

pher's stone. He is a man, however, of sane, clear, and subtle understanding, of varied accomplishments, and deeply versed in his own science, the chair of which, in the Edinburgh University, he narrowly missed attaining. He sometimes lectures with success in public; he published, a good many years ago, a series of tracts by "Victorious Analysis," with a high and beautiful meaning, and more recently the tragedy of *Galileo Galilei*; and so he lives on there, in Edinburgh, with one believing and helpful disciple, a life of scientific romance in an age of scientific prose. But to return. In religion, the aid had been secured of the well known Isaac Tayler, the author of *The Natural History of Enthusiasm* and of *Wesley & Methodism*. So that, on the whole, *The North British Review* started under very good auspices, and with very fair promises of success.

Dr. Welch died the year after he had commenced the labors of editorship, and it passed into the hands, for a short time, of Mr. E. Maitland, an Edinburgh advocate, whence it was received by Dr. Hanna, the biographer and son-in-law of Dr. Chalmers; so that three of our chief reviews were being conducted by sons-in-law of distinguished men—*The Quarterly*, by Mr. Lockhart, a son-in-law of Sir Walter Scott's; *The Edinburgh*, by Mr. Empson, a son-in-law of Lord Jeffrey's; *The North British*, by Dr. Hanna, a son-in-law of Dr. Chalmers'; while a son of James Mill was editing *The London and Westminster*. So powerful, even in literature, is the hereditary principle! Somewhat more than a year ago, *The North British* ceased to be edited by Dr. Hanna, and was transferred to Professor Fraser, its present conductor. This gentleman is the son of an Argyllshire minister, was educated for the Scotch Church, at the Edinburgh University, where he was a favorite student of Dr. Chalmers, whom he followed into the Free Kirk to become Professor of Logic in its metropolitan college. In England, as well as in Scotland, *The North British* is said to be doing well among reviews, not at present a very prosperous class of publications. In politics, its principles are liberal; it recognises the interest and importance of the new social theories, without committing itself to any of them. It acknowledges the right of the State to supervise industrial arrangements, and tends towards the advocacy of a general system of education; altogether its religious views are orthodox, without, however, being sectarian. In addition to the contributors already named, we can mention that most shrewd and hearty observer, Mr. Samuel Laing, the Norway tourist; Principal Cunningham, and Professors Fleming and McDougall, of Edinburgh; Dr. Hamilton, the earnest minister of the National Scotch Church in Regent's Square; Dr. Kitto, versed in Palestine; Thomas de Quincy, who has contributed some half dozen articles or so, among them a striking one on Pope; the Rev. Charles Kingsley, the author of *Alton Locke*, whose hand we recognised mauling Festus-Bailey; and Mr. Anthony Panizzi, the Librarian of the British Museum, who writes upon Italian literature and Italian affairs, and in a review of Sir Harris Nicolas's *Nelson Despatches*, is said to have "settled" the question whether our naval hero was right or wrong in hanging some Neapolitan prince or other. Indeed, the library of the British Museum sends more than one contributor to *The North British*. Thus Mr. John Jones lately explained in its pages the system pursued in his own department, and there, too, figures Mr. Coventry Patmore, whose ingenious and subtle essays on architecture are, we confess, more to our taste than his poetry. Last, not least, among the contributors to *The North British*, is Mr. David Masson, a searching and meditative writer, chiefly on social topics, yet the critic, too, of Wordsworth and Carlyle's *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. But stop—we are forgetting one of the cleverest articles that have been recently published in any review—that on "The Literary Profession," which appeared about a year ago, and is from the pen of a Mr. John W. Kaye, of whom we are likely to hear more.

