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THE EVOLUTION OF TERMINOLOGY IN ENGLISH PERIODICAL CRITICISM
OF PROSE FICTION, 1800-1832

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
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in

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by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to offer an analysis of the terminology used in the English periodical criticism of prose fiction from 1800-1832. The specific aim of the study, however, is to indicate the extent to which critics writing for representative periodicals of the era continued to apply to the new literary genre, terms and concepts borrowed from criticism of the older literary types. An effort is made to point out both new interpretations given to terms of ultimate classical origin and to mention recent additions to the terminology. Incidentally, contributions made by specific periodicals also receive some attention.

Because contributors to all the journals often used terms very vaguely, careful examinations of the major terms in context are necessary. Only in this way may changes in meanings be detected. Only by this means may a clear insight be gained into the critical concepts for which the terms are symbols. Thus, throughout the study, not only the major terms, but also the minor descriptive words used with them receive consideration.

The material for the thesis is the reviews and articles in a representative group of English periodicals and numerous photostats and microfilmed copies of reviews in rare periodicals. At least one complete publication of each type

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(routine monthly reviews, quarterlies, magazines, and weeklies) and numerous imitative or lesser periodicals have also been examined.

The novel is a new literary genre, having no natural or historical terms of its own. Both the epic and drama, however, antedated the most ancient criticism. Yet modern criticism of these older forms is remade classicism. Thus it is reasonable to assume that at first there would be some transfers from the poetic groove to the fictional one. Fielding's significant contributions to criticism of the novel in the eighteenth century are well known. He pointed the road for later critics to follow. For terms and theories, however, Fielding had turned to the classical criticism of the epic and drama. Yet after 1800, the decided advance made in the writing of novels and the changes wrought in poetic criticism by Wordsworth would both be expected to produce changes in the terminology of the criticism of prose fiction.

In the routine reviews of the day, the Monthly Review and its various imitators, however, extensive use of neoclassical terminology was obvious from 1800 to 1832. Still, there were faint traces of changes in interpretations of terms after 1815 and a greater number after 1820, especially in terms denoting the qualities of authors as revealed in their works.

In the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review, and their kindred publications, there was also a heavy reliance upon classical and neoclassical terminology; but after 1815
some reinterpretations of older terms appeared. Moreover, from 1820 on, some reviewers in the Edinburgh Review tended to introduce a few terms with romantic connotations; and some contributors to the Quarterly Review turned to classical criticism, especially to the Poetics of Aristotle, for terms and concepts to apply to the novel. They often emphasized terms hitherto applied almost exclusively to tragedy. During the last two or three years of the period, both great quarterlies introduced a few terms specifically adapted to the peculiar character and the particular function of the novel.

The magazine and the weekly publications, however, offer the greatest number of new terms and of reinterpretations of old terms. Variations were especially noticeable after 1818 in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, in the London Magazine, and in the Examiner. At a somewhat later date innovations appeared in the terminology of the New Monthly Magazine, in the Athenaeum, and in Fraser's. Of course, the more conservative magazines and weeklies like the Gentleman's Magazine and the Literary Gazette also presented variations in interpretations of old terms, certainly after 1815; but they introduced fewer new terms than did the other publications.

It is worthy of note, however, that most of the changes in meanings and many of the new coloques were similar to those found in the current criticism of the drama and of poetry. In short, these critics did not evolve a
complete set of terms adapted to the special problems presented by the novel. Furthermore, their innovations in interpretations often resulted rather from their careless use of terms than from a conscious effort to modify existing critical words to suit the requirements of the new literary genre. Though many terms in the periodicals received greater emphasis than they had during the preceding century, the great bulk of the terminology remained very similar to that used by Samuel Johnson in his criticism of older literary types. The emphasis was still upon a probable, natural, moral and useful fiction. Many of the terms, even those which seemed new, were English equivalents of Aristotelian terms. There were indications also of Horace's influence. In addition, there appeared traces of the theories of Addison and of Young, especially in the use of such words as genius, imagination, and fancy. Also present were vestiges of neo-Longinian terminology. Among the nineteenth-century critics, Wordsworth had some slight influence after 1815 upon terms related to characterizations; and Coleridge had a considerable influence after 1820 upon the terms imagination and fancy and upon the critics' concept of the artistic characterization as involving a representation of universal and particular traits. Hazlitt was naturally the most influential of all since his contributions to the periodicals were the most extensive.

Yet even in the periodicals published in 1832, there continued to be a mixture of classical, neoclassical, romantic, and what might be termed functional terms, the first
two types being greatly in the majority. In many publications
the reviewers attempted more searching analyses of the means
whereby certain effects in the novel might be achieved and
used their terms with greater care than before. The critics
in the reviews and in the quarterlies, however, were still
wedded to traditional concepts; and the reviewers in the
newer magazines appeared too uncertain about what standard,
if any, should be applied to the novel for any of the reviewers
to select or to evolve a complete set of terms for use
in the criticism of the novel. The terminology was in the
throes of birth, perhaps soon to emerge completely formed.
As the period closed, however, the permanent form which the
terminology would assume remained in doubt. Most critics
of prose fiction continued to be dependent upon classical
and neoclassical terminology.
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PREFACE

Because much of the terminology in the reviews of prose fiction (1800-1832) is similar to that in eighteenth-century criticism, I believe that some indication of the interpretations, especially of "difficult" terms, in that earlier criticism may prove helpful to the reader. Accordingly, I include here a very brief glossary of the terms most frequently used by the reviewers with the meanings commonly given them by the eighteenth-century critics.

Glossary

art— involuntary working of universal principles or the conscious application of principles (or rules)— sometimes merely of common sense— to the subject.
catastrophe— (historical or Aristotelian) entire tragic experience, (loosely) unhappy ending, or merely ending.
catharsis— emotional purging through emotions of pity and fear (Aristotelian)— misinterpreted by the critics of the eighteenth century as involving ethics or morality.
character— 1) an historical portrait, 2) a representation of types of human beings, 3) a presentation of traits common to all humanity, or 4) a combination of the last two.
conception— creative talent or the product of creative talent.
decorum— 1) consistency in character portrayal; 2) general moral refinement; 3) appropriate to a specific type of character, usually nobility; 4) rarely, the universally suitable and appropriate.
fancy— 1) faculty of reproducing images, 2) that of creating images completely unrelated to the actual, 3) the power of producing ideas.
genius—1) consummate originating powers, general transcendental native ability; extraordinary, inexplicable, innate, and undisciplined powers of invention; or 2) a man possessed of such powers—innate general ability (including inspiration); 3) a generally powerful mind concentrated in one direction. Original genius—innate (often undisciplined) power of creating or originating.

humor—1) a sympathetic sense of the incongruous (related to wit rather than to pathos), 2) the agreeably ludicrous or ridiculous.

imagination—power of producing images frequently so vivid that they seem real and arouse the reader's emotions (often opposed to reason and connected with inspiration).

imitation—representation of the immediate world, the actual; a presentation of Aristotelian universal truth or reality "disengaged from accident"; copying of another author's style or material.

invention—1) creative imagination or originating power producing characters and actions that seem new, 2) the discovery of essential or universal truth underlying outward appearances; 3) the faculty of imagining and fitting together episodes into plot or specific traits into character.

judgment—1) cultivated instinct for propriety or a kind of taste; 2) an ability to discriminate, to understand, and to evaluate.

nature—1) typically true human behavior; 2) humanity in general (or often human beings in the salon); 3) also such loose concepts as the immediate world, innate general ability or genius, the ancients, universal laws, the ideal.

originality—power, mainly innate, to imagine and to create what seems new.

plot—1) sequence of events related by cause or design, 2) merely mechanical organization, 3) combination of the two meanings (short of organic unity).

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1 In the nineteenth century the term came to denote a fusion or unification of all the faculties or powers of the mind in the construction of the ideal. It gave unity to the literary works and was the agent for expressing a general conception in images.
poetic justice— the punishment of vice and rewarding of virtue at all costs.

power— 1) innate imaginative force; 2) specific inherent talent; 3) effectiveness resulting from genius or imagination (almost never remarkable imaginative, mental, and emotional qualities).

probability-- 1) general correspondence to past events; 2) consistency of plot and character; 3) reasonableness in the light of universal human behavior, often emphasizing cause and effect.

real— 1) consonant with the actual world, 2) artistic and moving effectiveness, 3) semblance of universal truth (neo-Aristotelian).

sense-- 1) power of reasoning (or of rationalizing); 2) innate, sometimes partly cultivated, feeling for what is "universally and permanently" suitable (at times almost synonymous with genius).

style— 1) manner or method of composition, 2) language.

sublime— 1) figurative language; 2) picturesque thought and imagery; 3) supreme power, magnitude or grandeur.

taste— 1) an inherent and also acquired sense of the universally appropriate, 2) a feeling for what is conventionally suitable, 3) a vague but important sense of the best.

truth-- 1) factual or historical accuracy, 2) correspondence to the immediate world or the works of nature, 3) the universally accepted scheme of things, 4) the ideal.

unity— 1) oneness of design and of action, 2) general impression of continuity.

verisimilitude or vraisemblance— 1) semblance of reality achieved by sheer accuracy of details, 2) a semblance in agreement with general truth, 3) a combination of the two, 4) sometimes merely a synonym for possibility.
INTRODUCTION

The statements of the critics of the so-called romantic period in English literature provide an interesting subject for study. The day of the dogmatic critics is commonly supposed to have passed, and the dawn of a complete change in creative and critical work has come. But this supposition is somewhat erroneous — at least with respect to periodical criticism of prose fiction. Here one reads of the value of good taste, common sense, and judgment on the part of the novelist; of the necessity of a moral or useful tendency in a pleasing work of fiction; of the desirability of consistent, appropriate, and universally true characters; of well-managed plots that have unity. Of course, genius, originality, and imagination are greatly commended; but very often some sort of restraint for them is recommended.

Some reviewers even mention the rules of the ancients. For instance, there is this passage in the Quarterly Review:

The novel, in short, is an accommodation of the ancient epic to the average capacity of the numberless readers of modern

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times. It is not probable, that, with the exception of Fielding, the writers in this species of composition deliberately proposed to abide by the rules of the Stagirite, yet we shall find that all the most skilful and successful of their productions have been conducted conformably to the principles on which those rules were founded.

The reviewer states further:

A complete critical examination, therefore, of the conduct proper to the construction and execution of the novel, would tend to develop the laws by which even the loftier efforts of genius should be regulated; and even such a hasty survey as we can promise will prove two important truths, first that the rules of classical poetry originated not merely in caprice and custom, but are founded in truth and general nature; secondly, -- that every good writer originates them again in his own mind, and by the laws of his own intellect necessarily prescribes their observance to himself, while engaged in the labour of production. And we may, perhaps be enabled to illustrate this position, that, unless he does so originate them by the necessity of his own mind, the mere knowledge of them is insufficient to constitute a good writer, and their mechanical observance will fail to produce a lively and vigorous work of imagination.

Here, in the application of the rules of the epic to the novel, in this reiteration of the nature versus art stand of the neo-classicists, one sees that Romanticism does not rule; and one wonders to what extent the terms and theories of a presumably outmoded type of criticism have influenced the evaluations of the comparatively new literary genre, the novel.

Specifically, what is the source of the terminology of fiction, which has no natural or historical terms of its own? The novel is a new form. But drama and the epic antedated the most ancient classical criticism. Moreover, most

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modern criticism of these earlier types is remade classicism. Thus it is reasonable to assume that there may be some transfer of classical terms and concepts from the poetic groove to the fictional one, some adaptations and variations of these borrowed terms—all indicating the influences of older thought on novel criticism. In addition, there would, of course, be indications of the development of new concepts, particularly, one would think, after 1800.

For various reasons this date, 1800, seems a very good one at which to begin a study of terminology. In the first place, this year marks the publication of Wordsworth's Observations Prefixed to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads, a document which "served to make intelligible forever the dividing line between two regions in criticism."¹ From that time on, therefore, one might expect new—sometimes romantic²—terms and concepts to appear in the criticism of the novel just as they did in that of poetry. In the second place, a study of the critical findings of such authors as J. E. Spingarn, A. J. Tiele, and Joseph B. Feidler reveals a paucity of criticism in comparison with the production of prose fiction before that date; and any conclusions with regard to terms and theories should be based on an adequate body of critical material.

² Romantic in this study denotes the Gothic, the transcendental, the impressionistic, the unanalytical and inexplicably appreciative.
However, the works of the three critics just mentioned and an article by Warshaw furnish some pertinent information concerning this earlier fictional criticism.¹

Before 1579, writers of fiction aimed at amusing, edifying, or instructing their readers by means of such realistic representations of everyday life as would arouse the sympathetic emotions of the readers and make them believe in the fiction. They demanded a certain unity in structure, a sort of universality of character, and a simplicity and directness in style. All of their terms sound strikingly like those applied to epic and dramatic poetry of the time. Throughout the subsequent phases of the development of the novel — the "middle class" stories by Nashe and Deloney; the pastoral of Sidney and the Euphues of Lyly; John Barclay's Argenis; the imported French heroic romances and their English imitations; Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; Mrs. Behn's short "true" romantic novel; the satiric romances, criticizing the improbable plots of the serious romances; the chronique scandaleuse, that pretended to reform by presenting ultra-realistic pictures of evils; and the historic stories, aiming to inform the reader

pleasantly -- the major concerns of the English fictionists and their few critics were the truth or reality of the narratives and the power of these stories to reform or to edify. The terminology was suited to those aims.

Some terms may be traced to the influence of the writers of the French romances and of their critics. For instance, Gomberville, in his Polexandre, and La Calprenede and Madeleine de Scudery, in their prefaces, mentioned unity, historic and poetic truth, vraisemblance, ideality, and propriety, as well as probability of plot and of character. Moreover, as the romancers began to use dramatic technique, D'Aubignac, the French critic and dramatist, having first applied to the romances the epic rules and terms of Aristotle, proceeded to add certain dramatic principles of the Stagyrite. These dramatic concepts involved an especially great emphasis upon terms like unity, probability, reality, and verisimilitude, previously applied extensively to tragedy, but not to the romances. Since D'Aubignac's work, like that of the French writers of romance, was introduced into England, English critics adopted some of the classical terms from him. Some, they adopted from Boileau, who in The Heroes of Romance attacked the lack of probability in the prose romance. Others, they brought directly from classical criticism, to which they

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1 See especially Tieje, op. cit., p. 80 ff., and Heidler, op. cit., p. 13 ff.

2 See J. Warshaw, op. cit.
tamed'—but at a much later date—for terms and
theories to apply to a literary genre long considered a
debased form of the epic. But to the very end of the
seventeenth century important English critics like Dryden,
Bymer, Milton, and Dennis remained more interested in
dramatic and epic criticism; in which, one may note, they
were using concepts and terms (largely of Aristotelian-
Hesian derivation) that later critics were to apply to
the novel.¹ For instance, such terms as verisimilitude,
probability, morals, useful, pleasing, didactic poetic
justice and unity appear often in their works.

Early in the eighteenth century appeared the short
romantic novel, to be succeeded in popularity by the much
better works of Defoe, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett,
Sterne, Johnson, Goldsmith, Burney, and very late in the
century by those of Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe. Even in
this time of the rise of the great English novel, however,
most major critics like Addison, Pope, and Johnson continued
to consider prose fiction so inferior to the older literary
types as to be unworthy of their serious attention. The fiction-
lists themselves persevered until 1740 in their insistence
upon the absolute authenticity and the moral or instructive
value of their work.² Before that date, to be sure, Addison

¹ See J. E. Spingarn, op. cit., 1, II, III. See also
W. P. Ker, ed., Essays of John Dryden (oxford, 1900).
² See A. J. Tieje, op. cit., pp. 431-432; and A. J.
Tieje, The Theory of Characterization in Prose Fiction
Prior to 1740 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Studies
In Language and Literature, 1916).
had remarked upon the treatment of vice and virtue in the romances and upon the need for invention and genius in the writers of prose fiction; and Shaftesbury, in his Characteristicks had attacked the lack of plausibility in fiction. But after the publication of Pamela in 1740 and the ascension of the periodical press, destined to be a potent force in determining the future of the novel, the criticism of the genre improved. To it were added numerous epic and dramatic derivatives with regard to plot, characters, sentiment, and diction. As Heldler notes, however, Fielding made the outstanding contribution to the criticism. He adapted some epic and dramatic theories and terms to the novel, and "mapped out in his prefaces and introductory chapters the course the English novel was to follow"; but his critical theory was far out-distanced by his practice. Indeed, it was only at the very end of the century that most critics began to realize the novel's "true significance and proper position in the realm of literature." This being true, "it remained for the nineteenth century to develop a theory adequately estimating so renowned a science." 

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2 The Monthly Review (begun in 1749) and the Critical Review (begun in 1758) were especially important. The reviews of the works of such novelists as Charlotte Smith, Holcroft, and Godwin show marked similarity to those reviews published in these journals after 1800. See, for examples, Monthly Review, series 2, XXII (1793), 253; and VIII (1792), 151. See also the Critical Review, series 2, XII (1794), 290.

3 J. B. Heldler, op. cit., p. 170.
I, therefore, wish to begin my study where Dr. Haidler's ends, with the year 1800, and to conclude it with the year 1832, generally conceded to mark the beginning of a new literary and critical era and the end of the apprentice-period of novelistic criticism.

An examination of general critical works and of various histories of the novel like those by Baker and Whitcomb reveals no extended treatment of the terms of novelistic criticism. Nor does an examination of the numerous articles published in the modern journals reveal such an investigation, although some of the articles do deal with one or more related terms or theories. For example, W. F. Callaway's "The Conservative Attitude toward Fiction" touches upon some related problems with regard to the critics' general attitude toward fiction; and W. H. Rogers hints at a few of the minor points in his "The Reaction against Velodramatic Sentimentality in the English Novel, 1796--1830." Then there are numerous studies on particular subjects like Callaway's Reason, Rule and Revolt in English Classicism, in which one would expect to find—and does—a considerable

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2 In order see Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LV (1940), 1041 ff.; and MLIX (1954), 98 ff. For others see the bibliography.

3 P. Callaway, Reason, Rule and Revolt in English Classicism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940).
amount of information on terms and theories; but there are only a few pages devoted to the novels. Most of the attention is centered upon the older literary forms. In this group one might place also the numerous books on specific periodicals, most of which devote only a modicum of their space to periodical criticism of the novel.¹

The two studies most closely related to this one, however, are J. W. Bray's A History of English Critical Terms and B. N. Gibson's The History of English Criticism, from 1800 to 1832, of Prose Fiction.² But Bray's work, to which I refer in the course of this study, does not deal with novelistic criticism in the periodicals of the nineteenth century. Moreover, although Dr. Gibson has related the nineteenth-century criticism of the novel to earlier critical evaluations of that same genre, he has not traced the connection between the terminology of the fictional criticism and that of the earlier standard used in evaluating the epic and the drama. Nor has he given a detailed treatment to the individual contributions of the periodicals of the time—and certainly not to the terms used in them.

Believing, therefore, that an analysis of the journalistic criticism of fiction will yield an excellent cross-section view of the attitudes of the critics of the

¹ These are mentioned in chapter seven.

romantic era toward the terms and terminology and being convinced, furthermore, that such an analysis is not invalidated by the work done by Dr. Gibson, I propose to investigate the use made of the critical terms in the leading periodical publications. To these journals many noted critics of the era, like Hazlitt, Lamb, and Coleridge, contributed. Indeed, a great proportion of the best known criticism of the time was first published in these journals. But these magazines also had their less capable writers. Thus the reviews and the articles in the periodicals furnish a fairly accurate general picture of all types of contemporary novelistic criticism. I wish to see what the terminology is, what additions have been made to the terminology of an earlier time, especially to that of the classicists and neo-classicists, and what new interpretations more suitable to the novel have been given to the hereditary terms.

This being applied criticism, it is necessary for me to examine the terms in context, to pay considerable attention to the theories which they are used to express. Otherwise, in many cases the work would have little validity. For instance, unless the context of the passage and the theory itself are considered, it will be impossible to know whether the reviewer means character to refer to Aristotelian idea— the imitation of universal human traits—to an imitation of a specific type or race; to a representation of individual qualities (accidents) giving a semblance of
reality; or to a portrayal, true to the universal but somewhat individualized by specific acts or appearances and also faithful to type. Thus throughout this study I shall note, not only the central concept suggested by each major term, but often, in addition, the periphery of related thoughts connoted by the minor descriptive terms.

Because the report of such an investigation rapidly assumes monumental proportions unless it is strictly limited, there follow detailed treatments of the terminology in the leading periodicals of each type. But that in the imitative or lesser publications receives attention only in the last chapter. The study begins with a detailed consideration of that model for succeeding routine monthly reviews, the Monthly Review. To it I give a thorough examination for several reasons. In the first place, it is the only review of its particular kind of which such an analysis is made here. In the second place, its scope and age indicate that it is likely to offer the widest range of derivative terms of all the journals. It, therefore, seems advisable to define all of its inherited terms— at least the important ones— so that in succeeding chapters I may limit my explanations chiefly to deviations from the neo-classical terms and to changes in the meanings of these traditional terms. In the second and third chapters appear discussions of the two great quarterly reviews, the Edinburgh Review and the

[1] The Westminster Review, greatest of the imitators of the Edinburgh Review, I have consigned to the last chapter since its criticism is generally conceded to be of less value than that in the two quarterlies mentioned.
*Quarterly Review*, both of them party organs. Both offer criticism of considerably fewer novels than does the Monthly Review because they emphasize selectivity and quality rather than quantity of criticism, generally reviewing those books "which could be made texts of articles on subjects of current interest." But they, as well as the older Monthly Review, are conservative and serious in style. The magazines, however, which I discuss after the quarterlies, are generally less serious in tone. The terms in these logical descendants of Cave's miscellany vary in type; but upon the whole, they are not so completely traceable to the terminology of earlier criticism as are those in the monthly and quarterly reviews. Of this group, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, the Gentleman's Magazine, and the London Magazine receive emphasis— the first, because of its popularity and importance during the era; the second, because of the value of some of its criticism and because of its illustration of changes made in the magazines at the beginning of the nineteenth century; the third, chiefly because of the excellence of its critical output under John Scott's editorship.

For discussion in the final chapter, therefore, there remain the weeklies and the various lesser magazines. Much of the critical comment in the weeklies, especially

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that in Leigh Hunt's *Examiner* and some of that in the more extensive *Literary Gazette*, is deserving of careful study. In addition, the *Athenaeum* and the *Indicator* contain material which calls for passing comment at least. Moreover, brief examinations are due the imitative journals; that is, the followers of the *Monthly Review*, of the *Edinburgh Review*, and of the other magazines of the time. These include such publications as the *Critical Review*, the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, and the *British Critic*; the *Annual Review*, the *Eclectic Review*, and the *Westminster Review*; the *Scots Magazine*, the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, the *Monthly Repository*, the *New Monthly Magazine*, and *Fraser's Magazine*.

In all of the journals I expect to consider those terms applied to the novelists as they reveal themselves in their work—such words as *genius*, *imagination*, and *fancy*. I shall also examine those words pertaining to the novels objectively considered—especially *style* with its related terms; *character* with its descriptive words; *description* and its adjectives; *plot* or *fable*, with which are associated such terms as *universal-ity*, *real*, *probable*, *natural*, *unity*, *propriety*, *pity*, *sentimentality*, *accuracy*, *wit* or *humor*, *sublimity*, *catastrophe*, and *poetic justice*; finally, those denoting the effect of the work upon the reader, such as *catharsis*, *amusement*, *utility*, *pleasure*, *informative*, and *moral*. All of these occur in abundance in the *Monthly Review*, which is now to be considered.

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1 See the preface for brief definitions of the most commonly used terms inherited from the eighteenth-century criticism.
First published by Ralph Griffiths in 1749, the *Monthly Review* began as a collection of digests of books and for more than thirty years made no particular progress in its critical comments. After Samuel Babcock advised Griffiths, on May 5, 1783, that readers wished more than mere abstracts of books, articles were improved "until William Taylor of Norwich and other writers created what was to be for one hundred years the standard type of periodical criticism."\(^1\)

In 1790 there was an effort made to review all publications each month; however, in 1793 William Taylor of Norwich began to attempt some selection. It was this same William Taylor, moreover, who

Because of his interest in continental literature, brought to English criticism (between 1793 and 1824) a broader literary outlook, thus correcting to some extent the insularity of British taste.\(^2\)

In *The Waverly Novels and Their Critics*, James T. Hillhouse says that the critical passages in the *Monthly Review* "reveal a minimum of analysis and detailed criticism" and that the entire "effect is distinctly pallid and

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negative." Though this may be true, it is necessary, in the interest of completeness, to examine this criticism and to study the critical terminology and the related critical theories advanced therein, for this publication endured during the entire romantic period and, in fact, had its end only in 1845. Moreover, it is the most important major periodical which had as its purpose the reviewing of all fiction published in London; and it is the model upon which numbers of lesser monthly reviews were patterned. In addition, it is especially important for my purposes because, having its roots deep in the eighteenth century, it may be supposed to show the influence of neo-classical theories to a greater extent than newer journals.

The terms applied to the author and especially those describing his work are usually good indices of the critical trend of any period. Those in the Monthly Review are no exception. From a study of their meanings, implied or expressed, one may determine whether this criticism of the novel is traditional or, perhaps, what we may term modern. If the terms are traditional, then obviously they

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1 James T. Hillhouse, The Waverley Novels and Their Critics (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1936), p. 73.

2 Note that throughout this chapter and succeeding ones, I shall not attempt to designate the authors of the reviews, which, almost without exception, were contributed anonymously.
are borrowed from poetic and dramatic criticism since the novel is a comparatively new literary form without an established critical terminology of its own. There are, of course, countless terms applied to authors and to their works, but only the major ones need be studied in detail.

A Terms Applicable to the Author

Careful examination indicates that these nineteenth-century critics of the novel merely applied to novelists the classical and neo-classical terms once reserved for poets and dramatists. But because the meanings of the terms may have changed, an investigation of specific passages is in order. Moreover, the reviewers' choice of terms may be enlightening.

They select a number of terms that are connected with the higher mental processes. They say that a novelist should have a "vigorous mind" (referring specifically to general mental ability of a higher type); 1 "good sense," by which they mean either trained intelligence and reasonableness 2 or a feeling (both innate and acquired) for the

1 "Brother Jonathan," Monthly Review, CVII (1825), 485. For other similar uses see "Philip Augustus," series 4, II (1831); "Matilda," CVII (1825), 435; and "Cloudesley," series 3, XIII (1830), 597. Since succeeding references not otherwise indicated will be to the Monthly Review, I shall not repeat the title of the journal. All references not otherwise indicated are to the new or second series of the Monthly Review.

2 "Almack's," series 3, IV (1827), 108. See also "Black Rock House," LXIII (1810), 102.
universally appropriate;¹ "knowledge," especially
knowledge of general human nature² and of the human
heart,³ though antiquarian or historic knowledge is also
commended;⁴ "powers of observation," involving intellectual
discrimination and perception;⁵ "good taste," which is
the name for instinctive sensibilities, cultivated judgment,
and often general propriety.⁶ All of these terms are

¹ "Moderation," n. s., CVII (1825), 87. Note that
Soileau's "reason and good sense," which were eighteenth-
century "catchwords," are still important. See J. W. Smith
and E. W. Parks, eds., The Great Critics (New York: W. W.

² "Black Rock House," LXIII (1810), 102. See also
"Destiny," series 4, II (1831), 127; "The Bachelor's Journal,"
LXXVII (1815), 215; and "Die Wahlverwandtschaften," LXVIII
(1812), 543. In the last review the expression pathetic
powers occurs, denoting the ability to originate moving scenes.

³ See "Geraldine," XCII (1820), 413; "Self Delusion,"
CII (1823), 435; and "Destiny," series 4, II (1831), 117.
This knowledge of the human heart is mentioned in earlier
criticism of the novel. See H. Fielding, Works, ed. L.

⁴ See "The Daughters of Isenbergh," XIII (1810),
107; "The Pirate," XVII (1822), 75; and "Brambleley House,"
series 3, I (1826), 304.

⁵ "Sympathy in Search of Peace at Home," n. s.,
XCVI (1821), 102. See also "Alphonse," LXI (1810), 472;
"Ned Bentley," LX (1809), 95; "Destiny," series 4, II (1831),
117; "Woman," LXXXVIII (1819), 329; and "Almack's," series
3, IV (1827), 108.

⁶ "The Omen," series 3, I (1826), 336. See also
"The Life and Adventures of Paul Plaintive, Esq.," LXVIII
(1812), 432; "The Tor Hill," series 5, III (1826), 414;
"Edouard," CVIII (1825), 424; "Tales of Old Mr. Jefferson,"
CII (1823), 213; "The Albigenses," CVI (1825), 471;
classical or neo-classical, both in origin and in meaning. Almost the only new implication is the one that Scott has "formed the taste by which he is generally tried." This, of course, suggests Wordsworth's similar theory about "great" and "original" authors. In general, the influence of the "cult of taste," which dominated much of the poetic and dramatic criticism of two preceding centuries, is very strong here; and the term most frequently denotes a very neo-classical kind of decorum based upon mere conventionality.

In addition to the terms mentioned, there are many others, some denoting general, others, specific talents and abilities. Very frequently appearing is talent, which signifies either general innate ability or an inherent specific ability, such as inventive or descriptive power.

1 "The Monastery," XCII (1820), 406.
2 See W. Wordsworth, Prose (London: Grosart, 1876), II, 125.
Moreover, talent is considered better when it is accompanied by judgment and good taste. In the year 1827, however, the term appears in a passage stressing the author's need of a "heart attuned to all the kindly sensibilities of our nature" and emphasizing the "witchery of romance." Here the general romantic tone almost vitiates the indication of the need for training. Then there is power, used extensively to denote either sustained force or ability and talent, usually creative. The former meaning, De Quincey and Hazlitt adopted. Other terms like genius, imagination, fancy, invention, originality, and ingenuity are so important as to deserve here a considerably more detailed examination.

Fancy and imagination are deemed especially necessary for an author; and since the two terms are often synonymous expressions, they may be considered together. Fancy, it is true, sometimes denotes a lighter form of

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1 See "Letitia," XXXIX (1802), 427; and "The Albigenenses," CVI (1825), 170.
2 "De Vere," series 4, V (1827), 89.
imagination; sometimes even wild flights of imagination, and
type of native, inventive power. Some reviewers apparently feel that fancy deals chiefly with superficial images and
ideas, not with underlying universal truths. This slight indi-
cation of a distinction between fancy and imagination is
interesting in view of the confusion of the two terms through-
cut the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. 2

However, the implication that fancy is an innate creac-
tive power, the equivalent of imagination, is evident in re-
marks upon various authors' "productions of fancy." 3 Echoing
the views of Hobbes, Milton, Dryden, and Johnson, these review-
ers insist that fancy is a "suspect" quality which must be re-
strained by reflection and judgment. Certainly for the past
century and a half, critics had been writing thus:

It is to be lamented that a fancy filled with such charming
pictures as those with which Lady Charlotte occasionally em-
bellishes her work, should have been suffered by her judgment
to run riot, and waste itself in the labyrinth of incidents
which are to be found in her narrative. 4

Especially in the reviews of Maturin's work do the critics
mention the need for restraint of fancy. For instance, the
author is described as being "hurried along by the

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1 See "Leolin Abbey," n. s., XC (1826), 196.

2 See T. Hobbes, Complete Works, holesworth ed., Ill,
4-6; J. Dryden, An Essay of Dramatic Poesy, and C. Johnson, The
English Poets, both reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit.,
pp. 360, 462, and 466.

3 "Helon de Touron," XCV (1821), 51. See also "Drelincourct and Rodalvi," LXII (1810), 213; "The Monastery," XCI
(1820), 410.

unreflecting impulse of his own fancy."\(^1\) Similarly, other works by other authors are criticized. Nevertheless, in all these cases the restraint urged is that of judgment operating to secure probability for the products of fancy; and an unrestrained fancy is sooner forgiven than "imitation" of other authors.\(^2\) The fancy mentioned in connection with this imitation appears to denote a certain imaginative creativity, and the entire passage is strikingly reminiscent of Young's theory expressed in his *Conjectures*. Altogether, therefore, fancy—a term used too loosely perhaps for one to be quite sure of its meaning—refers either to wild flights of imagination or to imaginative creativity of a serious kind. In many cases where the "graces of fancy"\(^3\) are mentioned, fancy is deemed more superficial than ordinary imagination. Most of the meanings of the term, as well as the theory that it should be restrained, are in keeping with classical and neo-classical ideas.

With regard to imagination itself, the term denoting a very desirable quality in novelists, one again has difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory definition.

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\(^1\) "Melmoth the Wanderer," n. x., XCIV (1821), 82. See also "The Albigenses," CVI (1825), 171. For other criticism of unrestrained fancy see "The Natural Daughter," XXXII (1800), 93; and "Tales of the Wild and Wonderful," series 3, I (1826), 72.

\(^2\) "Lochiel," XCIV (1821), 73. See also "Adeline St. Julian," XXXIII (1800), 103.

\(^3\) "Fitz George," series 4, II (1832), 469.
The term often applies, as it does in the work of Hobbes, to an imaging process productive of heightened imitations of reality, particularly in such expressions as "a vigorous and picturesque imagination," 1 and "considerable powers of imagination," 2 or "subtle observation, and an imagination of a lofty order." 3 Sometimes, however, the term is faintly Coleridgean and applies to inventive powers, as it does in these: "a plastic imagination," 4 or "a very fertile imagination," 5 or "an imagination so inventive" that undoubtedly "the arts of execution will speedily be acquired." 6 Something more than a mere imaging process is evidently indicated above and also here:

We must acknowledge, however, that the imagination of the fair writer seems to have been fatigued and exhausted by the vigour of its first exertions; or, having too highly excited the feelings of the reader by the brilliancy of its first flashes, a tameness and insipidity of effect are hence conceived to prevail in its subsequent efforts.

1 "Sir John Chiverton; a Romance," series 3, III (1826), 439.
3 "The Pirate," XXXVIII (1823), 69. Compare with Johnson's concept in his Rasselas, Chapter X, and with Addison's in his Spectator, No. 418.
5 "Tales," LIII (1807), 437.
6 "Bathilde," LXXV (1814), 469.
7 "Belinda," XXXVII (1802), 368.
There is a hint of the Wordsworthian concept of the connection between imagination and feeling. But in only one of these excerpts is there even the slightest effort made to consider imagination as innately compatible with reason, and there is a distinct echo of Hobbes; Dryden’s, and Johnson’s theory that imagination needs the restraint of reason. Too, the fear that imagination may substitute for reason and accurate observation forms the basis of many comments. For instance, there is this estimate of the novelist Griffin:

Of native fire, energy, imagination, feeling, eloquence, our friend has enough; indeed, rather too much, perhaps; for these qualities serve him on all occasions, and supply the place of that attention to the business of life, and of that keen observation of men and manners, which are among the very first requisites of a novelist.  

Reviewers believe, then, that imagination should be influenced, not only by taste, but also by moral concern, and by "sound judgment." The culmination of the theory of imagination in this journal comes, however, in the interpretation of imagination as representing an integral quality in the active fusion of powers of the mind to

1 "Third Series of the Lunatic Festivals. The Rivals, Tracy’s Ambition," series 3 XIII (1830), 463.
2 "The Last Man," series 3, I (1826), 335. See also "The Milesian Chief," LXI (1812), 322.
3 "The Daughter of Adoption," XXXV (1801), 356.
4 "The Victim of Intolerance," LXXVIII (1815), 216.
create an ideal. That interpretation is suggested here, where power refers to the ability "to create the ideal":

To the existence of this power, two of the highest qualities of mind are requisite; viz. accurate and subtle observation, and an imagination of a lofty order.¹

Except for the verbal echo of the "plastic imagination," critics in the Monthly Review, therefore, in their interpretation of imagination are very traditional. To them the term variously denotes an imaging process, an inventive ability, and an intrinsic faculty for the creation of an ideal based upon observation and inspiration. All of these meanings are somewhat related, and most are more nearly allied to the neo-classical than to the romantic viewpoint. Here continuance of the feeling that imagination is separate from judgment and in need of the restraint of reason and judgment is certainly not what one might expect in a period which produced Coleridge's theory of the "plastic power" which involves a fusion of the traditional judgment and fancy with other mental faculties.

Genius, a term denoting a quality even more to be desired than imagination, occurs frequently in the reviews; and the novelists who possess it are always sure of some measure of the reviewers' praise. The meaning of this term, like that of many others, is by no means easy to determine. Sometimes it appears to have the meanings

prevalent in classical and neo-classical criticism, of innate ability or ingenuity. It may even refer specifically to native artistic impulses, to powers of invention or imagination; or it may designate a type of inspiration or spirit. Sometimes it denotes a fusion of aesthetic, intellectual, and artistic forces or powers.

But very often the term genius designates specific inherent talents related to the creation of the novels, and perhaps all of these talents may be described as native impulses to imagine or to create. These artistic impulses are different in various authors. For instance, when a reviewer writes of Maturin's "materials moulded with the hand of genius but not judgment,"1 he appears to mean inventive or imaginative power not connected with the reasoning processes of the mind, since he considers judgment to be a separate quality. Yet the thought that genius should be accompanied by judgment strongly suggests neo-classicism.

This same inventive or imaginative talent is designated by genius in a number of critical passages similar to the following:

1 "The Albigenses," CVI (1825), 171. The quotation above reminds one of this passage found in Fielding's Tom Jones (II, pp. 5-6), where genius includes judgment:

By genius, I would understand that power, or rather those powers of the mind which are capable of penetrating into things within our reach and knowledge, and of distinguishing their essential differences. These are no other than invention and judgment; and they are both called by the collective name of genius as they are those gifts of nature which we bring with us into the world.
This peculiar and metaphysical exemplification of human life is the subject of Baron Fouqué's works; and on this ground, aided by high poetic genius and descriptive powers, they deserve the attention of the critic and the reader.

The specific artistic impulse or ability implied in the use of genius in the review of Helen de Tournon is "power over the great sources of feeling," for the "highest genius" is said to be displayed in weaving a story dependent upon such power. This relationship existing between genius and sensibility or feeling is also vaguely shown in a statement concerning the author of Farbeck of Wolfenstein. Here genius denotes merely her forte or her power to create tragic compositions:

Her genius, like that of her admired Joanna Baillie, is of the tragic cast; and, we should say, exclusively qualified to excel in scenes of elevated feeling or of pathetic tenderness.

Indeed, more often than not, genius probably marks some type of inventive imaginative power, but often the term is so loosely employed that it may also mean inherent general ability. Such is the case when the reviewers write, "that we remark genius in this work," or that the author of Paulconstein Forest possesses

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1 "Undine," XCII (1820), 187. Genius here is creative power.
2 "Helen de Tournon," XCV (1821), 50.
3 "Farbeck of Wolfenstein," XCIV (1821), 242.
"considerable taste and genius,"\textsuperscript{1} or that "genius, fancy, energy of sentiment and diction, are undoubted characteristics of the author" of \textit{Falkland}, despite his "offences of bad taste."\textsuperscript{2} The association of taste with genius here is interesting; but it is scarcely taste in its highest activity, to which A. W. Schlegel refers in his \textit{Vienna Lectures} as a synonym for genius. Instead, it is a vague sort of taste based upon proprieties. Indeed, most of the meanings given the term \textit{genius} are perhaps indistinctly neo-classical.

There are some uses of \textit{genius} which are not covered by the passages already discussed. The word sometimes signifies a type of spirit or an inspiration. The "fire of genius,"\textsuperscript{3} which is said to break out in \textit{Chantilly} is the fire of inspiration; "the fount of genius in the author"\textsuperscript{4} of \textit{Lucius Carey}, by means of a very different figure of speech, also designates inspiration; and "the flashes of real genius"\textsuperscript{5} in Miss Benger's \textit{The Heart and the Fancy} may be flashes of inspiration.

The variety of meanings which may be attributed to the term \textit{genius} as it is used in the criticism of Scott

\textsuperscript{1} "Faulconstein Forest," LXII (1810), 97.
\textsuperscript{2} "Falkland," series 3, V (1827), 271.
\textsuperscript{3} "Chantilly," series 4, I (1832), 440.
\textsuperscript{4} "Lucius Carey; or the Mysterious Female of Nora's Doll," series 4, II (1831), 134.
\textsuperscript{5} "The Heart and the Fancy," LXXI (1813), 102. See also "Iphiboe and L'Etrangere," CV (1824), 490; "Graham Hamilton," XCIX (1822), 137.
prompts one to consider separately a few of the passages on Scott. Though the definition of "animating spirit" is remotely suggested, probably genius is merely a synonym for decorum in "the peculiar and appropriate genius of that dialogue"¹ in The Monastery. It is, however, very likely imaginative inventiveness, resting upon increased sensibility and a certain judgment, that the term genius signifies in this passage, where poetic is synonymous with impassioned or moving and vivid:

The genius which this writer has displayed, in seizing on and appropriating the most poetic incidents and characters, is very remarkable; while the reality and truth, with which he has invested them, display in the fullest manner the extent of his poetical powers.²

This is a more significant use of genius, however, one reminiscent of Reynolds and indirectly of Johnson:

The happy union of these powers [the faculty of seizing on the great principles of human action and so combining them as to form an ideal order, accurate and subtle observation, and imagination], however, enriched by learning and aided by industry, presents that rare instance of successful genius which the author of "Waverley" has displayed, . . .

In the preceding passages the growing inclusiveness of the term is obvious. The absence of any suggestion that genius requires control by reason and by other intellectual processes may be due to the fact that genius now is thought

¹ "The Monastery," XCI (1820), 407.
² "Quentin Durward," CI (1823), 187. See also "The Abbot," XCIII (1820), 70, where genius includes "invention" (imagination) and intellectual processes connected with "historical research."

to include the intellectual as well as the aesthetic and imaginative powers.

For the most part, the meanings of the term, such as innate general ability, inventive or imaginative talent, spirit or inspiration, are such as may be discovered in earlier criticism. Moreover, the idea that learning, judgment and taste are needed with genius is neo-classical. Yet one point certainly should be noted, namely, the identification of genius with the higher intellectual processes as well as with aesthetic, artistic, and imaginative powers. This shift in emphasis to reason and intelligence (as well as the inclusiveness of the term) is suggestive of criticism of the later nineteenth century.

Closely allied to one specific ability designated by the term genius are the related abilities signified by the terms invention and originality. Invention and originality are very nearly synonymous in this criticism though invention is a much older concept.

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1 See Sir P. Sidney, The Defense of Poetry, ed. A. S. Cook (Boston, 1890), p. 46; T. Rymer, Tragedies (London, 1692), I, 64; E. Young, Conjectures on Original Composition, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 414.


Invention, a term usually applied to the product, or occasionally to the process, in this journal denotes the capacity or ability of the author. Of course, it may refer to the product in such a passage as this:

To say that the invention of the plot evinces the highest order of dramatic talent, would be to award it an undue share of praise. More properly speaking, the talent which applies to that quality in the present composition, is more of the melodramatic class.\(^1\)

Moreover, the term applies sometimes to the process of creating, of fitting imagined episodes together into a plot. I quote:

Dr. Johnson observed that the invention of a story was no inconsiderable effort of the human mind;—and if this remark be true, some applause must be due to the author of these tales, which are all different from each other in their plot, and of which each displays marks of originality.\(^2\)

In the majority of cases, however, the term is connected with a specific talent of the author. In this connection, it refers usually to creative or imaginative power; and seldom to be discovered is the traditional concept based on the imitation of "nature" (the portrayal of the likeness of truth out of materials gained from

\(^1\) "At Home and Abroad; or Memoirs of Emily de Serdoull," series 4, II (1831), 129. Note the implication that invention of plot requires dramatic talent.

\(^2\) "Sir Owen Glendower, and Other Tales," LX (1809), 25. Compare with the use of the term in S. Johnson's Rambler, No. 335. It is in direct contrast to Johnson's theory in Rambler, No. 145, that the only possible originality arises from selection and arrangement of materials already used by the ancients.
observation). Sometimes the imaginative or fanciful power indicated is the wild variety totally unrelated to nature and to probability. It is to this type that the reviewer of Vivian Grey evidently refers when he remarks that the author of the novel "is not gifted with marvelous invention."²

In the majority of cases the imaginative creativity denoted by the term invention is of a probable and reasonable sort. The "considerable powers of invention"³ shown by the author of The Knight Errant, "the great fertility of invention" accompanied by "the strong graphic power"⁴ exhibited by Saturin in his Yelmoth, and the "fertile invention"⁵ to be found in the author of Traits of Nature—all apparently refer to general imaginative ability.

