, as often as he had occasion to take down a book, he gently brushed the dust off the upper leaves before opening it. I think I have mentioned all the furniture of the room, except a sort of ladder, low, broad, and well carpeted, by which he helped himself to books from the higher shelves. On the top step of this convenience, Hince, a venerable Tom-cat, fat and sleek, and no longer locomotive, usually lay, watching the proceedings of his master and Maidd with an air of dignified equanimity."

The presence of the Highland target, broad-swords and dirks, in Scott's "den," reminds us what a passion he had for military glory. Before his marriage, while still residing at his father's house, 25 George Square, he was quartermaster to a volunteer corps of Light Dragoons, which had been formed chiefly through his energy. That old cynic, Kirkpatrick Sharpe, thus describes his appearance in regimentals. "I remember seeing from the window Walter limping home in a cavalry uniform, the most grotesque spectacle that can be conceived." It is difficult to imagine that most sane of men ever making himself "grotesque," and Sharpe saw something to ridicule in everybody. But it is certain that Sir Walter was never intended for the pomp and circumstance of war. He was a true borderer, ready, doubtless, to hold his own with any man; but able to wield a stout Jeddart staff better than a Highland dirk, even as he was able to paint a Dandy Dinmont better than a Fergus McIvor. How brave a soldier he was in matters that try body and soul infinitely more than material warfare, there is no need to tell. There is no more noble and pathetic picture in all the records of men of letters than that of Scott: Already old, long used to

"That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends."

Quietly putting all thought of personal ease aside, and girding himself to write away a debt so enormous that a weaker man, on being confronted with it, would have lain down and died. The house in Castle street, which, as he touchingly said, had "sheltered him from the prime of life to its decline," was sold. Lady Scott, affectionate but not heroic, succumbed to mental pain and mortification. And alone, in a third-rate lodging-house at No. 6 St. David street, Sir Walter sat down to his stupendous burden.

To Edinburgh in 1798 came the brilliant Sydney Smith. He had started to Germany with a pupil, and his own account was that he put into Edinburgh "under stress of war." It was an event of some importance to the country, considering his part in originating the *Edinburgh Review*. "One day," he says, "we (Smith, Brougham and Jeffrey) happened to meet in the eighth or ninth story or flat in Buccleuch Place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed that we should set up a review; this was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed editor and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the *Edinburgh Review*." This first number was published in October, 1802. One is tempted to wish that Dr. Johnson had lived to read it, and that it had greeted the eyes of that hater of Scotland and Scotland's staple, with the motto first proposed for it: "*Tenui musam meditamur avena*—"We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal."

In Edinburgh Sydney was married—though not to a Scotchwoman—making on his wife the handsome settlement of "six small silver teaspoons much worn." The departure of the happy pair to London, where they lived I am afraid to say how long—"on invitations and his mother-in-law's pearls," brought the wit's editorial career to a close.

The first recognized editor of the *Review* was Jeffrey, whose diminutive stature, so out of all proportion to his intellectual power, might have passed as one of the most striking illustrations of the proverb that "gude gear is made up in wee bundles." "He hasn't body enough to cover his mind with," said Sydney Smith, "his intellect is indecently exposed." Professor Wilson's bride was not pleasantly impressed by him. "Mr. Jeffrey," she writes to her sister, "is a horrid little man, but held in as high estimation here as the Bib'e." Children, however, who are said to be better judges of character than grown people, were devoted to Jeffrey; and Jeffrey was devoted to them. Arriving at Foston, on one occasion, during Sydney Smith's absence, he requested to be taken to the children, who happened to be amusing themselves with a very small donkey.

Jeffrey threw himself into the play with ardour, and finally urged by the little ones, mounted the donkey. When Sydney returned, it was to find a tableau on which he immediately improvised:

"Witty as Horatius Flaccus,
Great as Jacobin as Gracchus,
Riding on a little jackass."

Brougham, the remaining member of the brilliant trio whose wit and audacity had so much success, was, though the son of an English landed proprietor, born in Edinburgh. His father, having lost by death his betrothed, to whom he was passionately attached, came to Edinburgh to beguile his sorrow. This he effectually did by marrying the niece of Principal Robertson; and, residing in Edinburgh, his son Henry was educated at the High School and admitted to the Scottish bar.

The Tories in accepting formally the new regime, had transferred to the Whigs on their own account the animosity with which they had hitherto regarded them as adherents of the House of Hanover. The Edinburgh reviewers held—or, to shock their opponents, professed to hold—opinions scarcely consistent with devotion to any royal House. As during the progress of an epidemic, milder forms of the disease attack many whom the epidemic itself spares, so during and after the revolution in France, every government in the world was, to some extent, unsettled by revolutionary doctrine. It was a time when those who were for the old order at all felt themselves bound to utter no uncertain sound. Nor did they. The famous English *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's Magazine* took up the gauntlet which the reviewers had thrown down. The first number of *Blackwood* appeared in October, 1817, succeeding the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, which only lived through half a dozen numbers. The latter had been, as to politics, colourless; the first issue of *Blackwood* fell like a thunderbolt from a clear sky. In addition to its assaults on Coleridge and Leigh Hunt, it contained the celebrated *Chaldee Manuscript* of Professor Wilson. When, later, Leigh Hunt threatened prosecution, his threat was scorned as "a cockney crow." "Who the devil," cried Lockhart, "cares for all cockneydom?" The magazine lived, and lives, and is likely to live—perhaps long enough to record the advent of Macaulay's New Zealander.