It had been one of the designs of *The North British* to secure the support of the English Dissenters, but this was soon found to be impossible. Stimulated by the appearance of *The North British*, some wealthy English Dissenters founded *The British Quarterly Review*, the first number of which came out in February, 1845, then, as now, under the Editorship of Dr. Vaughan, The Doctor is the Principal of the Lancashire Independent College, a leader of the Congregational dissenters, and formerly preached in a chapel at Kensington. He writes a great deal in his own review, and chiefly with the aim of diminishing the influence of such living authors of renown as he considers, from their insinuating scepticism, dangerous to the faith of the rising generation. The more marked

of his papers in this branch are those on Theodore Parker, Emerson, and Carlyle. Yet an article from his pen in one of the earliest numbers of his review, entitled "The Priesthood of Letters," said a good many things which were looked on by his friends as far too bold. In theological and biblical literature he has had the assistance of Dr. Davidson, likewise of the Independent College. In political and social economy, a good deal has been done by that striking mediocrity, Mr. Edward Baines, the editor of *The Leeds Mercury*. Mr. Edwards, formerly of the British Museum, and now at the head of the Manchester Free Library, contributed an instructive paper on public libraries. And here, too, in these dashing sketches of Macaulay, Carlyle, and D'Israeli, do we not once more recognise the hand of the omnipresent Mr. Lewes?

The same month of the same year that witnessed the birth of *The British Quarterly*, welcomed to the light the first number of *The Prospective Review*, the organ of English Unitarianism, as the other is of orthodox dissent. This small and modest-looking publication has been and is managed by a trio of Lancashire Unitarian ministers, the Rev. John James Tayler of Manchester, and the Rev. Messrs. Thom and Martineau of Liverpool. In general talent, although it is of a refined rather than of a vigorous kind, Mr. Tayler is considered to stand at the head of his class; and certainly none of his brethren have produced a work displaying as much acumen as his *Retrospect of the Religious Life of England*, although as sermons many Unitarians would rank Mr. Martineau's *Endeavors after the Christian Life*, higher than Mr. Tayler's *Christian Aspects of Faith and Duty*. But we must leave these questions of precedence to more competent judges, and conclude with saying, that while *The Prospective*, by the nature of the case, circulates almost exclusively among the sect of whose doctrines it is the organ, yet it occasionally contains articles on neutral topics which, from their calm elegance of style and discriminating intellectuality, might be perused with pleasure by even the most orthodox.

EXCELLENCIES AND PECULIARITIES OF THE FRENCH "SYSTEM" OF GOVERNMENT.—SECRET OF SUCCESS AT THE LATE EXHIBITION.

The practical and observant Paris Correspondent of the *New York Commercial Advertiser* in a careful and impartial analysis of the recent Message of the French President, Louis NAPOLEON, thus sums up the distinctive characteristics of the French system of Government, in so far as it excels those of any other civilized Government. His remarks, however, have more point contrasted with American, rather than European experience. He observes: The message throws incidentally a flood of light on the distinctive features of the institutions of the country. No one can read it without gaining a clear idea of the causes of the superiority of France to all the other nations,—without understanding why Frenchmen prefer remaining at home to emigrating even to the rich prairies of the West. It is a remarkable fact that the great majority of emigrants from the port of Havre are Germans. The secret of this patriotism lies in the admirable economy of the French administration, and the adaptation of political institutions to social wants. Certainly, the army is too large, and there are too many civil functionaries, but they are well kept at comparatively small expense. No other Government has such an admirable system of account-keeping, in all the grades of administration; and the mode of collecting taxes is wonderful for its simplicity, accuracy and economy. The supervision of able engineers, salaried by the state, assures the excellence and stability of railroads, public buildings, and bridges, and prevents the explosion of steam-boilers in locomotives, manufactories and vessels; the prevention is so efficient that not more than half a dozen explosions of the kind take place annually, in this nation of thirty-six millions of people. Wise police regulations make it impossible to erect a private building with walls so thin as to endanger the lives of the inmates or those who pass by. Instead of giving over the lives of the citizens as a prey to every quack who may be plausible enough to win the confidence of the ignorant or unsuspecting, no precautions are spared to secure thoroughly educated, experienced and scientific physicians; to gain a diploma, one must have had long experience at the bedside of the hospital sick, and sustained the searching scrutiny of able examiners.

A druggist, too, has gone through a long course of study, lectures and examinations; a broken down merchant is not permitted to