A further indication that the reviewers believe invention of the best type to be closely allied to imagination appears in this comment on the author of the Tales of a

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¹ This theory is also advanced by Wordsworth. Prose (London: Grosart, 1876), II, 130. See also H. Fielding, Tom Jones, Book IX, Chapter 1.


³ LIX (1822), 542.

⁴ XCIV (1821), 84.

⁵ LXXI (1815), 102. For similar uses of the term see "Jacqueline of Holland," series 4, III (1831), 107; "The Forest of St. Bernardo," L (1806), 519; "Newton Forster," series 4, I (1832), 296.
Briefless Barrister:

His inventive faculty does not appear at all to be allied with imagination; it is a sort of volition, which being disposed to produce a tale, runs on with every kind of stuff which can help fill up a page, such as, 'he then sat down and wrote a letter'.

Yet the passage above indicates the willingness on the part of the reviewer to term something "inventive" even though it is not related to imagination.

In short, there is not much here that cannot be found in eighteenth-century criticism. In the earlier criticism, even in classical criticism, there is the same emphasis upon the need of invention; and, if there has been any change at all, it may be found only in the almost imperceptible change in meaning and in application. The word does not appear now to denote probable imitation of nature or truth, and it rarely seems to refer to wild imaginative power. Instead it relates to coherent imaginative creativity and at all times is closely connected with originality.

Originality is a term by which reviewers designate another important quality. Applied to the author, the earliest meaning of the term originality is a tendency

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1 XIII (1830), 467-468.

toward imitation of nature (the universal or ideal) as opposed to the imitation of other authors; and applied to the finished product, the term denotes a likely or probable, but new or unexpected development. In the criticism now being studied, the term is linked with invention on the one hand and, in a few cases, with ingenuity on the other. It is obviously also connected with imagination and fancy, but not of a wild kind. Those are almost the only conclusions that can be drawn with regard to its meaning in view of the usual vagueness with which it is used.

When a reviewer writes that *The Usurer's Daughter* is not marked by any originality of invention,"¹ he evidently means novelty of imaginative or creative activity with regard to plot. Furthermore, in their references to the "original thinking"² exhibited in the work of one author, to the "good sense and originality of thinking"³ shown in another's work, and to the "talent and originality"⁴ evinced in still a third author's novel, the reviewers imply that originality is connected with imaginative activity which is reasonable or thoughtful. This is worthy of note in


² "Rothelan," CVII (1825), 55.

³ "George the Third," LVI (1808), 206.

⁴ "Bouverie, the Pupil of the World," LXXVI (1815), 212.
a romantic era.

This association of the meaning of the term with imagination or fancy is more definitely indicated in the following discussion:

Miss Porter here sets out on the mistaken notion that she can give originality to her tale, 'By pitching upon Norway as the principal scene of action, merely because it was ground untrodden by other novel writers.' To attain this object, she should have chosen a field of fancy untenant by other authors; whereas she has now given a set of characters and occurrences which are familiar, (to novel readers) changing merely their 'local habitations and their names.'

It is perhaps advisable to note the advice given Miss Porter about the means for securing originality, since it shows the typical attitude of the critic toward even slight imitations of other authors. In short, to secure originality the reviewers indirectly advise the authors to rely upon their own imaginations for materials and characters as different as possible from those found in the works of other novelists.

Though one expects to find originality in close juxtaposition to invention and imagination, one is surprised to find it with ingenuity, another term designating a quality advisable for an author. The term ingenuity is suggestive of skill or cleverness in manipulating materials

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1 "The Recluse of Norway," LXXVII (1615), 212.
2 See also "Valentine's Eve," LXXIX (1801), 438. "The Mistake" XXV (1801), 331. In both passages a degree of "originality" wins praise for the authors.
already possessed, whereas originality connotes power of invention by means of imagination of new materials. Yet the two terms are sometimes used together. For example, Hook is described as being "not very remarkable for ingenuity or originality." Of course, the term ingenuity often occurs without originality; and the quality is always considered desirable. For instance, the novel Moderation is highly praised because it is "a pleasing little artifice, fabricated by no mean power of ingenuity."2

In all of the criticism on originality and ingenuity, one must again admit that there is little new and almost nothing that suggests romanticism. Though originality may not appear to have its earliest meaning of imitation of nature as opposed to imitation of authors, it has a closely related meaning, a meaning that is far from new, that is connected with invention and with imagination of a controlled and probable sort. Ingenuity too has no new meaning. Though the term itself is not prevalent in neo-classical criticism, wit is; and the latter term is similar in meaning to ingenuity—at least at times.

In reviewing all of the terms used to denote qualities desired in an author, the student is struck by the neo-classical influence obvious here. An author

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1 "Maxwell," series 4, I (1831), 124. See also "Confessions of an Old-tempered Man," LXXXVIII (1819), 328.

2 "Moderation," CVIII (1825), 88. See also "The Scottish Adventurers," LXVIII (1812), 108.
should have, so say the reviewers, a fine mind; good sense; knowledge, especially knowledge of the human heart gained by instinct and observation; good taste, which is the name for instinctive sensibilities, cultivated judgment, and often for general decorum or propriety. All of these qualities related to the higher mental processes and to judgment are designated by terms that are classical or neo-classical both in origin and in general meaning.

Of course, the terms imagination and fancy, denoting other requisites for authors, are also traditional; and the idea of the need of restraint for fancy as well as the association of judgment with imagination is neo-classical. Fancy evidently is the name for wild flights of imagination, lighter forms of imagination, or imaginative creativity; imagination signifies an imaging process, inventive ability, or artistic power arising from a unification of various mental processes. Only in the last implied meaning of imagination is there anything that is at all new, and it is traditional rather than romantic in tendency. But there are a few reviews employing these terms in a fairly romantic spirit.

The same general statement may be made concerning the terms that denote general or specific talents or abilities of various sorts. Talent, power, invention, originality, and ingenuity (which connotes cleverness and skill and which is named along with originality as a requisite)—all of these terms, or at least all of the
theories indicated by them, might be called carry-overs from the eighteenth-century. Even 
inenuity, though scarcely used save in modern criticism, has its neo-
classical counterpart in wit, and is perhaps connected with Jonson's ingenium. Genius, however, by which is
designated the most important requisite of an author, though it retains its previous applications, in one passage at least points the way to a newer development. Neo-
classical or classical are its uses as innate general ability, inventive or imaginative talent, spirit or inspiration; however, the identification of genius with a fusion of all the higher intellectual powers with artistic and imaginative ones is something slightly different and very modern in sound.

Therefore, one arrives at the conclusion that, save for isolated cases—generally discoverable only after 1820—the reviewers in the Monthly Review employ the classical or neo-classical terms in their listing of the various qualities which they believe necessary for a writer. Moreover, the meanings of the terms vary very little from those given them by the eighteenth-century critics. Most remarkable of all, however, is the deficiency of evidence of romanticism; but perhaps some such evidence may appear in

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1 Jonson's ingenium (Discoveries), meant nearly what our modern genius does; but the fact that he translates it as "natural wit" and that wit later achieved a different, narrower meaning may have caused the change in ingenium (ingenuity).
the terms applicable to the works of the authors.

B Terms Applicable to the Works of Authors

Before considering specific terms used in criticizing the works of the novelists, I wish to examine briefly a few general passages that either indicate the state of the novel at this particular time (1800-1832) or show indirectly the qualities to be expected in an excellent work of fiction, since those obviously will be the qualities praised.

The review of Reginald Dalton contains this passage, which is interesting, not only because it shows the reviewer's impression of the change in "modern works of fiction," but also because it indicates the reviewer's opinion of the relative merits of men and women writers:

This circumstance [the prevalence of men writers] has produced a very considerable change in the character of our modern works of fiction. The tone of sentiment which pervades them is naturally more manly and vigorous; and the reader is not offended with numerous instances of that weak and sometimes (absit invidia) mawkish sensibility, which was observable in the works of very able female writers; and examples of which may be found even in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe. A more general acquaintance with life and manners, also, is displayed in these masculine novels; together with a much keener perception of the humorous. Miss Edgeworth is the only female writer who has succeeded in the comic novel. On the other hand, in the delineation of domestic scenes and manners, the ladies decidedly display superior talents, and in painting a hero they certainly excel their rivals. In the love passages of their works, we know not exactly to which class of writers we should give the preference; tho' as in galantry bound, we feel inclined to award it to the fair candidates. We believe that the sentiment itself is
more deeply, more purely, and more faithfully felt by them.*

Perhaps the most important point here is the very legitimate attack on "mawkish sensibility" or sentimentality, and it is an attack with which even the classicists would have been in sympathy. Aside from noting that the author of the review makes an effort to be fair in his estimate of both types of writers, though he honestly believes male writers to be better, there is little else to be said about the passage.

There are, however, numbers of general criticisms concerning the novels of the nineteenth century, many of them attacking some defect in the novels or some type of novel. The fashionable novel is often indirectly attacked, but there is a direct attack on it—and not a gentle one—in the review of The Collegians. The reviewer believes "It is one of the disgraces of the literature of the nineteenth century that the fashionable novel should have been permitted to hold so conspicuous a place."² He is also of the opinion that fashionable novels are works that "no man of ability has ever condescended to write and no person of moderate taste will ever read."²

For an indication of the qualities deemed desirable in a novel, however, and for an estimate of the relative

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¹ CIV (1824), 200-201. For another treatment of the differences between men and women as novelists, see "Women As They Are," Edinburgh Review, LI (1830), 446.

² Series 3, X (1829), 609.
merits of various authors one turns to reviews of Scott's works, simply because those reviews are usually more inclusive than the ordinary ones in the Monthly Review. The qualities which are praised or censured in Scott's works, one would expect to be praised or censured in those of other authors; therefore, this general discussion of Ivanhoe is valuable:  

We perceived that the narrative was not unfrequently prolix and tedious, and in some of the most momentous periods of it protracted and wire-drawn to the torturing minuteness of Guisciardini himself;—that the dialogue, tho' for the most part highly dramatic, occasionally languished for want of a seasonable variety, or of that quickness of reciprocation without which a dialogue even in real life is flat and uninteresting;—that even those individual peculiarities which constitute a single man into a species, and in the delineations of which no writer has more excelled; or that those personal humours which, in their right place, are irresistible in their effect, were sometimes not very seasonably protruded in moments when emotions are stirring that are jealous of all interruption;—that the disguises in which the author envelopes his persons are too soon penetrated, and the termination of the plot too easily anticipated;—that he sometimes appears to expend on separate sketches, and on incidental descriptions, the powers which he ought to have reserved to give a finish and consistency to the whole;—and that his English was not always far from impurities, which no authority can sanction and no genius excuse.1  

The interest in emotional effect and in unity of impression, the concern about technical matters, and the continuing insistence upon language free of "impurities"—all are worthy of note here.

As for the relative merits of Scott and other novelists, the following discussion makes clear the fact

1 "Ivanhoe," XCI (1820), 75.
that the reviewer considers Scott superior only in what
is vaguely termed his "poetical spirit," which is doubtless
a kind of imaginative tone or feeling:

In the delicate and accurate delineation of feeling and
manners, he (Scott) must yield to Richardson; in the
pathetic, he cannot compete with Mackenzie, Fielding and
Smollett stand unrivalled in wit and humour; in the faith­
ful representation of national character, no one has sur­
passed Miss Edgeworth; and in the romantic interest of her
narratives, Mrs. Radcliffe is pre-eminent. If, however,
in all these respects the Scotch novelist may be said to
be inferior to the writers whom we have mentioned, a
peculiar charm still hangs about his productions, which
has rendered his name more widely popular than those of
even his most celebrated predecessors; and that charm is
the poetical spirit with which all his writings are
touched.  

The entire passage reiterates what is generally thought
concerning several famed novelists; and it, like most of
the criticism in the Monthly, is so perfunctory that it
lacks the interest of many reviews in other journals.

Indeed, all the facts that can properly be said
to have been treated in the passages just considered are
just these: that men are less inclined to portray senti­
mentality in their novels than women, that the fashionable
novel is an abomination, that Scott is superior to other
novelists only because of his "poetical spirit" (a very
vague term); and that the ideal novel should obviously
avoid certain faults which are pointed out in Scott’s
novels and should possess similar good points.

Perhaps, however, the consideration of those
specific terms applicable to the novels and a few of

1 "Quentin Durward," CL (1823), 167.
the theories connected with them may be productive of interesting information.

It is almost an impossible task to consider all of the critical terms and theories applicable to the novel, but at least the more important ones may be carefully studied. For the sake of convenience, the less important terms will be grouped under the heading of important terms to which they are in some way related. Those connected with style and language, with description, with characters, with plots or fables, or with the function of the novel will be considered under their respective headings in the order named.

Because language is the material of style, it seems advisable to consider the two together. Both terms, language and style, usually retain the meanings which they have had in English criticism since the sixteenth century. The innovations—if any—are apparent in the descriptive terms used with the major ones to denote theories of the ideal style or language.

To the terms descriptive of the ideal language or diction, the critics pay a great deal of attention. Language, they think, should be vigorous,1 fluent,2 accurate,3

1 See "Errors and their Consequences," XCI (1820), 216.
2 See "Which Is the Heroine," C (1823), 99.
or correct,\(^1\) forcible,\(^2\) and elegant.\(^3\) Or it may be familiar,\(^4\) not affected,\(^5\) not ungrammatical,\(^6\) not strained,\(^7\) but natural and easy,\(^8\) intelligible,\(^9\) simple,\(^10\) and un-

exaggerated.\(^11\) It may have "the dignity of the epic"\(^11\) and be "eloquent" and "polished."\(^12\) These terms and theories are quite traditional in implication.

Indeed, numerous specific remarks as well as general theories of the critics concerning language also indicate the influence of writers of the past. The "slang phraseology"\(^13\)

\(^1\) See "Cottage Sketches of Active Retirement," LXIX (1812), 97. See also "Le Forester," XLI (1804), 212.

\(^2\) See "Lemira of Lorraine," XCVII (1822), 304.


\(^6\) "Decision," XCI (1820), 216.

\(^7\) "Agnes," XCVII (1822), 444.

\(^8\) "Clan Albion," LXXX (1816), 84. For similar terms see "Sophia St. Clair," LII (1807), 436; "Silvanella, or the Gipsey," LXIX (1812), 214; "Women," LVIII (1809), 199.

\(^9\) "Paul Jones," series 3, IV (1827), 234.

\(^10\) "Peter Shemhi," CVI (1825), 203.


\(^12\) "Tales of the Heart," XCII (1820), 386. See also "Leonora," LII (1807), 436; and "Fuston," LXI (1810), 99.

\(^13\) "Maxwell," series 4, I (1831), 125.
of Mr. Hook, for instance, is condemned, for it is "the language of bad taste and corrupted morals, in whatever class of society it prevails." The diction of Mrs. Opie is criticized because it "is condemned by correct taste, and by universal convention banished from all tolerably good society." This subjection of language to the test of taste (here obviously closely related to propriety) and of morals is quite reminiscent of the eighteenth-century theories.

One review, that of Mr. Ireland's Rinvaldo, is especially interesting, not for its description of the author's language as "Animated and flowing, when it is not inflated with pomposity," but for the reviewer's theory that "principles of harmonious congruity . . . form the basis of a correct and uncontaminated diction." He maintains that the blending of "poetic imagery" with "prose detail" produces "a medley of heterogeneous language" which violates those basic principles.

Despite the generally vague quality of the passage, the reader infers that the language of the work offends any reader's sense of symmetry and proportion. This idea is reasonably new, but the type of diction which such "congruity" is to achieve is described by the terms

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1 "Tales of the Heart," XCII (1820), 384. For a similar example see "The Welsh Mountaineer," LXVII (1812), 322.

2 XXXIV (1831), 203-204.
correct and uncontaminated, which have neo-classical connotations. Moreover, congruity itself appeared in Puttenham's work.  

However, the praise of the "poetic and impassioned" language in at least one novel gives some slight evidence of new shifts in emphasis. Even so, the term poetic is not new; and the stress upon the intensity of impassioned imagination in description has its counterpart in Longinus' On the Sublime.

The theory that the language should be appropriate to the character using it and to the time in which the character lives is also traditional; and this theory of decorum is, of course, a valid one. Anyone would agree with the statement that the author of Halincourt "errs . . . in giving his own powerful diction to the female characters." But how is the writer of an historical romance to be sure that the language of his characters is suitable? In relation to the question of this need for historical authenticity of language this excerpt from the review of Arthur of Brittany is pertinent:

But as to the language that is expended in conversation, letters, and harangues, it is the duty of every reader to suppose, that if the author do not report the very words which were put in requisition upon all such occasions,

2 "Lodoiska und ihre Dochter," XCIII (1812), 462.
3 LXXXIII (1817), 323. See also "The Daughters of Isenberg," LXIII (1810), 103.
be at least gives us the best possible translation of them from the obsolete to the living phraseology.1

In some respects this passage makes sense, and in some it does not. In the first place, the meaning is not clear. Is it the duty of the author to reproduce exactly archaic phraseology, or at least to translate it precisely into modern language? If the latter be true, the theory is as ridiculous as are all those earlier theories demanding factual accuracy instead of verisimilitude; but if, on the other hand, the reviewer means that the author should produce an impression of historical fidelity of language, the idea is valid.

Along with suggestions of various other theories, some hint of the theory of verisimilitude occurs in the discussions of dialects and foreign languages. According to the reviewer of Don Telesforo de Trueba y Cosio's The Castilian,

It is infinitely better for a novelist who tells a story of Spain to make his heroes and heroines talk like Spaniards, than talk in Spanish—a distinction which Mr. Trueba's reflection will teach him to be not without a difference.2

Whatever the dialect or language, one point is made clear, that it must be intelligible. Therefore the reviewer objects to the author of St. Clyde, not because he imitates Scott, but because he uses the Scotch dialect

1 Series 4, III (1831), 423. See also "The Monastery," XCI (1830), 407.
2 Series 5, X (1829), 407.
excessively, making "almost all his characters speak unintelligibly"¹ and even allowing "himself to narrate in such language as they employ."¹ Naturally, the reviewers insist that the writer know the foreign language or dialect which he uses and that he not use foreign phrases merely to give the impression of learning.²

In all of the terms or theories relating to language, one gets the impression that there is little new, that the reviewers are using the terms and expressing the theories which the classical and neo-classical critics used earlier. Much of the criticism is valid, but sometimes the lack of specific information about terms and the loose way in which they are applied makes one wonder whether or not the reviewers give lip service without really comprehending the meanings of the terms. They spend too much time listing grammatical inaccuracies and errors in spelling; but, on the other hand, the qualities of language which they praise are qualities that abler critics have agreed should be praised. They think that language should be vigorous, correct or accurate, fluent, forcible (meaning forceful), elegant, eloquent, polished, easy, animated, interesting, simple, grammatical,

¹ "St. Clyde," LXXX (1816), 320. See also "Laurie Todd," series 3, XIII (1830), 466.
² See "Le Haufrage," LXXVI (1816), 544; and "Private Correspondence of a Woman of Fashion," series 4, XIII (1832).
unaffected, lively, natural, dignified, not flowery, not diffuse or strained. Moreover, language should be in keeping with good taste and morals, should be intelligible, and appropriate to the characters and to the age. Nearly all of this criticism, the terms and their meanings, can be traced to classical or neo-classical criticism. Even when there is a passage advancing a new idea such as the one about "principles of harmonious congruity," the end achieved upon that basis is neo-classical.

What was true of language is also true of style. A mere study of the only slightly changing basic term style would give little information on the subject since the critical theory is chiefly concerned, not with the restricted literal meaning, but with the broad, implied, figurative connotation or theory that is influenced by the descriptive terms. Though not defined, style seems to refer, in the reviews, to the habit or method of writing which the author possesses, or rarely to the general tone of the work reflecting the aesthetic sense of the author. But the descriptive terms indicating the desirable qualities— and the undesirable ones— may be enlightening.

The reviewer of Isadora of Milan objects, for instance, to the style of that work because it "occasionally

degenerates into slip-slop"¹ (slovenliness). In an equally vague fashion, other reviewers comment on other novels that "the general style" of a work "is pleasing"² (in harmony with the taste of the reader), or that a style is "harsh and unpleasant."³ They use a variety of terms—some suggesting the impression made upon the readers by the author's personality revealed in his work, some denoting the effect of the novel objectively considered. The terms are of the former type in the statement regarding the "force and feeling in the style"⁴ of Delworth. Neither of these terms is new, force (power) being prevalent in eighteenth-century criticism and feeling (allied with intuitive sympathy) appearing in Johnson's work and at times in the works of others. Both types of terms appear among these indicating objectionable qualities of style. The reviewers thoroughly condemn the "flippancy"⁵ (reflecting the author's deficiency of dignity) of the

¹ "Isadora of Milan," LXVII (1812), 320.
³ "The History of Amstrath Gatum," XXXIV (1801), 321. See also "Sigewart," XXXIII (1801), 321. Harsh (rough in sound) was adapted from musical terminology. It and pleasant refer to the impression of the work upon the reviewer. Compare with the use of terms in W. Webbe, Discourse of English Poesie, Arber Reprints (Birmingham, 1870), p. 32; and F. Bacon, Complete Works, Spedding's edition (London, 1857), IV, 44.
⁴ LIX (1809), 220.
⁵ LIX (1809), 321.
style of The Man of Sorrow; the "tame and turgid"\(^1\) style (deficient in vigour, as well as inflated) of Agnes de France; and the "turgid and disjointed"\(^2\) style (inflated and lacking in unity) of The Tale of Edward and Anna. Likewise, they deplore the "unequal"\(^3\) style of The Spy, the "gloomy and sceptical"\(^4\) style of Ernesto Berehtold, and the "gallicisms of style"\(^5\) in The Wanderer. The terms gloomy and sceptical, comparatively new in applied criticism, indicate the impressionistic turn being taken by the criticism. The objections to the style of The Sea Kings in England and to that of The Forester, because the first is "raised"\(^6\) unnecessarily and the second is "too ornate and poetical for the nature of the subject,"\(^7\) both sound traditional.

Moreover, neo-classical in terms also is this comment of the reviewer of Ballantyne's Novelists Library with regard to Mrs. Radcliffe's style:

Sir Walter, we think, hardly does justice to the precision and singular beauty of her style. He think her Mysteries

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1 Supplement, CI (1823), 544.
2 LXXXIII (1817), 24.
3 Series 4, II (1831), 308. *Unequal* implies lack of regularity in composition.
4 XCI (1820), 215. The terms used here refer to the mental attitude of the author.
5 LXXVI (1813), 419. *Gallicism*, meaning a word borrowed from French, implies a lack of purity in language.
6 Series 4, I (1831), 114.
7 CVII (1825), 95. *Ornate* refers to the extravagant; poetical, to the too highly ornamental.
of Udolpho a model of pure English, animated by the finest inspiration of the muse of romance.1

The association of beauty, which here very likely refers to that which is immediately pleasant or agreeable in the mind of the reader, with precision (exactness) reminds one strikingly of eighteenth-century theories, largely based on perversions of Longinus' theory.

But despite the fact that figurative (poetical or vividly imaginative) is not a new term, the tenor of this statement concerning Scott's own Talisman is romantic: "The very style partakes of the influence of the clime and glows with figurative and Oriental ardor."2

Usually, however, the influence of neo-classicism is definite in the various passages on the lucid or clear style. Certainly it is so in the remark that Mr. Godwin's style "is really a model of its kind" because of "the lucidness of his sentences and the natural mode of his combining ideas."3

Suggestive of traditional theories also are even the fairly recent critical terms like impressive and lively,4 which these reviewers use, not only with clear, but also

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1 VIII (1825), 269.

2 "Tales of the Crusaders," CVII (1825), 162.

3 "Cloudesley," series 3, XIII (1830), 604.

4 See "The Microcosm," XXXV (1801), 429. For similar terms see also "Castle Baynard," CVI (1825), 330; and "Redwood," CVI (1825), 432.
with other terms like sprightly, spirited, and animated, connoting energy and movement.¹ Traditional, too, is the praise of a "natural and graceful style."² The two latter adjectives are often found in conjunction with such terms as pure and excellent.³ All the theories suggested by these terms were prevalent in earlier criticism, and so were most of the terms.

One may make the same point about the stress upon "simplicity"⁴ of style. By the "simple style" these reviewers mean just what the earlier critics did. The reviewers use simple with such terms as dignified (seriousness of tone and restrained energy), masterly (showing skill or power), flowing (easy), fluent (smooth), straightforward, idiomstic (well known), and even elegant (denoting light grace and general refinement and elevation).⁵ It is,

¹ In the order named see "The Rival Mothers," XXXVI (1801), 138; "De Vere," series 3, V (1827), 145; and "The Visier's Son," series 4, I (1831), 320. Note also the attack on the "languid" style in "The Game of Life," series 3, IV (1830), 284.

² "Mademoiselle de la Fayette," LXXIII (1814), 212. See also "Elfreda," LXVII (1812), 321; "Sleepless Woman," series 4, III (1831), 127.

³ See "Destiny," series 4, II (1831), 117, where pure refers to idiomatic language; and "Palmyre et Flaminal," XCIV (1821), 544, where excellent refers to unified artistic effect.

⁴ "National Tales," series 3, IV (1827), 436. See also "Lionel," LXXXIX (1819), 210; and "Black Rock House," LXIII (1810), 102.

⁵ In the order named see "Guiscard," LX (1809), 96; "Gaston de Blondeville," CIX (1826), 234; "Granby," series 3, I (1826), 96; "Raymond," LXIX (1809), 485.
therefore, very unlikely that they dissociate simplicity and conscious artistry. Obviously, in their opinion, as in that of the neo-classicists, the **simple** style gives evidence of the well-regulated skill of the author by its ease, precision, and elegance. It involves a formal unity of design and an apparently natural method of expressing thought in well-chosen, idiomatic language.

Similarly commended by these critics are the "elegant" style (which possesses the lighter graces and refinement),

1. the "polished" style,

2. and the "correct" or "accurate" style.

3. Very often, therefore, a composition is criticized because of the "haste and inaccuracy" or the "venial carelessness" marring its style, or because it is affected. In the last case, the author has generally used a method of expression that is so exaggerated or so

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3. See "The Discarded Daughter," LXIII (1810), 101; "De Rengey," XCVII (1822), 109; and "The Decision," LXVII (1812), 321; "Bouviere, the Pupil of the World," LXVII (1815), 104; and "Belmour," XXXCIII (1802), 413; "The Knights," LIX (1809), 319. In all the need for correctness and accuracy is stressed.


unnatural that the taste of the critic is offended. The
unaffected style, on the other hand, may be pure (probably
referring to use of refined, idiomatic language), rapid
(alluding to ease of movement, energy and animation),
elegant (refined), ingenious (natural and sincere), simple
(implying sincere directness in composition), and easy
(facile).¹ In short, the unaffected style gives the critic
an impression of ease, sincerity, refinement, simplicity,
smoothness, and artlessness, though actually it may have
been achieved only through a great deal of conscious and
careful effort on the part of the writer.

In most of their discussions on style in the
Monthly Review, the critics are too fearful to blaze new
trails of their own. They urge temperance or moderation,
clarity, and correctness in style almost as much as did
critics during the heyday of the neo-classicists.² They
employ such veteran terms as elegant, polished, accurate,
correct, unaffected, precise, simple, easy, formal, dignified,

¹ In the order named, see "I Promessi Sposi,"
series 3, VI (1827), 467; "The Spaniard," LVII (1808),
100; "The Woman of Colour," LXII (1810), 212; "Temper or
Domestic Scenes," LXXI (1812), 217; "The Village of
Mariendorph," XCV (1821), 615; and "Karmath," series 5,
V (1827), 429.

² See for similar uses of terms applied to style
the following: John Dennis, The Impartial Critic, as
reprinted in J. E. Spingarn's Critical Essays of the
Seventeenth Century, II, 145; J. Warton, Essay on Pope
(London, 1806), I, 39; S. Johnson, Complete Works, II, 56;
J. Dryden, Works, XII, 284, and XIV, 209, and XI, 333;
fluent, masterly, natural, clear or perspicuous, animated, sprightly, lively, graceful, and harmonious. In general, the meanings of these terms are traditional. There are discoverable, of course, a few strictly aesthetic terms like pleasing and excellent; a few with impressionistic connotations like flippant, gloomy, and sceptical; a number that are newer but suggest conventional theories, like tame, turgid, disjointed, impressive, and sparkling. Yet, generally speaking, in applying descriptive terms to style, the reviewers do not get out of the conventional ruts, any more than they do in the case of terms applied to language.

It is perhaps important for one to determine the extent to which the comparatively new theory of descriptions--especially of natural scenery--is neo-classical; for, unlike the theory of style, it has no deep roots in classical criticism and may, therefore, show more pronouncedly the influence of the changing concepts of the nineteenth century. The basic term description does not itself need particular study, since it generally refers to the mere representation of scenes, characters, and customs with no hint of development in characters or progress in action. The secondary or qualifying terms used with description, however, are of sufficient importance to warrant their being studied carefully since they contribute to the general theory of description held by the reviewers.
Though it is very difficult to separate descriptions of mere external scenery from descriptions of characters, manners, and events, for the sake of convenience, I shall attempt to do just that. First, I shall consider those critical passages dealing solely with the representation of natural scenery.

That the reviewers believe firmly in scenic descriptions one realizes immediately upon reading the following statement about the author of *Legends of the Rhine and The Low Countries*:

He apologizes for omitting to describe scenery, though he must know that a well finished picture throws a magical effect over any composition.¹

But the scenery, though helpful if good, is a decided detriment if it is "vastly laboured."² Moreover, the author fails if he spends so many pages "in describing the scenery and manners of the place"³ that there is scarce room left for the presentation of action. In addition, he err in giving descriptions of scenery that are "flowery"⁴ (excessively ornamental or elegant) or that

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¹ Series 4, III (1832), 141.
² "The Tor Hill," series 3, III (1826), 421.
³ "Little Majolo," n. s., LXXVIII (1815), 325. See also "Oakwood Hall," XC (1819), 214.
⁴ "The Benevolent Monk; or The Castle of Olalla," LXII, (1810), 213.
are so "evidently and avowedly taken from books"\(^1\) that they lose their air of being copied from nature. Of all the terms used in discussing undesirable qualities, only the term **flowery** is somewhat new.

Whether the various desirable qualities mentioned by the reviewers in their treatments of objective scenic descriptions are traditional also, one may determine only by studying specific passages.

One reviewer praises Miss Gwenson's *Women* because of its broad general descriptions.\(^2\) The book of another author wins praise for its "striking scenes;"\(^3\) that of another for its "vivid and powerful"\(^4\) descriptions; yet another for its "picturesque descriptions."\(^5\) Of course, Scott's "powers of scenic description"\(^6\) producing the "vivacity and freshness"\(^7\) of his scenes are lauded as usual. In fact, the reviewer virtually panegyrizes Scott's descriptions thus:

All the grandeur, the beauty, and the nakedness of the land is spread before us; and, tho' slightly, the author

\(^1\) "Aretar," LXXII (1813), 326.
\(^2\) LVIII (1809), 196.
\(^3\) "Mathilde," LVIII (1809), 517.
\(^4\) "Vittoria Colonna," series 3, VI (1827), 279.
\(^5\) "Anastasius," XCI (1820), 7.
\(^6\) "The Pirate," XCVII (1822), 79.
\(^7\) "Tales of the Crusaders," CVII (1828), 162.
has touched with the hand of a master, the solemn associations connected with the birth place and sojourn of the Son of Mary.¹

Somewhat eulogistic in tone also is this statement concerning the author of Brother Jonathan:

In his descriptions of scenery he shows an acquaintance with nature's grandest works, and proves that he is alive to the sublime impressions which may be received from those examples of her power which are prodigally exhibited in North America.²

In the last two passages the stress of the imitation of the grander (simple but sublime) aspects of nature reminds one of the elevated and picturesque imagery held dear by such authors as Milton and Sam Johnson; and, of course, it suggests Burke's theories on the sublime, current in the latter part of the eighteenth century.³

Of the other terms mentioned above, striking (remarkable or surprising for its novelty), vivid (effectively clear and striking), powerful (full of force or energy), picturesque (graphic and charming mental imagery), vivacious (sprightly), and fresh (full of natural vigor and spontaneity) in their meanings show some of the influence of newer tendencies; but only powerful and fresh have recently gained their popularity in criticism.

In other reviews there appear additional descriptive words

¹ Ibid., p. 162.
² "Brother Jonathan," CVII (1825), 435.
like charming (a comparatively new aesthetic term), and admirable (fairly new in criticism); and minute, correct, accurate, and beautiful (all traditional terms with slightly modified meanings). It is worthy of note that those terms like vivid, picturesque and striking, which have retained their eighteenth-century significance, have meanings compatible with romantic tendencies to emphasize the aesthetic appeal of art.

The derivative nature of terms used in the descriptions of people and of scenes involving action is as apparent as it is in the case of scenic pictures. Here, too, certain qualities of the representation are considered excellent; others, highly undesirable. In I Promessi Sposi the portraits "of the good Capuchin, the young and illustrious nun, and of Cardinal Borromeo, are drawn with the hand of a master thoroughly acquainted with human nature." Moreover, the author gives a "faithful picture of the morals, . . ., and manners of that epoch" and represents the characters of the lovers with "simplicity suitable to their humble sphere." At times his "most comic descriptions are followed by others that inspire the most horrible sensations."

But his major fault, in the opinion of the reviewer, is that

1 In the order named see "De Vere," V (1827), 102; "Fits of Fitzfords," series 3, XIV (1830), 285; and "Exiles of Palestine," series 4, I (1831), 35.
his "description of the player may be thought too minute."

Thus, even when there is a hint that he seeks to achieve realism by the use of too many minutaiae, an author is praised if his descriptions are masterly (creating an approved artistic effect), faithful (accurate with regard to nature), suitable (possessing propriety), sometimes comic (laughable), sometimes horrible (an aesthetic term denoting an unpleasant effect on the reader). All of these adjectives are old friends that we have met in criticisms devoted to poetry or drama of past centuries.

Humorous descriptions are greatly favored by the reviewers; but there is little information available about what, in their opinion, constitutes humor. The "humor and archness, which peer through" the descriptions in one group of stories are praised; and the "well managed humorous descriptions" in another are commended. Probably humorous has the meaning prevalent during the eighteenth century of agreeably ludicrous.

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1 Series 3, II (1827), 467. See also "Les querelles," series 2, LX (1809), 211 and "Watilda," CVII (1825), 435. For an attack on descriptions of "unpleasant and subordinate characters," and on the presentation of "vulgarity of manners as shown in the lower ranks of life," see "Glenfargus," XCI (1820), 440-441; "Cameron," series 4, I (1832), 82; and "Filial Indiscres- tions," XXXIII (1800), 208.


Pathetic, tragic, or affecting descriptions are also often considered by the reviewers at some length. For instance, the reviewer of Melmoth the Wanderer writes:

The business of the writer of imagination is to select, and combine, and represent, vividly: but out of the realms of Terror and Pity his tragic descriptions should never wander, and least of all should they approach the caverns of Loathsomeness.1

Despite the neo-Longinian figurativeness of the passage above, it is somewhat reminiscent of Addison's theories of imagination and good taste.

Of the types of description arousing the feeling of the reader, the pathetic, of course, takes first place. If descriptions not only have "so much pathos"2 that the reader's "heart responds" but also have much of "nature" (meaning apparently especially the inner impulses of human nature), obviously they are pleasing. In fact, any description (like the march of the recruits in St. Clyde) that is "natural and affecting"3 has a great appeal for the critics. By natural, apparently is meant that which is probable or closest to human life; and by affecting is meant that which is touching or pathetic. The latter term is a comparative newcomer in criticism; and, indeed,

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1 XCIV (1821), 89. For a consideration of the "delicate emotions of the heart" and of "natural sensibility" see "Lodoiska und ihre Drotchter," n. s., XCIII (1821), 462.

2 "Harrington, A Tale and Ormond, a Tale," n. s., LXXXIX (1819), 831. Pathos is especially interesting to the reviewers. See "Emeline," XCI (1820), 177 for another mention of it.

3 LXXX (1816), 321.
the entire emphasis on feeling, though certainly found in classical criticism, is greater during this period than it was in the eighteenth century.

There is especial interest evinced in the natural descriptions. Descriptions of customs that show the author's "familiar acquaintance with his subject"\(^1\) and delineations of character that are "at once national and natural" are highly praised. National, of course, means faithful to racial qualities; and natural here means faithful to universal qualities of human nature.

Scenes and representations of life in various stages are also supposed to have fidelity—in the case of historical novels, a fidelity to historical truth. Scott's scenes in *Feveril of the Peak* have both "spirit and fidelity,"\(^2\) and the descriptions in *Almack's* are both "animated" (spirited and lively) and "accurate"\(^3\) (true to external customs and behavior). However, a "lively and feeling description,"\(^4\) one showing "energy

\(^1\) "Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry," XCIX (1822), 256.

\(^2\) C (1823), 204.

\(^3\) Series 3, IV (1827), 100. See also "The Albigenses," CVI (1825), 773; "De Vere," series 3, v (1827), 144-45.

\(^4\) "Le Château de St. Valérie," n. s., LXXXIII (1817), 325.
and fire,"¹ one that is "forcible"² or one that is "powerful"³ is sure of being greatly commended. All of the terms like animated, spirit, powerful, forcible, energy, fire, lively denote varying degrees of vigor, energy, and force inhering in the composition and impressing the reader of it. All are very popular terms, but not to be characterized as strictly new and romantic. Yet the romanticists' interest in movement, fire and vigor is seen in the repeated use of these and of other related terms.

In brief, the criticism of descriptions shows the influence both of old and of new tenets. The terms employed are rarely new; however, at times the meanings of the traditional terms have been slightly changed.

In the description of objective scenes such terms as striking, vivid, powerful, picturesque, fresh, vivacious, charming, accurate, beautiful, minute, and correct are used, many of which are related to the distinctness, vividness, variety, and novelty of imagery in which the romanticists show great interest. Such terms as powerful, fresh and charming are new in criticism; and such terms as accurate (faithful to external nature) and correct (accurate with regard to facts not to rules), though they are

¹ "Quentin Durward," CI (1823), 197.
² "The Three Perils of Man," XCIX (1822), 440.
³ "The Last of the Mohicans," CIX (1826), 123.
traditional, have new meanings. Others have retained their old connotations.

In the discussion of the presentations of portraits, events, and customs, the reviewers also employ a mixture of old, renovated, and new terms. Such aesthetic terms as masterly, horrible, and beautiful occur along with terms denoting a kind of propriety such as suitable and keeping. Almost the only relatively new critical term employed is fire (and even it may be found, though rarely, in classical criticism); but there is discernible a slight variation from the traditional in the meanings of many of them. Pathetic, affecting, spirited, lively, vigorous, humorous, comic, faithful, and natural occur, showing the reviewers' preference for vigorous description expressing feeling, fidelity to truth and nature, and liveliness.

Many similar remarks may be made about the critics' theories with regard to character delineations. In this case also, the reviewers employ old, renovated, and new terms and are exceptionally enthusiastic about realistic portrayals. Characters that are pleasing, amusing, or interesting; that are well delineated; that are drawn with discrimination and consistency; that are moral, original, and especially natural receive their just share of praise. Moreover, characters that are "concerned in retarding or accelerating the catastrophe of the respective plots" are
preferred to those who "amuse the audience, as insulated characters."¹

Vigorous heroes and heroines driven "onwards by a irresistible destiny" are preferred to others. Too, there are mentioned some special qualifications for the hero and the heroine that strongly suggest the neo-classical influence. No "useless personage"² is an acceptable hero; for, says the reviewer:

"Now we confess that we have still so much of our ancient prejudices about us, as to wish to see a hero invested with some distinguishing qualities which may compel us either to admire or to hate him; and we deem it a little hard that we should be required to listen to the adventures of a person who has no claims to our sympathy."³

As for the heroine of a novel,

"We would have something more rich and piquant, or rather more elevated and imposing, than Alice Bridgenorth; who, though she was doubtless a very amiable personage, is unfitted to sustain the dignity of the heroine of four volumes."⁴

Moreover, no author should form his heroines "of a very lumpish and un kneaded sort of clay, incompetent to animate the dull and lifeless beings by whom they were surrounded."⁵

¹ "Tales of My Landlord," series 3, LXXXIX (1819), 391.
² "The Abbot," XCIII (1830), 69.
³ "Feveril of the Peak," C (1823), 190. See also "Maurice Powell," XCIX (1822), 106.
⁵ "Maurice Powell," XCIX (1822), 106.
All characters, even the subordinate ones, are expected to be somewhat "attractive, to excite interest."¹ "Men of straw"² that ape the characters of another novelist are not to be tolerated. Repeatedly, this note of the necessity of an aesthetic appeal of the characters is sounded. The characters must be pleasing or amusing or attractive or interesting.³

There is, however, little conscious analysis of effect. Much of this is an appreciative type of criticism, showing, to be sure, the lasting influence of Aristotle's theory of effect, but involving little thought on the part of the reviewers. Indeed, all of the terms applied to the characters are employed in the same loose, general fashion. Originality, novelty, novel invention, and new conception appear in the reviewers' praise of excellent characters. But so loosely do the critics employ each term that it is impossible to discover precisely what is meant. In nearly every case, any one of the four expressions—originality, novelty, novel, and new conception—could be substituted for any other.

¹ "Silvanella," LXIX (1822), 160. See also "The Confederates," C (1823), 441; and "Belinda," XXXVII (1802), 368.

² "Maurice Powell," XCIX (1822), 106.

But let us examine **original** first. Occasionally the juxtaposition of other related terms affords us a clearer insight into the reviewer's meaning. For instance, Fenella is described as "the most original and poetic conception"\(^1\) in *Peveril of the Peak*. Here **original** suggests a coherent creativity and a vividness of imagination instead of a vague "newness". Often, however, **original** denotes characters that are only new or that are not direct imitations of other authors' creations. This "newness" or lack of imitativeness is nearly always insisted upon;\(^2\) but, if the character has redeeming excellencies—such as "spirited and humorous disquisitions"—\(^3\) the author may be forgiven for his imitation. No author, however, should have characters that are imitations of his own earlier creations, imitations that he fails to endow "with that air of originality which distinguishes Bottom the weaver from Starveling the Tailor."\(^4\) Probably, the most "original conception," according to one critic, of all the characters mentioned is the "principal

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1 *"Peveril of the Peak,"* C (1800), 191.

2 See "*The Assassin of St. Glenroy,*" LXI (1810), 99; "*Corinna, of Italy,*" LIV (1807), 152; "*Knights of the Round Table,*" series 4, III (1832), 514.

3 *"La Nouvelle Arcadie,*" LXV (1811), 218. Here Fontaine's *Uncle Prants* is criticized as an imitation of Sterne's *Uncle Toby*, but the character is admitted to be good in spite of its lack of originality.

4 *"The Pirate,"* XCVI (1822), 71. See also "*Tales of My Landlord,*" series 5, LXXXIX (1819), 388.
personage"¹ in Melincourt. Here "an Orang-Outang, brought forward as a specimen of the natural man" has bought "for him a baronetcy and a seat in Parliament."¹ Because this wild creature is novel, as well as "ably sustained and supported," it gains considerable admiration from the critic.

In all of the passages considered, the term original (or originality) denotes a character that is new in that it is no imitation of another fictitious creation; or it denotes a creation of the author's vivid, coherent imagination.

The words novelty and new or novel usually connote a narrower type of originality of character delineation, but the reviewers often use novelty and originality almost synonymously. For instance, novelty (or novel) may imply a creation of a coherent imagination, though it may also simply denote something slightly or greatly different from the ordinary. But, when one reads that "some novelty and much sense are displayed in delineating the character of Henry Wynneford,"² or that the character of "Clarice Harvey claims praise for a considerable degree of novelty and force,"³ one is inclined to connect two meanings with the term: in the first case, a trained intelligence; in the second, imaginative power. So the presence of

¹ LXXXIII (1817), 322.
² "Peveril of the Peak," C (1823), 190.
³ "Belinda," XXXVII (1802), 374.
novelty or novel doubtless indicates that the characters discussed are different from ordinary and are productions of a trained intelligence or of a vivid, coherent, and creative imagination.