The soul of *Blackwood* in its early days was Professor Wilson. Of godlike figure and stature, and with "tawny mane" floating to the breeze, Christopher North was one of the sights of Edinburgh. His Toryism was honestly come by. "John," said his mother, after hearing that he was writing for the *Edinburgh Review*, "if you turn Whig, this house is not big enough to hold us both." At the early age of thirty-four, "John" obtained the chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University. His students worshipped him; and on his return to them after the death of his wife, so showed their sympathy, that he fairly broke down.

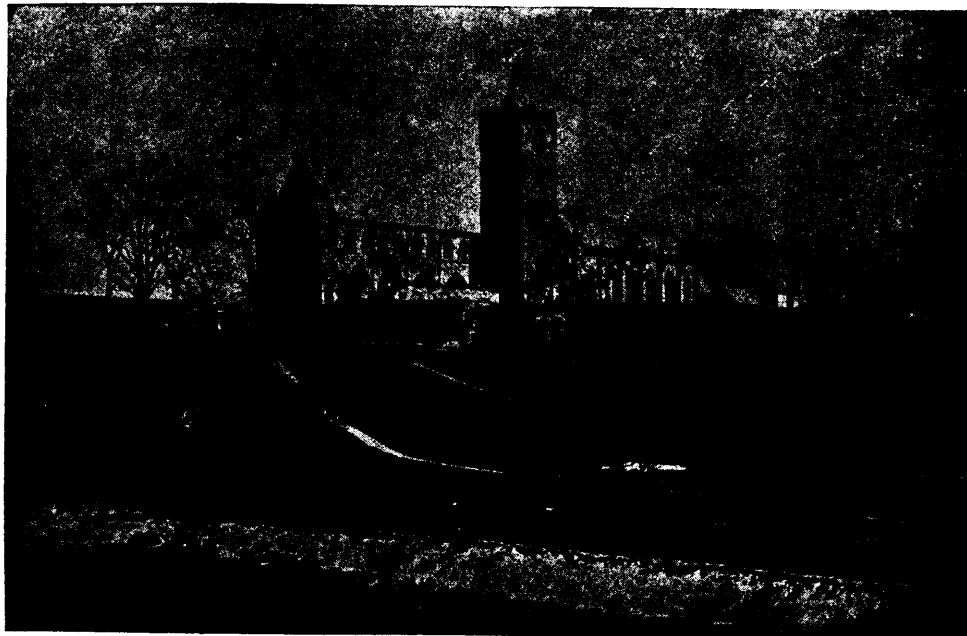
"Leaning his lion-like head upon his desk," says the author of *Old and New Edinburgh*, "he exclaimed in a low voice, never forgotten by those who heard it, 'Oh, gentlemen, forgive me! but since we last met I have been in the valley of the shadow of death.'"

The brilliant professor of Logic and Metaphysics, Sir William Hamilton, was also one of the early contributors to *Blackwood*. So was his brother Thomas, the author of *Cyril Thornton*, and, if we are to believe *Peter's Letters*, of "a thousand beautiful *jeux d'esprit*," both in prose and verse. Scott, Henry Mackenzie, De Quincey, Brewster, Lockhart, Alison, Aytoun, Hogg, Bulwer, Warren, Dr. Moir, and hosts of others, have adorned its pages, as did that "large-brained woman or large-hearted man" so lately lost to the world—George Eliot.

In a single article it is impossible even to glance at events for which the days of which we are writing are renowned: the rise and progress of the famous *Scotsman*; the philanthropic and successful efforts of the brothers Chambers in furnishing to the million literature as cheap as it was excellent; the triumphant success of Sir James Simpson, the "grand old Scottish doctor," in his experiments with chloroform. Hosts of representative Scotchmen we must pass, all but unnamed: Cockburn, with his courtly and idiomatic Scotch; Clerk of Eldin, also with his Scotch—which, if not so pure as Cockburn's, answered his turn. "Do you spell water with two t's in your country?" asked an English judge who was amused at Clerk's pronunciation. "Na my lord," replied the lawyer sternly, "we dinna spell water wi' twa t's, but we spell mainners with twa n's." Then there was Kirkpatrick Sharpe—already more than once referred to: his dress pre-historic; his house an old curiosity shop; his tongue scandalous; his political belief, that (as Johnson averred) the devil was the first Whig. No one who has visited Abbotsford will forget his etching of Queen Elizabeth dancing "high and disposedly;" and his Margravine and Lady Gwydyr show that he excelled in the graceful as well as the grotesque.

The "Old Saloon" of the Mes-srs. Blackwood, at 45 George street, is classic ground. It is to-day almost the same as when described in *Peter's Letters*—"an elegant oval saloon lighted from the roof;" and learned and famous men yet resort to it, but alas! not like the men of o'd. I challenge any country and any age to produce a company at once so witty, so patriotic, so sane, and so lovable, as those grand old Tories of the days of Scott and Wilson. If the illustrious ones of this world haunt as shades, the places in which they delighted while yet in the body, what charming ghosts must linger about the old saloon! No pallid spectres they, but genial livers over of "*Noctes*" in which their wit out-sparkled the wine, and "*Dies*" in which their native heather outbloomed the rose.

A. M. MACLEOD.



DUNBLANE CATHEDRAL.