There is never a suggestion that truly novel and original characters are not desirable; but when these characters are ghosts or supernatural creations, there is a possibility of adverse criticism. These supernatural creatures are not to be too "wild and grotesque,"¹ and are not to be like the ghost of Earl Robert, who runs "in and out of the arras like 'a rat' without turning his visit to any useful purpose."² Nor are they to interfere with the effectiveness of the plot.³ In fact, this obtrusion of supernatural characters is deemed "the most prominent defect of the popular Scotch novels."⁴ If these characters are used for some useful purpose, if they "delineate allegorically the secret springs and workings of the human mind," and if they "embody and shadow forth some unknown truths of the moral world,"⁵ they are wholly acceptable.

² "The Wharbrooke Legend," n. s., XCIV (1821), 104.
³ "Forman," n. s., XCIV (1821), 104.
⁴ "Undine," XCIII (1820), 186.
An author's characters, then, should be pleasing, attractive, well-drawn, original and useful to the plot development. Even ghosts and other supernatural or improbable creations are acceptable when they are appropriately treated and serve some useful purpose. Any characters which, in addition, are highly moral and which furnish the reader with examples of proper conduct are almost sure to win the approval of the critic; for in the vocabulary of the critics there loom exceptionally prominent such neo-classical terms as exemplary, moral, virtuous, and respectable. For example, Justinian in Count de Novini is extolled as "an exemplary model,"¹ and Mrs. Opie's "new and exemplary character of St. Aubyn"² is commended. But representations of immoral or "libertine"³ characters are condemned. Not only are authors not to "hold up for approbation" characters that are wicked; but they are warned against throwing "too much nobleness and grace" around those whose actions they wish to "represent as vicious and immoral,"⁴ since vice, too attractively

¹ "Count de Novini," XXX (1800), 150. See also "Patronage," LXXIV (1814), 102.

² "Temper or Domestic Scenes," LXVIII (1812), 217. See also "Endocia," LXXIII (1814), 544; and "Le Souterrain," LVIII (1809), 524.

³ "Belmour," XXXIX (1802), 314. See also "The Italian Don Juan," XCIII (1820), 102.

clothed, may be less despicable than it should.

The general idea seems to be that moral characters are to be preferred as heroes and heroines, that vice in characters must not be too attractively painted, that it must be punished and that virtue must be rewarded, that wicked and licentious characters are not to be prohibited provided that the author does not in effect say: "See these noble characters" and then present rogues and profligates. In short, there must be a consistency between the character when the author describes and that same character's deeds. In terminology and in theory this notion of the need of moral characters is reminiscent of earlier criticism.¹

So, too, is the idea of the need for discrimination of characters and for "adroitness in managing them."² The author who has "no felicity in developing and unfolding the peculiar distinctions and shades of character"³ is almost certain of constant adverse criticism; but he who has this gift, though he may include "too many personages," so long as "they all have their appropriate features" and take some "part in principal scenes," may be praised for "exuberance of fancy" rather than blamed for a "repetition

² "The Abissinian Reformer," LXII (1810), 212.
³ "Modern Literature," XLVII (1805), 207.
This "want of distinctness" or insufficiency of "discrimination" is constantly attacked; and, of course, the presence of "well-discriminated and contrasted characters" is equally praised. James Fenimore Cooper's novels failed here, especially; and since the criticism of his failure is slightly more analytical than most, I quote it:

Their pervading defect is in their dramatic personæ. They have no moral characteristics; and their physical peculiarities aided by costumes and artificial manners show them like men in a masquerade who have all the external requisites to support their assumed parts, but want the essentials which constitute them. They are people almost without souls—...; they want individuality of character.

His characters do not have the "similar uniformity" of Scott's and Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines. They do differ in physical characteristics, but only as puppets on a string differ, by virtue of costume and makeup. Inwardly, they are the same—all wooden—no creatures of flesh and blood.

Here, of course, not merely a lack of discrimination, but

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3 "Lochiel," n. s., XCIV (1821), 74. See also "Marriage," series 2, LXXXVIII (1819), 328; "Felix Alvarez," n. s., XCI (1820), 217.
4 "Rose and Emily," LXIX (1812), 332. See also "The Daughters of Isenberg," LXIII (1810), 102; "The Forlands," L (1806), 317; "Tales of Fashionable Life," LXII (1810), 96.
actually a lack of vraisemblance is noted. The judicious, intellectual art of drawing characters that shall seem to be distinct and separate is then especially desirable in the novelists.

So, too, is the art of maintaining the consistency of these characters once they are drawn. This insistence upon consistency, upon a "sustained"1 regularity—upon "conformity" between the character and his actions,2 between the earlier and the later descriptions of the same character,3 between the earlier and the later actions of the same character4—is reminiscent of Aristotle, of Horace, and of Rymer. Sometimes the consistency required borders on vraisemblance, when characters are inconsistent with our general knowledge of real characters. That is the thought expressed here with regard to the "virtuous" woman in Geraldine Hamilton:

He set up an image like that seen in vision by the king of Babylon; the head was of fine gold, the breast and

1 "Clan Albion," LXXX (1816), 90. For similar expressions see also "Les Deux Tartuffes," XXXIX (1802), 504; "Vittoria Colonna," series 3, VI (1827), 280; "Destiny," series 4, II (1831), 127; "Norman Abbey," series 4, III (1832), 302.

2 "Granby," series 3, 1 (1826), 98. See also "Histoire de la Famille," LXXII (1813), 544.

3 See "Thinks I to Myself," LXVI (1811), 207; "Belinda," XXXVII (1802), 368, where Horace's "Servetur ad iustum, qualis ab incerto processerit, et sibi constet" is quoted.

arose of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet part iron and part clay, without coherence or consistence; and all such images, when brought to the test of truth, like the image of the Prophet, are broken to pieces together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.¹

At times an inconsistency arises from the author's over-emphasis of the effects of the possession (or lack of possession) of a "single good quality"² on the actions of a character. Often the so called "inconsistency" is really an "incongruity," or an "improbability" when the characters possess "sentiments and qualities which contradict each other"³ and which are so "irreconcilable"⁴ that one might sooner suppose that "Satan can be divided against himself."⁴ The ideal characters are at one with truth. The descriptions of these characters, early and late, and their deeds, early and late in the novel, must present a unified effect upon the minds of the readers. There must be "a strict consistency, a dramatic distinctness"⁵ about them.

If, in addition, there can be "a living naturalness,"⁵ then the achievement is truly remarkable. This "living naturalness," a type of vraisemblance, often appears

¹ Series 4, III (1832), 511-512.
² "Redwood," CVI (1825), 431.
³ "Brother Jonathan," CVII (1825), 485. See also "Raymond," LXIX (1812), 488; "The Recluse of Norway," LXIVII (1815), 212.
⁴ "The Cave of Cosenza," XLIV (1804), 319.
⁵ "The Wanderer," LXXVI (1815), 415.
along with such terms as accuracy, probability, or reality in the criticism. It all depends upon what the critics are pleased in their own minds to interpret as realism or truth to nature. They may refer to imitations of national, racial, or temporal (according to the times) characteristics; to imitations of actual people, especially historical personages; to accurate imitations of surface qualities or conventionalities; to copies of the abstract or the essence of human nature. The last type is of course the highest and most important considered.

There was certainly no stigma attached to drawing characters directly from specific individuals or definite types in historical or in contemporary life. Even improbabilities and incongruities were sometimes excused when the author copied from life, as this passage indicates—a passage which, by the way, very interesting for its slight suggestion of Coleridge’s theory of imagination:

The character of Lady Delamore is well drawn—chiefly we should have inferred from a real model, even if we had not been told so; for it displays some rather improbable traits, which all real characters do, as Miss Edgeworth profoundly remarks, when they have not undergone a complete amalgamation with some imaginary one in the fancy of the author.2


2 "Kingstead Abbey," series 3, XIII (1830), 297.
Yet the character of the sovereign in *Castle Baynara* is criticized because "it is not within the bounds of history or of probability to suppose him to be capable of the folly and malignity here attributed to him.\(^1\) Great praise indeed is deserved, according to the reviewers, when the portraits are drawn with "historical correctness."\(^2\) Too "large a share of imagination" might admittedly interfere with a writer's accurate perception of character.\(^3\) But if it did not, that writer's historical characters were almost certain of great praise. Perhaps the implication might be that in drawing historical personages or group portraits from life, accuracy of observation was to be preferred to any imaginative alchemy.

Indeed, the accuracy for which purely imaginative portraits are so often commended rests upon a narrow factual fidelity to specific surface manners and habits of people, not upon a searching examination of the human heart or upon broad principles of human behaviour. This is true even in such passages as this, where accurate is used with *vraisemblance* (a word usually denoting a resemblance to broad truth, not to facts):

It may be a most accurate delineation of character and manners, but as we have not witnessed the actual existence

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\(^1\) "Castle Baynara," CVI (1825), 474.

\(^2\) "Maid Marian," XCVIII (1822), 443. See also "The Saxon and the Gael," LXXVII (1813), 329; "Tales of the Crusaders," CVII (1825), 174; and "Raverley," LXXV (1814), 275.

\(^3\) "Paul Jones," series 3, IV (1827), 234.
of the things represented, we can feel no pleasure in the 
representation upon the mere ground of its vraisemblance.  

There is a suggestion of the necessity for a type 
of technical manipulation of actualities in passages where 
"skilful and accurate" occur together, where "naturally 
drawn" is used with "appropriate," or "unnatural with 
indelicate." In another passage an author is blamed 
for paying so little attention "to the probabilities and 
decorum of characters." Here the same crippling narrow-
ness of terms is apparent. "Unnatural" might be inter-
preted broadly, did it not appear with the limiting 
"indelicate," usually indicating a lack of refined sensi-
bility; so might the term "naturally drawn" if it had 
not occurred with the specific appropriate, used to denote 
a simple propriety. "Probabilities" here is more closely 
related to "decorum" in morals, language or manners than 
to correspondence to general truths. We may chuckle at 
the critic's irate pronouncement that one author's char-
acters are unnatural because they "have such shocking 
health and such frequent falls, that their history seems 
most calculated to amuse the leisure moments of a hospital

1 "The Last of the Lairds," series 3, IV (1827), 35.

2 "Tales of the Heart," XCI (1820), 386.


4 "The Milesian Chief," LXI (1812), 322.

5 "The Refugees," XCIX (1822), 441.
We may read the critic's commendation of the "vivid" as well as "correct painting in the characters" of one artist, or of the "variety of characters and their peculiar traits," which are exhibited by another writer with such accuracy and precision as to display "a mind accustomed to much observation." In all of these passages, the terms accuracy, correctness, probability, decorum, and naturalness refer to a simple imitation of external or surface qualities and manners of character—qualities immediately obvious to the observer of human character and action.

There is some concern displayed, however, about the presence of a higher or broader "truth" of character, about an imitation of the essential Aristotelian verities of life. To draw characters which shall be "true" in this sense, the author needs, not merely to observe, but also to understand human life. Occasionally, too, a critic observes the need of "pointing up" the actual, for literary effectiveness, as in this case:

Something of exaggeration is to be forgiven, may required, in every painter of manners: that which is beautiful must approach nearer to the ideal, and that which is comic must approach nearer to caricature than reality would strictly warrant.

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1 "Matilda Montford," LX (1809), 98.
2 "Self Delusion," C (1823), 435.
3 "Home," XLI (1803), 103.
4 "The Wanderer," LXXVI (1815), 413.
This exercise of literary license in character drawing is effective only when the author "succeeds in placing the mind of each of his dramatic personae before us."\(^1\) These characterisations are based upon "discernment of character,"\(^2\) and frequently upon "much feeling and an accurate knowledge of human nature"\(^3\) gained through keen observation "of the springs and motives which influence the conduct of individuals in the commerce of life."\(^4\) It is to be assumed that an author who has an understanding of the "truth of nature"\(^5\) will not misuse his literary license. He will not seek to inculcate "an almost impracticable degree of excellence,"\(^5\) nor will he represent as "all sinful" a character "whose conduct is remarkably conscientious and pure."\(^5\) The "too faultless"\(^6\) character; the "too cold to be natural"\(^7\) character; the "absurd and unnatural"\(^8\) beings; or the

\(^1\) "Tremaine," CVII (1825)
\(^2\) "Traits and Trials," XCV (1821), 110.
\(^3\) "Charles de Montfort," LXVI (1811), 545. See also "Tales of the O'Hara Family," series 3, IV (1827), 131.
\(^4\) "What You Please," XLVII (1802), 206.
\(^5\) "Coelebs in Search of a Wife," LVIII (1809), 129.
\(^6\) "Montague Newburgh," series 2, LXXIII (1817), 324. See also "Corasmin," LXXIX (1814), 434.
\(^7\) "Leonora," LIII (1807), 436.
\(^8\) "The Adventures of a Dramatist on a Journey to the London Managers," LXXIII (1814), 105. See also "Isabel de Barros," CII (1823), 214; "Maxwell," series 4, I (1831), 125; "Llewellen," n. x., LXXXIX (1819), 210.
"caricatures"; the "too abstract to be human" characters, like Mackenzie's, that are really "fine spiritualized sensibilities and passions rather than creatures of mortal mould"—all of these, who in some way overstep "the modesty of nature" and in whose existence we could not "persuade ourselves to believe," are flaws in the author's novels. The best characters are "pictures of general interest," not "full length likenesses of individuals." They are drawn from nature "with great truth and vivacity." They may present a view of "human imperfection which is so natural that the contemplation of it becomes painful." They may be like Mrs. Opie's highly praised characters, neither immoderately good nor immoderately bad but sometimes "as heavy and dull as people in every-day life are frequently found to be." In short, they must have a semblance of truth in order to gain the sympathetic attention of the reader; and this semblance must be based upon a representation of the essential elements of human

1 "Ballantyne's Novelists' Library," CVIII (1825), 265.
2 "The Rival Mothers," XXXVI (1801), 187.
3 "Henry Count de Kolinski," LXII (1810)
5 "Reginald Dalton," CIV (1824)
6 "Eugenie et Mathilde," LXXVII (1812), 107.
7 "Tales of the Heart," XCII (1820), 376.
nature slightly particularized as well as colored by the
author's imagination for the sake of effect.

The efforts of the critics to evolve a set of terms
and theories relating to character delineation are fairly
obvious in all of this criticism. The terms, however, are
used in a loose manner, having lost their strict meanings
in this somewhat loosely aesthetic rather than rhetorical
and technical criticism—aesthetic since the usual basis
for the analysis is the general impression made upon the
mind of the reader rather than a conscious analysis of
the artistic effectiveness of the author's technique
as shown in his completed work. The terms pleasing,
amusing, interesting, elevated, well-painted, effectively
discriminated, well-sustained or consistent, moral, original
and natural often recur. To the fictional characters the
critics apply all these terms; but the greatest emphasis
is upon nature, an adjective with many meanings. It may
refer to an imitation of a specific person or a group, to
an imitation of external habits and customs of people in
general, to an imitation of national or racial attitudes,
to an imitation of essential or abstract qualities of
human nature. The occasional insistence on the need of
the characters' furthering the plot suggests modern
functional criticism. But very strong are the neo-classi-
cal implications.¹ In fact, the terms employed and theories

¹ See S. Johnson "Preface to Shakespeare," reprinted
in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 441 ff.; and A. D. Ker, ed.,
Dryden's Critical Essays (Oxford, 1900), I, 191-203 and II,
202-229.
advanced in the treatment of character can scarcely be termed romantic at all, though some of the terms have acquired new meanings. But the case may be different in the reviewers' considerations of plots.

Much of the criticism is concerned with the author's handling of his plot and with the general effectiveness of the plot or fable. In this matter both romantic and neo-classical tendencies are discernible. For example, the praise of one novel's "variety and brevity" seems traditional. On the other hand, such criticism as this is in the romantic vein:

From deep tragedy we are hurried on to broad farce; from the sunshine of contentedness to the gloom of despair, from the thinking of the light guitar to the thunder of battle.

Then again the same novel is described as "a story of fearful interest, and marked by great boldness as well as originality of invention." The qualities praised are those fancied by the most traditional critic, but the manner of praise is less restrained than his would be. He might write thus of a thoroughly approved novel:

The interest of the narrative improves with its progress; it seldom transgresses the legitimate bounds of probability; it exhibits unity of design, and consistency and appropriation of character; it abounds in trying incidents; and all its tendencies are strictly moral.

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1 "Stories of Waterloo," series 3, XIII (1820), 269. See also "Tales round a Winter's Hearth," CIX (1826), 355.

The qualities of plot thus praised are the ones which are the most frequently considered. If to those may be added the requirement that the plot be reasonably "simple,"1 (or if intricate, that it be "well managed")2 we have the most frequently considered requisites of a good plot.

But there are specific requirements of the plots with regard to subject, plot structure, and interest; with regard to fixed rules, to propriety and to humor. Then there is a great deal of information about the desirability of various types of realism, and some about the endings of the novels. All of these requisites receive the reviewers' especial attention; therefore, to all, except interesting, I shall give some special treatment.

Of the term interesting, which has its traditional meaning, it is necessary to say little. In the minds of these reviewers (just as in the case of the critics of the drama and of poetry) apparently the term suggests "origin-
ality,"3 "probability,"4 "pathos" or "feeling."5

1 "Le Macon," series 3, XI (1829), 414.
2 "Tales by the O'Hara Family, Second Series," series 3, IV (1827), 129.
3 "Carbonaro," series 3, X (1829), 613.
4 For the importance of probability see "Constantia Neville," XXXIII (1800), 216. See also "The Knights," LIX (1809), 318; "Records of a Noble Family," IXXVII (1815), 212; "Fleddyn," XC (1822), 105; "Tales of the Crusaders," CVII (1826), 161; "Sketches of Character," IX (1800), 210; "English Fashionables Abroad," series 3, V (1827), 263; "Liberality and Prejudice," LXXIII (1814), 119.
5 "Gertrude de Mart," series 3, I (1826), 248; "Seventy Six," CII (1823), 212; "Redwood," CVI (1825), 430.
"mystery,"¹ "variety," and "morality."² Interest concealed in glamour even such a defect as a lack of "epic unity;"³ but a lack of interest—arising from whatever cause, from the too "early"⁴ marriage of the heroine, or from a disregard for probability and reason—condemned the plot utterly. All of these connotative meanings and theories are traditional, but the wording of a passage is sometimes romantic.

Sometimes this lack of interest arose from the material or subject matter, which I expect to consider now in some detail.

Very frequently the subject matter is not approved because it is "not well-chosen,"⁵ or because it is too


⁵ "Valperga," CI (1823), 105.
Imitative of other authors' or "too dull,"¹ or because it lacks "the charm of novelty."² Vulgarity.³ and especially immorality and impropriety are not suitable subjects and automatically spoil any story, even one told "with interest and pathos."⁴ No subject matter is to be desired which is "heartless yet heartbreaking."⁵ and which gives "pain to every humane mind," and an "exhibition of disgusting wickedness" which "can do no good" is not fit subject matter even for an "ingenious writer."⁶ We note with interest that one reviewer condemns the use of "the pernicious effects of indiscriminate novel reading"⁷ as material for fiction. Many other specific subjects are banned,⁸ but a "chaste and delicate manner"⁹ of presentation sometimes saves even such unworthy subjects from complete condemnation.

Very rigorously attacked is the prevailing

¹ "The Sisters, No Enthusiasm and Body and Soul," C (1823), 186.
² "Tales of the Manor," XCIX (1822), 440.
³ See "Newton Forster," series 4, 1 (1832), 296.
⁵ "Charlton, or Scenes in the North of Ireland," CIV (1824), 215.
⁶ "Traditional Tales," XCIX (1822), 439.
⁷ "The Heroine," LXXIII (1814), 319.
⁸ "Mademoiselle de la Fayette," LXXIII (1814), 212.
⁹ "Frederic," XXXIV (1801), 532.
practice of writers of using as subjects the mysterious, the supernatural, and the horrible. "Useless mysteries and unnecessary horrors," according to one reviewer, not only were a waste of time but were also productive of a "sickly and irritable state of mind" even in those readers whose intellects were "sound and healthy."¹

Up to this point my concern has been with subject matter to which objections were raised. Much subject matter was approved. A few reviewers were even interested in the question of what causes some types of subject matter to be proper and some to be "improper objects of fiction."²

The reviewer of Paul Jones in considering this matter believes that

Whatever is indistinctly known, is equally the property of poet and novelist, whether it happened yesterday or 500 years ago.²

Thus the mystery surrounding the story of Paul Jones makes it suitable material for a romance or for a novel if all the material "is so moulded that it becomes a novel."²


² Series 3, IV (1827), 235, 231. See also "Edouard," CVIII (1825), 420. For similar expressions see also "The Last of the Mohicans," CIX (1826), 22. See also "Koningsmarke, the Long Finne," CIV (1824), 443.
Nearly all subjects from the "common store-house of nature,"¹ (human nature) might be approved. Miss Austen painted, with the approval of the reviewers, "the nature of everyday life ... in the liveliest colors," but without a trace "of anything which can be called poetical,"² though "we have variety and truth of feeling."² Mr. Raymond treated "the occupations and the enjoyments, the virtues and the vices of the working classes."³ Mrs. Opie used as her subject matter "human feelings,"⁴ and at times she dealt upon one feeling such as the enjoyment of the luxury of unnecessary grief.

It is still thought to be true that fiction never found out her legitimate object, till society arrived at that pitch of refinement, when the study of individual passions became more interesting than the naked relation of incidents, either of adventure or suffering.⁵

True, some tales of adventure, of the past, and of love⁶ do gain approval. But the "display of passions"⁷ wins the greatest praise. It is, therefore, because of his

¹ "Rothelon," CVII (1825), 53.
² "Aurentin Durward," CI (1823), 188.
³ "La Vacon," series 3, XI (1829), 408.
⁴ "New Tales," LXXVIII (1819), 320.
⁵ "Paul Jones," series 3, IV (1827), 231.
unfolding of "the elemental strife of the passions"\(^1\) that Scott receives accolades such as this (slightly romantic in its exaggeration despite its obvious adoption of the eighteenth-century Longinian concepts and terms): "He is a complete master of the awful and terrific, and the fearful graces of Longinus are obedient to his call."\(^1\)

Though, as Dryden said of poetry, representations of the grand passions are the most highly acceptable subject matter, the successful novel may be about almost anything, provided that the subject be cleverly handled. If it is neither dull, nor vulgar, not immoral, nor extravagant, nor painful; if it is not too mysterious or horrible or marvelous, it may be used by any author. America's early colonial life, the everyday life of English people, life of any working classes, the romantic life of passion and strife of past ages, the human feelings of any individuals—all of these may furnish the novelist with his subject matter. All of the terms and theories advanced, with the possible exception of one or two decidedly romantic pasans directed at Scott, are echoes of the past century. The condemnation of the horrible, the too mysterious, or the marvelous reminds us of Johnson; and the "morals" and the "lack of vulgarity" suggest almost any of the neo-classi-

\(^1\) "The Abbot," XCIII (1820), 81. See also "Tales of My Landlord," series 2, LXXVII (1818), 360.
Besides suitability of subject matter, the plot of a novel must be simple; or, if intricate, it must be so well contrived and managed that the intricacy will seem simple. The incidents and supporting narratives are considered as exceptionally important also. It is sometimes true that, as a critic writes:

The structure of the tale itself is sufficiently simple, but the narrative is frequently worked up to an intensity of horror and an agony of suspense, which are really much more than interesting; therefore the anxiety of the reader becomes engrossed, and his imagination excited, in many of the situations, to a degree which is absolutely painful. Very often the plot is just described as "simple," or "by no means complicated." The critics usually mean that the work has an unelaborated structure, but sometimes they may refer to a unity of effect.

The terms intricate and complex (or complicated)—inheritances from the criticism of the epic and drama—are also constantly used in reference to plots. Intricate refers usually to a conscious elaboration which, cleverly handled, adds interest; awkwardly handled, interferes with

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2 "The Last of the Mohicans," CIX (1825), 124.


4 "L'Etrangere," CV (1824), 491.
unity of effect and with comprehensibility. Complex and complicated mean about the same thing that intricate does. Although the complex novel is sometimes praised, usually the praise is similar to this:

When its complicated nature is considered, its parts will be admitted to unite not badly together, but had it been more simple it would not have pleased us less.

No matter what the structure of the plot may be—simple or complex—the reviewers carefully note whether the "general conduct" of the plot is "sufficiently ingenious," whether it is managed with "dexterity." By whatever terms—and they use many different ones—the reviewers indicate the author's "felicitous" or sometimes "clumsy" handling of his plot, one is always


3 "Les Deux Tartufes," XCVII (1802), 504. See also "Leontin de Blondheim," LXXII (1808), 474; and "Scenes of Life," LIII (1807), 437.

4 In the order named see "Brambyte House," series 3, I (1826), 314; "The King of the Peak," CII (1823), 211.


6 "Zillah," series 3, X (1829), 80. See also "Ivan Vejeeghan," II (1831), 438; "Woman," LXXII (1809), 198; "Caroline Ormsby," LXII (1810), 325; and "Les Deux Frances," LXVI (1811), 542.
conscious of their deep interest in the subject and—
and this is more significant—of their decided neo-classical
ideas with regard to plot management. At times they even
use the terms applied by classicists and neo-classicists
to poetry. They say that an author may begin his novel
"like an epopea in the midst of things,"¹ or that he may
start at the beginning but that he must not have "the
grand pathetic winding up in the middle."²

Occasionally, the "general plan"³ of the novel
is a failure, or the "awkward"⁴ device (for instance the
epistolary method) is at fault; but sometimes merely the
handling of "specific incidents and episodes"⁵ is de­
fective. The critics attack especially the multiplication
of incidents with such rapidity that they "fall into
confusion "⁶ and destroy the interest of the piece;
and even more do they decry the use of "episodical narra­
tives which neither assist the progress of the main argu­
ment, nor have intrinsic merit."⁷ A "singular variety

¹ "The Wanderer," LXXVI (1815), 413.
² "Body and Soul," C (1823), 178.
³ "The Monastery," XCI (1820), 406; "Lodoiska
und ihre Dutchter," XCIII (1821), 463; "The Lake of
Killarney," XLVIII (1805), 206.
⁴ See "The Ayrshire Legatees," XCVII (1821), 301
and "At Home and Abroad," series 4, II (1831), 128.
⁵ "The Jew," series 4, I (1832), 83.
⁶ "Brother Jonathan," CVII (1825), 485. See also
"The Heart and the Fancy," LXXVI (1813), 102; "Le duc de
Lauzun," LV (1808), 520.
⁷ "Le Siege de la Rochelle," LV (1808), 526.
of incidents,"1 preferably of "natural and well imagined"2 ones that will "rise on the reader in the manner best calculated for keeping alive his curiosity or emotion"3 is an ideal. It is better for the "subordinate incidents" not to be "more attractive than the main story."4 Even when the "incidents are few, domestic, and even commonplace,"5 they may, if "represented with a master-hand,"5 add appreciably to the value of a novel. There is a decided emphasis on the author's selection of and treatment of incidents in relation to the main thread of the plot.

In all of the theories and terms of criticism dealing with the technical management of either the main thread of plot or of the individual incidents, there is a decided neo-classical overcast, a tendency to analyze the effectiveness of plot structure, and a particular emphasis upon conscious artistry in contrivance and management of either the simple or the intricate plot.

The insistence upon a plot's having an excellent structure can be traced to Aristotle's time, but there are certain passages from the reviews that bear a clearer

1 "Le Siege de la Rochelle," LV (1808), 526.
3 "Les Athees Consequens," CV (1824), 478.
4 "Elizabeth," LVIII (1809), 514.
5 "Tales of my Landlord, series 1," LXXXII (1817), 385.
6 "Tremaine," CVII (1825), 250.
imprint of classical and neo-classical influence. These are the specific references to rules, classical and neo-classical. The general idea is this:

Though the efficacy of fixed rules and of principles of sound taste and judgment considered as the test of modern works of originality and power should never be questioned, yet, as genius, like charity may be allowed 'to cover a multitude of sins,' we think that where much good abounds, with some little alloy of eccentricity and peculiarity of character, those rules and principles ought not to be very vigorously enforced.  

Shades of Alexander Pope! Here hovers the ghost of these lines in his An Essay on Criticism:

Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,  
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend;  
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,  
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,  
Which, without passing through the judgment, gains  
The heart, and all its ends at once attains.

However, the need for sound structural principles is constantly mentioned. The reviewers liken such practices as "fabricating one story on the basis of a preceding tale" to "building one house on top of another and exposing them to the chance of falling together." 2 They especially emphasize unity of design or the more modern unity of tone or effect. They frequently quote Horace.

For instance, here the Heart of Mid-Lothian is compared to one of those 'monstrous and prodigious things' which Horace has described as decked with all the attributes

1 "Undine and Sintram," XCIII (1820), 184.
2 "The Morlands," L (1806), 318.
of feminine proportion above but ending below in an obscene and disgusting fish:

\[
\text{ubi turpiter atrum} \\
\text{Desinit in pices, mulier formosa supræne.}
\]

Though some flaws may be overlooked, authors are constantly reminded that "unity of design . . . is always to be discovered in the productions of a master." The critics agree, however, that they do not wish to impose "rigidly upon the writer of prose fiction, unities either of time or place; but still there are certain bounds which must be observed with respect to both of these particulars." There is decided objection to a story which is "like what the French call une piece à tiroir." Its "separate drawers" may contain "rare and precious" things; but the whole lacks "that general symmetry, that fusion of parts" which it must have in order to provide "charm and interest."

The strong neo-classical hangover evidences itself

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1 "Tales of my Landlord, series 2," LXIXVII (1819), 357. See also "Guy Mannering," LXXVII (1815), 86.


in the praise given any "tale which has a beginning, a middle and an end"\textsuperscript{1} and in the adverse criticism meted out to a story which "has no beginning--an indispensable requisite, according to Aristotle and all other legitimate critics, to the perfection of a narrative."\textsuperscript{2}

As though these references to the principles of Horace and Aristotle were not enough to indicate a traditionalistic tendency, the critics refer to such faults as "a disproportion between the members and the body of the narrative,"\textsuperscript{3} to such an admirable practice as following the "old and excellent maxim,--ars est celare artes, which in these days of innovation has been so frequently disregarded even by writers of no mean distinction,"\textsuperscript{4} as well as to "the rules of poetical justice."\textsuperscript{5} All of this criticism is decidedly derivative in nature.

There is, too, some insistence upon the vaguely similar neo-classical qualities, propriety, decorum, and

\textsuperscript{1} "The Wild Irish Girl," LVII (1808), 379. See Ben Jonson, Discoveries, in Smith and Parks, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 266.

\textsuperscript{2} "William Montgomery," series 3, X (1829), 305.

\textsuperscript{3} "The Prairie," series 3, V (1827)

\textsuperscript{4} "Rinsted Abbey," series 3, XIII (1830), 297.

\textsuperscript{5} "The Highland Smugglers," series 4, III (1832), 136. See also "Third Series of the Munster Revivals," series 3, XIII (1830), 466.
delicacy. All of these terms, the reviewers use fairly loosely; but it is possible to arrive at their probable meanings in context. Propriety chiefly refers to suitability and correctness. Thus, the Welsh Legends are deformed by "violations of propriety"—inaccurate representations when considered with respect to the "times and places" presented. Any violations of propriety or of good taste (often used interchangeably with propriety) are promptly noted. Instead of propriety, the reviewers sometimes use decorum to denote "good taste and pure morality." Likewise, they very often use the term delicacy, and with it sometimes they associate morality and piety. Violations of delicacy (indicated by the term indelicacy meaning inelegance or vulgarity) are as promptly noted. The uses of all these terms are in keeping with the need—

1 For uses of these terms in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century criticism see J. Dryden, "Preface to All for Love"; J. Collier, A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, reprinted in Spencern, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, III; J. Barton, Essay on Pope, II, 315.


4 "Mystery," XXXIII (1830), 111.


6 "Gabriel Forester," LXII (1810), 213.
classical tradition.

Moreover, traditional also is the reviewers' condemnation of extravagance; of "overwrought affectation," of sentiment, manners, or general inventiveness. All sorts of extravagance may, it is true, appeal to readers who "can allow their imaginations to be wafted to the very ends of the world of invention." But most reviewers would agree with the one whose extravagance reminds

of that wicked judge, who never thought that he did his duty to his country, unless he ordered everybody whom he tried, for immediate execution.

Here one has attacks upon exaggeration and affectation, upon indelicacies and vulgarities, upon improprieties or lapses in decorum. Here these reviewers of the novel pay homage to such lords of the neo-classicists as Aristotle and Horace and often condemn those writers whose plots fail to follow the main rules set down by the ancients—unless, of course, those novelists have snatched "a grace beyond the reach of art." The terms used

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2 "Alibeg," series 4, II (1831), 134.

3 "National Tales," series 3, IV (1827), 432. For other condemnations of exaggeration in romance, see "Isabel de Haras," CII (1823), 214; "Ispilo et L'Estrangere," CV (1824), 486; "Sophie Arieli," CVIII (1825), 426.

have a familiar sound and familiar meanings though the critics make no definite effort to use them exactly.

The plot which was constructed according to rules, or that which was not; the one which abounded in impro-
prieties, affectations, or extravagances, or the one which did not, might expect a modicum of praise if it had
some comic relief, some wit, humor, or satire. If there were actually good "comic parts"¹ in the tale-- and by
comic, the critic seemed to mean laughable or humorous-- the reviewer was amused. On the other hand, says one
reviewer:

A reader feels in an awkward predicament when a hero of romance and all his party are described as being in
convulsions of laughter produced by jokes which do not cause him to show his teeth by way of smile . . . ²

Effective satire, wit, and humor were, however, sure of approval. The term satire chiefly denotes wit
that is used for an ethical purpose-- a sort of application of an intellectual sense of the incongruous, or perhaps
simply of the comic. Consequently, it is by no means surprising to find it used, not only in connection with
wit, but also with caricature as it is in the review of Paul Clifford. That novel is described as "a dashing
satire," in which there are "caricatures drawn with such easy wit, and, at the same time with such perfect good

¹ "The Observant Pedestrian Mounted," LXVIII (1815), 217.
² "Memoirs of an Author," LXVIII (1812), 218.
humour and freedom from malice" that everyone marvels at "the tact with which it is managed."¹

As satire is really an application of wit, so wit appears to be a kind of intellectualized humor, not admired if associated with "affection," ² but highly regarded if it is "natural"³ and "easy"⁴ and if it, "instead of flashing, steals upon us."⁵ In this last case, the thin line between humor and wit is scarcely discernible; but wit does appear to be based upon the comical reaction arising from surprises at apparent analogies and contrasts, an interpretation that dates from Dryden. When "vulgarity has been unfortunately mistaken for wit and humour,"⁶ or when the author is "jocose rather than witty, more playful than humorous,"⁷ or when the crollery "is displayed in quaint expressions rather than in ludicrous situations,"


² "Castle Baynard," CVI (1825), 329.


⁴ "Paul Clifford," series 3, XIV (1830), 260.

⁵ "The Misfortunes of Elphin," series 3, XI (1829), 304.

⁶ "Rebecca," LX (1809), 96.

⁷ "The Abbot," XCIII (1820), 81.
and when the author has "substituted swearing for wit,"\textsuperscript{1} praise is withheld. In short, when the wit presented is true wit that is well managed, the reputation of the novelist is helped by it; otherwise, his reputation is damaged.

The reviewer of \textit{Emma} indicates the position of most critics when he says that a "strain of genuine natural humour, such as is seldom found conjointly with the complete purity of images and ideas which is here conspicuous" is a gift "of sterling worth."\textsuperscript{2} Moreover, any "broad humor"\textsuperscript{3} or any humor such as the type that "turns on the quaint and scriptural phraseology of the Puritans"\textsuperscript{4} or "on the simplicity and provincialism"\textsuperscript{5} of a group of people like the Pringle family is irresistible; but "coarse humour"\textsuperscript{6} or "strokes of humour" that are "mingled with the improbable, the absurd, or the unintelligible"\textsuperscript{7} are naturally drawbacks, even as they were when Johnson

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{2} "Emma," LXXX (1816), 320. See also "Helen of Glenross," XLI (1803), 103; "Tales of my Landlord," LXXXIX (1819), 405; "Women," LXXXIII (1818), 412; "Frederic de Montford," LXVI (1811), 208.
\textsuperscript{3} "Bardenbrass and Haverhill," LXXXIII (1817), 324. See also "The Reformist," LXV (1811), 217.
\textsuperscript{4} "The Cavalier," XCVI (1821), 434
\textsuperscript{5} "The Ayrshire Legatees," XCVI (1821), 302.
\textsuperscript{6} "Scheming," XC (1821), 110.
\textsuperscript{7} "The Absent Man," LXXXIII (1817), 98.
\end{quote}
and Addison dominated the literature. The term humor appears to refer simply to the agreeably and tastefully ludicrous. It is wit, not so conscious and so intellectual. Properly managed, humor, wit, and satire are all desirable in the fable of a novel.

Traces of sentiment or of sentiments "equally correct and beautiful," "affecting incidents," and presentations of "the more delicate emotions of the human heart" are also considered especially desirable. The sentiment must not be that "sickly" variety displayed in German novels, which is actually sentimentality, but instead it must be either a generally contemplative tone pervading the whole work or individual pensive feelings or emotions. In either case, the sentiment or sentiments or the affecting incidents should be generally circumscribed by the restraints of good taste and not allowed to overflow mawkishly. The readers of "affecting" stories may be able to say "in the words of Aufidius—'I Too was moved,'" or in less restrained language that the novel "rushes at

1 "Mathilde," LVIII (appendix), 517.
2 "Lodoiska und ihre Dochter," XCIII (1821), 462.
3 "Angelion," LXXXVII (1817), 100.
ones to the heart, and unlocks the inmost fountains of our sympathetic affection.\(^1\) Some of these passages are romantic, but the restraint is, of course, neo-classical, and the terms are inherited ones.\(^2\)

The reviewers are considerably concerned also about the presence or absence of probability, of possibility, of verisimilitude, of truth to nature or to fact. Indeed, judging by the amount of space which they allot to their discussions of these terms, one might conclude that they are more interested in the reality of the plot than in its subject matter, in its interest, in its following of rules, in its propriety, or in its presentation of humor and of sentiment.

Of all the terms used, probability receives the greatest amount of attention.\(^3\) The reviewer of Nature

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\(^1\) "Kenilworth," XCVIII (1821), 161

\(^2\) See, for example, the number of these terms throughout J. Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare, reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 449 and 457 especially. See also J. Dryden, Defence of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy, reprinted in J. P. Ker, ed., Essays of John Dryden I, 113-114.

agrees with the author of the essay prefixed to that novel 
"that the events recorded in a novel should be precisely 
what may be supposed to take place without exaggeration 
in common life," but he also points out that the novel 
*Nature* cannot "be brought with safety to that criterion." Where that criterion may be applied, such criticism as this 
regarding Mrs. Opie results:

She does not wing her flight like the lark into clouds. She 
keeps on the ground; and her humble and unaspiring occupation 
is that of drawing from the world as it is, and from manners

"Virginia," LXVII (1812), 321; "Raphael," LXVII (1812), 107; 
"Temper," LXVIII (1812), 217; "Things By their Right 
Names," LXIX (1812), 97; "The Empire of the Nairs," LXIX (1812), 214; "Friends Unmasked," LXIX (1812), 435; "The 
Curate and his Daughter," LXI (1813), 212; "Tales of 
Real Life," LXXII (1815), 326; "Alinda," LXXII (1815), 327; 
"Histoire du Prince Timor," LXXIII (1814), 216; "Pierre 
and Adeline," LXXIII (1814), 320; "The Lovers of Ravenswood," 
LXXIV (1814), 216; "The History of Mr. John De Castro and 
his Brother Bat," LXXVII (1815), 211; "Discipline," n.s., 
LXXVIII (1815), 400; "The Ward of Delamere," LXXVIII (1815), 
324; "La Nature et Les Societes," LXXVIII (1815), 325; 
"The Magic of Wealth," LXXIX (1816), 213; "Clenervon," 
n.s., LXXX (1816), 217; "Northern Irish Tales," LXXXVI 
(1816), 103; "The Advertisement," n.s., LXXXVI (1816), 103; 
"Romen," LXXXVIII (1818), 410; "Sophia," LXXXVIII (1819), 
329; "The Physicenomist," LXXXVIII (1819), 329; "Atewold 
et Clare," n.s., LXXXVIII (1819), 543; "Edward Wortley," 
LXXXIX (1819), 211; "Sidoxet," XCI (1820), 214; "Lodoiska 
und ihre Dochter, XCIII (1820), 462; "Supreme Bon Ton," 
XCIV (1821), 104; "St. Aubin," XCV (1821), 110; "Such is 
the World," XCV (1821), 111; "Le Chevalier Hulbman," XCV 
(1821), 544; "Extra," n.s., XVII (1822), 543; "Reformation," 
C (1823), 98; "The Actress," C (1823), 441; "Agnes de France." 
n.s., CI (1823), 544; "New Arabian Nights' Entertainment," 
series 3, VIII (1826), 414; "Cecile, ou Les Passions," 
series 3, V (1827), 540; "Highways and By-ways," series 3, 
VI (1827), 108; "The Tales of Romen," series 3, X (1829), 
94; "Destiny," series 4, III (1831), 126; "The Club Book," 
series 4, III (1831), 126; "Ceraldyna Hamilton," series 4, 
III (1832), 511.

1 XLV (1804), 211.
as they are, those incidents which, though of rare occurrences in real life, have sufficient probability to fascinate and amuse us.¹

Miss Edgeworth, to whom Mrs. Opie is compared, also "conforms to truth and nature";² but her story itself is "often improbable,"² in spite of the "perfect consistency"¹ of her characters. Probability is always considered desirable, especially because it helps in achieving an air of reality in the novel.

Usually the term probability is so general as to include the concepts denoted by plausibility, possibility and credibility; but these latter terms also occur frequently. For example, Mademoiselle de la Fayette by Madame de Genlis "acquires plausibility, not only from the historical ground-work, but from the fair author's skill in developing motives which are supposed to actuate her personages, and in imitating the events of real life, while she displays their remote consequences."³ This plausibility is closely related to probability, since, theoretically, a story would need to be probable or consistent in general before it became either plausible (which would mean at least speciously reasonable) or credible (capable of...
of being believed). Thus a "totally incredible"\(^1\) story would also be far from probable. Of course, plausibility and credibility are not so general in their applications as probability; neither is possibility. In general, the critics' attitude seems to be this:

A novel-writer should always "keep probability in view," but the author of a romance has a wider scope, and may be permitted to range within the bounds of possibility, though all fictions which exceed these limits must be classed with the Arabian Nights and the Adventures of (sic) Lunckhausen.\(^2\)

Most of the critics would agree with the reviewer of Lemira of Lorraine that Dr. Johnson's "nervous language" applies very well to the novels of the nineteenth century, that it is still the "business of a modern novelist" to bring a lover, a lady and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with the violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture and part in agony; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered; . . . For this probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) "Faulconstein Forest," n. s., LXII (1810), 97. See also "The Life and Adventures of Peter Watkins," LXXXI (1816), 331; "Can We Doubt It," XLIX (1806), 208; and "Self Deception," LXXXIV (1817), 97.

\(^3\) n. s., XCVII (1822), 303-304.
Yet they regret this lack of probability and spend much of their time "inquiring a little about probabilities" in novels. On occasion, they satirize an author who disdains "all those trammels" confining her to "the semblance of reality" but who observes "the exact rules of propriety in "matters of minor importance." They are, however, even harsher in their reviews of a novel like The Boyne Water, which is both "improbable and extravagant."

Because of his skill in handling the supernatural, Scott is forgiven improbabilities. Often, if an improbability does not interfere with the moral teaching, a novel by another author may not be considered to have a serious flaw. Too, if the improbability be "essential to the catastrophe" or to the general progress of the story, it may be overlooked. Otherwise, it is not.

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1 "Ellen," LXII (1810), 212.
2 C (1826), 363-364.
3 "The Monastery," XCI (1820), 409-410. But see also "Placide," LXXXIII (1817), 323; "Third series of the Kunster Festivals," series 4, XIII (1851), 464; and "The Tor Hill, series 3, III (1826), 427; "Dudley," XC (1819), 105. In these the authors' improbabilities are attacked.
4 "Dudley," n. s., XC (1819), 105.
5 "Tales of the Passions," n. s., LXVII (1812), 388. See also "Ivanhoe," n. s., XCI (1820), 88.
reviewer of Belisario writes that an absolute want of probability ought not only to be passed in silence, but pardoned, if, as is true in Clarissa, great beauties result from it.¹

This preoccupation with "beauties" reminds us somewhat of such eighteenth century authors as Addison, Carton, and Burke.

The general opinion, then, is that "the want of probability as a fault"² is "much more deserving of toleration and susceptible of amendment, than the want of spirit or of interest,"² or even of morals. Moreover, at least one reviewer believes that the presence of "beauties" completely overshadows defects in probability. Yet all the critics agree that the ideal novel should be probable—that is, consistent in its plot and capable of being conceived of as possible when judged by its general correspondence to past events. Here the term has the meaning which it has in Aristotle's Poetics, or, for that matter, that which it possesses in the works of Dryden, Rymer, Johnson, and even Hazlitt.³

Some type of realism, verisimilitude, or naturalness characterizes each novel praised by the critics.

¹ n.s., LVI (1808), 464. Note here beauties, a term often used in epic criticism—a term derived ultimately from Longinian criticism.

² "Sir Owen Glendower," n.s., LX (1809), 95.

The day of the extravagant and artificial romance has definitely passed. 1 Admiration for "romantic sentiments of prudery" 2 that are "artificial and unnatural" and for "powerful engines of trap-doors, back stairs, black robes, and pale faces" 3 is a thing of the past. If, however, the romance has the "present and living interest of real existence" 4 it is highly praised. The critics' conceptions of types of realism are somewhat vague. So loosely are the terms used that it is difficult to tell whether the reviewers allude to Aristotelian universal truth or nature, to a narrow factuality; or to a verisimilitude achieved by the use of carefully selected details and by a certain natural consistency of plot. An exact classification of the criticism with regard to the use of specific terms is, therefore, impossible. But for the sake of ease in handling, I shall attempt a loose classification based upon the critics' use of such terms as nature or natural, truth, verisimilitude, reality or realism, reality and fiction, or reality and history.

Very frequently the reviewers describe plots as "natural" or "obedient to the laws of nature," when what

1 See "Le Siege de la Rochelle," LV (1808), 522.
2 "Le Divorce," XLVI (appendix 1805), 540; "The Rival Cothers," XXXVI (1801), 158.
3 "The Man of Fortitude," XXVII (1802), 27.
4 "Anne of Geierstein," series 3, XI (1829), 307. See also "Fleetwood," XLIX (1806), 102; "Feveril of the Peak," C (1823), 188.
they really intend to say is that the stories are accounts of what might be conceived as probable in real life. For instance, one of the stories in *Winter Evening Tales* is praised because "in various parts it reminds us of the singular powers of the most astonishing narrator in English Literature, the celebrated Daniel Defoe," whose "ordinary incidents" were "so true to nature and to probability" that they could scarcely be considered as "anything but the plainest and most simple recitals of real occurrences." In addition, the reviewer notes: "Such was the perfection of his art that it lies perfectly concealed."¹ On the other hand, *A Series of Novels* by Madame Genlis is adversely criticized because it "contains incidents which belong more to romance than to what the English understand by a novel which purports to be a natural series of events, such as may be expected in real life."² Both of the foregoing excerpts are significant in indicating, not only the reviewers' ideas of a natural plot, but also their recognition of the differences between novels and romances. In nearly all cases, the noun *nature* and the adjective *natural* apply to known patterns of human behavior, to mirrored details of reality, which applied to fictitious plots,

¹ XCIII (1820), 264. See also "Frederic Latimer," XXX (1800), 433; "New Tales," LXXXVIII (1819), 328; "Valentine's Eve," LXXIX (1816), 459; "Taverny or 'Tis Sixty Years After," LXXV (1814), 275; "Tales of my Landlord," LXXXIX (1819), 399; "Pandurang Hari," series 3, I (1826), 69; "Love and Gratitude," I (1806), 220; "Tales of Fancy," LXXIX (1816), 214; "Amelie et Clotilde," LXXXII (1815), 544.

² xli (1803), 104. See also "Tales of my Landlord," LXXXIX (1819), 399; "Martin of Fenrose," XL (1803), 207.
make these plots realistic or verisimilar. In a way, then *nature* is a synonym for *truth,* and a work which is *natural* has verisimilitude.

The terms *truth* and *nature* appear frequently, for the reviewers always note that "fidelity to truth and nature"¹ is necessary for any work to maintain that "delusion, which it is the most important triumph of the novelist to create and preserve."² Such fidelity, then, leads to the very desirable *vraisemblance* (verisimilitude). But these terms are all used so loosely that it sometimes seems that verisimilitude is identical with fidelity to truth or to nature; and a strictly logical interpretation of them (or a classification of them) is almost impossible. The only course left is merely to consider separately a few passages containing the term *verisimilitude* or *vraisemblance,* whatever the reviewers may mean by it.

Scott is said to have "done well by attending to those verisimilarities which render more perfect (sic) the fascination of story,"³ in his *Kenilworth,* but even

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² "Highways and By-ways," series 3, VI (1827), 110.

he is adversely criticized for allowing the prolixity of his *Heart of Midlothian* to detract from the "probability and vraisemblance"\(^1\) of the story. *Peter Schemihi* and *Sir Ralph Saber*, among other novels, are criticized for their want of "vraisemblance."\(^2\) Indeed, wherever verisimilitude occurs, it is commended; wherever it is wanting, the lack is deplored.\(^3\) But what the critics mean by it is difficult to determine. Since the term occurs with probability\(^4\) and with harmony,\(^4\) it may apply to plots that are consistent, that have no details contrary to possibility or to probability. Sometimes the term appears to be a purely aesthetic one denoting the artist's presentation of an imaginary scene or a character in such a way that it seems real because of his (the author's) skill at presenting details borrowed from actual life.

Likewise, the words *real* and *reality* have vague meanings. In general, however, they apply to plots that are consistent even when they are extraordinary and that are so cleverly interlarded with natural details that they seem usual and probable. But sometimes, when historical facts or actual occurrences are considered along with fictitious ones, the terms indicate merely "the outward

\(^1\) LXXXVII (1818), 356.

\(^2\) See CVI (1825), 203 and Series 4, I (1832), 436.

\(^3\) See "Display," LXXIX (1816), 325 and "The Tor Hill," Series 3, III (1826), 415.

\(^4\) "Peter Schemihi," CVI (1825), 203.
world of created things."

The first meaning is applicable to a plot like that of *The Prediction*—a plot which, "extravagant as it is in its incidents, is worked up . . . into a terrific semblance of reality" and which, as a result, arouses "a painful intensity of silent and shuddering horror." On the other hand, a plot like that of *Palville House*, which contains incidents "such as we can easily conceive to arise in the intercourse of real life," has the second type of realism regarded as very desirable. The lack of this sort of realism is noted with dismay.

The third interpretation of the meanings of real and reality is found in a consideration of historical novels or of other novels that are supposed to present true events or real characters along with romantic ones. In general, this sort of realism—factuality—falls under the critics' fire since the critics are "convinced that the commixture of real and fabled personages, of actual and fictitious events" is nearly always a "hinderance [sic]

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2 "Tales of the Wild and the Wonderful," Series 3, I (1826), 79. See also "Guy Mannering," LXXVII (1815), 93.

3 LII (1807), 321. See also "Memoirs of X. de Brinbac," LIII (1807), 273; "Zeluca," LXXIX (1816), 324.

4 "Julia of Ardenfield," LXXXIII (1817), 97. See also "Julietta," XL (1803), 207.
to the effect and fascination of the romance. This "effect" or "delusion," as it is sometimes called, must be maintained and if "authentic history" detracts from it, then the history should not be used.

The presentation of romanticized history is censured as much as the historical romance, and devices such as Irving uses in presenting his A Chronicle of Granada only annoy the critics. It is said that Mr. Irving "shelters himself under the pasteboard shield of some fictitious histories; and like the discreet Bottom, while rearing like any nightingale, assures the ladies that he is only in jest." In short, the use of "a stalking horse" to present "a history of such romantic and almost overpowering interest" is seriously criticized.

All of these reviews indicate the critics' preoccupation with a sort of probability or truth or naturalness or verisimilitude or reality. In general, the terms are loosely used to indicate the desirability of events that seem to the reader consistent and probable, assuming

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1 "The Abbot," XCIII (1820), 70. See also "Ivanhoe," XCI (1820), 73.

2 "The Sea Kings of England," series 4, 1 (1831), 114. See also "Romance and Reality," series 4, 1 (1832), 293. For further discussion of the effect of historical facts or events upon the effect, see "Thaddeus of Warsaw," XLIII (1804), 214; "Cecile" series 3, V (1827), 542; "The Wild Irish Girl," LVII (1808), 381; and "Laverhill," series 4, II (1831), 434.

the situations to be such as the authors describe. Nature, natural or naturalness indicates the broad principles of human behavior. Truth denotes the usual and sometimes the fidelity to actuality, which is a necessary quality in historical novels, though the mixture of the actual and the romantic is frowned upon. Real (as well as reality) sometimes denotes factuality, but usually it refers merely to the semblance of truth or verisimilitude that arises when the events of a novel are so consistent with what is known as to seem actual. All of these are ideas and concepts very familiar to the readers of earlier criticism. So are most of the concepts about endings now to be considered.

The terms denouement, conclusion, ending, termination and even catastrophe appear often to be used synonymously in the reviews. There is no hint of the classical idea of the true catastrophe (indicating an entire tragic experience) and no notion of a set of theories with regard to the catastrophe or the ending. Some qualities win approval, and some, disapproval. Most of the reviewers, like sheep, follow the old leaders in praising some qualities of an ending and in criticizing others. They are never led to make very unusual or outstanding comments.

One denouement depends upon a story that is "too revolting." Another denouement is "common," another is "tedious and confused." Others are "somewhat abruptly conducted," "rather forced," "unnatural," or "needlessly tragical." Obviously, the critics would prefer a denouement or an ending that would not be too ordinary, but that would seem probable in view of preceding events and would not offend the reviewers' sense of good taste.

The terms close, conclusion, ending and termination are used in much the same way that denouement is employed and with the same sort of qualifying words and phrases. The conclusion of The Scottish Adventurers "abounds with improbabilities"; the close of Continental Adventures is too "theatrical"; the concluding scenes of the Bride of Lammermoor "are deeply tragic, and they are undoubtedly worked up with considerable ability." The conclusion of The Sea Devil wins praise because it is

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2 LXVIII (1812), 109. See also "First Love," series 4, II (1831), 118.

3 CIX (1826), 399. See also "Le Souterrain," LIVIII (1809), 524.

4 "Tales of my Landlord," LXXXIX (1819), 397.
"moral." Thus it is apparent that the ending should be probable, that it may be tragic if it gives evidence of the author's ability, and that it is well for it to be moral. To these requirements may be added the popular one that the story should "end happily," if possible, and that there should be no "premature hint" of the story's termination.

The term catastrophe at times is merely a synonym for ending. For instance—unless, of course, the reviewer is being ironic—that is the meaning of the word in the remark that The Reformist ends, "like all of its class, in the vulgar catastrophe, a wedding." At other times, catastrophe denotes a tragic conclusion, but it never attains the dignity of the classic meaning. Naturally, the reviewers feel that the catastrophe should be "concealed," but the reviewer of The Adulteress remarks significantly that effective concealment has no virtue per se "when the reader feels no interest in its development." So the catastrophe must first of all have interest. In addition,

1 LXVII (1812), 320.


3 "Histoires Nouvelles et Contes Moraux," LXI (1810), 544. See also "Jessica Madeville," XLVII (1805), 207; and "Ivanhoe," XCI (1820), 88.

4 LXII (1810), 98.
it should have "probability."¹ That is, it should not "break in on us with a shock for which we are totally unprepared."² If it can also "advance the moral,"³ so much the better.

Whatever the term by which the ending is designated—ending, conclusion, catastrophe, termination, or dénouement—it should not be "deficient in poetical justice."⁴ Yet "the poetical justice" must not produce "worse consequences" than are just or fail to present "adequate rewards."⁵

To summarize, the terms ending, termination, conclusion, dénouement, and catastrophe are used loosely and synonymously. But catastrophe more often denotes an unhappy ending. By whatever term the conclusion may be designated, the critics believe that it should be to some extent unforeseen, yet probable, natural but not common, preferably happy but above all interesting; and if it must be tragic, then it must have sufficient force to move the reader. If it be moral and serve the purposes of a sort of general poetic justice, so much the better. None of this criticism could conceivably be termed creative. Most of it is traditional and neo-classical in a slovenly,

¹ "Claire d'Albe," LVII (1808), 468.
² "Quentin Durward," CI (1823), 168. See also "Contes Nouvelles," LXXVII (1815), 482.
³ "Warbeck of Wolfstein," XCIV (1821), 236.
⁴ "Amélie et Clotilde," LXXXII (1813), 544.
⁵ "Geraldine," XCII (1820), 414.
careless fashion.

C Terms Expressing the Function of the Novel

No matter what kind of ending the plot may have, the critics always require that the purpose of the novel be apparent by the end of it. Moreover, this purpose--if it is approved--is usually such as Horace himself might have countenanced had he been writing about novels, or less frequently it is such as Longinus, or perhaps Castelvetro, would have advocated. In other words, the purpose of the ideal novel is aut prodesse aut delectare (either to profit or to please). But at times, the reviewers admit that pleasure may be the proper function of novels. Very often, too, of course, they emphasize only the utility of the novel. I shall consider first those reviews emphasizing utility (with particular attention to the term moral), next those emphasizing pleasure, and finally those considering both. Nearly all critics--even the didactic ones--recognize that a novel is more successful in achieving its utilitarian ends if it is also pleasing. The reviewer of Temper, for instance, remarks that for successful teaching, Mrs. Opie should have "treated the subject less didactically." Yet, in general, it is the utility of the novel that receives the greater emphasis; and the terms utility and usefulness

1 See Smith and Parks, op. cit., 113, 63, and 150.
2 LXVIII (1812), 217.
(generally referring to the informative or reforming qualities) occur often. A typical passage is one from the review of Gordon Gifford. In it the novel is commended for its "striking lesson of practical utility, to those daydreamers, who . . . . place all their dependence upon visionary hopes of golden gains."¹

In countless other reviews (in which the words utility or usefulness do not appear)² this same preoccupation with the practical value of the novel is apparent. Indeed, several reviews praising the utility of novels are especially interesting because of their indictments of specific ideas often associated with romanticism. For instance, the reviewer of Dorothea commends the purpose of that novel, which is to delineate the folly of making a regard for the general good the leading motive of individual action; of cherishing wild notions of the advantages of unsophisticated nature; and of diffusing Mr. Godwin's ideas respecting property, promises, and gratitude among the vulgar.³

Here at the beginning of the romantic period is an attack on the romantic ideas. Then one finds also favorable comment on the novel St. Claire, a novel which "exposes the danger

¹ Series 4, III (1831), 127. See also "The History of Myself and my Friend," LXIX (1812), 333 and "The Sisters," LXXI (1812), 458.

² See the following: "Varieties of Life," LXXXIX (1816), 214; "Leonora," LXIII (1807), 435; "Rachel," LXXXIII (1817), 323; "Edouard," CVIII (1825), 420; and "The Discontented Man," LXXIX (1819), 101.

³ XXXVII (1802), 424.
of allowing sentiment to gain the ascendancy over reason."
This critical note reminds us of the eighteenth-century
criticism of the sentimental drama; but the reviewer's own
vague and involved style of criticism, as well as his diction,
itslf somewhat forcefully suggests that of the sentimental
dramas. He remarks thus:

The children of unsophisticated virtue will doubtless
close the eventful recital with confirmed resolutions of
guarding against the seducing influence of romantic sensi-
bility, while they drop a tear over its ruined but amiable
victims.1

But the modern reader is somewhat surprised at the
emphasis occasionally placed upon the novel as a vehicle
for the dissemination of very minor and even unusual (for
the time) ideas. For instance, the reviewers rejoice at
seeing the "folly of duelling"2 attacked or the evils of
"inconsiderate gossipping."3 pointed out.

Almost without exception the reviewers loudly
acclaim the power of the novel to inculcate virtue (moral

1 XLIII (1804), 268. Another echo of sentimentality
occurs in the review of Discipline LXXVIII (1815), 397,
where the critic remarks that the "allurements" of a novel
may succeed where craver efforts fail," and then uses
sentimental quotations to prove his point.

2 "The Duellists," LI (1806), 335 and "Julia of

3 "Says She to Her Neighbor, What," IXIX (1812),
97. For other similar attacks see "The Refugees," XCIX
(1822), 441; and "Memoirs of Sylvester Daggerwood," LIV
(1807), 526; "Raymond," LXIX (1812), 486. For other comments
on this dissemination of minor ideas see "Le Siècle de la
Rochelle," LV (1808), 526; "The Mussulman," series 3, XIV
(1830), 267; "The Armenian," series 3, XIV (1830), 274;
"Flin Flans," LI (1806), 212.
excellence), benevolence, devotion, and piety. These words and their synonyms occur on many pages, for as surely as the reviewers believe it to be the duty of an author "to correct the taste of the times,"¹ so surely do they believe it to be his duty "to improve everyone,"² to present "the exposure of folly and the castigation of vice,"³ to the end that the readers may have "a strict regard for virtuous conduct"⁴ and a "genuine piety."⁵

But most highly praised are those novels "in which the interests of religion are sedulously kept in view."⁶ Moreover, an author is expected to be very careful in treating religion. He is to abstain "from the levity of

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¹ "The Fatal Vow," LVIII (1809), 217.
² "Self Control," LXV (1811), 435.
³ "Scenes of Life," LII (1807), 437.
⁴ "Virtuous Poverty," XLY (1804), 314.
⁵ "A Sequel to Coelebs," LXXI (1813), 319. See also "Redwood," CVI (1825), 430.
mingling allusions to scriptural subjects with the idle badinage of his narrative."¹ He is to refrain from the "irreverent use of scriptural phrases."² He should indeed have the action of his story motivated by religious principles, but he should exercise good taste and extreme care in presenting these principles.³

Closely allied to the critical passages in which the terms virtue and religious principles occur are those sections of the reviews in which the terms morals and morality are to be found. Since the ideas represented by the latter terms are so similar to those concepts denoted by the former, all four terms are often to be found in the same reviews. But the words most frequently used are morals and morality. Morality and good taste also are closely associated in some reviews. In fact, though one reviewer praises the "moral lessons" in a novel, he is disturbed by the fact that some of the lessons "are not in the most refined taste."⁴

¹ "Tales of the Wild and the Wonderful," series 3, I (1826), 82.
² "The Abbot," XCIII (1820), 82. See also "Howard," LXXVIII (1815), 435.
Then again a reviewer declares that in the case of a book with an exceptional moral, it is "pardonable for the rigor of the critic to yield to the feelings of the moralist."¹ This, however, is not the position taken by most reviewers. They ordinarily agree that a book must have good qualities in addition to a moral tendency, but that "interest"² and amusement must not be sacrificed to the moral, whether that moral be based on religion or on "reason."³ As accurately as any, the following passage represents the attitude of the average critic:

If a work, professedly of amusement contains nothing hostile to good morals in its general result and effect, and if the attentive reader may select his own practical lesson of improvement from particular incidents and characters the author has fulfilled his duty in this respect; and he is not bound to square the whole tenor of his composition to any preconceived moral design.⁴

¹ "Percival," XXXVII (1802), 425. See also "Tales of Fashionable Life," IXII (1815); see also "The History of Bettervllle," XC (1803), 207; "Les Deux Tartuffes," XXXIX (1802), 504; "Country Houses," Series 4, II (1832), 254.


³ "Lucy Ormond," XLIV (1804), 425. See also "The Microcosm," XXXV (1801), 429.

Thus whether the terms employed be utility, usefulness, religion, piety, informative, virtuous, duty, or moral, it is clear that the majority of reviewers believe that the novel should have some utilitarian function. It should be a vehicle for instruction or for reform; and, preferably, it should be moral in tendency. Especially in the reviews written early in the nineteenth century, the critics even demand that the novels teach specific moral lessons or inculcate principles of virtuous action based on religious beliefs. Some reviewers insist, moreover, that morals be presented in a decorous fashion. Of course, this coupling of morals and good taste or decorum reminds one forcefully of the neo-classic tradition.

True, some reviewers do emphasize delightful, pleasing, entertaining, or amusing alone; but usually they use these terms along with terms implying the usefulness of the novel. Here again, we see the effects of the neo-classic theory.

Among those novels emphasizing the entertaining or pleasing qualities of fiction, Mrs. Cunning’s The Heir Apparent is described as "pleasing"¹ and the novel Nightmare Abbey is deemed "entertaining."² Moreover, the function of the novel to entertain is very forcefully emphasized in the review of German Stories, where we find

¹ XL (1803), 296.
² XC (1821), 327-328.
this weak echo of Coleridge's theory of the "willing
suspension of disbelief":

The narrator appears to believe in everything which he
relates, and thus he carries his audience with him to the
end of his tale, little caring how far he trespasses on
their credulity, provided that he can, for the moment,
entertain their imagination. 1

Furthermore, the critic exclaims that this novel has cast
"a spell quite as binding" 1 as that of the Arabian Nights.

The terms pleasing, amusing and entertaining are
used almost synonymously; and the last two sometimes occur
in the same critical passages in connection with imagination.
The implication is that the ability of the novel to enter-
tain or to amuse arises from the power of the novel to
enkindle the imagination of the reader so that the reader
willingly accepts improbabilities. Although the applica-
tion of this theory of Coleridge is recognized, the reviewer
of Tales accepts it with reservations, as this passage
indicates:

Her tales display a very fertile imagination, and are very
entertaining: but, as they were written solely for amuse-
ment, the bounds of probability are freely exceeded, . . . 2

Of course, there are reviews in which the emphasis is

1 Series 3, III (1826), 527. For other commendations
of entertainment in novels or for attacks on the
lack of entertainment see "The Letters of a Solitary Xan-
derer," XXXIV (1801), 332; "A Northumbrian Tale," XXXIII
(1800), 102; "Something New," XII (1803), 103; "Count de
Novini," XXXIII (1800), 209.

2 "Tales," LIII (1807), 437. See also "The
Ayrshire Legatees," XVII (1821), 301 and "German Stories,
series 3, III (1826), 527.
placed upon the amusing quality of the novels. Headlong Hall, for example, is "a very harmless care-killer," which "will afford a pleasant evening's amusement," especially to readers who enjoy a "burlesque on all favourite hobbies." On the whole, the reviewers deplore a lack of amusement in a novel, but are reluctant to praise an amusing one when they can not "discern any human profit likely to accrue from it." So we always come back to the Horatian ideal.

That ideal may be described, as has already been indicated, as "moral and amusing." It may be moral in that it keeps "the mind from lower or worse occupation," or-- and this is more desirable -- it may "prove the foster mother to many good and honorable feelings."

The ideal novel may also be described as one which furnishes "harmless amusement" without offending our

1 "Headlong Hall," LXXXII (1817), 330. See also "Les Parvenus," LXXXVIII (1819), 556; "Frederic," XXXIV (1821), 531; "Rothelin," XXXV (1822), 54; "Francis and Joseph," LVII (1808), 323.


3 "Somers," LXXXIII (1818), 415. See also "Francis and Joseph," LVII (1808), 323; "New Tales," series 2, LXXXVIII (1819), 327.

4 "Duty," LXXVII (1815), 212.

5 "Clan Albion," LXXX (1816), 84. See also "Justina," LXXVIII (1802), 313; "Lady Jane's Pocket," LXXIX (1816), 103.
"common sense"\(^1\) or "sober reason"\(^2\) or one that appeals to those "to whom information is amusement."\(^3\) It may be a novel that is "agreeable and instructive," that affords "a lesson both improving and entertaining," and that presents sentiments "founded on just perceptions of reason and nature."\(^4\) All of this criticism—even the use of nature in connection with reason—descends from the neo-classicists. The terms are theirs.

There is at least one echo of the actual Latin "utile and the dulce"\(^5\) and numerous translations\(^6\) of these words and of Horace's aut prodecesse aut delectare. But the blending of the two qualities (denoted by the terms) requires care, or, in the words of the reviewer of De Vere, "a little more tact" than some novelists used. This lack

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1 "Isemba of Lorraine," XCVII (1822), 304.
2 "Emma," LXXX (1816)
3 "Anastasius," XCI (1820), 111. For similar uses of information, see "Fruits of Scottish Life," series 3, XIV (1830), 265; "Charles Ellis," LIV (1807), 212. For attacks on types of information presented, see "lumessa," CVI (1825), 61; and "The Niser Married," LXXII (1813), 326.
4 "Aubrey," XLVII (1805), 62. For other uses of the term instructive with amusing, pleasing, and entertaining, see "The Nobility of the Heart," XLIX (1806), 207-208; "Phatime," XXXVIII (1802), 513; "Marlan," LVII (1809), 187; "Geraldine, n. s., XCII (1820), 415.
5 "Geraldine," n. x., XCII (1820), 415.
6 "The Victim of Intolerance," LXXVIII (1815), 216. See also "System and No System," LXXVIII (1815), 435; "Zeal and Experience," n. x., XCIV (1821), 104; "Sinclair," LV (1807), 514.
of "taet" resulted in novels that were "neither pleasant nor profitable."¹

Truly remarkable in the critics' eyes were those novels that, in addition to being "pleasant and profitable," had no deficiency in "poetical justice."² Many would agree with the reviewer who, defending poetic justice, quotes this passage by Bacon:

"As real history gives us not the success of things according to the deserts of vice and virtue, fiction corrects it and displays to us the fates and fortunes of persons rewarded or punished according to their merit;—and, as real history disgusts us with a familiar and constant similitude of things, fiction relieves us by unexpected turns and changes, and thus not only delights but at the same time inspires morality and nobleness of soul."³

The novel, then, may have as its function the giving of information or instruction—important or unimportant—or the inculcating of moral principles preferably based upon religious belief. But the novelist is not to use his work as a vehicle for dogma or to burden it with so many useful lessons that the interest of the story falls beneath the weight of them. Provided that the subject matter be harmless, a novel may furnish only entertainment, amusement, or pleasure. The ideal novel, however,

¹ "De Vere," Series 3, V (1827), 68.

² "Amelie et Clotilde," LXXII (1813), 544.

³ "Anastasius," n. s., XCI (1820), 142. See also "Moral Tales," LXXV (1811), 435; "Frederick," LXVI (1811), 208; "Aline de Reisentation," LXVI (1811), 541; "Geraldine," XCII (1820), 414. See also the section in this paper on "Endings."
will offer entertainment-coated pills of information or of moral teachings.

Now to sum up the study of this journal.

Conclusion

As rare as really creative thought in the discussions at afternoon literary circles are the bits of unusual, new or modern criticism in the Monthly Review. Most of the critical terms used and the theories which these terms express are indistinct echoes of eighteenth-century criticism. I say indistinct because it is almost impossible to understand precisely what meanings the reviewers intend all their terms to have. But it is clear that romanticism has affected this criticism very little.

In considering the requisites of authors, the reviewers mention such terms as these: a find mind, good sense, power of observation, good taste, (cultivated judgment, or propriety), imagination (inventive ability, or controlled creativity), fancy (wild flights of imagination or sometimes restrained imagination), knowledge (of specific facts or of the human heart), talent (innate ability), power (force or talent), invention (power of coherent imaginative creativity), originality (related to invention or controlled imagination), and genius (innate general ability, imaginative talent, or rarely a fusion of higher intellectual power with artistic and imaginative gifts). Most of these terms are traditional ones used in an ordinary—
frequently in a vague—manner. The insistence upon imaginative restraint is neo-classical in tenor. So, too, is the tendency of the reviewers to praise uncontrolled imagination when the novelist is a genius. There are some romantic touches, however, mainly after 1817, in the praise of uncontrolled fancy and in the commendation of a novelist's knowledge of the human heart. Moreover, the use of the term genius to denote a fusion of intellectual power with artistic and imaginative ability seems new, but not specifically romantic.

On the criticism of the novels themselves, there is little new or colorful. For the most part, the terms used are the old ones; but there are a few new ones used to indicate traditional ideas and a few old ones having new meanings.

In the criticism of language and style the terms seem peculiarly ordinary. Language is supposed to be forcible (meaning forceful), fluent, elegant, accurate, and lively. It should not be either diffuse or flowery, but should be in good taste and appropriate to the characters and the age portrayed in the book. The insistence upon accuracy and correctness of language is decidedly neo-classical. Neo-classical, too, are many of the adjectives applied to style. Pope himself might have praised a style that was correct, elegant, polished, accurate, clear, lively, and graceful. Of course, some terms like pleasing and excellent are aesthetic; some like flippant are impressionistic; and some like taste, turgid, disjointed, and impressive are
new expressions for traditional ideas. But, on the whole, the adjectives applied to style and language are traditional ones, and the term *style* itself has no unusual connotations.

In their discussions of descriptive passages the reviewers show the influence of the old and the new tenets of criticism. They use such terms as *powerful, fresh, charming, striking, vivid, horrible, and beautiful*, along with *correct, minute, accurate, suitable*. Many of the first named terms are used by the romanticists to indicate novelty of imagery; and, of course, terms of the latter type have neo-classical implications. But *accurate* often has the comparatively new meaning of "fidelity to external nature," and *correct* sometimes means "accurate with regard to observed facts, not with regard to rules." Indicative of the reviewers' preference for descriptions that are affecting and faithful reproductions of life is their use of *pathetic, comic, humorous, vigorous, and natural*. In short, romanticism is not making great inroads here; but there are some faint traces of changes in the interpretations of old words and in the trend toward using words that are slightly different from the ones to which the eighteenth-century reviewers were accustomed.

Most of the criticism of character-portrayals is vague aesthetic or interpretative criticism rather than strict technical criticism, since the basis for the analysis is the impression made by the fictitious characters upon
the minds of the readers, rather than a conscious evalua-
tion of the author's technique. Yet the occasional in-
sistence upon the necessity of having the characters further
the plot and of having the heroes and heroines meet specific
requirements is suggestive of tenets of long standing, but
the former was not especially emphasized during the preceding
century. The majority of the terms, however, are used in a
vague and general fashion. Most of them like probable,
pleasing, amusing, interesting, consistent, moral, original,
and natural seem traditional in their application. The
term natural is very frequently used. It may denote an
imitation of a specific person, a representation of habits
of people in general, an imitation of national or racial
attributes, or an imitation of the abstract qualities of
human nature (Aristotle's universal).

In their evaluation of the subject matter, or of
the plot, or of the ending of the novel, the same predilection
of the reviewers for traditional terms and theories is
apparent. Even so, at times a few reviewers write such
exuberantly enthusiastic criticism that the modern reader
remembers that this is the romantic period. In the con-
sideration of the subject matter, the reviewers use familiar
words, like interesting, suitable, simple, and appropriate;
but they are particularly insistent upon having the material
be interesting. They are prone to consider seriously the
author's management of his plot, the effectiveness and
artistry of plot structure, the selection and the treatment
of incident in relation to the main plot, the rules for plot structure, and the unity of design or the lack of it. All of this deep concern about technical problems sounds both modern and traditional. Some of it is even to be traced to classical principles of plot construction. Moreover, the use of such terms as propriety, decorum, interest, probability, verisimilitude, natural, and real adds to the neo-classical tenor of the whole. Of course, virtually the same conclusions may be reached with regard to the terms descriptive of the endings of novels. Ending, conclusion, denouement, and catastrophe are sometimes used as synonyms, but catastrophe usually denotes an unhappy ending. In descriptions of the ideal endings, major terms occur with such adjectives as unforeseen, probable, natural, moving, moral, interesting, and even with the expression poetic justice. None of these are new or startling. All have reasonably familiar meanings, but they are all used in a loose, general fashion.

In their consideration of the function of a novel, a few critics (following the tradition of Castelvetro) admit--but usually only late in the criticism--that fiction may serve merely to amuse, to delight, to entertain, or to interest. A greater number feel that it should be a vehicle for some sort of information or instruction, preferably for moral instruction based on religious principles; but an overwhelming majority of the critics follow the Horatian dictum adopted by neo-classicists, that any
Imaginative work should be both profitable and pleasant (aut prodesse aut delectare).

So here in the Monthly Review we find criticism mainly in the neo-classical groove. There are some verbal echoes of Aristotle and of Horace. But romanticism shows its influence in the form of a few new terms or a few changed meanings here and there, and in the critics' tendency to overlook the improbable or even the immoral because of their enthusiasm for the genius of the author or because of the great pleasure afforded the readers by the book. Even this last point could be defended on classical grounds. Before 1815 one finds mainly repetitions of neo-classical terms and theories. There are a few hints of romantic tendencies between 1815 and 1817; more, between 1817 and 1825. After 1825 there is considerable emphasis upon the functional and upon means of achieving artistic, organic plots. The commonplace character of much of the criticism prevents our feeling any particular enthusiasm for it, and new and unusual ideas—romantic or otherwise—have to be searched for in these reviews.

Such is the nature of criticism in what we might call this "Consumers' Report" among the journals. Since it had as its avowed purpose the mentioning of virtually all novels, it was of some assistance to those who needed guidance in their selection of fiction. Doubtless, readers of that type frequently found it useful. Sometimes they found it interesting. But for the modern reader the
Edinburgh Review, next to be examined, has a much greater appeal.
II

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

Like the criticism in the Monthly Review, that in the Edinburgh Review is somewhat traditional. It is, however, generally better criticism. The critics in this journal do not often merely echo inherited theories. They understand the critical dicta and use them accordingly. But even they use terms in a loose and general fashion. To this fact any careful reader of the reviews can testify.

The Edinburgh Review began in the year 1802; and from that time on, through its reviews, it brought to the attention of its readers many works of the famous authors of the day. Francis Jeffrey was both editor and leading contributor; but many other important and unimportant writers reviewed novels for the periodical, among the more famous ones being Macaulay and Hazlitt. To determine the manner in which all of these reviewers used various critical terms, one must examine the critical articles in some detail.

The critics judge the novelists on the basis of their possession of numerous capabilities, such as imagination or fancy, eloquence, good sense, genius, talent, originality—or the ability to make imitations seem original—powers of conception and invention, both knowledge of human nature gained from observation and from understanding and knowledge of some principles of composition. So it
is necessary to consider all these terms carefully with a view to determining exactly what each implies.

The desiderata for the ideal novel are also numerous. In general, the style, descriptions, character delineations, and plot are expected to have especial merit—a merit achieved only through the novelists' close observance of principles mentioned by the critics. For instance, the descriptions, characters, and plot have to have a type of realism, probability, or verisimilitude. The plot has to be well constructed, has to be designed to inculcate some moral and to entertain, has to be possessed of an excellent dénouement and of a power to hold the interest of the reader. The many critical terms used by the reviewers in judging the works of fiction will, therefore, be considered under the various headings mentioned above.

Before one considers the terms employed in the criticism of novelists and novels, however, the novel in general deserves some attention. Such a treatment is advisable in order that one may note the general state of the novel and of the novelists; that he may indicate the motives prompting various critical utterances; and, finally, that he may trace the lack of a definite critical terminology applicable to the novel to its cause, the comparative youth of the novel as a literary type and the former disregard in which the novel was held.

On the following pages, therefore, consider first the information found in the Edinburgh Review on the origin,
forms, and development of the novel, and on the contributions made to the novel by specific novelists and by novelists in general; afterwards, the specific terms applicable to the novelists and then those pertinent to the novels.

As indicative of one theory about the relative merits of women and men writers, I give the following excerpt:

In works which come from a female pen, we are seldom offended by those moral monstrosities; those fantastic perversions of principle, which are too often to be met with in the fictions which have been written by men. Women are also less stilted in their style; They are more content to describe naturally what they have observed, without attempting the introduction of those extraneous ornaments which are sometimes sought at the expense of truth. They are less ambitious, and are therefore more just—they are far more exempt from that prevailing literary vice of the present day—exaggeration—and have not taken their stand among the feverish followers of what may be called the intense style of writing; a style much praised by those who inquire only if a work is calculated to make a strong impression, and omit entirely the more important question whether that impression, be founded on truth or on delusion. ¹

There are many exceptions to be found to these statements. Many women writers are guilty of extravagance, of "moral monstrosities"¹ and of stilted styles; and many men are completely free of the faults in novel writing generally attributed to their sex. In other words, no conclusion is generally agreed upon. But the critics in this journal are notable for their commendation of women novelists at a time when many reviewers attacked them.

¹ "Women As They Are," LI (1830) 446. From this point on, all periodical references will be to the Edinburgh Review unless otherwise stated, and I shall not repeat the title of the journal.
In bringing about a change in the attitude of readers toward the novel as a particular type of literature, both men and women novelists played a part. In the particular form in which it appeared in the romantic era, Madame de Staël considered the novel, "with the exception of La Nouvelle Héloïse," to be preeminently English. With her theory, the English reviewers were not completely in accord; however, most agreed that Madame de Staël herself performed the important function of showing the relationship existing between the literature and the "national taste, genius, and morality," as well as "the political structure of society, the accidents of climate and external relations, and the variety of creeds and superstitions." Furthermore, they believed that "her bold and vigorous attempts to carry the generalizing spirit of true philosophy into the history of literature and manners" added appreciably to her value. Indeed, her treatment of literature and her acceptance of the novel as an important type of literature still cause her to have a significant place in a consideration of the origin and development of the novel as it is known today.

1 "De la Literature consideree dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales," XXI (1913), 47 and 2. Note the neo-classical terminology.


3 "De la Litterature consideree dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales," XXI (1913), 47 and 2.
Fanny Burney also is important in any treatment of the development of the novel. Hazlitt declares:

Among those few persons who have kept the even tenor of their way, the author of Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla holds a distinguished place. Mrs. Radcliffe's enchantments drear and mouldering castles, derived a part of their interest, we suppose, from the supposed tottering state of all old structures at the time; and Mrs. Inchbald's Nature and Art would not have had the same popularity, but that it fell in (in its main characters) with the prevailing prejudice of the moment, that judges and bishops were not pure abstractions of justice and piety. Miss Edgeworth's tales, again, are a kind of essence of common sense, which seemed to be called for by the prevailing epidemics of audacious paradox and insane philosophy.

Almost alone among her fellow novelists Fanny Burney continued to write what might be called novels, not afflicted with ills of various types.

Scott, however, eclipsed even Fanny Burney and Madame de Stael in achievements and in contributions to the development of the novel. Indeed, the critic declares:

For novel writing, in general, the Author of Waverley has done much. First, he has made it a more creditable exercise of ability than it was previously considered and thus invited to it many writers who might otherwise have considered it unworthy of their regard. But beyond this he has shown them how they should pursue it.

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1 "The Wanderer," XXIV (1815), 335. This article dealing in detailed fashion with English novelists is republished under the heading "On the English Novelists" in W. C. Hazlitt's Works, edited by A. R. Teller and Arnold Glover (London: J. E. Dent, 1903), VIII, 106-132. Note in this passage the neo-classical term common sense, which, of course, is often applied to Miss Edgeworth.

2 "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1830), 77.
He has taught them that on whatever period, country or sphere of society, their fictions may be laid, they must first look forth upon Nature. They must not indulge the untaught promptings of a wild imagination, but set down only that which they have first ascertained to be in accordance with general truth.

Scott has also been indirectly beneficial to the reputation of the novel, in that he has demonstrated another way in which the novelist may be useful.

Without one word of direct precept, the Waverly Novels have made us feel more than any essays or lectures ever did, to what end history should be read, and in what manner it should be written.

Thus one sees that Madame de Staël, Fanny Burney, and Scott helped in increasing the repute of the novel and in defining, to some extent, its use. The contributions of these authors are chiefly in the field of the English novel, but Boccaccio and other novelists in different countries also performed their function in the development of the novel.

Boccaccio by creating and fixing the prose style of his country, had concentrated even the defects of the Decameron, and forever given the tone to the Italian novel.

In all of these statements, the reviewers reveal a consciousness of the formative influences in the novel; but they do not write a great deal about the particular forms

1 Ibid., p. 77. Here note the terms Nature (the universal parent— with emphasis upon human nature, however), imagination (untutored power of originating), learning, and experience— all neo-classical. Compare with their use in A. Pope's Essay on Criticism, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 386 ff.

2 "The Italian Novelists," XLII (1825), 177.
which novels take or about the specific technique for each
form. However, several discussions of technique are notable,
especially some with regard to the epistolary novel. Concern-
ing the respective merits of the letter-form and the diary-
form, the reviewer of Charles et Marie has this to say:

A series of letters requires, therefore, a series of incidents,
and is hence less suited to those simple tales in which little
more is intended to be exhibited than the affections and
caprices of an irregular mind. For the exhibition of the
rapid changes of such a character no form seems better suited
than that which the diary form has been adapted by the author
of this little tale.¹

On the other hand, in an article on Richardson's
works Mrs. Barbauld states that the best form of narration is
that in which the author is merely a narrator because it "lays
him under less restraint" than other forms. The letter-
method, she considers vital only when the major aim is a
presentation of characters, not of plot. The epistolary
method, therefore, does not seem to be completely suitable to
Richardson's material, since his novels "are narrative and
the letters of most of his characters contain little more
than a minute journal of the conversations and transactions
in which they were exclusively engaged."²

¹ II (1803), 186.

² A.L. Barbauld, "The Correspondence of Samuel Richard-
son, Author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison;
selected from the Original Wss. bequeathed to his Family. To
which are prefixed a Biographical Account of that Author and
Observations on his Writings," V (1805), 732,24. See also
"Mademoiselle de Tournon," XXXIV (1820), 375, for an attack
on the letter form as destructive of "illusion."
The consensus of opinion is that the letter form is an unfortunate choice for any novelist under most circumstances. Rigid instructions hamper the progress of the story and make the narration seem unnatural. The diary method and the method in which the narrator is simply the teller of the story and not an actor in the events are both to be preferred to the epistolary method. Of the two, the latter is better because it allows the writer more freedom and because it is less likely to involve improbability.

Upon this question, Hazlitt quotes Dunlop's statements:

In history there is too little individuality, in poetry too much effort, to permit the poet and historian to portray the manners living as they rise. History treats of men, as it were, in the mass; and the individuals whom it paints, we regarded merely as principally in a public light, without taking into consideration their private feelings, tastes, or habits. Poetry is in general capable of too little detail, while its paintings at the same time are usually too much forced and exaggerated. But in Fiction we can discriminate without impropriety, and enter into detail without meanness. Hence it has been remarked that it is chiefly in the fictions of an age that we can discover the modes of living, dress and manners of the period.  

1 See F. G. Black, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century (Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 1940), pp. 2 and 110. Here Black mentions the same faults indicated above in considering the reasons for the decline of the epistolary form. He remarks upon the steady rise in epistolary novels from 1780 to 1790, reaching "a record of 191 novels in letters" during the ten-year period. After 1788, "the highest point" in annual production, there was a "steady decline" until the method passed into virtual disuse.

Here Hazlitt makes a distinct effort to distinguish between the novel and poetry; and this effort is important despite the false value which he ascribes to the novel. Certainly, he and other critics are beginning to consider the novel seriously, to note the differences between it and other literary types, not always to the detriment of the novel. These particular points made in the very conservative Edinburgh Review reveal the progress made toward the establishment of the novel as an important literary genre.

A Terms Expressing the Requisites of Novelists

In their discussions of the new literary type, the reviewers do not give a great amount of attention to the personality of the author as it is revealed in his work. But they do sometimes list certain qualities which they believe should be possessed by good authors; and the critical terms which they use are generally the traditional ones—originality, power of conception and invention, genius, talent and others—all examined in the preceding chapter. These terms are so often used loosely and interchangeably that it is difficult to separate them.

Like the reviewers writing in the Monthly Review, these critics deem originality praiseworthy, but not always necessary. Indeed, in true neo-classical fashion, they consider that, since the ancients have written upon all subjects, pure originality is unobtainable, that only novelty of selection and
arrangement can be expected; that is, as Hazlitt says, unless "we should begin by destroying the works" of all "predecessors" of modern novelists. They, therefore, roundly applaud any sort of originality which appears. For example, one reviewer declares:

Though the conception of the Ayrshire Legates, however, is not new, the execution and details must be allowed to be original; and, along with a good deal of twaddle, and too much vulgarity, certainly display very considerable powers both of humour, invention, and acute observation. When there is, however, any measure of novelty of conception, as in Scott's work, the critics are delighted. Moreover, they object--but not too seriously--to "obvious and abundant" imitation (copying of the manner, style, or material of other authors) discoverable at times even in Scott's work. They especially dislike the novelist's imitation of his own earlier work and greatly disparage those imitators of

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2 "Annals of the Parish," XXIX (1823), 170. Note here the use of the terms humour, invention, and observation, denoting desiderata for authors. Note also the use of the neo-classical term vulgarity.

3 "Tales of my Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 257. For other uses of originality see "Sir Andrew Gyllie of that Ilk," XXXIX (1823), 17; "Valerius," XXXIX (1823), 179; "LaSolitaire, Le Renegat, Ipsiboe," XL (1824), 159; "The Italian Novelists," XLII (1825), 192; "The Croppy," LII (1831), 414; and "Yesterday in Ireland," LII (1831), 425.

4 "Ivanhoe," XXXIII (1820), 2.

5 "Waverley Novels and Tales of my Landlord," LV (1832), 73.
Scott who "exaggerate" his "defects" in their inartistic copies. Both originality (referring either to the power of imagining or creating anew or to the talent for producing new arrangements) and imitation are used in much the same way as Edward Young employs them in his Conjectures on Original Composition, although the theory that absolute originality is impossible is more nearly akin to Pope's concept.

One gets the same impression of the continuance of the eighteenth-century terminology in the reviewers' use of invention and conception, terms used interchangeably and as synonyms of originality. In most cases, despite the similarity of the terms, the reviewers using invention and conception together appear to designate by the latter imagining or originating power and by the former term, the partially acquired talent for imagining and then fitting together episodes into a plot or qualities into an individual character. But at times, especially when they use poetical with invention, the critics refer to a sort of innate imaginative power, somewhat akin to inspiration. The qualities denoted by the terms

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are desirable, but not essential attributes of an author; for, according to the critics, some very creditable novelists have succeeded by substituting close observation for powers of invention and conception. Lister, for instance, has a mind that is "observant, acute, and just, rather than inventive, and his sensibilities are more true and gentle than engrossing and profound." Yet "nothing can exceed the truth and keeping of his sketches ... from real life."\(^1\)

Even more to be commended than invention and conception, of course, is the possession of genius. Like the preceding terms, genius is used somewhat loosely. It usually indicates natural talent of a general sort, but sometimes it denotes a limited specific faculty like imagination, or occasionally a kind of spirit—a meaning which it had in classical criticism. Its presence is always marked by these reviewers; and its absence, lamented. Genius alone is not at its best, however. Usually, in true neo-classical tradition, it wins more extravagant plaudits when it is itself somewhat restrained.

All reviewers, however, attest its power; and one critic writes of **Waverley**:

> It is wonderful what genius and adherence to nature (universal human behavior) will do, in spite of all disadvantages. Here is a thing obviously very hastily, and, in many places very unskillfully written— ... ; and yet, by the mere force and truth and vivacity of its colouring, already casting the whole tribe of ordinary novels into the shade and taking its place rather with the most popular of our modern poems, than

\(^1\) "Arlington," LVI (1832), 149.
with the rubbish of provincial romances.\(^1\)

In fact, genius nearly always atones for defects that might not otherwise be overlooked. Madame de Staël has great defects, but they are "the defects of genius."\(^2\) Maturin, "straining to reach the sublime," often produces "the ridiculous"; but such is his "undoubted genius" that his failures lead only to "regret in every admirer of talent," not to "wicked amusement."\(^3\) In most of the preceding passages, genius refers to superior innate ability, to originality, or to a person possessed of such talents; but here the word is closely akin to a kind of spirit:

The genius of the writer, like that irregular offspring of fire, the Potheen of his native land, has not only a strength, but a wildness of flavor about it, which it would be in vain to look for in productions more amenable to the gauge of criticism.\(^4\)

This passage suggests the untamed genius theory which one is accustomed to associate with the Romantic Age in English literature; and if a great number of similar uses occurred in the criticism, much might be made of it. But a great number

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\(^1\) "Waverley," XXIV (1814), 202. For a similar use of terms see "Waverley Novels and Tales of my Landlord," LV (1832), 75.

\(^2\) "Fableau Historique de l'État et des Progrès de la Litterature Francaise depuis 1789," XXXV (1821), 178.

\(^3\) "Melmoth, the Wanderer," XXV (1821), 355. Note the use of the neo-classical sublime, and compare it with the use of the term in E. Burke, Works (London: Henry Bohn, 1864) I, 67-178. In addition, for another expression of the need for Maturin to "control" his genius--this time by rules--see "Women," XXX (1818), 356.

\(^4\) "Tales of the O'Hara Family, XLIII (1825), 264."
do not appear here. Most of the time the critics use the term in such a vague fashion that it may be interpreted as meaning a specific talent, general talent, or even a kind of inspiration, though the last meaning is always the most doubtful. For instance, the reviewer writes of Robinson Crusoe:

As it was the first [of his acknowledged romances], it was decidedly the best; it gave full scope to his genius; and the subject mastered his prevailing bias to religious controversy, and the depravity of social life, by confining him to the unsophisticated views of nature and the human heart.

No matter what the meaning of the term may be, however, there is no doubt that it is a desirable adjunct to any writer's other qualities. Indeed, in the opinion of many critics, it is an absolute essential. With these opinions most of the critics of the eighteenth century would have been in complete agreement; and, as a matter of fact, most of these uses of genius can easily be discovered in neo-classical criticism of the drama and poetry. Certainly both the theory of the need for regulating genius and the attitude that genius is to be forgiven minor defects have a "Popean" sound. The latter thought, Pope expresses in his "Preface to the Translation of Homer's Iliad," and the former, in his An Essay

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1 Closely associated with genius is the term talent, usually denoting ability of either a specific or a general nature. For uses of the term see "Simple Tales," VIII (1806), 487; "Waverley," XXIV (1:14), 20; "Le Solitaire," XL (1824), 160; and "Eugene Aram," LV (1832), 212.


Moreover, Addison in his *Spectator* and Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets* use the term very much as these reviewers do.

Imagination, with which fancy is associated just as it has been in the criticism of the two preceding centuries, is another desirable quality for a novelist. It is perhaps worthy of note that the critics—again in the neo-classical tradition—favor an imagination or fancy ruled by reason.

Fancy, which is even more vaguely used than the term imagination, denotes at times a wild form of imagination, completely unrelated to reality. Certainly that is what it appears to mean here:

In comparing this work then with the former productions of the same master hand, it is impossible not to feel that we are passing in a good degree from the reign of nature and reality, to that of fancy and romance; . . .

In the treatment of Chateaubriand, however, fancy appears with sublime; but this sublime is not that used by Longinus. Instead, it suggests the eighteenth-century usage, for the reviewer remarks facetiously about "how dangerous it is for a Frenchman to meddle with the sublime." The reviewer of Granby adds the thought that

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1 "Ivanhoe and the Novels and Tales of the Author of "Waverley," XXXIII (1820), 8. See also Mademoiselle de Tournon, XXXIV (1820), 373, where Scott's "humor and fancy," (referring to his sympathetic sense of the incongruous and his playful imaging power) are mentioned.

2 "Mademoiselle de Tournon," XXXIV (1820), 373.
it is desirable for fancy to be controlled by "a directing and superintending judgment."¹

Moreover, this same "superintending judgment" is evidently needed for imagination. Certainly authors are commended for having it. Scott, for example, receives great praise because he is "the master of his imagination, rather than the slave." No "utterer of eloquent ravings," he seems instead "to have looked forth upon nature, . . . , from the watchtower of a commanding intellect".² Maturin, on the contrary, lets his imagination run riot; and the reviewer's opinion of the author's "foaming at the mouth and falling into convulsions"³ is clearly expressed. The exaggeration, the unrestrained effusion of the romantics is not for him. In most of the passages mentioned and in others,⁴ imagination denotes an imaging power using as its materials objects in nature which it reflects or heightens. But it may sometimes deal with mere fancies; it may be closely akin to inspiration as it is in this passage on Richter:

he exhibits an imagination of singularity, nay, on the whole of a truth and grandeur, unexampled elsewhere. In his dreams there is a mystic complexity, a gloom, and amid the dim, gigantic, half-ghostly shadows, gleamings of a wizard

¹ XLI (1826), 376. For a similar insistence on a curb for fancy see Jeffrey's review of Waverley Novels, LV (1832), 73.
² "Waverley Novels and Tales of my Landlord, LV (1832), 73.
³ "Melmoth, the Wanderer," XXXV (1821), 354.
⁴ See, for instance, "Bracebridge Hall," XXXVII (1822), 350.
splendour, which recall to us the visions of Ezekiel. 1

Here is a far-off echo of Longinus' theory and more than a suggestion of Sidney's belief in the inspired imagination. 2

Then there is Hazlitt's statement, implying Coleridge's concept 3 of the imagination as an innate and inspired faculty for perceiving, fusing, and recreating.

This intuitive perception of the hidden analogies of things, or, as it may be called, this instinct of imagination, is what stamps the character of genius on the productions of art more than any other circumstance; for it works unconsciously, like nature, and receives its impressions from a kind of inspiration. 4

Hazlitt's nature has the meaning given it by the German critics—creative spirit (Geist) or force in the universe, evolving and obeying its own laws. This universal creative spirit, interpenetrating the mind of the author, provides him with inspiration and a sort of occult understanding and impels all his faculties toward creativity. This sort of imagination, acting according to its own laws, some reviewers believe desirable. But most of them remain suspicious of uncontrolled imagination and attempt no analysis of imagination or fancy. Theirs

1 "Jean Paul Richter's Leben," XLVI (1827), 192.


4 "The Wanderer," XXIV (1815), 323.
is the ancient concept of the Muse’s inspiration of poets, a concept which led to the theory of the furor poeticus or of the wild enthusiasm deemed in need of a curb from Plato’s time on.

Besides imagination, the reviewers mention many other special requisites for authors—knowledge, eloquence,¹ and good sense (a feeling for that which is universally suitable),² among them. Knowledge, the critics believe to be especially desirable—“knowledge of effect”;³ knowledge of “the genuine feelings of the mind in ordinary situations”;⁴ even the less desirable sort possessed by Madame de Staël, “knowledge of those dark and secret workings of the heart, by which misery is so often elaborated from the pure elements of the affections.”⁵ Usually, however, the emphasis is upon general human nature, as here, where the reviewer remarks that Anastasius “abounds in eloquent and sublime passages,—in sense,—in knowledge of history,—and in knowledge of human character;—but not in wit.”⁶

¹ See "Fableau Historique de l’état et des Progres de la Litterature Francaise depuis 1789," XXXV (1821), 178.
² See "Granby," XLIII (1826), 396.
⁴ "Elisabeth," XI (1809), 452.
⁵ "De la Litterature consideree sans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales," XXI (1813).
⁶ "Anastasius," XXXV (1821), 112. Note here the attenuated sublime, and the use of wit as a sort of ingenuity based rather upon fancy than upon judgment presumably, since it appears almost opposed to sense.
In addition to knowledge and the other qualities already indicated, the reviewers mention many others. One reviewer writes of Fielding's "humour (a sense of the ridiculous and incongruous) and his tenderness," of Smollett's "aptitude" for representing the "humours (temperaments resulting from bodily fluids) of his dramatis personae," of Marivaux's lack of "talent" (inventive power). Another mentions Captain Marryat's "shrewd insight into peculiarities of character." Still another, whose analyses are reasonably good, remarks upon Jane Austen's genius for ridiculing human foibles, her "nicely regulated vein of humour," and her "undeviating good sense." Miss Siddon, too, he commends for her "clearness, practical good sense, and acute insight into motives of human conduct."

Imagination or fancy, genius, originality, invention, knowledge of human nature and of principles of composition, ability to delineate character, wit, humor, and good sense—these are the terms which the reviewers use to denote qualities desired in a novelist. There is not one which would not have appealed to a critic of the preceding century.

1 "Fableau d'Historique de l'État des Progres de la Litterature Francaise," XAV (1821), 178.

2 "The Naval Officer," LII (1831), 136.

3 "Women As They Are," LI (1830), 447-450. See also "Harrington," XXVIII (1817), 396 for a similar use of terms.
Some few meanings of terms have romantic implications; but most of these can be found in Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* or in Edmund Burke's writings. Only Hazlitt's discussion of imagination appears indicative of newer thought. To the end of the period these critics have a tendency to repeat eighteenth-century patterns with few innovations in style or approach.

B Terms Used in Expressing The Requisites for the Novel

Closely akin to the special requisites for the successful novelist were, obviously, the requisites for the successful novel. Moreover, before discussing specific terms, it may be helpful to examine a few passages about popular prose fiction of the day in order to form a composite picture of the reviewer's conception of the qualities of a good novel.

As Miss Edgeworth herself exemplified many qualities desired in a novelist, so her works exemplify the desiderata in a novel. Concerning her *Tales of Fashionable Life* the reviewer writes:

In our opinion, however, they are as entertaining as they are instructive and the genius and wit and imagination they display, are at least as remarkable as the justness of the sentiments they so powerfully inculcate.¹

Cumberland's work wins no such accolade; for, though possessed of many merits, it lacks importance and interest.

¹ XIV (1809), 388.
In fact, says the critic Hazlitt:

To us it appears that a story may possess novelty, probability, and variety in its incidents; that the incidents may be arranged by the narrator, so as to keep us ignorant of the final issue till the last; that it may possess all the ornaments which our author has enumerated—a good style, characters well defined and interesting in themselves, sentiments as sublime as any in Epictetus, and descriptions as fine as in the Romance of the Forest, or . . . nay, to crown all, we can even conceive that the story shall be written in prose—and yet, that with all these merits, which are all that our author requires, it shall be a string of events so unimportant or unimpassioned, that a second perusal would be quite insufferable. Have we not seen Mr. Cumberland's novels?  

Having so thoroughly criticized Cumberland's novels for their lack of importance and interest in incident, Hazlitt here gives the reader further information about his idea of the peculiar merits which novels should possess:

Waiting to be better instructed, we would merely hint at present, that the proper merit of a Romance consists in Interest and Pathos, including in Pathos the ridiculous as well as the serious emotions. A romance is nothing if it does not preserve alive our anxiety for the fate of the principal characters, with a constant, though varied, agitation of the passions.  

Of Sterne's novels, Hazlitt declares that, notwithstanding their "mannerism and affectation," those novels are "of the first orders." Continuing, Hazlitt makes an

1 "History of Fiction," XXIV (1815), 49.
2 Ibid., p. 49.
effort to analyze the technique of characterization used by Sterne and Richardson.

Sterne's are intellectual and inventive, like Richardson's but totally opposite in the execution. The one [sic] are made out by continuity, and patient repetitions of touches, the others, by rapid and masterly strokes, and graceful opposition. His style is equally different from Richardson's;— it is at times the most rapid;— the most happy;— the most idiomatic of any of our novel writers. It is the pure essence of English conversational style. His works consist only of morceaux,— of brilliant passages. His wit is poignant, though artificial, and his characters (though the groundwork has been laid before), have yet invaluable original differences;— and the spirit of the execution, the master strokes constantly thrown into them, are not to be surpassed.

Obviously, excellence of style, as well as excellence of character delineation and of wit, is desirable in a novel.

Another reviewer adds to the list of desiderata for prose fiction such qualities as the Decameron possesses. He mentions variety of subject matter, "elegance and naivete" (whatever he may mean by those terms) of style, "purity of language," and powerful descriptions, as well as "a truth, a pathos, and an exquisito refinement of sentiment." 2

There are, of course, other requisites considered. One exceedingly important quality, not already mentioned, is unity. This Richter's Leben lacks. But the unity seemed necessary is not of the type which the neo-classicists have been wont to discuss. The reviewer writes of Richter:

1 Ibid., p. 49.
2 "De la Litterature du Midi de l'Europe," XXV (1815), 53.
Regarding his novels, we may say, that, except in some few instances, and those chiefly of the shorter class, they are not what, in strict language, we can term unities; with much callida junctura of parts, it is rare that any of them leaves on us the impression of a perfect, homogeneous, indivisible whole. A true work of art requires to be fused in the mind of its creator, and, as it were, poured forth "from his imagination, though not from his pen, at one simultaneous gush. Richter's works do not always bear sufficient marks of having been in fusion; yet neither are they merely rivetted together; to say the least they have been welded."

This unity is that of effect or impression. Moreover, under the figurative phraseology the structure of a sound idea may be glimpsed— one which Coleridge expresses. In fact, the fusing power of the imagination suggests Coleridge's "esemplastic" imagination. Closely related to this type of unity is, of course, the production of "the proposed effect."² In case this effect is achieved, the means of its achievement are not very important. Nothing is said about determining whether or not the effect is worth gaining. But the emphasis on effect is definitely in keeping with modern tendencies. Certainly it is one point which Poe stresses.

Reviews appearing very late in the period add little to what has already been mentioned. But time and again one finds reiterated in them the theory of the need for realistic

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¹ "Jean Paul Frederick Richter's Leben, nebst Characteristik seiner Werke; von Heinrich Boering," XLVI (1827), 192.

² "The Croppy," LII (1831), 413.
and forceful characters. For instance, one reviewer values Arlington more highly than Cranby or Herbert Lacey mainly because the first novel has "strongly drawn and well contrasted characters, as well as greater power and finish of execution."\(^1\)

By way of contrast to the above passages, it may be interesting to try a reverse approach and examine a passage in which the reviewer indicates what an ideal novel should not be. The novel which calls forth the following vituperative outburst is Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship:

To us it certainly appears, after the most deliberate consideration to be eminently absurd, puerile, incongruous, vulgar, and affected;—and, though redeemed by considerable powers of invention, and some traits of vivacity, to be so far from perfection, as to be, almost from beginning to end, one flagrant offence against every principle of taste, and every just rule of composition. Though indicating, in many places, a mind capable both of acute and profound reflection, it is full of mere silliness and childish affectation, and though evidently the work of one who had seen and observed much, it is throughout altogether unnatural, and not so properly improbable, as affectedly fantastic and absurd—kept, as it were studiously aloof from genuine and ordinary nature—never once bringing us into contact with life or genuine character— and where not occupied with the professional squabbles, paltry jargon, and scandalous profanity of strolling players, tumblers, and mummers . . ., is conversant only with incomprehensible mystics and vulgar men of whim, with whom, if it were at all possible to understand them, it would be a baseness to be acquainted.\(^2\)

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1 "Arlington," LVI (1932), 159.

2 XLII (1825), 414-415.
Judging by this passage, one sees that a novel had to have a measure of realism and natural characters; it had to be composed according to taste—but note that the taste seems to be the reviewer's own—and to just principles of composition. If not, not even "powerful description" and "gleams of warm and sprightly imagination" could redeem it in the eyes of a critic who obviously considers unnatural whatever is unfamiliar to him.

In short, if one may form a kind of synthesis of the ideas from many reviews, the composite ideal novel may be described. It had to be entertaining and instructive; it had to be written in an excellent style; it had to present interesting events, often fraught with passion or pathos. Its subject matter was to be varied; its descriptions, powerful; its characters, natural and appealing. Force and originality; unity of impression; production of proposed effect; freedom from violations of taste or of principles of composition; probability—all were to be added to the other excellencies. The terms expressing these desirable qualities and those denoting the undesirable ones are, if one excepts perhaps unity of effect or impression, to be met with in the work of Johnson or of Addison or of Pope. Entertaining, instructive, sentiments, novelty, probability, variety, interesting, ornaments, well-defined, genius, pathos,

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1 XLII (1825), 414-415.
artificial, purity, truth, sublime, beauty, taste, affected, incongruous, invention, vulgar, coarse, observation, unnatural, even imagination and genius—all are old terms. Of course, one does associate beauty and sublime with the Longinian revival (quite apparent in the works of the preromanticists); and Hazlitt's emphasis on interest, passion, and pathos seems faintly romantic until one recalls that Boileau insisted first upon interest and later upon rules and that the classicists were very much concerned with a legitimate emotional effect.

But now to consider terms connected with specific phases of the novel—with description, with style and language, with character, and with plot.

The term description has the obvious meaning—the act or art of presenting a picture in words. Epic critics were little concerned with it, natural scenery or background being of minor importance to them. Moreover, the reviewers are not as much interested in it as in other aspects of the novel. To Scott's descriptions, however, and to others like them, they give some slight attention. In general, the critics consider desirable a description which is effective and realistic. Some descriptions, such as those in The King's Own, they merely term "Excellent." But wherein the descriptions are excellent, one is not told. Of Scott's Kelworth, however, the reviewer writes:

1 LII (1830), 137.
The great charm and glory of the piece, however, consists in the magnificence and vivacity of the descriptions with which it abounds, and which set before our eyes with a freshness and force of colouring which can scarcely ever be gained except by actual observation, all the pomp and stateliness, the glitter and solemnity, of that heroic reign.1

More extravagantly laudatory comments are given to Scott's descriptions than to the descriptions of any other authors. In depicting "external" or "natural scenery" even the once popular Mrs. Radcliffe bows to the "magician of the North," with his "rich and judicious selection of images," "which convey a distinct impression to the mind."2 Scott's "description of visible objects" places the reader in the situation of a spectator," Jeffery implies.3

The authors of Adam Blair and of Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life are avowed imitators of Scott; but their descriptions lack a little of the flavor of the original. [They] have formed themselves more upon the poetical, reflective, and pathetic parts of their common model; and have aimed at emulating such beautiful pictures as that of Mr. Peter Pattison, the blind old woman in Old Mortality; and the Bride of Lammermoor, the courtship at the Mermaid's Well, and, generally, his innumerable and exquisite descriptions of the soft, simple, and sublime scenery of Scotland, as received in connection with the character of its rustic inhabitants.4

As far as theories of description are concerned, therefore, one can see that little information can be gleaned

1 "The Fortunes of Nigel," XXXVIII (1822), 207.
2 "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 69.
3 Ibid. p. 69.
from the foregoing critical comments. Almost the only point to be made is that descriptions should as nearly as possible mirror the scenes which they attempt to represent and that all descriptions should be effective. But the question is how? This, the reviewers do not answer. Only Jeffrey makes any effort to do so, and his explanation does not go beyond Reynolds' theory expressed in the Discourses. The reviewers usually apply the old cliches seemingly without any forethought. One sees at every turn such expressions as the external nature (the invisible scenes), essence and the sublime (the attenuated eighteenth-century term). But there are also the somewhat newer terms—like glory and fresh, much in the minority. The old ut pictura, poesis theory lingers.

The reviewers pay slightly more attention to style than to description, and their remarks upon style in general and upon the language used in novels are somewhat interesting. But again there is little that is new in terminology or in theory.

The reviewers admit the "charms" of a good style. They say, to be considered good, a style should have various characteristics, which are dependent, in a measure, upon the type of the story itself. Thus the style of an author's writing in one novel may vary from that in another, as this comment upon the style of the author of the Provost shows:

1 "Mademoiselle de Tournon," XXXIV (1820), 302.
The style of his [Provost's] narrative is exceedingly meritorious; for while it is pitched on the selfsame key of picturesque homeliness and deliberate method with that of the parish Annalist, it is curiously distinguished from it by a sensible inferiority in literature, and an agreeable intermixture of malaprops and other figures of rhetoric befitting the composition of a loyal chief magistrate.²

A style should also have some life, timeliness, and vivacity. It should even have variety.² But it should never be "like a translation from solemn Latin, or some academical exer­
citation."² Nor should a style be "too elaborate and uniform."³

Style is of such importance to Italian novelists that they put the major emphasis upon "writing elegantly." Such elegance, of course, does not appeal particularly to the nineteenth-century English reviewers; and one of them criticizes the style of the Decameron as being "too musical and diffuse." Somewhat sarcastically he declares also that Franco Sachetti is "a great favourite with the Italian critics, principally, . . . , on account of his style," since his stories "have little else to recommend them." Bandello's style also, the critic dislikes because it is "rude and inelegant, and disfigured by the provincialism of Lombardy."⁴

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1 XXIX (1823), 171.
2 "Valerius, A Roman Story," XXIX (1823), 180.
3 "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," XXIX (1823), 180.
4 "The Italian Novelists," XLII (1825, 177, 134, 190, 198.
But there are many English novels written in a style highly approved by the reviewers. Such is the case with O’Hara or 1798, which has an "unaffected and lively" \(^1\) style. Godwin's Cloudesley is another such novel. Hazlitt writes:

There is indeed, no falling off in point of style or command of language in the work before us. Cloudesley is better written than Caleb Williams. The expression is everywhere terse, vigorous, elegant. \(^2\)

Moreover, Women As They Are is notable because of "the fluent ease and sparkle of its style, to which even a prodigality of ornament imparts no portion of heaviness," \(^3\) and the style of Cyril Thornton, though it differs from that of Women As They Are, is also good, being "rendered pleasant by its ready conversational flow, and unaffected picturesqueness." \(^4\) Good, too, is the "bold, soldier-like" style of Stories of Waterloo. \(^5\)

Occasionally, in the reviews of novels, there are lengthy treatments of the style of individual authors. In one, style appears to refer to the specific impression made by the whole composition upon the reader. The reviewer says of Lady Morgan's style:

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1 XLIII (1825), 368.

2 LI (1830), 146. See also Hazlitt's comment on the "brilliancy, ease and faultless equality of Irving's style: "American Literature - Dr. Channing," L (1829), 310.

3 LI (1830), 451.

4 LII (1830), 123.

5 LII (1830), 130.
Flightiness and exaggeration are prominent characteristics of style. It is showy and gaudy, and there is a certain splendid indistinctness about it.

The reviewerRemarks further upon Lady Morgan's "energy and vividness." The preceding passage--indeed, all of this criticism of the style of various authors--bears the imprint of the times. It is often nebulous or vague, sometimes pictorial, sometimes even apt, but seldom analytical or technical. There seem to be few specific principles upon which the criticism is based. This fact is obvious to the end of 1832.

In other discussions of style, the critics often mention the language of the author. The author of Yesterday in Ireland, who has "a correct, agreeable style," uses language which is described as "perpetually floating between the familiar and the romantic without exactly belonging to either." The language "appears to be taken" from the Waverley Novels. As for Sir Walter Scott's own style and language, Jeffrey writes in an Horatian vein:

Beauty of style is not one of Sir Walter Scott's chief merits. His choice of expressions is, however, better than his disposition of them. His sentences are too full of expletives,—too long, and loosely arranged; exuberant, like his fancy, and untrimmed, as if never subjected to a process of compression,—a limae labor perhaps incompatible with the wonderful expedition with which work after work has issued from the press. 3

2 LII (1832), 421. Romantic here means strange.
3 "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 76.
Moreover, the style of Irving's *Sketch Book* is notable for the "care and accuracy" expended upon it and for the "great purity and beauty" of the diction, the latter almost compensating for Irving's lack of "boldness of invention."\(^1\)

Most of the comments on the subject of style and language, one sees, seem general; some, very indefinite. Ease and simplicity of style, as opposed to an exaggerated or unnatural style are necessities, however. Yet no distinct stylistic canon can be framed from these passages which are characterized by a loose use of terms. A close examination of the terms reveals that most of them have been borrowed (with their meanings) from the eighteenth-century criticism. They are quite similar to those found in the *Monthly Review*. Such adjectives and nouns as *elaborate, elegant, rude, ease, charm, lively, unaffected, energy, and beauty* were at home in Pope's writings; and less familiar terms like *sparkle, showy, gaudy, flightiness, and indistinctness* seem in keeping with the typical neo-classical works. But, of course, they do indicate the growing "picturesqueness" of the terminology. *Mainly style* means manner or method; but at least once it does refer to the general tone or impression of the whole work, much as it does in modern criticism.

\(^1\) XXXIV (1820), 160-162.
In their consideration of character treatment the reviewers evince the same propensity toward the vague use of inherited terminology. They generally agree with the neo-classicists that characters should be realistic, should be true to nature, should be both probable and possible; but there is a difference of opinion among them concerning what is meant by these various terms. Some insist that characters should be copied directly from real people; others, that the characters should possess only generic traits or only universal traits and need not be—should not be—exact replicas of any living individuals. There is a general opposition to characters that are caricatured and exaggerated. There is a great deal of insistence upon presenting such a knowledge of characters as might be gained, not only from observing them, but also from penetrating by some psychic means the innermost recesses of their minds and souls.

The characters in many novels are dubbed unreal or "extravagant"¹ or "wooden"² or "caricatures"³ or merely "unpleasing"⁴ to the reviewer in type. Caricatures, so the critics say, are often the result of the novelists' attempts

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¹ "Charles et Marie", II (1803), 186-188.
² "Fleetwood, or The New Man of Feeling", VII (1805), 193. Note the use of the term dramatis personae, borrowed obviously from dramatic criticism.
³ "Leonora", VIII (1806), 207.
to depict "national character" or types. This fact is made clear in a very good article on the works of Miss Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Mr. Banim. The reviewer says:

Whoever sits down to draw an Irishman— a Scotchman— a Frenchman, will generally either exaggerate, for the sake of effect some one peculiarity, or try to combine, in the same person, so many qualities not co-existent, that the figure by being meant to resemble all its countrymen, ceases to be like any. None, perhaps, have been more caricatured than the Irish, but rather by the former than the latter process. Miss Edgeworth is successful in characterizing the Irish with "force and fidelity"; however, Lady Morgan is by no means the clever delineator of national characters that Maria Edgeworth is. Her characters do not seem to be "natural". The Irish characters of Mr. Banim are more desirable, being "forcible, true and characteristic, but too often coarse or unpleasing." Yet even he frequently exaggerates, especially when he wishes to "convey an opinion"; and "he forces it upon us, rather than leads us to it."

Some reviewers insist not merely upon fidelity to type but also—and especially— upon universality of appeal and resemblance to general human nature. For instance, the characters in Madame De Stael's Delphine are said to have been drawn from real life; and the character of her Madame de Vernon is considered "to be drawn with considerable skill."

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1 See "Sailors and Saints," LII (1830), 133. See also "The Croppy, The Denounced, Yesterday In Ireland, The Collegians, The Rivals," LII (1831), 411.


3 II (1803), 174.
by an author who has "lived long in the world and observed it well." 1 Another critic judges the characters of Mrs. Opie's Simple Tales to be especially good, and the reasons he gives are Aristotelian ones. He says:

For more serious sympathy we must be made to feel that the sentiments and actions of the characters are such as must inevitably belong to all persons in their situation and it is on the delicate adaptation of their language and conduct to their circumstances, and not to any supposed peculiarity in their character, that the success of the writer will generally depend. It will be found accordingly, we believe, that almost all the fine traits of natural expression that are quoted and remembered, from the dramatists and greater poets, both ancient and modern, derive their whole beauty from this perfect and beautiful conformity to general and universal nature, and that they reach the heart of every reader just because every reader perceives at once that they express the concentrated and appropriate emotion, which it is natural for persons in such circumstance to feel. There is no need for the representation of ideal individuality. 2

In general, verisimilitude of some sort is a requisite. Hannah More's Coelebs In Search of a Life contains some characters that are not realistic; but the realistic ones—especially those with some faults—give the novel a measure of praise. 3 Praiseworthy also are the characters of Madame De Souza, for they "are touched with a delicacy, a discrimination and a truth which throw an air of perfect reality over the painful story to which they belong." 4

1 II (1803), 174.
2 VIII (1806), 466.
3 XIV (1809), 146.
4 "Mademoiselle de Tournon," XXXIV (1920), 376. See also "Granby," XLIII (1826), 405, for praise of "delicate portraits" drawn with a sort of "painter's excellence."
Likewise, the characters of Jean Paul Richter, in some cases, seem actually to have life. Their thoughts, as well as their outward characteristics and mannerisms, are presented to the readers. But other characters of his are patently inartistic creations. They lack true semblance to life. The reviewer has this to say of Richter's characters:

In this latter province, certainly, he is at home; a true poet, a maker; his Siebenkas, his Schmelzle, even his Fibel, and Fixlein are living figures; but in heroic personages, passionate, massive, overpowering as he is, we have scarcely even a complete ideal; art has not attained to the concealment of itself. With his heroines again he is more successful; they are often true heroines, though perhaps with too little variety of character; bustling, buxom mothers and housewives, with all the caprices, perversities, and warm generous helpfulness of women; or white, half angelic creatures, meek, still, long-suffering, high-minded, of tenderest affections, and hearts crushed yet uncomplaining. Supernatural figures he has not attempted; and wisely, for he cannot write without belief.1

Thus it is evident that, on occasion, Richter is what Sidney, following the Greek critics, called a great poet, a true "maker," a kind of creator of new forms of men.1

The author of Cloudeley is not such a writer. He draws characters in order to analyze them scientifically as examples, not to make them appear to be real characters, each an individual. His hero remains "a characterless, passive, inefficient agent to the last."2 As for all his characters, the writer does not call characters from the dead, or conjure them from regions of fancy, to paint their peculiar physiognomy,

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1 "Jean Paul Richter's Leben," XLVI (1827), 192. Note here the Horatian ara celare artem.

2 LI (1830), 145. See also Hazlitt's comment on characters of J. F. Cooper, which are drawn "to the life" but which have had "no motion" put into them. "American Literature," L (1829), 312.
or tell us their story, so much as (like the anatomist) to
dissect and demonstrate on the insertion of the bones, the
springs of the muscles, and those understood principles
of life and motion which are common to the species. Now, in
the novel, we want the individual, not the genus. 1

The author’s great mistake, in the reviewer’s opinion, is,
not only that he fails to make his characters true to the
general characteristics of human beings, but that he fails
completely to individualize his characters, to give to each
a particular personality which makes him a reality, not a
scientific object lesson. This, we admit to be sound
technical criticism.

The author of the article entitled "Women As They
Are" has a great deal to say—most of it very apt criticism—
about characterization. He declares it to be the "object of
the novelist" to "delineate human nature," 2 and he says that
Miss Edgeworth’s sketches of character are "admirable as far
as they go; we only complain that they do not always go deep
enough." 2 Miss Austen, on the contrary, appears to go too
deep, for some of her readers, in her zeal for "fidelity of
delineation." 3 Her readers, not considering, as did Horace,
that "the highest triumph of art consists in its conceal-
ment," 3 failed to perceive her merit. Completely unaware,
they remained of her remarkable art "of making her readers
intimately acquainted with the characters of all whom she
describes." 3 Strangely enough, the reviewer believes that

1 Ibid., p. 152.
2 LI (1830), 445-448.
3 Ibid., p. 449-452.
Susan Ferrier, despite occasional improbabilities,
combines much of Miss Austen's skill in portraying character, and her nice perception of its more delicate shades, with a far greater knowledge of picturesque effect, and what may be called the poetry of her art, and a power to excite a deep interest, and to cope with difficult situations and violent emotions, and to display them successfully.¹

Moreover, Mrs. Gore's characters, though they are sometimes "picturesquely sketched," sometimes drawn with "happy discrimination,"² seem like "figures moving across the magic lantern of society,"² people with whom the "reader is not rendered intimately acquainted."² Not even their dialogue is "sufficiently characteristic." Indeed, most of them "speak the same language."² In addition, Mrs. Gore "frequently exalts the characters of those whose chief pursuit is pleasure, while she lowers those whose time is more usefully employed."²

In short, in the review of "Women As They Are," as well as in other reviews, the critics agree that caricatures, exaggerations, and unreal characters are to be deplored; that variety, discrimination, appropriateness, an air of reality, universality, good taste, and moral excellence are to be sought in all characterizations. All the terms are of neoclassical origin. These same ideas are advanced in several articles concerning the famed novelists of an earlier century, as well as in those concerning Miss Burney and Scott of the nineteenth century.

¹ Ibid., p. 449-452
² Ibid., p. 452.
Hazlitt's review of *The Wanderer* contains observations based mainly on the desiderata mentioned separately in other reviews, but this time applied to famous novelists of both eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Therefore, it merits at least some attention. Hazlitt says that "the characters in *Don Quixote* are strictly individual; that is, they do not belong to, but form a class by themselves."¹ But those of *Gil Blas* are the opposite. "There is very little individual character"² in this work. The author, Le Sage, does not take the elements of human nature, and work them up into new combinations (which is the excellence of *Don Quixote*); nor trace the peculiar and striking combinations of folly and knavery as they are to be found in real life, like Fielding; but he takes off, as it were, the general, habitual impression, which circumstances make on certain conditions of life and moulds all his characters accordingly. All the persons whom he introduces, carry about with them the badge of their profession; and you see little more of them than their costume.²

His characters then remind one somewhat strikingly of the old type-masks worn in Roman comedies, each mask representing a peculiarly typical character. There is little or no evidence of the true elements of humanity, of the universal feelings and thoughts, or even of individualized actions. Not so with Fielding. Although his *Tom Jones* has been adversely criticized because of its moral—or lack of it—and especially because of "the want of refinement and elegance in the two principal characters,"² the treatment

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¹ XXIV (1815), 324-331.
² Ibid., pp. 324-331.
of character is praiseworthy since it gives evidence of the author's "profound knowledge of human nature— at least of English nature."\(^1\) Furthermore,

Fielding was a master of what may be called the double entendre of character, and surprises you no less by what he leaves in the dark, (hardly known to the persons themselves), than by the unexpected discoveries he makes of the real traits and circumstances in a character with which, till then, you find you were unacquainted.\(^1\)

Richardson, on the contrary, seldom leaves anything "in the dark"; and his "nature is always the nature of sentiments and reflection, not of impulse or situation."\(^1\) It is, in a way, unfortunate that he "furnishes his characters on every occasion, with the presence of mind of the author,"\(^2\) and that he deadens "all actual objects and feelings" by presenting them "through a medium which may be true to reason, but is false in nature."\(^2\) Yet they do have an air of reality, and Richardson does attempt to depict their thoughts and feelings. Of Miss Burney, Hazlitt says just what the other critics do, that she is "of the old school, a mere common observer of manners,"\(^3\) that her characters here are "all caricatures."\(^3\) Throughout the article, one observes that Hazlitt uses the neo-classical terms— caricature, reason, nature, real, general, and individual— with new ones.

\(^1\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 324-331.

\(^2\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 119.

\(^3\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 336-337.
Now to consider Scott. He is not accused of presenting caricatures, even though some of his characters are far from realistic. He is said by the critic, to possess "a truly graphic and creative power in the invention and delineation of characters." Indeed, he sketches his imaginary people with such "ease, brilliancy, and profusion" that he sometimes "reminds us of Shakespeare." Moreover, concerning his portraits of poor people, Jeffrey declares (in a somewhat Wordsworthian vein, the exact reversal of the neo-classical concept of gentility):

The great merit of all these delineations is their admirable truth and fidelity—the whole manner and art of the characters being accurately moulded on their condition and the finer attributes that are ascribed to them, so blended and harmonized with the native rudeness and simplicity of their life and occupations, that they are made interesting and even novel beings, without the least particle of foppery or exaggeration, and delight and amuse us without trespassing at all on the province of pastoral or romance.5

Even in The Black Dwarf, where the major character "is a little too much like the hero of a fairy tale," there are

1 "Tales of My Landlord," XAVIII (1817), 194.

2 Ibid., pp. 194-200. With regard to the comparison of Scott with Shakespeare note that in a latter review Jeffrey remarks that the novelist is not on a par with Shakespeare, since "the best drawn characters," of the former "make us feel as if we saw and heard them," but those of the latter "as if we had lived with and they had opened their hearts to us". "Waverley Novels," LV (1832), 65-67. For other instances of comparisons of Scott and Shakespeare in other journals see Athenæum, II (1829), 337-340; Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XIX (1820), 152; and Monthly Review, XCVII (1820), 543-547.

3 Ibid., pp. 194-196.
other characters "who are as real, intelligible, and tangible beings, as those with whom we are made familiar in the course of his other productions." 1 Throughout Scott's works, however, there are both probable and improbable characters. Diana in Rob Roy cannot be called realistic, or even possible, though she is "a very bright and felicitous creation." 2 Moreover, "the inconsistency in Cleveland's character" 3 is a blemish on The Pirate, and there is lack of "eternal and universal nature" in the characters in The Fortunes of Nigel. Also, even though the characters in Scott's historical novels, for the most part "are specimens of a class," 4 in whom there is much of "the true spirit of history," his heroines are very frequently improbable. But Jeffrey, like a true romanticist, condones this failing.

He says:

It is plain that if Minna or Rebecca had been drawn with strict regard to probability and made just such as they were most likely to have been, one of the great objects of fiction would have been reversed; the reader would have been repelled instead of being attracted. 5

There is a kind of poetic haze cast over the two characters which adds to their effectiveness.

1 Ibid., pp. 194-196.
2 "Rob Roy," XXIX (1817), 410.
3 "The Fortunes of Nigel," XXXVII (1822), 204-205.
4 "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 67.
5 Ibid., pp. 67-69.
This poetical tone pervades, more or less, the delineations of all his heroines; and the charm which it imparts, perhaps more than counter-balances the detrimental tendency of sameness.1

It is clear that Scott's characters, particularly his women characters, might be greatly improved; yet the critics are fairly well satisfied with the characters as they are. As a matter of fact, much as the critics may talk of the need for realistic characters drawn from life and cleverly handled, they continue to regard Scott's characters as being on the whole satisfactory even when they lack probability and verisimilitude.

Concerning the treatment of characters, then, one may draw several conclusions. In general, the reviewers deplored exaggerated characters and type-characters and insisted that characters be probable and verisimilar. To that end, they urged writers to study human nature, then to draw characters that would be true to it, and from their imaginations to add details making each character individual. However, famous novelists whose characters and stories possessed great interest were sometimes forgiven for creating improbable personages. Such was the case with Sir Walter Scott. Even in his case, however, the reviewers preferred his historical characterizations based upon the general qualities of the people of an era to his specific historic portraits. In short, the Aristotelian ideal still prevailed.

1 Ibid., pp. 67-69.
Variety, universality, probability or an air of reality, discrimination, propriety (of speech and action) or suitability (to personality, occasion, and type), general consistency—all of these terms occur constantly. All designate the type of characters which Aristotle in his Poetics considered good and which the neo-classicists adopted from him. Addison, one remembers (among others), stressed variety; Johnson, verisimilitude achieved by universality accompanied by details appropriate to each type; Dryden, suitability. Then there is also the matter of the common or low characters, which shows Wordsworthian influence. In short, there is here a blend of classical, neo-classical and romantic terms, with the classical and neo-classical greatly in the majority.

What was true of the term character is true of plot. It is not so much with the major term plot that the reviewers are concerned as with the various requirements of plot mentioned. The term usually refers to the plan or mechanical structure of the story, or often to the story as a whole. With regard to the requirements of plot, the reviewers often advocate excellency of design or structure and unity of place and action. Despite the fact that the

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various critical terms and theories are not always definitely explained, in general the ideas seem definitely traditional, the only exception—if it may be called one—being unity of effect or impression already discussed above.¹

The need for unity of action and the means for achieving it are given in the review of Charles et Marie, from which I quote:

There is a kind of unity of action necessary to the dignity of a narrative, which digressions so frequent would destroy. The incidents, accordingly, must all be great in themselves, or, if in themselves unimportant, be great at least in the permanence of the emotions which they leave; and to them must be sacrificed all those 1000 fleeting circumstances, and fleeting feelings, which best display the varied susceptibilities of human passion, and which interest us more because being less easily foreseen, we are less prepared to expect them.²

That Richardson's Clarissa wins mild admiration from Mrs. Barbauld is in part due to the complete simplicity of its plot. She writes:

The plot, as we have seen, is simple, and no under plots interfere with the main design, no digression, no episode. It is wonderful that, without these helps of common writers, he could support a work of such length. With Clarissa it begins, and with Clarissa it ends. We do not come upon unexpected adventures and wonderful recognitions by quick turns and surprises; . . .³

¹ See "Jean Paul Richters Leben," XLVI (1827), 192 and "The Croppy" LII (1831), 413.
² II (1803), 185.
³ "The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson," V (1804), 28.
Her use of **simple recognitions**, **design**, and other terms, as well as her interpretation of the **simple plot**, strongly suggests Aristotle's *Poetics*. In other reviews there are also classical and neo-classical terms. There is the mention of "**inartificial texture**"\(^1\) of the machinery of plot in Hannah More's *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, and there is criticism of the deficiency apparent "**in design and unity**"\(^2\) of Scott's *Abbot*. The reviewer considers this latter flaw in some detail saying that

as a historical sketch, it has neither beginning nor ending; nor does the time which it embraces possess any particular interest, in and for a history of Roland Graeme, which is the only denomination that can give it coherence; the narrative is not only too slight and insufficient in itself but is too much broken in upon by higher persons and weightier affairs to retain any of the interest which it might otherwise have possessed.\(^3\)

In general, many novels of the period have plots that are to be criticized because of their lack of unity or faulty design; and terms like **unity**, **recognition**, **beginning**, and **end** constantly remind one of earlier epic and dramatic criticism.

In addition to the ones mentioned above, a number of other novels may be cited which lack good plots. For instance, the author of *Cyril Thornton* has expended no great efforts in plot construction; yet his efforts have succeeded in stringing

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\(^1\) XIV (1809), 146.

\(^2\) "The Fortune of Nigel," XXXVII (1822), 206.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 206.
together "such adventures as his characters' experience would enable them to describe with the happiest effect." The simple, picaresque quality of this plot and other plots does not, however, elicit a high degree of praise from the critics, who seem usually to have reserved that for more complicated plot structures.

Yet no fixed rule can be made on that score; for both the simple, probable plots of Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth and the improbable, complicated plots of other novelists are commended at times. But usually the critics find fault with the latter sort of plots, especially if the plots lack harmonious unity or completeness. Even in 1830, the viewpoint of the critics is still neo-classical. Thus Jane Austen's plots are commended for being very simple, formed upon the most rigid view of probability, excluding everything romantic. Her surprises are calculated to produce a few powerful emotions, and include only such events that occur in every-day life.

Equally simple are the plots of Maria Edgeworth, who is notable for "the admirable management of her story, the rapid yet natural march of the action."3

Scott's Waverley Novels are generally so extravagantly praised that any passage in which the defects of the

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1 LII (1830), 123. See also "The Nightwatch," LII (1830), 131.
2 "Women As They Are," LI (1830), 409, 443.
3 Ibid., pp. 409, 449.
works are pointed out is notable. So I quote the following very neo-classical criticism:

The plots in the Waverley Novels generally display much ingenuity, and are interestingly involved; but there is not one in the conduct of which it would not be easy to point out a blemish. None have that completeness which constitutes one of the chief merits of Fielding's Tom Jones. There is always either an improbability, or a forced expedient, or an incongruous incident, or an unpleasant break, or too much intricacy, or a hurried conclusion. They are usually languid in the commencement, and abrupt in the close; too slowly opened, and too hastily summed up. Guy Mannering is one of these in which these two faults are best apparent.¹

The plots of Bulwer-Lytton, too, received adverse criticism. In the case of his Pelham, "the impression left upon the mind at the close was not that of complete and harmonious unity."² His Disowned, though superior to Pelham in fertility and aim, loses this superiority somewhat, as the reviewer cleverly notes, because of "the complexity arising from separate plots slightly connected and the Ariosto-like transitions which they occasioned."² In fact, it is generally charged that the author's plots "are defective;— an observation, not without foundation, but too unqualifiedly applied."²

Waverley's Arlington, on the contrary, is made more effective, not only by its details, but also by its plot structure. It is "in the happy adjustment; easy movement, and graceful finish of the incidents"³ that much of the charm of the book lies.

¹ Waverley Novels and Tales of 'y landlord," LV (1832), 73.
² "Eugene Aram, A tale," LV (1832), 211-213.
³ LVI (1832), 150.
All of these reviews indicate that, in the reviewers' opinions, the plots should have completeness or unity of action, coherence, clever complication or effective and natural simplicity. A plot satisfying these requirements was sure to win the plaudits of the majority of the reviewers, but it might be praised if it satisfied only a few of them. On the whole, the terms used and the theories of plot structure advanced are decidedly neo-classical; but the occasional emphasis upon unity of impression is Aristotelian revival. Nevertheless, are accustomed to classify the latter as modern.

The question of the subject matter for novels receives some attention also, especially in the review of Lister's Arlington:

'I remember,' says Schlegel in his History of Literature, 'it was the observation of a great philosopher, that the moment the world should see a perfect police, the moment there should be no contraband trade, and the traveller's pass should contain an exact portrait of its bearer, that moment it would become impossible to write a good romance; for that then nothing could occur in real life which might, with any moderate degree of ornament, be formed into the groundwork of such a fiction."

Such subject matter, however, is not essential for the novel. Many modern novels are based on no such material for "speculations on manners and morals, and practical views of society, now take the place of much that was formerly occupied by bustling adventure . . ."1 This special consideration of the proper subject matter for novels is interesting because it is one of the few expressions of the change that is coming

1 Ibid., pp. 146-147.
over the novel. The eyes of all are turned toward reality. The wildly adventurous exploits of the swashbuckling hero are giving way to considerations of the everyday life of ordinary people; for this, one should note, is in the year 1832, the end of the romantic period.

The unusual, the extravagant, and the improbable are supplanted by the natural, the simple, and the rather probable. The change, of course, is a gradual one, becoming obvious even in the eighteenth century and constantly gaining momentum and power. Here at the end of the romantic period comes the passage quoted above, indicating what type of subject matter the novels are presenting and may present in the future.

The change to realistic subjects in novels probably accounts, to some extent, for the great number of terms denoting imitations of reality. In any comparatively complete examination of critical terms, it would be amiss to omit fact, realism, probability, and verisimilitude—all of which were important to the nineteenth-century reviewers of fiction. Those novels giving an acceptable imitation of life, having either probability and verisimilitude or truth to life and nature were usually praised. One type of imitation, a kind of factuality, was often confused with that based on general fidelity to universal life and nature. Therefore, the reviewers' opinions concerning the novelists' attempts to achieve this sort of reality by exact imitations of specific scenes and characters are very similar to their ideas concerning the relationship between historical facts and fiction.
It is advisable to consider the latter first. Afterwards, opinions of general realism of various kinds in scenes, characters, and plots will be examined. Last will come a study of those specific passages in which the reviewers use the terms probability, verisimilitude, and others similar to the latter term. In view of the loose application of these terms and of the frequent confusion in meaning, there will obviously be some overlapping of the divisions.

A matter of great concern for critics was the relationship between fiction and historic fact. In discussing this question, the reviewers use chiefly terms like real, truth, and reality—all mainly denoting fact. But for the theories of the reviewers regarding the relationship between fiction and history, specific reviews should be examined.

Of all the authors whose works were examined with a view to determining their presentation of reality, Scott was foremost. Since his famous novels were admittedly of an historical nature, the publication of nearly every one of his novels was a signal for the reviewers to examine in detail the historical parts in order to ascertain their historical accuracy. In the review of Old Mortality one finds both an explanation of Sir Walter's method and a defense of his so-called partisanship. His method in writing all his historical novels is approximately the same, according to the reviewer.

Accordingly, in this as in his other works, he has made use of the historical events which come in his way, rather to develop the characters, and bring out the peculiarities of the individuals whose adventures he relates, than for any
purpose of political information; and makes us present to
the times in which he has placed them less by his direct
notices of the great transactions by which they were dis-
tinguished, than by his casual intimations of their effects
on private persons, and by the very contrast which their
temper and occupations often appear to furnish to the colour
of the national story.1

This book, Old Mortality, is a work of merit because it shows
"an admirable picture of manners and of characters"1 and ex-
hibits, "with great truth and discrimination,"1 the effects
of "the stormy aspect of the political horizon"1 on the life
of the day. The merit of the book prompts the reviewer to
defend Scott from a charge of being too "severe upon the
Covenants,"2 by saying that the author had not spared the
oppressors of the Covenants and that (and this is very
important) the author probably did not dream that he would
be held "responsible for historical accuracy or fairness in
a composition of this description."2 He, therefore, prob-
ably "exaggerated a little on both sides for the sake of
effect" and exaggerated more on that side "which afforded
the greatest scope for ridicule."2 The reviewer, it is ob-
vious, believes that general historical truth is valuable
but that absolute factual accuracy is of negligible im-
portance by comparison.

1 "Tales of My Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 216-218.

2 Ibid., p. 259. But note that Scott's deviations
from "historical truth" are censured in "The Fortunes of
Nigel," XXXVII (1822), 207.
In most considerations of Scott's historical fidelity, therefore, there is an effort made to excuse the author's deviations from strict history on the grounds that he is "a novelist," not "an historian." The charge of partiality particularly is dismissed on the same grounds, and imputations of inaccuracy are brushed aside unless the details detract also from the imaginative value of the work. This theory, of course, is sound.

Whereas an excess of historical material is usually the reason for a critic's censuring historical novels, an insufficiency of it forms the basis for the criticism of the novel. The Croppy.

The Croppy, a Tale of 1798 is meant to be an historical novel—historical, inasmuch as it introduces some real events, but not as bringing real personages on the scene. Than the period chosen for this tale, perhaps none in the history of Ireland is more interesting; and it is therefore to be wished, that the story had been rendered more strictly historical,—that the author had introduced just enough of fictitious private details, to cause us to take an interest in his imaginary actors in the real public drama, and then allowed us to follow with them easily and naturally, the march of events. But this is not done; on the contrary, we are allowed to see very little of the out-breeding and progress of Irish rebellion.

A somewhat philosophical consideration of the relationship existing between reality and fiction—reality as a whole, not real characters and incidents in fiction—is to be found

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1 "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 75. For other considerations of the reproduction of reality in Scott's work see "Waverley," XXIV (1814), 242, and "Tales of My Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 194.

2 LII (1831), 417.
in a review of Arlington, from which this comes:

No doubt the capabilities of our present state of society for awakening a fictitious interest, are less obvious to a careless eye than the more salient and strongly marked features of earlier times; yet there never can be any want of harmony between the world without and the world within, -- the things which interest us in reality, and those which excite or affect us in fictitious narrative, -- provided only the right chord has been struck in each by one who has music in himself and who knows the true range and compass of his instruments. 1

In this review the reader finds an example of what he might expect from many reviewers of a romantic era -- a consideration of reality as being composed of the inner and the outer life. The presentation of this type of reality in fiction appeals to the reviewer. Actually, such reality seems more akin to a kind of transcendental universality than to reality as it is usually considered.

The employment in novels of such universal reality as is described in the review of Arlington is praised. But the use of actual incidents and characters even in historical novels, though sometimes commended, is not a practice which the critics believe should generally be followed; and certainly it should not be followed by any save an excellent writer. Otherwise, as Aristotle pointed out, 2 the flaws in the fiction

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1 LVI (1832) 147-143. Here the reviewer appears in a very vague way to be saying what Reynolds said in his Discourses, that nature must include the mental reactions and faculties of man——imagination especially.

2 See Aristotle's Poetics, XXV, 5. I use the J. R. Butcher translation as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 53.
will seem more pronounced because of their proximity to truth. The novelist who is somewhat inaccurate historically, but still artistic, (here again Aristotle comes to mind) is not to be censured, since he, as a novelist, should not be expected to have an historian's accuracy. That novelist who is both inaccurate and inartistic is to be condemned for both faults. In general, these are the theories on the fact and fiction question. Most of them are fairly sound if judged on aesthetic grounds.

The theories concerning realism, meaning fidelity either to the immediate world or to universal truth and nature, bear a close resemblance to those expressed on the matter of historical fact and fiction, on the one hand, and to the yet-to-be-considered theories of probability and verisimilitude on the other. The following part of this study is to deal first with passages in various reviews which treat of realism—of fidelity to the universal or to types, or to details of life—and then with passages on probability and verisimilitude. Since there is no definite line of demarcation between realism on one side and probability and verisimilitude on the other, there will be much overlapping. In the discussions of the first type of realism, terms like natural, truth, life, and nature are often used in a somewhat synonymous fashion.

In a review of Samuel Richardson's work, an overlapping is apparent. Natural suggests verisimilitude and the classical decorum (consistency between character and action). Mrs. Barbauld questions the behavior of Richardson's heroine;
and, advocating a fidelity to human nature she believes lacking in Pamela, she asks,

But again is it quite natural that a girl, who had such genuine love for virtue, should feel her heart attracted to a man who was endeavouring to destroy that virtue?¹

Richardson's handling of Sir Charles Grandison is also considered faulty, chiefly because the means by which Grandison protects himself cannot be considered natural. Richardson makes Sir Charles "so very good a swordsman that he is always capable of disarming his adversary without endangering either of their lives."² The critic objects, asking, very aptly, "But are a man's principles to depend on the science of his fencing master?"² Yet, despite the occasional lapses noted in Richardson's characterization, his works are somewhat realistic. Indeed, usually we get so intimately acquainted with the characters, and so impressed with a persuasion of their reality that when anything really disastrous or important occurs to them, we feel as for old friends and companions, . . .³

This effect, Richardson brings about by the "unparalleled minuteness and copiousness of his descriptions" and by his habit of presenting "every particular in the character and situation of the personages."³ Doubtless this method is

¹ "The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson," V (1804), 23.
² Ibid., p. 31.
³ Ibid., p. 45. Cf. "The Wanderer," XXIV (1815), 331. In the latter reference the reviewer remarks on the "appearance of truth" given Richardson's work by his "exactness of detail."
fatiguing to the reader, but effective in making the characters seem realistic, even though the actions of the characters be improbable.

At first glance the criticism of Godwin's Fleetwood seems to advise a kind of probability; but on second thought, it is possible that this criticism confuses probability with possibility and misapplies the classical tenet. At any rate, the following passage is worth quoting because it is definitely concerned with realism, and because it indicates the reviewer's knowledge of and tendency to apply Horatian terms and principles:

Some of those fastidious readers-- . . . , have remarked, that both these tales are in a vicious style of writing; that Horace has long ago decided, that the story we cannot believe we are, by all the laws of criticism, called upon to hate; and even the adventures of the honest secretary, who was first heard of ten years ago, are so much out of the usual road, that not one reader in a million can ever fear they will happen to himself.1

In The Cottagers of Glenburnie there is a suitable amount of realism-- of fidelity to "general truth" added to a "nice discrimination of national character" and "a dramatic representation of humble life."2 This reviewer favors all types of realism, if wisely used. Another critic of similar persuasions is not inclined to sympathize with any fastidious

1 "Fleetwood, or The New Man of Feeling," VI (1805), 183.

2 XII (1808), 401.
reader who might object to the "lower scenes" in Waverley, which, though they may seem "coarse" to some, are painted with a "force" and "a truth to nature" (to type) which equally bespeak the powers of the artist, and are incomparably superior to anything of the sort which has been offered to the publick for the last 60 years.¹ This defense of "low" life is an inversion of the neo-classicists' "gentility" concept.

However, realism marked by fidelity both to the actual prototypes of the characters and to universal truths is the highest mark of attainment. As Hazlitt indicates, we find in the novel, as a general rule, the closest imitation of men and manners; and are admitted to examine the very web and texture of society, as it really exists, and as we meet with it when we come into the world. If the style of poetry has "something more divine in it," this savours more of humanity.²

It is significant that Hazlitt believes the novel to serve the function of a kind of mirror held before men and manners—a magic mirror, perhaps, emphasizing things which a casual observer of life might miss and reflecting clearly those actions and characters whom all do not see, or seeing, do not understand. By means of the novel, he says, we meet "an infinite variety of characters."² Especially impressive are those in the works of the great realistic novelists.

¹ XXVIII (1817), 194.
There is a certain set of them, who, as it were, take their 
rank by the side of reality, and are appealed to as evidence 
on all questions concerning human nature. The principal of 
these are Cervantes and Le Sage; and among ourselves, 
Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne.¹

Many of the nineteenth century novelists, particularly 
the imitators of Scott, certainly receive no praise at all 
from the reviewers; but Galt is an exception. In his Annals 
of the Parish, he has 
sought chiefly to rival the humorous and less dignified parts 
of his original; by large representations of the character 
and manners of the middling and lower orders in Scotland, 
termingled with traits of sly and sarcastic sagacity, and 
occasionally all harmonized by the same truth to nature and 
fine sense of national peculiarity.²

His Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life, however, is too 
poetical to be so commended—too imbued with the "soft spirit 
of humanity and gentleness."³ The reviewer implies that prose 
fiction should generally express reality; poetry, unreality 
and dreams. His is an exceptional position, however.

An examination of many other reviews shows that an 
accurate imitation of present life is sometimes a matter for 
praise; sometimes, for blame. For example, Today in Ireland is 
judged defective because of its realism, which, being "too faithful"⁴ 
to the darker side of Irish life, is unpleasant to the readers.

¹ Ibid., pp. 320-322.
² XXXIX (1823), 160.
³ Ibid., p. 180.
⁴ XIII (1826), 360. See also "Princess de Cleves," 
XXXIV (1820), 382.
On the other hand, the reviewer believes the accurate, if unpleasant realism of the *Decameron* makes a vivid and praiseworthy impression. In the Italian work,

The pathological accuracy with which the rise and spread of the disease is described; the gloomy despair, and still more fearful riot and jollity which pervade the town, the numerous and anxious plans adapted by the citizens for their safety—all different, yet all leading to the same fatal result; the universal selfishness and corruption of morals . . . . , are described with a solemn and stately precision, varied occasionally by passages of impassioned eloquence, and judicious selection of individual incidents, which leave a deep impression of horror upon the mind.¹

Yet the truth is that the non-selective imitation of life in detail is not ever preferable to copies which, while accurate with regard to general principles, are not necessarily exact facsimiles of particular originals. In all of this preceding criticism truth may mean either universal principles or fact. Moreover, real and reality have the same dual meanings as truth. But fact and accidents represent the actual.

Closely related to truth is the term probability. Ideally probability involves a cause and effect plot arrangement and usually refers to that which previous experience leads one to expect in certain situations or to that which one's knowledge of universal human behavior indicates as customary. Verisimilitude, air of truth, resemblance to reality, character of truth, air of probability, vraisemblance, and air of local portraiture—all are terms that, in the reviews,

¹ Thomas Roscoe, "The Italian Novelists," XIII (1825), 113.
are somewhat synonymous with probability and with one another. Precisely what they mean, one can but guess. Generally they indicate a sort of realism arising from an accumulation of details or from a fidelity to general truth or from a combination of the two. To some extent, all these terms denote merely that which is plausible or credible. All the terms and their uses are thoroughly traditional. Improbability is generally associated with earlier fictional attempts, which may often have been highly successful because of their possession of various other excellent qualities.

This point is made clear in the following passage:

The infancy of fiction for example, is everywhere characterized by a superabundance of incident. Attention is kept awake by rapidity of succession, and the beauty or propriety of individual occurrences, or their relation to each other, is forgotten in the hustle and excitement produced by the train. If there exists a principle of selection at all, it seems to be in favour of what is wild and improbable.1

This "principle of selection" is certainly characteristic of Antonio Francesco Grazzini's work. His are "chiefly stories of practical jokes, sometimes ingenious, but almost always improbable and cruel."2

The reviewer of *Women As They Are* is very much interested in probability and censures Fanny Burney's *The Wanderer*, which he terms "that long and provoking tissue of improbable distresses."3 He also criticizes somewhat seriously the

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1 Ibid., p. 174.
2 Ibid., p. 194.
3 *L.I* (1830), 450. See also "The Wanderer," *XXIV* (1815), 338.
improbable incidents in *Women As They Are*, especially the "surprising and not very probable éclairissemenc" that takes place near the end of the book.¹

Though the term probability is not mentioned, the reviewer of *Cyril Thornton* also has a clear and correct idea of the theory of it and of resemblance. It is his opinion that

a traveller may accurately describe circumstances, which fell under his observation, which nevertheless though related with the utmost fidelity, will convey a decidedly false impression of the general habits and feelings of the people among whom they occurred, while the novelist may, without stating exactly a single fact which has actually occurred, so mould his fictitious narrative, that the impression which we derive from it shall be perfectly correct. Thus, fiction may not only be made the handmaid of truth, but may be enabled sometimes to perform its didactic duties even better than truth itself.²

Here the reviewer reminds one of Sidney's theory.³

The critic of *Tales of Military Life* is also particularly interested in probability. He says,

in strange juxtaposition with facts, is a tissue of such wild and romantic improbability, that the true part of the narrative is entirely overborne and counteracted by the fictitious; and we cannot read the tale with that terrible feeling of congestion which a good novel ought always to produce.⁴

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² LII (1830), 121.


⁴ LII (1830), 129-130.
In fact, despite the "ingenuity and attention to effect" which are often found in the novel, the improbability of the story detracts greatly from its value.

Apparently the taste of readers and critics has changed greatly, so that they no longer relish improbable, unreal, or even impossible fictions which were formerly the rage. One reviewer even doubts that he could any longer enjoy a romantic tale of the Radcliffe School with its gloomy towers, and mysterious monks. Indeed, he feels that even such a book as Stories of Waterloo is too "full of impossible adventures" for it to be considered a good book. In it "reality and fiction clash much too violently."

Even the noted Miss Edgeworth fails to satisfy the requirement of probability, though her exceptional morality compensates to some degree for this lack. In her Popular Tales "many of the incidents . . . are unmeaning and improbable; yet they all inculcate an exceptionable and practical morality. . . ." Is the inculcation of morality then to be ranked by critics higher than the possession of probability?

1 LII (1830), 129-130.

2 LII (1830), 130. See also "The Croppy," LII (1830), 417; "The Rivals," LII (1830), 430; and "Ugome Aram," LV (1832), 212. In all these reviews the terms probable and improbable occur; and all the novels are considered improbable.

3 "Harrington, A Tale," LII (1817), 396-397.
Evidently, such is the case with Miss Edgeworth. But stories by other women novelists are also criticized for improbability, whether the stories are moral or not.

Probability in all these reviews usually refers to that which is reasonable and natural. Verisimilitude is sometimes a synonym for probability, but the fact that even improbable and extravagant works may have an "air of reality" is indicated, as is the fact that resemblance to general truth does not mean fidelity to facts. An "air of truth" may result from well-chosen realistic details even though the main episodes of the story may be improbable.

Almost the same conclusions may be drawn from an examination of the reviews of works by famous, or less famous, men. In the review of Godwin's Fleetwood occurs the following passage indicative of the reviewer's attitude toward the lack of probability in Caleb Williams:

Several scenes are painted with the savage force of Salvator Rosa; and, while the author pauses to reason upon the feelings and motives of the actors, our sense of the fallacy of his arguments, of the improbability of his facts, and of the frequent inconsistency of his characters; is lost in the solemnity and suspense with which we expect the evolution of the tale of mystery.3

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1 See "The Wanderer" XXIV (1815), 338; "Corinne," XI (1808), 194; and "Le Solitaire," XL (1824), 160.

2 See "Le Solitaire", XL (1824), 160.

3 VI (1805), 182.
Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* on the other hand, for the most part, possesses at least verisimilitude, or as Scott puts it, "a character of truth and simplicity." However, the disgusting picture of the Houyhnhnms produces in the mind of Scott an impression of dullness.

The picture is not only extravagant but bald and tame in the highest degree; while the story is not enlivened by any of those numerous and uncommon incidents which are detailed in the first two parts with such an inimitable air of probability as to almost persuade us of their reality.

In this passage there is the same confusion of probability with verisimilitude that has occurred in English criticism since the sixteenth century. But these nineteenth-century critics, in general, use terms loosely, even more loosely than earlier critics did.

Scott's own novels frequently lack the probability and verisimilitude that he praised in the work of Swift. They are deficient, on occasion, even in possibility. His *Black Dwarf* is "plainly very deficient in probability and simplicity" in spite of the great merit of its details. His *Rob Roy,* however, has "brilliancy and truth of colouring" and even


2 Ibid., p. 48.


4 "Rob Roy", XXIX (1817), 404.
probability in plot technique; but this same statement may
not be made about The Heart of Midlothian, in which "the
final catastrophe, too, is needlessly improbable and start­
ing."

Notwithstanding the reviewer's statements concerning
the unreality and the improbability of Scott's plots and
characters, Jeffrey, in 1832, has this to say:

May, even his anomalous beings are felt to be generally re­
concilable with our code of probabilities; and as has been
said of the supernatural creations of Shakespeare, we are
impressed with the belief, that if such beings did exist,
they would be as he has represented them.¹

Either his "code of probabilities" differs from that possessed
by other critics of the age, or he just disagrees with others
in the application of the code. Perhaps he is influenced by
the theory that novelists, like playwrights, should be granted
certain premises and that then their works should be judged
accordingly. It is more likely, however, that the year of
the review— the year in which Sir Walter died— gives us
the clue. Here the most favorable interpretations possible
are to be given Scott's work.

No such interpretations are given to Maturin, whose
works lack, not only probability, but also verisimilitude. In
his preface to his Women, the author has this to say of his
own earlier works:

¹ "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV
(1832), 66. This passage is reminiscent of S. Johnson's
Preface to Shakespeare.
When I look over those books now, I am not at all surprised at their failure; for, independent of their want of external interest, ( . . . ), they seem to me to want reality, vraisemblance; the characters, situation, and language, are drawn merely from imagination; my limited acquaintance with life denied me any other resource. In the Tale which I now offer to the public, perhaps there may be recognised some characters which experience will not disown.1

The reviewer feels that Maturin's hope of offering in the

Women, a tale of some degree of probability is realized, only

if the critics grant the author a few premises. He declares:

The description of the fiend's past and language . . . is all well conceived and executed in a grand and magnificent strain of poetry, and in the perusal, supposing the reader carries his mind back to the period when such intercourse between mortals and demons was considered as a matter of indisputable truth, the story acquires probability, and consistency, even from that which is in itself not only improbable but impossible.2

Verisimilitude, one sees, is generally praised by critics. This quality is, however, sometimes designated by other terms. Highways and By-ways contains a measure of "general reality"3 (verisimilitude) and is therefore praised. Likewise, lack of "general reality" or "truth"4 detracts from Calh's Annals of the Parish as it does from other stories.5

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1 XXX (1818), 235.
2 Ibid., p. 236.
3 XXXVIII (1823), 459.
4 XXIX (1823), 161.
To summarize, then. The reviewers use truth, real and fact to denote the actual, present or past. They are generally agreed that absolutely accurate duplication of historical people and events is desirable if the novelists insist upon putting real people and events into their novels. Otherwise, the effectiveness of the novel is weakened. Yet these reviewers do not feel that the use of real facts and people is advisable. Nor do they feel that, if such a use of facts is employed in a novel of excellent quality, the novelist should always be condemned for a few inaccuracies. They do point out, however, that a fidelity to general truth is much more desirable than any imitation of individual facts and people.

With reference to the semblance of reality designated by such terms as natural, air of truth, air of reality or real, the reviewers consider again that minute accuracy or fidelity of detail is of less value than fidelity to universal principles in depicting either fictitious characters or events. A blending of the two types is, however, very desirable.

Though the term verisimilitude is not defined, the theory for which it stands is expressed several times; and obviously verisimilitude is considered a good quality of a novel. The point is made clear that even improbable plots may be given an air of reality by the clever use of details. Naturally, a basis in universal truth or nature aids appreciably in giving a novel an air of reality; but factual accuracy is not essential for verisimilitude.
Probability is not defined either, but its meaning seems fairly clear. It stands for that which is likely and reasonable in view of one's knowledge of human behavior, but is not necessarily true—true without a doubt. The possession of probability is to-be-desired but not always to-be-required if a novel possesses other distinctive merits. This quality is one specifically demanded even during the earlier phases of the novel's development. It was adopted from Aristotle's theory of drama and applied to the novel by critics in France certainly as early as the time of D'Aubignac—in England, somewhat later. Since this requirement particularly suited the temperament of an age of reason, the concept became one almost universally urged by and upon the novelists of the eighteenth century. Even Smollett in one of his prefaces mentions its desirability. The term probability remains a favorite with these reviewers of the nineteenth century.

There are, however, other terms applicable to the plots. Though less frequently appearing than the terms denoting problems of realism, these should not be ignored.

Propriety, taste, decorum, and delicacy, for instance, are important. Thoroughly neo-classical terms used somewhat synonymously, they denote that which is fitting in the plot or fable. Sometimes the terms themselves are not used, but the theories which they represent are expressed. Often taste is considered as the cause of the appearance of propriety, decorum, and delicacy in work; more often, however, taste is merely a synonym of the other three terms. Little effort is
made usually to define any one of the terms. However, taste is defined in the following passage:

Taste, if it means anything but a paltry connoisseurship, must mean a general susceptibility to truth and nobleness; a sense to discern, and a heart to love and reverence all beauty, order, goodness, wheresoever or in whatsoever forms and accompaniments they are to be seen. This surely implies, as its chief condition, not any given external rank or situation, but a finely gifted mind, purified into harmony with itself into keenness and justness of vision; above all, kindled into love and generous admiration.¹

Offenses against propriety or taste are noted often. For instance, the reviewer voices several objections to Delphine. He declares that the last two volumes of the work "are redundant"² and that the story should properly have ended where the interest ceases at the death of Madame de Vernon; but, instead of this, the scene shifters come and pick up the dead bodies, wash the stage, sweep it and do everything which the timely fall of the curtain should have excluded from the sight, and left to the imagination of the audience.²

The author makes another mistake. She should have been warned against allowing the heroine to be seriously sick too frequently lest a "crisis of perspiration be substituted for a crisis of passion.² Here apt phraseology unites with sound criticism.

¹ "Die Poesie und Beredsamkeit der Deutschen, von Luthers Zeit bis zur Gegenwart. Dargestellt von Franz Horn" and "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Kritik der schönen Literatur Deutschland während der Jahre, 1790-1818,"XLVI (1827), 315.

² II (1803), 173 and 174.
The errors made by Miss Burney in *The Wanderer*, however, arise, not so much from lack of propriety, as from a false idea of what constitutes true propriety.\(^1\) Furthermore, "exaggeration and bad taste"\(^2\) displayed in *Tales of the O'Hara Family* evidently result from the author's desire to preserve at all costs the notable "vigour and raciness"\(^2\) in every page.

Being often led by his "love of the ludicrous" to make forced and vulgar exaggerations,"\(^3\) Scott also is an offender against good taste and propriety. Yet, the critics say that "taste" is not, and should not be, the only criterion for judging Scott's works, that we should "accept them as affording information which we could not have obtained but at the expense of trouble and research ..."\(^4\)

The novel *Elisabeth*, however, brings no condemnation upon the author because of its lack of propriety or good taste. The "feminine delicacy that everywhere shades and refines"\(^5\) the character of the heroine is praised. Besides, "To this

\(^1\) XXIV (1815), 337.

\(^2\) XLIII (1825), 364. See also "The Naval Officer," LII (1830), 156; and "Yesterday in Ireland," LII (1831), 413, for attacks on lack of taste.

\(^3\) "Tales of My Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 197.

\(^4\) "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 70. Note here the false value given to Scott's works.

\(^5\) XI (1808), 451.
delicacy of principle, which is virtue, the author of Elisabeth adds delicacy of hand, which is taste. In short, everything in the novel is fitting and suitable.

Propriety and good taste have a somewhat narrowed application in these reviews. They designate a narrow fidelity to what is generally and habitually accepted as proper to a certain group of people instead of what the definition of taste given in the beginning of this discussion might lead one to expect. The propriety and good taste are determined, not by literary, but by what may be called social considerations. This fact especially requires one to point out the pronounced neo-classical influence.

As a matter of fact, the neo-classical influence is detectable even in the critics' concern about the presentation of sentiment or feeling or pathos. The latter terms occur often in the reviews—actually more often than do propriety and taste. The critics are, in general, in favor of the presentation of honest sentiment, of real feeling, and of true pathos; but they dislike exaggerated sentimentality. This attitude is perfectly obvious in the following comments on Charles et Marie:

We object, then, to the extreme contrast by character in the hero and heroine, who would both have been much more interesting, if each had borrowed a little of what is superabundant in the other; we object to much false refinement and extravagance of sentiment; . . .

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1 Ibid., 451.
2 II (1803), 128.
The valid objection made to the novel Fleetwood, moreover, is that the author makes "no attempt to describe the minuter and finer shades of feeling."¹ Instead, "the effect is always sought to be brought out by the application of the inflated language of high passion."¹ On the other hand, the little story Mother and Daughter, by Mrs. Opie, is remarkable for being "the most pathetic and the most natural in its pathos, of any fictitious narrative in the language."² In it there is "truth and delicacy of sentiment,"² besides noteworthy traces of the quality for which the author is justly famed—namely, the art "of presenting ordinary feelings and occurrences in a manner that irresistibly commands our sympathy and affection."² Treatments of feeling, then, particularly of pathetic feeling, are acceptable to the reviewers; but such treatments must be natural.

The "analysis of feeling" and the presentation of "false sentiments"³ in Madame de Staël's Corinne detract from its value. However, the reviewer concludes that these "blemishes are very inconsiderable, compared with the general execution of the work—..."³

But in the presentation of sentiment, Boccaccio yields to no one, for he has "carried sentiment of every kind to its very highest purity and perfection." In his comments on

¹ VI (1805), 192.
² "Simple Tales," VIII (1806), 465.
³ XI (1808), 194.
Boccaccio's virtues, the reviewer does what few reviewers do—
attends an analysis of the term sentiment. I quote:

By sentiment, we would here understand the habitual workings
of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost
tirely upon itself, without the violent excitement of
opposing duties or untoward circumstances.

Notwithstanding his attempted analysis, the critic cannot be
called a scientific one who bases his statements on definite
critical principles; for his works show him to have a tendency
to romantic unrestraint in diction, especially when he calls
Boccaccio "divine" and speaks in glowing phrases of the Italian's
power.

Sir Walter Scott, as another critic puts it, "displays
his greatest powers, in the delineation of the grand and
gloomy aspects of nature, and of the dark and fierce passions
of the heart." In fact, nearly all of the critics believe
the presentation of feeling and of passion to be important.

They agree that

It is a great thing, certainly, to make a man wise for him-
self; but it is still greater, and not less important, to make
him understand that there are feelings stronger than selfish
feelings, and joys of more value than selfish enjoyments.

In expressing these theories they use synonymously
passion, sentiment, and feeling; but the first term generally
denotes a deeper emotion. Very frequently they employ pathos
and pity, but caution novelists that pathos must be handled

1 "De la Litterature du Midi de l'Europe," XI (1809),
154.

2 "Tales of My Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 196.

3 "Harrington and Ormond," XXVIII (1817), 394.
carefully. One "pathetic" story is "on the whole, rather fade and finical—and too much in the style of the sentimental afterpieces which we have lately borrowed from the Parisian theatres."¹ One notes here the Johnsonian influence.

Generally, the test for the effectiveness of pathos is whether or not it brings "tears" to the eyes of the reader. The tales in *Annals of the Parish* are somewhat successful in this respect, for

the more seducing touches of pathos with which the work abounds, are intermingled and cut short with the same sparing and judicious hand; so that the temperate and natural character of the pastor is thus, by a rare merit and felicity, made to preponderate over the tragic and comic genius of the author.²

Obviously even pathos which can evoke tears must be subordinated to the presentation of character when character development is to be emphasized as it is in *Annals of the Parish*.

The arousal of pity, traditionally held to be a function of tragedy, is usurped by novels such as is *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*, which

is very beautiful and tender; but something cloying, perhaps in the uniformity of its beauty and exceedingly oppressive in the unremitting weight of the pity with which it presses on our souls."³

True, the arousal of pity by a tragedy which will bear the "weight of pity" is commendable; but the overplus of pity

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¹ XXXVI (1822), 339, 350. Compare this with Johnson's essays on the romance in his *Rambler*.

² XXXIX (1825), 161, 163.

³ XXIX (1823), 189.
called forth by a simple, sad novel is somewhat akin to the
sentimentality of Euripides, which Aeschylus attacks in The
Frogs.

The more "sophisticated" novelists are interested in
"touching the feelings" of readers and in presenting "sentiments suited to the scenes in which the characters are placed" Of Godwin's work, for instance, Hazlitt writes in an objectionably sentimental vein: "In the suffering and dying Falkland, we feel the heart strings of our human being break; . . . "

Even more successful than Godwin in the presentation of feelings of all sorts is Mrs. Opie; for, says the critic: "The passions were her province, and her forte lay in the exhibition of their workings." 3

In conclusion, one may say that, even though the reviewers often use such terms as sentiment, pathos, feelings, and passion, they usually bestow praise judiciously upon authors who exercise moderation in the use of feeling and sentiment and introduce only that sentiment or pathos which serves an end in the novel. There is, in fact, much that reminds one of strict neo-classical decorum. Perhaps there is more emphasis on the power of pathos to produce tears than might

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1 "The Italian Novelists," XLII (1825), 175. See also "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 71.

2 "Cloudesley, A Tale," LI (1830), 158.

3 "Women As They Are," (1830), 450.
be found in a period more addicted to writing by rules, but there is less emphasis than one might expect in a period generally described as completely unrestrained.

Closely connected with the terms and problems of sentiment and feeling is the theory of catharsis, which the reviewers discuss along with problems of endings. Indeed, dénouement, catastrophes, and pity or terror (standing for catharsis)—the first two terms referring to structure; the third and fourth, to psychological effect—are usually so closely connected in the reviews that they may be considered here together. To the final experience, not to a whole series of experiences, is the term catastrophe usually applied.

Therefore, it is a synonym for ending. About no one of the terms denoting ending is there any especially important information given. In general, dénouements that are probable and happy are preferred to tragic ones. If there must be a catastrophe, these reviewers say it should not be too horrible to be endured. Moreover, a kind of catharsis is desirable, but this catharsis is not the traditional one, and the term catharsis itself is not usually used.

The theory of dénouements endorsed by the reviewer of the King's Own, I quote here:

One who, like the novelist, has the power of life and death in his hands, should not murder his hero without necessity... The wit of man has not yet devised anything better than the old stale finale of a happy marriage; and we advise all novelists to adhere to it.1

1 LII (1830), 136.
This is one of the few specific statements of a theory of "endings." Usually isolated remarks are made. For instance, inasmuch as the "forced and unnatural"\textsuperscript{1} dénouement of Scott's Antiquary and the "strained and improbable"\textsuperscript{2} dénouement of his novel The Pirate are severely criticized, one infers that such dénouements are as unpopular as the so-called surprise tragic dénouements mentioned above.

The catastrophes of Scott's Black Dwarf, Kenilworth, and Bride of the Lammermoor, as well as the catastrophes of stories by Edgeworth and Boccaccio, receive the critics' attention, though none are discussed at great length. The catastrophe of the Black Dwarf is quite satisfactory since it is "given with singular spirit and feeling."\textsuperscript{3} However, that of the Bride of the Lammermoor" is too horrible for fiction" even though it is said to "be founded on fact."\textsuperscript{4} As for that of Kenilworth, the reviewer declares:

The catastrophe of the unfortunate Amy is too sickening and full of pity to be endured, and we shrink from the recollection of it, as we would from that of a recent calamity of our own.\textsuperscript{5}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} "Tales of My Landlord" XXVIII (1817), 200.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} "The Fortunes of Nigel," XXXVII (1822), 210.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} "Tales of My Landlord," XXVIII (1817), 206.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} "Ivanhoe, and The Novels and Tales of the Author of Waverley," XXXIII (1820), 5.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} "The Fortunes of Nigel," XXXVII (1822), 208.
\end{itemize}
The catastrophes of Maria Edgeworth and of Boccaccio also receive their share of criticism. Miss Edgeworth's are not naturally produced. Whether Boccaccio's catastrophes are, on the whole, natural or not, we are not told by the reviewer; but certainly the Italian novelist's catastrophes please the reviewer. He especially likes the tragic one of the story of Isabella in the Decameron, which he finds "fine" as well as "affecting." In short, the ideas gleaned from all these statements are that catastrophes should be realistic but not too horrible or pitiful, that they should move the reader but not upset him to the extent that a personal sorrow might, and that they should in general be effective.

Something akin to the theory of catharsis appears in conjunction with a kind of morality and poetic justice in the following passage taken from comments on Samuel Richardson's work:

As the work advances, the character rises, the distress is deepened; our hearts are torn with pity and indignation; bursts of grief succeed one another till at length the mind is composed and harmonized with emotions of milder sorrow; we are calmed into resignation, elevated with pious hope, and dismissed glowing with the conscious triumphs of virtue.

In summary, one may say that, though happy endings are preferable, tragic ones are acceptable provided they have an air of reality and are not too horrible. Moreover, tragic

1 "Harrington, A Tale and Ormond, A Tale," XXVIII (1817), 392–393.

2 "De la Litterature du Midi de l'Europe," XXV (1815), 34.

3 "The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson," V (1804), 29.
endings properly move readers when they leave readers calmed and impressed by the "triumphs of virtue." But at no time do these reviewers trouble to consider thoroughly the psychological function of the novel. This very important phase of Aristotelian theory they virtually ignore, never attempting any penetrating psychological analysis. To the moral and ethical efficacy of the novel as well as to its power to amuse, however, one will see that they give a great deal of attention.

C Terms Applicable To The Function of The Novel

In their discussions of the novel's function, the reviewers are generally in agreement. Though a few believe novels should merely entertain, a much greater number believe that novels should also serve a didactic function— that they should give instruction, especially moral instruction. Consequently, books that are thoroughly moral are commended for being so; those that are not are criticized. The favorite terms, as an examination of various passages will show, are moral, virtue, vice, useful, edify, didactic, and sometimes amuse.

A consideration of the criticisms of the established novelists like Defoe, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett shows clearly the attitude of the critics toward the question of morality

1 Ibid., p. 29.
2 Ibid., p. 137.
In the novels.

In an article entitled "The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson," Mrs. Barbauld discusses moral treatment at length. She questions the validity of Pamela's moral virtue and declares, "We admire her guarded prudence, rather than her purity of mind."¹ Hence, as a moral example, the heroine becomes of little value. However, Richardson has succeeded in effectively teaching a moral in his novel Clarissa Harlowe; for in it he has portrayed "the triumph of mental chastity."² Yet, despite Richardson's generally completely moral books, it is doubtful that they have done very much good by inculcating moral principles in the youth of the day.

Richardson's good people in short are too wise and too formal, ever to appear in the light of desirable companions, or to excite in a youthful mind any wish to resemble them.³

As far as the famed Fielding is concerned, he is believed by Mrs. Barbauld and others to have a somewhat pernicious effect upon the morals of his readers. Richardson terms Fielding's Tom Jones "a dissolute book" and a "profligate performance."⁴ Lady Mary Wortley Montague declares all of Fielding's works to be "very mischievous," since

¹ Ibid., p. 30.
² Ibid., p. 44.
³ Ibid., p. 38.
they place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures.¹

Defoe is also an offender in this respect. His novels do not instill morals, although he may have believed they did.

It is inconceivable

that he should really think there was a salutary moral lesson couched under the history of Moll Flanders; or that his romance of Roxana, or the Fortunate Mistress who rolls in wealth and pleasure from one end of the book to the other, and is quit for a little death bed repentance and a few lip-deep professions of the vanity of worldly joys, showed in a striking point of view the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice. It cannot be said, however, that these works have an immoral tendency. The author has contrived to neutralize the question and . . . made vice and virtue equally contemptible or revolting.²

Indeed, of the famed eighteenth-century English novelists, only Richardson appears to have partially satisfied the critics' demand for moral teaching; and even he was not considered a successful moral teacher, since his characters did not inspire others to imitate their deeds.

The idea that novels should serve a didactic function was applied also to those works written by French novelists. For instance, one critic comments that "Pigault Le Brun

² "Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe," L (1830), 421-422.
is amusingly prolific, but frequently unfit for youthful ears."¹

His works are not recommended because they are not conducive to morality; yet their entertaining value prevents their complete condemnation. The power of D'Arlincourt in effecting reforms is, however, greatly praised, for this author's method is the clever one of laughing men out of their "follies."²

Of course, the novels written by the English authors of this particular era were expected to be vehicles for moral teachings or for other useful information. Few critics emphasized the entertaining value of fiction; but many emphasized the fact that the didactic function must seem incidental.

Such authors as the great Scott and the much less important Hope and others won praise because of the moral tendencies of their works. Hence, the term moral often appears.

For instance, the reviewer of Tales of My Landlord declares:

It is very honourable indeed we think, both to the author, and to the readers among whom he is so extremely popular, that the greatest interest of his pieces is for the most part a moral interest . . . ³

However, Scott never tries "to enforce any distinct moral."⁴

Hope's Anastasius is similarly applauded for being free from "sensual and glowing descriptions"⁴ which tend to corrupt

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¹ "Tableau Historique de l'État et des Progrès de la Litterature Française depuis 1789," XXXV (1821), 178.

² "Le Solitaire," XL (1824), 162.

³ XXVIII (1817), 194.

⁴ "Waverley Novels and Tales of My Landlord," LV (1832), 72.
"the morals by inflaming the imagination of youths."\(^1\) Besides, the novel arouses in its readers a "disgust at vice" as well as a "thorough conviction of the necessity of subjugating passion."\(^1\)

The reviews of Galt's *Annals of the Parish* and of Lister's *Arlington* reveal the same theories about "morality"\(^2\) in novels. Particularly does the *Annals of the Parish* "have not only a natural, we think, but a moral and monitory effect."\(^3\)

The moral or didactic tendency was especially prevalent in the women novelists of the era. Such novelists as Miss Edgeworth, Madame de Genlis, Miss Gore, Hannah More, and Madame Cottin pleased the reviewers with moral or didactic tales. Madame de Staël's *Delphine*, however, was displeasing to the critics because it seemed "an attack against the Ten Commandments"\(^4\) and appeared "to shed a mild lustre over adultery."\(^4\) The reviewer also points out the fallacy of Madame de Staël's endowing a villain with "graces" throughout a novel and hanging him on the last page. This, he feels, is of no value as an incentive to virtue.

\(^1\) XXXV (1821), 102.
\(^2\) *Arlington, A Novel,* LVI (1832), 159.
\(^3\) XXXIX (1823), 161-162.
\(^4\) II (1805), 172, 177. However, since it taught to "dangers of passion" her *Corinne* pleased the critics. See *Corinne, ou L'Italie,* XI (1805), 193.
Of all the moralists among this group of women writers, however, Maria Edgeworth is most consistent in her efforts to teach lessons and to inculcate morals. Terms like moral, useful, instruct, and correct abound in reviews of her Popular Tales, Leonora, Simple Tales, Tales of Fashionable Life, Patronage, Harrington, and Ormond. The object of the Popular Tales is "to interest, amuse, and instruct" to those "who are neither high-born nor high-bred" in principles of industry, perseverance, prudence, good humour, and all that train of vulgar and homely virtues that have hitherto made all the happiness of the world." Patronage, though said to have a moral that is "constantly good," is lacking in one respect. The critic believes "the Patron" was necessary to the moral, but thinks that poetic justice required a more decisive preponderance of good or ill, to be assigned to him." Thus, it seems that the critic, desirous though he may be of morals in a novel, believes that poetic justice—and one notes the use of Rymer's term here—should not be sacrificed even partially in presenting the moral lesson. On the whole, Miss Edgeworth's novels are characterized by powerful sense and a nice moral perception joined to a rare and invaluable

1 IV (1804), 329. For further praise of the author's moral tendency, see also "Leonora," VIII (1806), 207; "Simple Tales," VIII (1806), 471; "Tales of Fashionable Life", XIV (1809), 376, 378; and "Tales of Fashionable Life," XX (1812), 104, 108, 112, and 126.

2 "Patronage," XXII (1814), 417, 431.
talent for observation and display of human character."¹

Somewhat less notable than Miss Edgeworth's moral tendencies, but, nevertheless, worthy of mention are those of Madame D'Arblay, Mrs. Gore, Madame de Genlis, and Mrs. More. For instance, Hazlitt, reviewing The Wanderer, indicates that he does not believe Madame D'Arblay has produced a work which will yield either "profit or delight."² He remarks sagely: "The most moral writers after all are those who do not pretend to inculcate any moral."² Here Hazlitt uses the traditional terms: moral, profit and delight. The same sort of terms appears in other reviews of works by Madame de Genlis, Hannah More, and Mrs. Gore—edify and amuse³ and moral,⁴ for instance.

¹ "Harrington, A Tale and Ormond," XXVIII, (1817), 390-391, 404.

² "The Wanderer, or Female Difficulties," XXIV (1815), 321 and 329.

³ "Mademoiselle de Tournon," XXXIV (1820), 374.

⁴ "Coelebs in Search of a Wife," XIV (1809), 148, 151, and "Women As They Are," LI (1820), 374. For other uses of such terms as moral, virtue, and vice, see "Elizabeth," XII (1808), 461 and "The Cottagers of Glenburnie," XII (1808), 41.
In summarizing, one may note that few critics agree wholly with this question: "The main question as to a novel—did it amuse?" They do not think that the novel "is only meant to please" but neither do they maintain that it should teach. One critic declares that, "though we are not inclined to advocate the practice of making fiction a vehicle for didactic purposes, we should be unwilling to say that any interesting topic might not be so treated as to gain by the alliance." If the critical and didactic part overlays the narrative and dramatic part (as it does in Cloudesley and in other similar novels), the novel cannot be considered excellent. The "mere novel" is to be preferred to those fictions "which allure to the well-cushioned sofa of the novel-reader, and leave us seated in the uneasy chair of the scholastic disputant." It is required of the ideal novel, however, "that it shall be moral in its tendency, that it shall be amusing." By "moral in its tendency," the critic means that there shall be an enforced and sensible enlistment of our better feelings.

1 "Granby, A Novel in Three Volumes," XLVIII (1826), 395.

2 "The Youth and Manhood of Cyril Thornton," LII (1830), 120. For praise of the didactic novel see also "Highways and Byways," XXXVIII, (1823), 465.

3 "Cloudesley, A Tale," LI (1830), 152.

4 "Women As They Are," LI (1830), 440, 445. Yet note that the "great power and interest" of Adam Blair redeem the work though it is "neither very pleasing, nor very moral." See "Adam Blair," XXIX (1823), 185.
on the side of what is estimable.\textsuperscript{1} No formal morality is to be endured. Above all, even a novel moral in tendency must be entertaining. The theory of the function of novels is then at least pseudo-Horatian, if not purely Horatian. The nineteenth-century critics of the novel perhaps place more emphasis on the entertaining function of the novels than did Horace on the function of poetry; but, in general, the theories are similar. The terms, I reiterate, are the neo-classical ones—amuse, edify, delight, teach, profit, please, virtue, vice, and moral.

Conclusion

Now to sum up the criticism in the Edinburgh Review. For the most part the criticism of the novel seems here merely an extension of that prevalent during the neo-classical period. In line with the epic—and sometimes with the dramatic—criticism of the past century, the reviewers place the major emphasis, not upon style or upon the personality of the author revealed in his work, but upon realistic or believable characters; upon a unified, probable plot that interests, moves, and especially either edifies or reforms the readers. They consider the "beauties" and the defects of the novels and evaluate the works according to their fidelity to the rules. Both early and late, certainly in 1803 and again in 1832, one discovers direct references to Horace; and Aristotle's theory of characterization and his aesthetic

\textsuperscript{1} "Women As They Are," LI (1830), 445.
principles, important throughout the reviews, have a pronounced influence upon nearly all reviews after 1820. Except for some fairly romantic appreciations of Scott, a few theories of Hazlitt's similar to his concept of the intuitive, fusing, and creating powers of genius and imagination (expressed in 1815 in his review of *The Wanderer*); and a few faint hints, discoverable as early as 1817, of Wordsworth's theory of "low" characters as a part of an all-pervading, all-enveloping Nature; there is here little that could possibly be considered new. The terminology is exceptionally derivative.

In listing the requisites of the authors, the critics use such terms as originality, invention, conception, genius, imagination and fancy, talent, knowledge, eloquence, and good sense. The first three terms, they use frequently, loosely, and almost synonymously. Power of invention or conception and originality are considered important, but almost impossible of attainment in their purest form. Since authors can not be purely original because the ancients have already expressed all the basic ideas, the reviewers countenance a little discreet imitation. This theory, of course, is a neo-classical continuation. Another quality, genius, some critics consider to be essential; others deem it merely desirable. To some, the term means consummate natural ability of a general sort; to others, great creative talent; and to others, a kind of spirit or merely inspiration. These meanings are classical or neo-classical. So are most of the interpretations of imagination and fancy. The latter terms, used interchanges bly,
often connote an imaging power, using as its materials mainly visible nature (human and external), or an imaging faculty that is irrational and completely divorced from reality. They may even indicate an ability to perceive, to fuse, and then to recreate materials; or rarely they denote a sort of inspiration. Though both fancy and imagination are to be desired, the reviewers feel that, to be most effective, the qualities must be controlled, just as Rymer, Pope, and Johnson required. There were other qualities like talent; knowledge of human nature, of truth, and of principles of composition; eloquence; and good sense— all considered excellent but not absolutely necessary. The emphasis on knowledge of the universal is inherited from Aristotle through the neoclassicists. The stress on good sense reminds one of Boileau, who "gave authority to" the terms good sense and reason for the critics of the eighteenth century.

Equally derivative is the material on the novel; but I shall reiterate a few of the more important facts. The term style generally had the traditional meaning of manner or method of writing; but after 1830 it sometimes referred to the tone or impression of the whole work. In discussing the ideal style the critics mainly used the old terms, popular with Dryden, Addison, and Johnson—clear, easy, elegant, and unaffected. Sometimes, however, the terms were the somewhat more unusual ones like sprightly, gaudy, or sparkling. As for descriptions, the reviewers judged as best those imitations of external nature that were somewhat heightened for effect.
On the whole, their theory and their terms relating to descriptions are similar to those of Addison's, not quite so advanced as those of Reynolds. In addition to numerous terms like excellent, picturesque, accurate, and faithful, there are a few newer aesthetic ones like fresh and charming.

What has been said of style and of description may also be said of plots—that theories and terms are inherited ones. The term plot is loosely used to refer to the mechanical structure of a work or to the story. The plot is supposed to be complete, unified, effective, and interesting; the subject matter, preferably natural, simple, and probable. The entire plot is expected to be suitable—in other words, to possess propriety, taste, and decorum. Its dénouement (ending) is usually to be happy; or if there should be a catastrophe (this term applied to the ending, not to the whole experience), it must be realistic but not too horrible; and it must certainly express the triumph of virtue. The majority of critics demand also that plots serve a moral or didactic function, and not simply amuse. There may be feeling, sentiment, and pathos in moderation; but there must be no maudlin sentimentality.

Both plots and characters are to have verisimilitude and a realism based upon fidelity to general truth and sometimes to type (in the case of characters). They do not always have to be probable, nor do they have to be factually accurate; but probability is considered one of the most desirable of qualities.
These were the opinions of the reviewers writing in the Edinburgh Review. Some of the concepts seem sound; some can scarcely be termed excellent; and nearly all show the notable influence of neo-classicism and the lack of influence of new romantic theories. But let us now examine the rival of the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review, to see whether the neo-classical influence upon terms and theories is apparent there also.
Similar to the Edinburgh Review was the Quarterly Review. Both journals "agreed fundamentally on matters of literary criticism. Both depended largely upon established standards." Both prided themselves upon the selection of novels to be reviewed, not upon the number criticized.

The Quarterly Review, however, was a Tory magazine started in 1809 in opposition to the Whig Edinburgh Review. Sir Walter Scott, estranged from the Edinburgh Review because of its severe review of Marmion and because of the tone of its political articles, was largely influential in the creation of this Tory organ; and for it he wrote his well known appreciation of Jane Austen's *Emma*.

A violent reviewer, William Gifford, was the first editor of the magazine. His reviews and those of the equally biased Croker and Lockhart soon gave the publication a reputation "for unfairness and vituperation." But even these men did write some good criticism; and there were other better writers contributing to the Quarterly, among them being Henry Taylor, Charles Lamb, Walter Scott, John Sterling, Whitwell Elwin, Isaac D'Israeli, and Washington

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Irving. During the 1800–1832 period the editors of the Quarterly Review, in addition to "Juvenal" Gifford, were John Taylor Coleridge and John Gibson Lockhart. Under their direction appeared some of the first appreciations of such novelists as Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth, and Sir Walter Scott.

These reviewers recognized the popular appeal of the novel, and many of them admitted its importance as a new literary type. Being interested in its history, they indicated its connection with the historical romance, with the epic, and with the drama. Like the reviewers writing in the Edinburgh Review, they demanded even as late as 1832 that the novel be subjected to neo-classical rules governing the epic and the drama. Gifford was voicing a typical belief when he insisted in 1809 that the great moral influence of the novels made it imperative that each one "be subject to the inspection of a strict literary police." Moreover, attesting the literary importance of the new genre, Richard Whately admitted in 1821 that apologies for novels were no longer needed since they were "discussed by the ablest scholars"; and Lockhart remarked in 1826 that even Horace might have written

1 "Tales of Fashionable Life," Quarterly Review, I (1809), 148. This theory is reminiscent of Plato's demand for a strict poetic censorship. (Laws, VII, 801, Cooper's translation).

Since succeeding references, not otherwise indicated, will be to the Quarterly Review, the name of the journal will not be repeated.

2 "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821), 352.
novels had the great "rule-giver" been living in the nine­
teenth century.¹ Moreover, though Scott remained to the end faintly apologetic for novels, he noted with approval how the "child of the romance" was freeing itself from the fetters of "the original style of romantic fiction."² Once, as he remarks with approval, its readers had expected and demanded only extraordinary stories characteristic of the romance, not such imitations of real life as Jane Austen now dared to present. Yet Scott and his fellow reviewers, who sanctioned the discard of the chivalric subject matter of the epic poem and the romance, demanded that each novelist continue to be guided by the epic rules. He must remember, one critic declares, that the historical novel especially "is a classical species of composition, having certain leading principles and rules established and illustrated by

¹ "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV (1826), 354. This review Andrew Lang calls "an interesting and reflective essay on the art of fiction." See The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, I, 414.

² "Emma," XIV (1815), 189. For a similar statement with regard to the novel's increasing connection with reality see "Amelia Mansfield," I (1809), 305; and for other indications of interest in the history of the novel see Croker's review of Waverley, XI (1814), 354 and Lockhart's criticism of Lives of the Novelists, XXXIV (1826), 349-379.

³ See "Historical Romance," XXXV (1827), 519, where the novel is described as "an accommodation of the ancient epic to the average capacity of the numberless readers of modern times."
high authority and example.\footnote{\textit{Zohrab the Hostage}, XLVIII (1832), 393-394. Compare Pope's theory in his "Preface to the Iliad" and in his "Essay on Criticism" with this passage. The entire review of \textit{Zohrab the Hostage} is especially interesting in that it indicates the reviewer's consciousness of the limitations of the drama as opposed to the novel. He notes the advantages of the omniscient viewpoint, and he deprecates as inartistic the transfer of the hidden identity device from the drama to the autobiographical novel.} The author, therefore, must not permit himself "more than epic use of materials rejected by the drama,"\footnote{\textit{Zohrab the Hostage}, XLVIII (1832), 393-394. Compare Pope's theory in his "Preface to the Iliad" and in his "Essay on Criticism" with this passage. The entire review of \textit{Zohrab the Hostage} is especially interesting in that it indicates the reviewer's consciousness of the limitations of the drama as opposed to the novel. He notes the advantages of the omniscient viewpoint, and he deprecates as inartistic the transfer of the hidden identity device from the drama to the autobiographical novel.} and he must abstain from "those features of dramatic composition which are peculiarly and especially incompatible with the epic form."\footnote{\textit{Zohrab the Hostage}, XLVIII (1832), 393-394. Compare Pope's theory in his "Preface to the Iliad" and in his "Essay on Criticism" with this passage. The entire review of \textit{Zohrab the Hostage} is especially interesting in that it indicates the reviewer's consciousness of the limitations of the drama as opposed to the novel. He notes the advantages of the omniscient viewpoint, and he deprecates as inartistic the transfer of the hidden identity device from the drama to the autobiographical novel.} From his place in history Pope nods assent to this typical eighteenth-century position that for each type of literature there are certain principles strictly to be observed save in the case of "great original genius, that is to say--of that gift above all rules to which nothing is impossible."\footnote{\textit{Zohrab the Hostage}, XLVIII (1832), 393-394. Compare Pope's theory in his "Preface to the Iliad" and in his "Essay on Criticism" with this passage. The entire review of \textit{Zohrab the Hostage} is especially interesting in that it indicates the reviewer's consciousness of the limitations of the drama as opposed to the novel. He notes the advantages of the omniscient viewpoint, and he deprecates as inartistic the transfer of the hidden identity device from the drama to the autobiographical novel.} Thus the tendency of the creators of the novel to experiment, to borrow, and to mix materials and techniques from both the drama and the epic is occasionally frowned upon by a few critics like this one, even more faithful than most to strict rules.

Despite the reluctance of these few critics to sanction transfers of materials and techniques from the drama to the novel, since they associated the latter inextricably with the epic form, they and others did borrow terms and theories from both the criticism of the epic and of the drama. This mixture of borrowed terms prevails throughout the criticism in the *Quarterly Review*. There
are fewer new terms and new meanings implied here than was the case in the Edinburgh Review. In fact, an examination of specific passages, especially during the first two decades of the century, reveals a marked resemblance to the work of the earlier critics of the novel, whose habit it was to apply epic and dramatic dicta—and sometimes even the epic order of criticism—to the novel.1 This application of terms and theories that were current throughout the eighteenth century is to be observed in the evaluations both of novelists and of novels and in the statements regarding the proper function of the genre.

A Terms Applicable to Novelists

Seldom do these reviewers endeavor to trace the qualities of the novelist as they are revealed in his work, for their major interest is judging the worth of his finished composition. There are a few among them to whom Addison's definition of a "critick" might well be adapted:

one that, without entering into the sense and soul of an author, has a few general rules, which like mechanical

instruments, he applies to the works of every writer, and as they quadrate with them pronounces the Author perfect or defective. ¹

But occasionally, either by praising the presence of specific talents in certain authors or by lamenting the absence of these gifts, some critics indicate "the qualifications necessary to form a writer of novels."² For instance, Mr. Kett is considered to be "very slenderly endowed" since he exhibits no "keen penetration into human nature, no quick and lively powers [innate perceptive ability] of catching lively manners, or painting nice shades of character."²

The terms denoting all these qualities are numerous and are familiar to the reader of poetic criticism. Power is the one most frequently and, to some extent, most vaguely used. Its connotations are many. Scott writes in 1810:

In some of the novels of the late Charlotte Smith we found no ordinary portion of that fascinating power which leads us through every various scene of happiness or distress at the will of the author, which places the passions of the wise and grave for a time at the command of ideal personages; and perhaps has more attraction for the public at large than any other species of literary composition, the drama not excepted. Here the term has a marked relationship to the inexplicable faculty of enchantment, particularly appealing to the romantic element in artists and appreciators alike since the time of Beauer. In the same review Scott praises Waturin's "power" (innate imaginative force) but deprecates his "lack of taste."³

² "Emily," I (1809), 315.
In many other reviews the word denotes a specific inherent talent, as a "power of observing generic, not individual characters"¹ or "great poetical power"¹ or "dramatic power."¹ Often, however, it is debatable whether the term refers to a particular faculty of the author or to the force and effectiveness of his expression. It might refer to either in the case of "power of conception," applied both to Maturin and to Mrs. Shelley;² in the case of Miss Edgeworth's "power of humor"³ or Scott's "power of plotting"³ or Hope's "lack of power in combining his materials."³ Used in the plural, it usually denotes innate ability; but at least once it is a synonym for learning—very elementary at that. Somewhat ironically the reviewer remarks that Alicia Palmer "speaks with some confidence of her own powers, and not unjustly" since her spelling is superior to that of Miss Gwenson. Too, this "giantess among pygmies"⁴ "appears to know the meaning of most of her words."⁴ In general, however, the term signifies inherent talent or the effectiveness that is the result of genius or imagination;

¹ In the order named see "John De Lancaster," I (1809), 336; "Historical Romance," XXV (1827), 520-522; "The Fortunes of Nigel," XXVII (1832), 364.

² In the order named see "Wandervll," XVIII (1817), 176; and "Frankenstein," XVIII (1818), 385.


⁴ In order, see "Tales of Fashionable Life," I (1809), 154; and "The Daughters of Isenberg," IV (1810), 66.
and these meanings are the same ones which the word had in earlier criticism.¹

To some extent synonymous with power (if one excepts the meanings skill or learning) is another term appearing fairly frequently, especially after 1815—namely, genius. With regard to this quality, the highest of all gifts, the reviewers adopt the typical neo-classical viewpoint; but the great esteem in which they hold genius (consummate originating powers) reflects the "original genius" theories of Addison and of Young.² The importance of great innate ability is everywhere manifest, from Scott's statement in 1810 that the novel is now "decorated by the higher exertions of genius"³ through Lockhart's review in 1826, in which he remarks that the "genius" of Cervantes "blended the elements of imaginative prose together and ennobled, rather than invented"⁴ a new literary form. In addition, in contrasting Scott to the novelist's imitators, he declares, "One genius, in a word, made many clever artists."⁴ This same novelist prompts Nassau Senior in 1827 to extol the

¹ See Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p.390. See also Edward Young, Conjectures on Original Composition, in ibid., p. 430; and S. Johnson "From Alexander Pope" in Lives of the Poets, reprinted in ibid, p. 487.

² See Edward Young, op. cit., p.407 ff. and J. Addison, Spectator, No. CLX, as reprinted in J. Addison, Works, edited by C. V. Greene (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1859), V.

³ "Emma," XIV (1815), 168.

former's "energies of genius and acquisitions of knowledge."\(^1\) Finally, in 1832, in a review of *Mebra the Hostage*, one finds an expression of an old theory, already advanced in an earlier review,\(^2\) that in the case of "very high genius" even "eternal rhapsodies about personal feeling" or infringements of established "principles and rules"\(^3\) are to be endured. In the midst of such "grace-beyond-the-reach-of-art"\(^4\) criticism there appears very suitably a statement of doubt whether"genius of any kind actually rises and falls with the mercury in the thermometer."\(^5\) Such a *reductio ad absurdum* of the "climate" concept is in keeping with the neo-classical tradition, which admits the value of genius, which may bow low before the originating power of genius—though it never gives credence to Young's belief in the completely untutored genius, whom education may harm— which

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1 "Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, Redgauntlet, Tales of the Crusaders, Woodstock," XXXV (1827), 520. Compare this with S. Johnson's definition of genius, loc. cit., p. 457.

2 "The History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 407, where Mrs. Radcliffe's "strong and original genius" is said to compensate for the "mannerism" of her work.

3 XLVIII (1832), 396 and 393. The "rhapsodies" are described as imitations of Byron. The renunciation of the romantic school is marked here.


5 "The History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 385. For the opposite view see the *Edinburgh Review*, XXI (1813), 2.

may forgive faults in "the loftier efforts of genius" without ever recanting its stand upon the efficacy of "laws," but which customarily dismisses as too liberal such a notion as the one upon the influence of climate. Most of the meanings both of power and of genius—charm, effectiveness, innate general talent, inherent specific ability, native originating faculty—may well be included in Johnson's definition of genius as

that power which constitutes a poet; that faculty without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates.

Johnson's definition is actually less traditional in tenor than most of these uses of genius, especially when genius appears to replace the term talent in the language of the reviewers. Most nearly related to genius and power are imagination and fancy. The latter terms are used interchangeably, imagination being the more popular of the two, though it seldom appears before 1817. Precisely what the reviewers mean by either word is a matter for speculation; but, by examining the context of several passages in which the terms

1 "Historical romance," XXV (1827), 520.

2 S. Johnson, The Lives of the English Poets, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 467. However, there is little stress upon animating in the reviews; and at times genius seems merely a synonym for talent.

3 Talent is not frequently used. When it is, it may denote general or specific ability as Scott's "talent both gay and pathetic" or Irving's "talents." See "The Antiquary," IV (1816), 138 and "The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon," XXV (1821), 61.
appear, one may make some conjectures about the significance of each. When Scott writes of "a strong and vigorous fancy,\(^1\) he probably refers to the faculty for forcefully reproducing images based upon the visible—but somewhat heightened. Certainly that is his interpretation when he writes of "imagination, not less accurate and discriminating than vigorous and vivid.\(^1\) Lockhart possibly goes a step farther in his description of Scott's "poetical imagination" as more powerful and more exalted by far than had ever in former days exerted its energies elsewhere than in the highest of the strictly poetical forms—epic and tragic.\(^2\)

There is here at least a hint of the creative action of the mind in reshaping the images received through the senses. The product is, however, generally better described as picturesque than as inspired or impassioned; and it suggests faintly the eighteenth-century version of the Longinian sublime. Even more closely akin to the theory of the preceding century is Nassau Senior's discussion of Scott's "cultivated imagination.\(^3\) Though Senior's mention of the

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\(^1\) See in order "Fatal Revenge," II (1810), 34; and "Tales of my Landlord," XVI (1817), 457. For a similar use of imagination see also "Melmoth the Wanderer," XXIV (1821), 327.


\(^3\) "Historical Romance," XXV (1827), 520-522. The uses of the terms here and in the preceding passages are somewhat dubious. See J. Addison, Works, ed. G. W. Greene, VI, 322ff.
writer's "teasing fancy" might tend to focus one's attention on the creative power of the novelist, the reviewer's use of the adjective cultivated along with such expressions as "sufficient knowledge of his art" or "skill" in applying his gifts prompts the reader to recall that art and discipline are needed too.\(^1\) In all of these cases, imagination and fancy have some connection with reality, with actual life. But in 1832 the reviewer of Arlington and The Contrast uses both terms as fancy especially was employed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—that is, as though completely apart from life and thoroughly opposed to reason. He denounces the fashionable novels of the day. To increase the force of his already vigorous denunciation, he exclaims that he prefers to read even the stories of the "bleeding nuns," for "puerile in fancy as these tales were, they were, however, imaginative, and to the imagination only did they address themselves."\(^2\) Even this weak and indirect defence of the formerly maligned type of imagination manifested in the Gothic novels and romances

\(^1\) Ibid.

\(^2\) XIVIII (1832), 167. For a defence of this type of imagination see Bishop Hurd, Letters on Chivalry and Romance, edited by E. J. Morley (Oxford: 1911), p. 34. For similar concepts of imagination as irresponsible and in need of the curbs of judgment or philosophy, see F. Bacon, Complete Works, Spedding's edition (London, 1857), IV, 406; Thomas Hobbes, Complete Works (London: Yardsworth, 1617), III, 46; Frances Burney, Works (London: Bell, 1892), III, lxi; S. Johnson, Rambler, No. 125, as reprinted in The British Essayists, edited by A. Chalmers (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1864), XVIII.
is noteworthy, coming as it does at the end of the romantic period. In all of this criticism there is no advance beyond the theories of the imagination expressed during the eighteenth century. The terms fancy and imagination appear much less often than one might suppose—almost never during the earlier years.

Nearly always related in some manner to the imagination are the terms invention, conception, and originality—all appearing comparatively seldom in the reviews. For instance, invention is a synonym for the creative imagination in the critic's lament that Miss Edgeworth's "invention has not supplied her" with "an interesting plot." Moreover, conception usually indicates creative or imaginative talent; and originality, the power to imagine and to express what seems new. When the critics deplore Murphy's want of "originality" and praise Irving's "spirit and originality," as

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1 "The History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 406. For a similar use of the term in earlier criticism, see J. Addison, Works, Bohn edition (London: 1891), III, 2 and 422; and S. Johnson, Rambler, No. 4, as reprinted in The British Essayists, XVI, 83-84.


3 "The Fatal Revenge," II (1810), 347.
well as his "amiable and benevolent qualities of heart and mind," they are using the term originality just as Edward Young did in his Conjectures. To some extent, then, all three terms are similar; and all are inherited from preceding criticism.

Most of the terms already mentioned designate qualities that are mainly innate; but there are terms—some of them employed frequently, some, rarely— which suggest faculties that may be partially acquired or at least improved by conscious application. Among these are sense, taste, judgment, and knowledge. The first two, the reviewers use so vaguely that even an examination of the context of specific passages is of little help to the reader in determining the meanings. However, there do seem to be several interpretations possible for the word sense. When the reviewers write of "common sense" or of "solid sense," they suggest...

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1 "The Sketch Book," XXV (1821), 167. In another review Irving is praised for having "the indescribable humour (a sympathetic sense of the incongruous) of Sterne, with a tone of moral feeling of which the latter was incapable. See "Salamagundi, the Knickerbocker History of New York, Bracebridge Hall, Tales of a Traveller," XXI (1825), 487. The term humour has here the significance which it often has in the reviews. See also the passage on the "humour and pathos" of Scott in "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV, (1826), 378. In all the passages the terms humour and pathos parallel the uses discoverable in eighteenth-century criticism. See J. Addison, Works, Bohn edition, II, 297; and J. H. Marton, Essay on Pope, (London: 1806), I, 32.

2 "Woman," I (1809), 52. See also "Yelmoth the Wanderer," XXIV (1821), 303, where "good taste and common sense" are mentioned.

3 "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821), 352.
the power of reasoning or of rationalizing. By "good sense," on the other hand they often imply an innate-- or perhaps at times a partially cultivated-- feeling for what is universally and permanently suitable and fitting. When this feeling is to some extent acquired, it too is connected with reason. In the review of *Miss Edgeworth's Patronage*, the term signifies a quality both inherent and improved. The reviewer declares:

Her two strong points are good sense and humour, and it is by the buoyant power of her humour, that she has been able to diffuse among the public so large a portion of her good sense.1

Somewhat akin to *sense* in meaning is *taste*, and often the terms occur together in the reviews. In the earlier reviews *taste* usually denotes an inherent and partially acquired sense of what is appropriate or fitting.2 Throughout the reviews, in fact, such an expression as an "offense against good taste"2 implies the neo-classical decorum. Then, however, a critic writes about "taste and discrimination,"3 he may mean a sense of the universally appropriate; or he may refer to an "act of the mind"4 or to a "faculty of the

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1 *Patronage,* X (1814), 305. It is interesting here to note that H. C. Robinson questions the value of *Miss Edgeworth's* "good sense." He deplores the "tendency to check enthusiasm," a tendency observed in her work. See his Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence, ed. Sadler (London: Macmillon, 1869), I, 399.

2 *Guy Mannering,* XI (1815), 50. See also *Arlington and The Contrast,* XXVIII (1832), 187.

3 *The Antiquary,* XV (1816), 138.

Soul" for discerning beauties or imperfections. When the reviewers mention together "good sense and good taste" or "good sense, good taste, good feeling," it is very likely that they have in mind the last meaning. Certainly there are no new implications in any of the passages in which sense and taste occur. Even Pope, one recalls, used both terms and in much the same way in his An Essay on Criticism. There he remarked that genius and taste are both gifts from heaven, but be did imply that learning is a helpful adjunct to all three qualities. So many other critics adopted the "cult" of taste—Bouhours, Fontanelle, St. Evremond, Temple, Dennis, and Addison among them—that it would be unusual for one not to find numerous meanings given to such a term. Almost the same statement might be made concerning the word sense. Judgment, however, which is sometimes to be found with the two previously mentioned terms, is not the favorite with these reviewers that either of the other words is. Nor is it as popular as it was with critics during the past century. It may denote a cultivated instinct for propriety or a sort of taste as it does when the reviewer writes that Miss Edgeworth's weakness is a "defect of judgment," not "of powers." It may signify an ability to understand and to

1 J. Addison, Spectator Papers, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 680. Note here also Addison's theory of "good sense."

2 "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 392.

3 "Arlington and the Contrast," LXVIII (1832), 167.

4 "Tales of Fashionable Life," I (1809), 154.
evaluate as it does when the reviewer speaks of Miss Edgeworth's "instinctive judgment of character." ¹ None of its meanings indicate a variance from earlier criticism. ² In fact, judgment, good sense, and good taste—all—lend a neo-classical air to the criticism.

Another term which the reviewers employ often is the very general one—knowledge. It, too, was regarded with favor by critics writing in the past, especially by the neo-classicists. There are, however, so many types of knowledge that even arch-romanticists demanded some kinds. As the reviewers use the term, its meanings run the gamut from the learning acquired through study and observation to that gained imaginatively or intuitively. That "accurate and extensive" knowledge which Miss Edgeworth is "too judicious to display"³ is, of course, learning. Moreover, the knowledge "of the human heart," "of the world,"⁴ and "of human nature,"⁴ which Miss Austen possesses, refers to intuitive and sympathetic understanding as well as to information on human qualities gained by observation.

¹ "Patronage," I (1814), 307. Here the author's judgment and her power as a "keen, accurate, and impartial" observer are deemed compensations for her lack of such "fertility in contriving" as Fielding has.


³ "Patronage," I (1814), 305.

⁴ "Northanger Abbey," XIV (1815), 189; and "Northanger Abbey," XXIV (1821), 382.
Although knowledge "of the human heart" is generally associated with romantic tendencies, it has been important in criticism certainly ever since Temple wrote *On Ancient and Modern Learning*. Moreover, the other type of knowledge is that "of mankind in general"—a kind easily obtained by an author with the "eye of a painter and a poet," since such an author would observe surface facts and detect the universal truth beneath the visible signs. This knowledge of mankind, both Pope in his *An Essay on Criticism* and Joseph Warton in his *examen of Pope* approved. Then there is the knowledge "of good and evil," which reminds one somewhat of Miltonic theory; and finally, the knowledge "of man's stronger affections and profounder passions," which is "the product of retirement." The last type is suggestive of Wordsworthian theory, especially in its emphasis on retirement; however, one recollects Johnson's assertions about the need for every sort of knowledge. 

These, then, are the major terms which the reviewers use in their discussions of the qualities to be desired in a novelist—judgment, genius, power, imagination, fancy, talent, humor, sense, taste, and knowledge. It is worthy

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1 "Melmoth, the Wanderer," XXIV (1821), 311.
2 "Arlington and The Contrast," XLVIII (1832), 189 and 166.
of noting particularly that all of them appear in the works of the so-called neo-classicists. Of course, some of the interpretations of power, genius, imagination, fancy, and knowledge connote a liberalism that one is accustomed to associate with romanticism; but the same liberal tendency is marked in the works of Addison and of Johnson. On the whole, however, Pope could have used—actually did use—most of them. The difference lies in emphasis. Here there is stress upon genius and, especially after 1817, upon imagination; whereas Pope's is upon sense.

B Terms Applicable to the Novel

In their criticism of the various aspects of the novel the reviewers show the same propensity toward repeating terms and theories prevalent during the eighteenth century. There are, however, indications throughout the reviews that the critics are considering seriously the problems particularly important in the construction of the novel, that they are analyzing these problems and are making some effort to select for use terms and theories that will be suitable to the new genre. Yet they seem to oppose both complete innovations in theory and practice and changes in terminology. In short, they are willing to select, to rearrange, but not to change.

The average reviewer would probably agree completely with Scott here. He writes:

Force of character, strength of expression, felicity of contrast and situation, a well-constructed plot, in which
the development is at once natural and unexpected, and where the interest is kept uniformly alive till summed up by the catastrophe—all these are requisites as essential to the labour of the novelist as to that of the dramatist and indeed, appear to comprehend the sum of the qualities necessary to success in both departments.1

There is, however, one important ingredient lacking here—the moral. Most reviewers, especially earlier in the century, would immediately add that element. The moral is, however, also omitted in various other passages praising novels, especially those by foreign authors. Put in Scott’s criticism as well as in that by other writers the terminology and the theory are traditional. One notes especially the neo-classical influence on terms in the following:

Boccacci repandit cette variete dans son ouvrage, comme le plus sur moyen d’interesser et de plaire; et ce qui est admirable, c’est que, dans tous ces genres si divers, il recante toujours avec la meme facilité, la meme verité, la meme elegance, la meme fidelite a preter aux personnages les discours qui leur conviennent, a representer au-naturel leurs actions, leurs gestes, a faire de chaque nouvelle un petit drame qui a son exposition, son noeud, son dechirement, dont le dialogue est aussi parfait que la conduite et dans lequel chacun des acteurs garde jusqu’a la fin sa physionomie et son caractere.2

1 "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV (1826), 358. Compare this with Scott’s statement that the ideal novel is a "story regularly built and consistent in all its parts, and in which nothing occurs, and scarce a personage is introduced, that has not some share in tending to advance the catastrophe." Introduction to the Monastery, Standard Edition, XI, xxxviii. Referring to Scott’s statement with regard to the novel and the drama, the reviewer Lockhart disagrees, believing the drama to require more skill. Compare Lockhart’s statements with those of G. E. Lessing in Selected Prose Works, tr. K. G. Beailey and Helen Jimmern (London: Bell, 1905), 253-256. For other considerations of the merits of the novel and the drama, see Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine, II (1818), 403; XI (1822), 358; and XV (1824), 410.

Variety, interest, pleasing, ease, truth, elegance, suitable or appropriate—these and other terms are familiar to readers of earlier criticism of poetry, epic and dramatic.

But now to consider terms applied to specific phases of the novel—first, those applied to style and language; then those connected with character treatment; and finally, those used with plots or fables.

In the reviews the term style means approximately what it did when Puttenham wrote his The Arte of English Poesie; that is, it still refers to manner or method of composition or sometimes actually to the language. Since language and style are often synonymous terms, one might well consider the two together; however, for the sake of convenience, I wish to examine first certain passages in which the reviewers use the word style, then those in which the term language appears.

In writing of style, in which they truly do not seem to be very much interested, the reviewers show a tendency either to repeat terms which Pope, Johnson, and Dryden used or to express vague generalities. Only rarely do they attempt to distinguish between verse and prose style or to analyze as the reviewer does here:

The faults which we have to notice belong to the style. This is an imitation of that of scripture; it is, we think, sometimes too periphrastical, and sometimes it abounds in unnecessary repetitions. It retains also marks of its derivation from metrical romance in detail and accumulation of particulars, which, though sometimes striking, at other times degenerate into mere expletives.¹

¹ "Chronicle of the Sid Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar," I (1809), 152.
This attack on periphrases reminds one somewhat of Abbe Pénélon's somewhat similar statements with regard to the style of tragedy--statements made in his "Letter to the Academy." Usually, however, the critics merely object to a "strained" style that has a "grave and repulsive formality"; to "the tedious uniformity of a style always employed in delineating, even in the minutest details, what the author calls impressions exaltées"; to a style that is "puffy" and like "the whine of a sick lap dog"; to a "loose and incoherent style" such as Scott has; to one that leaves the reader "in doubt whether the head or the heart of the author be the most diseased." They praise the "clear, easy, unencumbered style" of Miss Edgeworth; the "playful and picturesque" style of Irving; "the unassuming simplicity" of Galt's style; Robert Ward's style, which is that of "the scholar and the gentleman"; and Bunyan's "homely bluntness."

1 "Emily," I (1809), 315.
2 "De la littérature Francaise pendant le 18 Siecle," VIII (1812), 299.
3 "History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 408.
4 "Tales of my Landlord," XVI (1817), 431.
5 "Frankenstein," XVIII (1818), 304.
6 "Patronage," X (1814), 305.
7 "The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon," XXV (1821), 58.
9 "De Vere," XXXVI (1827), 269.
10 "The Pilgrim's Progress," XLIII (1830), 487.
The emphasis upon clarity, ease, and simplicity of style might be traced to Aristotle's Poetics (XXII). This theory, Ben Jonson, Dennis, Dryden, Johnson, T. Marton, and other later critics adopted.¹

The same influence appears in the reviewers' considerations of language. There are a few points which probably should be made; but generally the language concepts are mere reflections of those of earlier critics of other literary types. The reviewers object to "an inflated jargon, composed of terms picked up in all countries and wholly irreducible to any ordinary rules of grammar or sense";² to any "intermixtures" that defile "our pure well of English,"³ unless the foreign words are necessary, there being no "readily" available English equivalents.³ Of course, Wilson, in his The Arte of Rhetorique, and Hobbes, in his Answer to Davenant, as well as many other Renaissance and seventeenth-century critics, made similar statements with regard to language. These reviewers require, in addition to purity, a neo-classical decorum of language. They say that Louis Bonaparte's


² "Roman," I (1809), 52.

³ "Tremaine," XXXIII (1826), 485-487.
language is "of the lowest scale,"\(^1\) that Miss Mitford adopts too many "vulgarisms" and uses "the phraseology of the dog-kennel and the kitchen."\(^2\) Croker complains because Scott's language in *Guy Mannering*, "though characteristic, is mean" and full of "vulgar slang and dialect."\(^3\) Scott's language in other novels, however, is generally considered to be "one of his greatest advantages."\(^4\) That of Richard Cumberland also appeals to his critic, for it is "easy and elegant."\(^5\) In 1832, however, one finds a critic upbraiding Vulgrave for failing to give appropriate speech to the characters in *The Contrast*.\(^6\) Moreover, one reads of the "grace" of Morier's language, of his "simple, manly English."\(^7\) To the end of the period, then, the terms simple, ease, and grace describe the ideal language and style, just as they did in Dryden's time and in Johnson's. There is no new theory of style or of language for the

\(^1\) "Marie," XII (1814), 398.

\(^2\) "Our Village," XXXI (1824), 167.

\(^3\) "The Contrast," XLI (1815), 502.

\(^4\) "Pereril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Hall, Redgauntlet, Tales of the Crusaders, and Woodstock," XXXV (1827), 527.


\(^6\) "The Contrast," XLVIII (1832), 186.

\(^7\) "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 391. The use of *manly* is similar to Dante's term in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, Book II, ch. vii.
novel. It is, however, important that speech suitable for each character begins to be emphasized.

Although the interest of the critics in the style and language of the novels is somewhat perfunctory, their interest in the characters is not. Judging from the great amount of attention which they give to considerations of the *dramatis personae* of the novels, one would surmise that they agree with Lockhart, who writes:

It is, above all, in the conception and delineation of character that the true novelist..., must excel; and these are matters, in which we may safely say, after the lapse of 5000 years, since the date of the *Iliad*, that mere art can carry no one far.¹

Certainly, they give to those creators of realistic characters the highest measure of praise. One wonders to what extent Scott is responsible for this attitude since his style has little to commend it, whereas his characters are frequently very artistic creations. To his characters and to those of other novelists the critics apply the Aristotelian standard and evaluate accordingly. But their major preoccupation is still with realistic imitations of human nature that stop short when the moral is concerned. They agree with Johnson. I quote:

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue, not angelical, nor above probability, for what we can not credit we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach; ...²

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¹ "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV (1826), 356.
Their terminology, with the exception of a few apt figurative expressions, is largely that inherited from such liberal neo-classicists as Johnson and Addison. That it is especially similar to that used by Johnson in his "Preface to Shakespeare," an examination of the criticism of specific authors' characterizations will show.

Miss Edgeworth's characters are "true and vivid" representations of nature "under the forms in which she usually presents herself." Her heroes and heroines are never "miraculously good nor detestably wicked," and the "individuality of her persons is preserved through all the varieties of rank, sex, and nation." Her actors are neither such accurate imitations of "real life" as to be morally harmful to readers nor such "mere essences" as are the characters of some other authors. In short, she is the critics' ideal, very unlike Madame D'Arblay, who has changed from a creator of life-like characters into a "mannerist," who does not "paint from life," who now has "all the probability of the union of the Vicar's surplice with the armour of Alexander."

One notes in all of these earlier reviews the great number of terms dealing with the probability and the individuality, but especially the probability, of the characters.

1 "Tales of Fashionable Life," II (1809), 148.
2 "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 330-333. Note the difference between essence here and below.
True or truth and real predominate, but there are other similar terms to be found. In Scott's opinion, the "indelible truth and peculiarity of character" in the works of Fielding, Smollett, and Hogarth give to these compositions a noteworthy distinction. The absence of such a quality, Scott correctly observes, is one of the defects of Mrs. Radcliffe, Mr. Murphy, and others of that company. "The characters of Gil Blas and Tom Jones," in Croker's opinion, "are not individuals so much as specimens of the human race." Moreover, "the essence of their characters is human nature...; on the other hand, the characters of the most popular novels of later times are Irish, or Scotch, or French; and not in the abstract, men." Obviously Scott, Croker, Gifford, and other reviewers writing from 1800 to 1814 emphasized the need for universal truth in characters; and this emphasis continued.

It is this quality that delights Scott in Jane Austen's "characters from ordinary life"; but Croker, though approving the essential "truth" of such a character as

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1 "Fatal Revenge," IV (1810), 340-344.
3 "Emma," XIV (1815), 190.
4 XV (1816), 128-139.
Edie in *The Antiquary*, laments, in true Scaligerian tradition, the sort of fidelity to life that produces "mean" (common or ordinary) personages. In truth, he likes realistic characters provided that they are not "low." Various other reviewers, including Scott himself, have much to say about the novelist's characters, especially about his historical portraits. Such copies, Scott believes, "increase the value" of a work provided that the author's judgment enables him to separate those traits which are characteristic from those that are generic; and his imagination, not less accurate and discriminating than vigorous and vivid, presents to the mind of the reader the manners of the times and introduces to his familiar acquaintance the individuals of the drama as they thought, spoke, and acted.

Portraiture in which the "truth of history" is violated, however, Scott labels "unpardonable sins against good taste." In short, he believed in general fidelity but not in an exact reproduction; and, like many other reviewers,

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2 "Guy Mannering," XI (1815), 502.

3 "Tales of my Landlord," XVI (1817), 430, 467, 461. See also "Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series," IXVI (1822), 110, where Senior declares that Scott's historical characters have been subjected to too exacting a test by readers familiar with the originals, that detailed accuracy should not be required of him.
he keeps in mind the neo-classical decorum. Scott implies that he thinks his own historical characters have a certain verisimilitude, that there is "truth and endless variety" of characters in some of his novels; but he admits that his heroes and heroines often have none of that vibrant aliveness. They are "that sort of pattern people whom nobody cares a farthing about." Often, like ventriloquists' dummies, they offer explanations that the novelist hesitates to give directly. Deploring his use of his own hero as a mere tool, Scott declares emphatically that the hero "ought to come forth and do or say something which no other person could have done or said." His theory is, of course, sound.

Nassau Senior's reviews, however, are often more analytical than Scott's and are certainly worthy of some attention. The student reading them is convinced that the

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1 For other examples of concern for propriety, decorum, or suitability in characters and for uses of those terms or their synonyms, see "Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series, and Tales of my Landlord, Third Series," XIV (1821), 118, 145; "Tremaine," XXXIII (1825), 479; "Peveril of the Peak," XXXV (1827), 555; and "Brambletye House or Cavaliers and Roundheads; The Tor Hill," XXXV (1827), 556. Propriety is the term used to designate appropriate speech, manners, and habits of characters in some reviews; for instance in "The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Isfahan," XXV (1823), 200, 215.

2 "Tales of my Landlord," XVI (1817), 469, 445, and 432.
critic has only recently read Aristotle’s Poetics, so closely does the terminology as well as the theory of the later criticism follow that of the earlier work. But it is possible that both Dryden and Johnson have been the intermediaries. Senior writes that

Effie is a perfect specimen of the fit subject for fictitious misfortune. Not so good as to make her calamities absolutely revolting; not so bad as to make them appear appropriate punishments.

Having praised the mixture of good and bad in Effie, he seeks to explain how Jeanie, "without possessing the advantage of a single fault," can also satisfy all critical requirements. Later he attacks the "want of individuality in the principal characters" in Scott’s Ivanhoe, praises the "vigour and consistency" of Magnus Trail in The Pirate, and laments Scott’s "selection of peculiar persons and situations for imitation"; that is, his actual presentation of three main characters:

A virtuous passive hero, who is to marry the heroine; a fierce active hero, who is to die a violent death;...; and a fool or bore, whose duty it is to drain to the uttermost dregs one solitary fund of humour.

Moreover, Senior declares that characters should be distinguished rather "by the matter than the manner of the

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2 "Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series," XXVI (1821), 118, 120.

3 Ibid., pp. 127, 470.

discourse" in order to assure their "permanence and universality." Notable is his use of such words and phrases as good, bad, single fault, consistency, appropriate, vigour, individuality, and imitation, as well as the very important universality. All are classical or neoclassical in origin.

The same qualifications demanded in Scott's characters are required in those created by other authors. For instance, the reviewer condemns Godwin's characters for their lack of verisimilitude, calling them "inventions and colourings of a madman's brain"; and another critic criticizes the author of De Vere for assigning to minor characters speeches which his "substantial personages" might have said "with quite as much effect and infinitely greater propriety."

In this journal the criticism of characters grows increasingly careful and analytical as the romantic era draws to a close. In 1832 there is a demand that all the characters have a "bearing on the development of the fable," that only those characters be expanded "dramatically" that are "true to nature, in themselves interesting, and therefore worthy of expansion."

1 "Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, Hedge-guntlet, Tales of the Crusaders, Woodstock," XXIV (1827), 528.

2 "Wandeville," XVIII (1818), 177.

3 "De Vere," XXXVI (1827), 270.

4 "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 393 and 397.
reviewer of Arlington and The Contrast, in his deep concern for the means whereby artistic perfection may be achieved in the novel, is unusual. Like Coleridge, he allows the "amplitude of details as a means" of achieving realism; but, like both Coleridge and Johnson as well as their model Aristotle, he stresses universality of character.¹ He declares that he refuses to say to "what degrees characters should be causative or consequent"; but he believes that, though incidents may be "left undetermined," the characters should be "distinctly conceived from the first."¹ So here at the very end of the period one finds the reviewers seeking to formulate a theory of characterization that will suit the novel, giving the characters of the new form the same searching attention earlier reserved for the epic and dramatic characters. But here, too, except perhaps for the correct use of details, they are looking to the past, to Aristotle's strictures on the epic and dramatic forms. In general, their terms, here and throughout the period, are English equivalents of Greek terms, earlier adopted and used by the various critics of drama and the epic. Truth, perfect, consistency, propriety, good taste, simplicity, variety,

decorum, individuality, originals, general nature—all are very familiar terms.

Most of these reviewers tend to agree with Lockhart that true genius displays its effect more clearly in the creation of character than elsewhere and that character study is, therefore, of great importance to the critic. But they are also concerned, especially after 1820, about the plot or the fable (referring to both the framework and the story) of the novel. As was true in the case of character delineations, so here they stress mainly the varying degrees of resemblance to reality; but Nassau Senior and a few others sometimes seek to determine the special technique for effecting the “artful” construction of plots. In their detailed examinations of the artistry of plot management, they apply a few specific terms borrowed from the classical criticism of the drama and the epic. These terms and their implied theories, I wish to consider briefly before turning to the problems of verisimilitude and factual accuracy, and then to the question of endings.

Even in the earlier reviews the critics were concerned about the need for artistic plots. For instance, the reviewer of John De Lancaster objected seriously to “inartificial” (not planned and executed according to

1 "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV (1826), 378.
2 "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 391.
3 "John De Lancaster," I (1809), 345.
artistic principles) incidents in the conduct of the story. From 1821 on, however, one finds the reviewers giving more searching examinations to plot construction and management, and requiring plots that are artistic when judged by the rules of Horace and of Aristotle. But they believe that "celare artes is the basis"\(^1\) of true art. Nassau Senior is the most insistent of all upon this concealment. In fact, most of the purely classical terms and theories expressed are those in reviews commonly attributed to him. He finds Scott noticeably deficient in the "management of the details" of plot and objects particularly to the *Heart of Midlothian*, where

the author, in his premature anxiety to get *in medias res*, introduces us at the point where the different interests converge; and then, instead of floating down the united stream of events, we are forced separately to ascend each of its tributary branches, like Humbold examining the bifurcations of the Croonoko, until we forget, in exploring their sources, the manner in which they bear on one another.\(^2\)

As for the *Legend of Montrose*, Senior labels it a story "without middle or end; to which two or three well known stories of great merit,... are,... artificially stuck on."

He adds: "A love-story... is interwoven to give it some consistency, and there are in this, as in every other of our author's novels, some splendid purpurei panni."\(^2\) One

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notes in all these passages the critic's tendency to apply Horatian terms or translations of them; moreover, the application of terms and of concepts from Horace and Aristotle continues in the reviews by Senior and by others to the end of 1832. One reads of the "disproportion of parts" in Scott's *Kessing*, of the satisfactory beginning, middle, and end in *The Abbot*; of the fact "that every fiction must contain Aristotle's dangers terminating in happiness, or happiness converted into misery." There is also the assertion that a good plot is constructed according to "the rules of classical poetry," which "are founded in truth and general nature." Yet the critic adds that "their mechanical observance" is not sufficient, that the author must " originate them by the necessity of his own mind." Else, he will be like Horace Smith, "a mere literary mechanic," whose novels are pieces of "joinery."

All of the terminology in the criticism of plot structures is decidedly similar to that in the epic criticism of Bossu or Dennis or Addison or even of Johnson. The ideas expressed in the latter passages, however, closely resemble René Rapin's (in his *Reflexions sur la poetique*) and Boileau's. Senior here

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2 "Feveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, Redgauntlet, Tales of the Crusaders, Woodstock," *XXXV (1827)*, 519-520, 559.

however, advances somewhat beyond their theory and approaches Coleridge's concept of genius "acting creatively under laws of its own origination."¹ But he never admits that the laws may be other than those of the Stagyrite or of Horace.

The fidelity of the reviewers to Aristotle becomes even more marked from 1827 to 1852; and their deep concern about the means of achieving an artistic, unified plot indicates that they are turning rather to the dramatic than to the epic criticism of Aristotle. In one review there is emphasis upon the technical details whereby "coherence of interest" or "unity of impression may be achieved." The "outlines and drift of the plot" are to be "pre-determined"; the incidents or episodes not. But every element must have "connexion [sic] with the subject" and all must be "closely connected and interwoven."² In another review Bulwer-Lytton comes under the critic's fire because the novelist deems "useless and absurd" the classical rule forbidding the introduction of numerous incidents "nowise bearing on the development of the fable." The author of Pelham defends the use of numerous episodes in the novel because they "make it resemble more closely the usual course

¹ S. T. Coleridge, _Shakespeare Lectures_, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, _op. cit._, p. 550.

² Arlington and The Contrast, _XLVIII_ (1832), 177-178. See also "De Vere," _XXVI_ (1827), 270.
of actual existence." To this contention, the reviewer replies: "This is to lose sight altogether of the primary principles of all works of art and to suppose that imitation, simply qua imitation will do." The entire review is in a similar vein, the critic insisting upon strict application of rules and opposing what he considers to be the misuse of dramatic technique in the novel. He uses such terms as imitation, reversal, recognition, and unravelling of the knot—mainly Aristotelian derivatives. So here in their criticism of the framework of plots the reviewers are ever faithful to the terminology of the neo-classicists and the classicists and in the later reviews to that of Horace and Aristotle especially.

The same fidelity appears in their considerations of the fable or the story resting upon the framework. In this matter, as has been indicated above, the critics have a major interest in the degree to which each plot is an imitation of reality or nature. They therefore use various terms denoting kinds and degrees of realism—imitation, true or truth, nature or natural, substance, visible sign, external resemblance, probability, air of reality, real life, consistency, vraisemblance, reality, and semblance of truth.

Since their use of all these terms stems from their theories of imitation, it may be well to look briefly at

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1 "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 393 ff.
these concepts first. Of course, one finds the type of imitation of which Young writes in his *Conjectures on Original Composition*, namely the copying of another author's style or material; but with that kind we are not especially concerned here. Then there is the representation of the immediate world, the actual, involving complete accuracy of details; and there is the representation of the Aristotelian universal truth, "the purified form of reality disengaged from accident and freed from conditions which thwart its development." With the last two varieties of copies, particularly with the universal, the reviewers busy themselves. There is one passage in which the imitation indicated, though certainly related to this general or universal truth, seems to imply also an ideal, a perfection, a life-as-it-should-be concept, which one is accustomed to associate with poetry. The critic writes of

foundation in truth and nature which is essentially necessary to support and animate the external resemblance,—to produce

1 See "Lives of the Novelists," XXIII (1826), 377.
3 See "Sandoval," XXXIV (1826), 492-93.
that harmony between the substance and the visible sign, in which the real charm of Art consists, and without which the imitation must be imperfect, wanting life and voluntary motion.  

But this is the exception. Usually the attention of the novelist is directed to life; and his aim is to give a verisimilar representation, or at least the reviewers think that should be his aim.

In stressing this point, the reviewers use probability, a term denoting the Aristotelian concept of that which is likely or logical in the light of universal human behavior and which emphasizes a cause and effect sequence of events. Usually these reviewers employ the term accurately, not confusing it with possibility or with mere factual accuracy as do critics writing in some other publications. For instance, the reviewer of *Sandoval* is not disturbed by the incorrect information about anatomy disclosed by the author; but he is very much concerned about the novelist's "absolute disregard for probability."  

Scott, too, is very much interested in probability and mentions as a major flaw of the old romances the fact that the authors of these, being "bound by the rules of probability and possibility," often went "beyond the bounds of the former."  

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2 "Sandoval," *XXIV* (1826), 492-93. Compare with Aristotle's *Poetics*, *XXV, 5 and 2.*

3 "Emma", *XIV* (1815), 190.
he regretfully admits that he has a tendency to sacrifice
"probability and perspicuity" to his "desire of producing
effect." ¹ Scott's attitude toward probability is that
of most of the critics writing in this journal. ² They regard
it as a *sine qua non* for a realistic plot.

The reviewers, of course, use many other terms that
have similar or related meanings. They use *nature* or *natural,*
referring— but rarely— to that which is scientifically
explicable as opposed to the "mystic and marvelous." ³ Generally
the term denotes customary human behavior and may connote a
certain decorum as when the reviewer reminds Miss Mitford
that "vulgarity is not nature." ⁴ Among the older novelists,
as Scott remarks, the reference was to what the French call
*là belle nature.* ⁵ In the case of the more recent authors,
however, the term often signifies "nature as she really
exists in the common walks of life." ⁶ In short, *nature*

¹ "Tales of my Landlord," XV (1817), 431.
² See "Amalie Mansfield," I (1809), 304; "Tales of
Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 329-330; "Pamadilla," XVIII
(1818), 177; "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821),
358; "Rob Roy and Tales of my Landlord, Second Series," XXVI
(1822), 110, 116, 123, 130; "De Vere," XXXVI (1827), 273;
"The History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 388.
³ "The Fatal Revenge," II (1810), 340-44. See also
⁴ "Our Village," XXXI (1824), 167.
⁵ "Emma," XIII (1815), 191.
⁶ "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821), 352.
usually refers to human behavior in any locality and in any social rank, though now and then a reviewer objects to the too realistic presentation of "low" life as being in poor taste and inartistic.

With nature sometimes occurs the term true or truth, as in the phrase true to nature.\(^1\) That particular expression is a synonym for probable; but truth may also refer to factual accuracy,\(^2\) to the immediate world instead of to the general or universal verity. Almost the same meanings can be assigned to the terms real, real life, and reality. Critics sometimes object to novels which presumably imitate "real life," but which, eschewing the "obviously miraculous or impossible," go beyond "the bounds of probability and consistency."\(^3\) The basis for this objection, however, is the moral effect upon the reader, which the critic appears to consider more important than fidelity to reality. Real and reality refer to the actual world in the passages where there are objections to "triple recognition" because such happenings are "unusual in real life,"\(^4\) and to a mixture of "reality and fiction" because, thereby, the "fictitious part loses the very semblance of truth."\(^5\) Reality denotes artistic and moving effectiveness,

\(^1\) "Zohrab the Hostage," XLVIII (1832), 397.
\(^3\) "Amelie Mansfield," I (1809), 304.
\(^4\) "The Pirate," XXVI (1821), 470. See also "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 329.
\(^5\) "Patronage," X (1814), 310-311.
however, when the critic declares that, though it lacks probability, *Anastasius* "has a terrible reality."\(^1\) The usual meanings, nevertheless, are closely related to factual accuracy on the one hand and to probability or vraisemblance on the other.\(^2\)

Often the reviewers point out the "air of reality," or the "vraisemblance," or the "semblance of truth" in various novels. Generally all of these expressions are roughly synonymous with probability, as they have been fairly consistently since the sixteenth century;\(^3\) but sometimes probability is regarded as a means whereby verisimilitude may be achieved; and, conversely, "improbabilities" destroy any "air of reality and truth."\(^4\) The distinction between the true and the probable or verisimilar is quite clear here:

That "*le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable,*" we do not deny; but we are prepared to insist that, while the 'vrai' is the highest recommendation of the historian of real life, the 'vraisemblable' is the only legitimate province of the novelist who aims at improving the understanding or touching the heart.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) **XXIV** (1821), 512.

\(^2\) "Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series," **XVI** (1821), 130.


\(^4\) "The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan," **XXI** (1823), 201.

\(^5\) "Tales of Fashionable Life," **VII** (1812), 329-330. See also "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," **XIV** (1821), 357, where Hazlitt declares that "some modern novels" bear the same relation to the real, that epic and tragic poetry, according to Aristotle, bear to history: they present us with the general, instead of the particular,—the probable instead of the true;...."
Though consistently requiring verisimilitude rather than factual accuracy in novels, the critics do develop a certain leniency toward the introduction of historical facts into fictitious narratives, doubtless because of Scott's practice. Whereas before 1814 they utterly condemned mixtures of fact and fiction, they later defend the embellishment of "an historical outline with graceful and not improbable fiction," especially if the author takes advantage only "of the doubtful points of history" and gives them "the colouring most expedient for the fable, or conducive to the cause of truth and morals."\(^1\) As Diderot explains it, the connection of events "escapes our observation in nature," since no one knows the "entire combination of circumstances." Therefore, the writer who shows the connection, "if really less true, ... has more the appearance of truth than the historian."\(^1\) Thus historical facts may themselves be useful in the creation of an air of truth.

Throughout their consideration of the realism of plots, the reviewers use terms with the same meanings which these words had in earlier criticism. Almost without exception up to the year 1821, the terms are the sort which Johnson employs in discussing the plots of Shakespeare in his Preface to Shakespeare and in examining romance and

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poetry in his **Ambler and in his Hasselas. Imitation, probability, nature, truth, universal, real or reality, vraisemblance, and others— all are found in Johnson's writings— and in Dryden's.\(^1\) After 1821 there is at least one hint of the Platonic and Aristotelian ideal, which the neo-classicists as a rule did not adopt; and there is also the sanction of the mingling of fact and fiction to which Johnson was opposed. One constantly has the feeling that these critics understand perfectly the Aristotelian concepts represented by the English terms and consequently use the terms exactly.

In their consideration of endings also, the reviewers use inherited terms— end or ending,\(^2\) dénouement, unraveling, conclusion, and catastrophe. At times all of the terms are used in a synonymous fashion; but catastrophe and unraveling, mainly late in the criticism, have meanings slightly different from the other two. The "unravelling of the knot"\(^3\) mentioned in one review refers to all of the action after the turning point— in short, it has the meaning which it had in dramatic criticism. Moreover, the term catastrophe appears to have slightly different meanings

\(^1\) See also J. Dryden, *Works*, eds; Sir W. Scott and G. Saintsbury, (Edinburgh: 1892) XIII, pp. 3, 15; and XV, 360 and 408 for similar uses of nature, probability and truth.

\(^2\) "Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series and Tales of my Landlord, Third Series," \(XV\) (1821), 116, 124.

\(^3\) "Sohrab the Hostage," \(XLVIII\) (1832), 378.
in several reviews. Once at least it has degenerated into a mere indication of an unfortunate happening, not necessarily at the end of any fiction. The reviewer writes:

Violent catastrophes and strange vicissitudes occur now and then in the history of mankind; but they are so rare, that, as lessons of conduct they have little effect on the mind.¹

Here, one notes, the attention is focused, not on the artistry of the catastrophe as it is in some later reviews, but upon the didactic purpose of the novel. But in most reviews the term designates an ending, and not necessarily a tragic one. For instance, the "unforeseen catastrophe"² to be found in Fielding's work is considered the mark of a great novelist. Moreover, Jane Austen's catastrophes are highly satisfactory, for "the final catastrophe is scarcely ever clearly foreseen from the beginning, and very often comes, upon the generality of readers at least, quite unexpected."³ This kind greatly appeals to Walter and also to Scott. Both comment upon Miss Austen's skill in producing plots in which "the more interesting individuals of the dramatis personae have... a share... in bringing about the catastrophe" and in which all events lead naturally from what has preceded to the catastrophe.⁴ Scott and Walter use the term to refer

¹ "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 330.
³ "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821), 360.
⁴ "Emma," XIV (1815), 190. See also "The Contrast," XLVIII (1832), 185.
to endings, but in Nassau Senior's review of *The Bride of the Lammermoor*, catastrophe has its classical meaning; that is, it refers to an entire tragic experience. The "fatal nature" of this catastrophe "is vaguely indicated at the very beginning" and more clearly designated at every step in the story. Moreover, "long before the conclusion we are aware of the place and means of its accomplishment."¹ This catastrophe, however, is the exception. Often Scott's catastrophes are faulty, as is the one in *Rob Roy*, about which the critic asks:

If the sudden death of one person is a most artificial mode of bringing about a catastrophe, what shall we say of this literary execution of a whole family?²

Too, there are "palpable and inexcusable defects in the dénouement"² of *The Black Dwarf*. Yet Scott makes a conscious effort to keep the dénouements of all his novels from being anticipated from the beginning. To that end, he suspends "that species of interest on the fictitious part of his narrative," instead of on the "historic action," since "curiosity is not excitable for an event already known."³

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³ "Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, Redgauntlet, Tales of the Crusaders, Woodstock," XXXV (1827), 565.
In all of the discussions of endings, one sees that the emphasis is upon their being "unforeseen" but not unnatural. The terms are the traditional ones—unraveling, catastrophe, and possibly dénouement being lineal descendants of Aristotle's dramatic criticism, and end or ending, of either dramatic or epic criticism. The most important point to be made here is the reviewers' increasing interest—most apparent after 1820—in creating endings which would be considered artistic even by Aristotelian standards. In fact, the interest in aesthetics and in technique is marked in every phase of this later criticism of the novel. The terms, however, remain those derived from classical and neo-classical sources.

C Terms Applicable to the Effect or the Function of the Novel

Just as the influence of earlier criticism of drama and the epic was apparent in terminology applied to the novel as a finished composition, so is the same influence detectable in terms denoting the effect of the novel upon the reader. The reviewers are very much interested in the emotional, intellectual, and moral influence of this new literary genre. Albeit inclined to stress the Horatian aut prodasse aut d oleare, these critics, like the ancients, recognize emotional effect as the basis of all aesthetic experience, even though their terms may differ from those of the classicists. There is, however, an apparently healthy reaction against false emotionality or
sentiment; and this reaction colors many of the reviews.

The critics often use terms strongly suggestive of the purpose of tragedy—pathos and pathetic, pity, fear, terror, passion, and emotion. To these, of course, they add humor, which they are inclined to associate with pathos and feeling. Horror, fear, and terror, they treat somewhat gingerly, maintaining that terrors calculated to arouse the feeling of fear require skillful handling lest they become "too accumulated and unremitting." Reviewing Murphy's The Fatal Revenge, Scott reminds the author that fear is indeed "a faithful and legitimate key to unlock every source of fancy and of feeling." However, "the finest and deepest feelings are those which are most easily exhausted." Hence many writers err in their excess production of terror; and, as another critic puts it, the result is "not tragic horror and pity but disgust." To the arousing of pity, the reviewers pay more attention. As far as they and the general reading public were concerned, pity arose from pathos; and their favorite pathetic scenes were similar to those in Cumberland's John De Lancaster, where there is presented "the death of a young woman, robbed of her virtue by the nefarious Sir David Owen." But whatever novels excited

1 II (1810), 345-346. D. J. Murphy was Zaturin.
2 "Salamagundi and Other Stories," XXXI (1825), 483.
3 I (1809), 345.
the pity and sympathy of the reader were considered good. In fact, upon the basis of their greater capacity for moving the readers to pity, Lockhart judged Fielding's novels superior to Smollett's. Another reviewer remarks upon the union of "quiet humour" and pathos, which has "pleased and affected" him. Obviously pleasing to Nassau Senior is such a union. I quote:

Where the ludicrous is interwoven with the pathetic or the terrible it heightens the effect, both by contrast, and the appearance which it gives of authenticity.

He has here sanctioned the mingling of the two upon a reasonable basis. Moreover, whatever the various critics may say of the emotions of pity and fear, they all agree that a reasonable amount of passion and sentiment is desirable in novels in order to move the readers; for even such "sketches and morality" as Miss Edgeworth herself may present are insufficient alone to hold the interest of the reader. On the other hand, any such excess of sentiment

1 "Lives of the Novelists," XXXIV (1826), 374.


4 "Patronage," X (1814), 305.
as may be found in many German novels arouses the critics' ire. As one critic expresses it:

What are supposed to be affections of the heart are des- canted upon until the tone of the novelist assumes the whine of a sick lap-dog; the characters are lost in clouds of puffy eloquence; and the whole is richly interlarded with a spurious morality which has all the consistency of the piety of Mother Cole and the pithiness of an undertaker's motto.¹

It was against this sort of sentimentality, against "the raving nonsense which readers are content to receive as sublimity and pathos," that Maturin directed the satire of his Women.² Many reviewers agreed with his opinions.

In all of their discussions about the necessity for exciting the passions of the readers, there is nothing new. Of course, the association of humor with pathos is not common in previous criticism; but it did occur in the eighteenth-century works. Certainly the two terms, as well as pity, fear, passion, and sentimental—with the same meanings—appear in earlier critical works.³ In summing up the whole theory of the reviewers about the effect of the novel upon readers, one might combine two of Dryden's ideas. In his "Preface to Troilus and Cressida,

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¹ "The History of Fiction," XIII (1815), 406.
² "Women," XIX (1818), 322.

containing the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy," Dryden states that tragedy is to purge our passions, our pity and our fear. Then he adds that the general end of all poetry is to instruct delightfully. To be sure, there is no hint in these reviews that novels must purge; but the critics, as we have already seen, often require that the novels arouse emotions. Moreover, in many passages yet to be examined, they demand that each novel give profitable instruction, preferably in pleasant form. Few believe that literature which solely entertains is of sufficient importance to justify its existence. Therefore, they rise in righteous indignation when they consider a novel which may be detrimental to the morals of the youth or harmful in any other respect. Here their attitude is similar to that of many neo-classicists— not too arbitrary, not too liberal. Their terms, moreover, are derivatives of the Horatian utile dulci, dearly beloved by critics for many years. They emphasize moral teachings particularly, but few of them after 1815 are as vehement as the critic who condemns Fielding's novels thus:

A novel, which is not in some degree a lesson either of morals or conduct is, we think, a production which the world might be quite as well without and, it must be admitted, that the personages of the (otherwise) excellent works which we have mentioned are brought together. . . . without reference to any particular principle, and without inculcating any specific system of moral duty. 1

But now to consider a few specific terms in various reviews. During the first ten years of the century especially,

1 "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 331.
the reviewers use the terms *virtue* and *vice* a great deal. One critic objects seriously to "those incompatible assem-
blages of virtues and vices" to be found in such French and
German novels as "tend at once to corrupt the taste and de-
prave the national character."1 Another mentions with delight
that Richardson, Mackenzie, and Miss Burney strive "to exalt
virtue and degrade vice."2 Cumberland's novels also give
one critic "the pleasing feeling that virtue goes on from
triumph to triumph and that vice is baffled in its schemes,
even by its own baseness and atrocity."3 Hence there is a
sort of poetic justice in his works; and poetic justice,
according to the reviewers, is desirable under some conditions.
If, however, virtue is "persecuted" until the very end and
then rewarded,4 if the "poetical justice" results from
fortunate accidents instead of from a probable course of

1 "Amelie Mansfield," I (1809), 305.
2 "Fatal Revenge," II (1810), 340.
3 "John de Lancaster," I (1809), 345.
4 "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 331-332.
events, then it may produce "pernicious effects" or "lose
its influence." But, in general, the reviewers believe
that

Virtue must be represented as producing at the long run,
happiness; and vice, misery; and the accidental events
that in real life interrupt this tendency, are anomalies
which, though true individually, are as false generally,
as the accidental deformities which vary the average out-
line of the human figure.1

At times the didacticism of Miss Edgeworth's novels
seems to satisfy all requirements. Because of her practice
of "interweaving the peculiarities of her persons with the
conduct of her piece, and making them . . . conduce to
the general lesson," her "moral conclusion," involving a
certain poetic justice, seems "neither inconsistent nor
unnatural."2 Unhappily, however, disagreeing with Gifford
and others, charges that she is "somewhat too avowedly
didactic."3 On the other hand, Miss Austen satisfies him
completely. She never forgets that "the immediate and
peculiar object of the novelist" is "to please." Her
moral lessons "are not offensively put forward, but spring
from the circumstances of the story."3 Hers is the "kind

1 "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821),
Aitken (London: 1899), III, 175 and 117 especially. For
an earlier use of the term poetic justice and for the terms
didactic, virtue and vice (among others), see T. Rymer,
Tragedies of the Last Age Consider'd as reprinted in J. E.

2 "Tales of Fashionable Life," VII (1812), 330-332.
See also "Tales of Fashionable Life," II (1809), 146-148 and
"Patronage," X (1814), 330.

3 "Northanger Abbey and Persuasion," XXIV (1821),
359.
of instruction which is furnished by real life." In addition, her novels "combine in an eminent degree, instruction with amusement."* Measured by the Horatian ideal, they do not fall short.

In nearly all subsequent reviews, as well as in the ones which preceded, there appear terms similar to the instruction and amusement emphasized by lately. A glance at specific passages reveals the preponderance of such traditional terms as curb, restraint, good, evil, vice, virtue, instruct, lessons, mend, amuse, pleasure, moral, and religion, terms like moral and instruct being much in the majority. To the end of the period the reviewers attack very vigorously novels like Mrs. Shelley's Frankenstein, which "cannot mend and will not even amuse its readers."2 They disapprove of the "morals" in Parnell's work and marvel that he thought by means of a novel "to eradicate sedition and potatoes out of Ireland."3 They are not generally in agreement with the reviewer who, doubting "the efficacy of inculcating greater morals in works of fiction," praises the "smaller morals" of Tremaine.4 Instead, believing (as Goethe has expressed it) that it "is a bad romance, the moral

1 Ibid., pp. 360, 375.
2 "Frankenstein," XVIII (1818), 385.
3 "Maurice and Berghetta," XXI (1819), 486. See also "A Letter to the Editor of the Quarterly Review," XXIII (1820), 373.
4 "Tremaine, Matilda, Granby," XXXIII (1826), 481-482.
drift and scope of which may be extracted in the form of one distinct proposition,¹ they condemn novels like Tremaine and De Vere because their lessons are not worth teaching, because "It is no very instructive matter to be informed that an Achilles easily cuts down a Thersites;..."² So the reviewers continue. They are pleased with the "entertainment" and the "information" in Hope's work,³ with the obvious "moral tendency" and the "pleasure" afforded by Irving's stories,⁴ with Maturin's ability "to wheedle the reader into a great deal of miscellaneous literature."⁵ Almost alone among the reviewers, Scott expresses some doubt about the power of novels to do either much good or much evil. He admits that they may sometimes "generate an indisposition to real history and useful literature." On the other hand, they "sometimes instruct the youthful mind by picture of life, sometimes awaken their better feelings..." As to the vices and follies of such a novel as Tom Jones, they are, according to Scott, such as "the world soon teaches to all who enter on the

¹ "De Vere," XXXVI (1827), 271-272.
² Ibid., p. 272.
⁴ "Salamagundi, Knickerbocker's Humorous History of New York, Bracebridge Hall, Tales of a Traveller," XXXI (1825), 475, 483. See also the similar terms in "Annals of the Parish," XXV (1821), 153.
career of life"; and it is extremely unlikely that "the perusal of Fielding's novel has added one libertine to the large list, who would not have been such, had it never crossed the press." With this opinion, as I have indicated, Scott's fellow critics had no sympathy. They agreed rather with the dictum of the reviewer of The Contrast, who writes in 1832 that novels, especially those of fashionable life, must "have a tendency to correct and amend what is amiss in it." All of this criticism leads one to believe that the opinions of the critics on the services to be rendered by the novel have changed but little since the days of the neoclassicists. When the latter bothered to consider the earlier novel forms, they demanded of them the same mixture of

1 "Lives of the Novelist," XXIV (1825), 365-367. With Scott's views, Lockhart disagrees. He asserts that Scott's novels, by stimulating the sale of their historic sources, have been beneficial in giving instruction in history.

2 II, VII (1832), 189.

utility and pleasure that they required of the epic. In addition, some demanded, again as the neo-classicists sometimes did, that the novels arouse the emotions of the reader, especially his pity, in order to teach more effectively. Their terms are the useful, pleasing, moral and amusing, familiar to all readers of earlier criticism. To these one may add the equally well known virtue, vice, poetic justice, corrupt, didactic, entertainment, information, instruction, and poetic justice.

Conclusion

In reflecting upon all of the reviews in this journal, I am impressed by one important fact. From first to last the reviewers appear convinced that the novel is an important literary genre, worthy of their serious attention. Convinced also that it is a powerful instrument for good or evil, they treat it as such—not as a truly debased epic


form, but as an "adapted" one, which, by virtue of its kinship to the lordly epic, is deserving of a place, perhaps a step below the epic and two steps below the tragedy. Strangely enough, Scott is one of the few doubters here. He is not convinced of the novel's future importance. He doubts its power to do good, though, when reviewing \textit{Ivanhoe}, he admits that such a work may somehow alleviate the despair common to all humanity.

It seems to me that Scott's own novels, if not his fairly orthodox theory of fiction, have influenced much of this criticism, especially from about 1815 until 1820. During those years there is great stress upon the importance of characters in novels; and numerous terms applicable to characters appear—consistent, natural, probable, universal, individual, well discriminated. Scott was notably successful in his earlier characterizations. But there is very little emphasis upon style and not too much upon plot construction. In both particulars, Scott's novels were weak. Can it be mere coincidence, or is there some relationship here? I believe there is a connection.

But upon what general basis do these reviewers evaluate Scott's works and those of others? Most would agree with this statement made in 1809:

\begin{quote}
It is perhaps a harsh answer, that every book must be judged by its internal merit, whether composed like that
\end{quote}

\footnote{But, in his review of Hoffman's novels in the \textit{Foreign Quarterly Review}, \textit{V} (1827), 50ff., he seems to feel that the novel is the equal of the epic and is reasonably sure of future success.}
of Lipsius upon the day in which he was born or like the last tragedy of Sophocles upon the verge of human existence. But, harsh or not, the book is so judged. A few critics feebly request that the environment of the author be considered, and a very few admit that personal preference may color their judgment—but, of course, they still think their opinions justified. The great majority, anachronisms in their time, continue to weigh books upon scales inherited from their fathers and, after 1820, upon those inherited from their classical forebears. After all, those scales are the only accurate measuring instruments, they believe. Moreover, the inherited terms are part of their equipment. And, strangely enough, more often than not, posterity, to which Longinus referred all such matters, has approved their results.

But some of the criticism, it seems to me, bears so thoroughly the imprint of various reviewers as to merit some separate notice. Croker's contributions, especially his guarded reviews of Scott's novels, are marked by a narrow, strict application of such terms as Rymer and Pope approved. Taste, good sense, knowledge, low, mean, extravagant, affected, easy, and clear predominate in his and in Gifford's reviews. Then there are Lockhart's

1 "John de Lancaster," I (1809), 346.

2 It is well to note here, however, that the authorship of the various reviews has not been definitely proved. There is still controversy about most of them.
reviews distinguished at times by a more liberal neo-
classicism and a strong bias in Scott's favor. Nassau
Senior, though failing sometimes to point out such obvious
facts as Scott's mistake in deserting Scotch themes,
manages to be purely classical, analytical, and interesting
at once—no small feat. He approaches the novels in much
the same spirit as that in which Aristotle examined the
works of Sophocles, Euripides, and Homer—though with
scarcely the same result. He strives to see by what means
scenes or characters or plots or catastrophes may be made
moving and artistic; and he utilizes in his discussions
neo-classical terms and classical terms such as in medias
res, purpurei panni, and μετάβασις. With him, we see
Scott's hero, unaware of impending doom, and hear the
"wheels of an avenging fortune groan heavily along the
distant road."1 Scott himself, we are pleased to call a
romanticist; but his reviews show him to be nothing of the
sort. Elsewhere2 he may defend Mrs. Radcliffe and maintain
that her work, being of a different type, should not be
tried by epic laws; but here he does not. In this journal
he votes for plots constructed according to well-established
principles; for characters that are consistent, universal,

1 'Rob Roy, Tales of my Landlord, Second Series,
and Tales of my Landlord, Third Series,' VII (1821), 125.

213. Compare with Pope's statement about Shakespeare in A. Pope, 'Preface to Shakespeare.'
and probable, and which contribute to the action. He does speak of the power of genius and of imagination. So did Addison. Conscious art, too, the novelist seems needful. Perhaps he fits best into the somewhat enigmatic classification of liberal conservatives. Had he written according to his own theory, he would have produced plots as artfully finished as those of Jane Austen, whom he admired. His style would have been clear and easy; and his characters, probable, as the best of his own actually were. Moreover, no neo-classical theory of gentility would have prevented his presentation of some "low" characters.

Yet, despite the great differences among all these critics, the terminology of all seems to fit rather neatly into a well defined pattern. Before 1815 there are great numbers of terms especially favored in the past by such neo-classicists as Rymer and Pope; Miss Edgeworth is the favorite novelist. Her works lend themselves especially well to the use of such terms as good sense, taste, moral, virtue, vice, pleasing, instructive, and didactic. During those years genius and especially imagination are not used very often, and when used are modified by cultivated or surbed. In the 1815 number of the journal, however, appeared Scott's review of Lalla. In it, as well as in a few other reviews, there is an unmistakable straining at the leash of the old neo-classical rules, a turning toward the presentation of reality— even of the seamier side, perhaps
a dawning understanding of the real meaning and use of tried critical principles, like probability. For the moment, metaphorically speaking, the pendulum may swing in either direction, toward the wild freedom of romanticism or the slightly restrained grace of a new kind of classicism, based, not upon narrow rules, but upon broad, creative principles.

Between 1815 and 1832 come some careful reviews marked by the exact application of classical terms, as well as some reviews presenting the same old eighteenth-century derivatives. Mixtures of fact and fiction—doubtless, because of Scott's influence—are no longer deplored; actually, sometimes praised. Imagination, fancy, and genius appear more frequently than before. In fact, there is even some recognition of the need for an appeal to the imagination of the reader. Careful and artistic plot construction, realistic characters, pleasant moral teachings—all are urged upon the novelists.

By 1832 the pendulum has swung all the way back. To meet the challenge of newer developments in the novel, the critics have not coined new words and invented new theories. They have returned to Aristotle; sometimes to Horace; to principles considerably more liberal than the strict interpretations of the early eighteenth century. As Johnson did in 1765 and as Coleridge did in 1817, they adopt whole-heartedly the Aristotelian theory of characterization based upon the universal. Again in agreement with
Coleridge, they allow the use of details, but only as a means to an end; and, of course, this theory about details is a fairly new development. They decry episodes, descriptions, and characters that are not necessary to the plot. They demand that fictionists adhere to rules for the epic. If the stubborn novelist refuses and insists upon using dramatic technique, then, say the critics, he must adhere to Aristotle's rules for tragedy. They consider in detail the means for achieving unified, well-proportioned plots and probable, consistent, individual, and appropriate characters.

At the very end there is the somewhat interesting picture of the critic who says in effect, "You can't fling away all the rules, and you can't mix dramatic and epic techniques"; and of the novelist who replies, "But I can. I have."

Yet one must not forget that, with rules and neo-classical terms, this criticism begins. With rules and classical, as well as neo-classical terms, it ends.

Such consistency is scarcely to be discovered in the much less serious magazines to which we now turn. First, consider the oldest of the group and, therefore, the one most likely to contain numerous traditional terms—the Gentleman's Magazine.
The Gentleman's Magazine, established in 1731 by Edward Cave, was the first important miscellany to be published in Great Britain. According to Walter Graham, "Cave's main purpose seems to have been to furnish in his 'magazine' a summary of news, along with the best entertaining features to be found in the daily or weekly sheets." This procedure was eminently suited to making the magazine the great financial success which it became and continued to be. After the death of Edward Cave in 1754, the magazine was carried on until 1800 mainly by David Henry, Richard Cave, and Francis Newbery, though there were a number of other important contributors. During this time, "fiction, it must be admitted, won but slight recognition in either the Gentleman's or the London Magazine."^2

Since the materials for this study came chiefly from the department entitled the "Review of Books," it is necessary to consider a few facts concerning that department.

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1 The title chosen by the editor was Mr. Sylvanus Urban.

It was conducted in succession by John Hawkins, John Duncome (Crito), Richard Sough and William Beloe. Another important member of the staff was John Nichols, who later became editor of the magazine. At his death in 1826, his son, John Bowyer Nichols, became part editor and finally "sole proprietor in 1855."¹

This brief account traces the history of the publication through the years with which we are concerned (1800-1832);¹ however, the magazine in its nineteenth-century form lasted until 1868 and continued as "a miscellany of light literature"¹ until 1907. In fact, it "legally"¹ exists even today as a kind of dummy magazine.

It is, therefore, especially important that any student of critical terms give due consideration to this magazine, which is significant "beyond most periodicals of the time--for its critical articles and reprinted poems and essays."¹ It has been my purpose to examine the critical articles, as in preceding chapters, in an effort to determine exactly what attitude was taken by the reviewers toward a few major critical theories inextricably connected with the critical terms and what meanings (basic or figurative) were given to those terms.

In the first section of the chapter will be treated such terms as genius, talent, knowledge, imagination, fancy, and others specifically applicable to qualities of authors.

¹ Ibid., pp. 150-153, and 160.
In the second part I will present a study of those terms specifically related to the works of the authors—those applied in discussions of the scenes, plots, characters, and functions of the novel. The major ones are probability, reality, verisimilitude, nature, moral, entertainment, interest, catastrophe, and denouement, though many others will also receive due attention. Often in this magazine the basic meaning of the major term borrowed from eighteenth-century criticism seems not to have changed; however, its connotative or figurative meaning has been perceptibly influenced by the times. Under such circumstances, not the basic term, but the minor or descriptive terms used with it are the important ones; and they will, accordingly, be studied as influencing the theory designated by the term in question. Good sense (reasonableness) might seem an intelligible expression, but a "good sense which forcibly speaks to the heart"\(^1\) is another matter.

As far as is possible, I propose to use the exact words of the reviewers in order that my own interpretations may not seem to be forced upon the reader and in order that he may draw his own conclusions from the materials presented.\(^2\)

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1 See "The Refusal," LXXX (1810), 355.

2 In this chapter as in chapter I, I do define numerous terms because in the magazines I found many neoclassical terms with new or romantic meanings. It seems advisable to indicate those here.
A Terms Applied to Authors

The critics of the Gentleman's Magazine thought the ideal author should have good sense, knowledge, powers of observation, genius, taste, invention, originality, talent, imagination, and fancy. The great desirability of the possession of these traits becomes immediately clear when one considers specific critical reviews. The particular qualities mentioned above are nearly always praised, but very often the exact meanings of the terms denoting the qualities seem obscure and vague.

What, for example, does the critic mean here when he speaks of a novelist's possessing "that strong good sense which forcibly speaks to the heart"? A good sense that "forcibly speaks to the heart" is a good sense to be associated with a native, untrained mental capacity and a kind of sentimentality, not with complete reasonableness. Therefore, the term is definitely new in its applied critical meaning.

This ability to appeal to the heart is also associated with the type of knowledge most often required of an author—apparently, a knowledge of the human heart. Mrs. Lenoir, the critic believes, is excellent, not because she possesses knowledge gained from books, but because in her story, "Mr. Dears and Miss Preston," she "has discovered great knowledge

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1 "The Refusal," Gentleman's Magazine, LXXX (1810), 355. Since all subsequent references not otherwise indicated will be to this journal, the name of the publication will not be repeated.
of the human heart, as well as much genius."\textsuperscript{1} The meanings of these terms appear fairly new. Knowledge denotes a variety gained by intuition and sympathy, and genius evidently means increased sensibility and great innate imaginative powers. This same type of knowledge in Sir Walter Scott brings forth the following comment on his Ivanhoe:

This, however, is no disparagement to Ivanhoe as a novel or romance; on the contrary, it shows that the author knows so well the road to the heart, that, if we dare make use of the simile, not unlike our most renowned pastry cook near the Royal Exchange, he seasons his mince pies so well, that, as they come out of the oven, they are eagerly bought, and greedily devoured.\textsuperscript{2}

These statements, at least in their terminology, show the tendency of the critics to use old terms such as knowledge in comparatively new applications.\textsuperscript{3}

In fact, the word heart looms somewhat large in criticisms of the authors, for it is "benevolence of heart,"\textsuperscript{4} as well as "delicacy of sentiment" (which evidently has the new meaning of grace of general tone or feeling), that gives to the author of Fidelia a great deal of commendation.

When an author possesses both of the qualities just named and, in addition, is "an accurate observer of fashionable

\textsuperscript{1} "Village anecdotes," LXXIV (1804), 350.

\textsuperscript{2} "The Monastery, A Romance," X (1820), 334.

\textsuperscript{3} Though knowledge of the heart is mentioned by eighteenth-century writers, it does not receive the emphasis which knowledge of books and knowledge of human (overt) behavior do in major critical works. For a mention of the need in novelists of knowledge of the heart, however, see Frances Burney, Works, edited by Ellis, (London: Bell, 1892), IV, 1.
life and manners, nothing but praise is to be expected from the reviewers. This mentioning together of such unrelated terms as kindness, grace of feeling, and accuracy of observation is typical of the reviews of the time.

Another essential is the possession of good taste—a kind of sense of propriety, not that type which the traditionalists believed to be acquired by study of literary principles, but that based on instincts and native sensibility. Of course, in some reviews the two definitions may be combined; but it is the latter meaning of the term that appears in this comment on Modern Manners:

This uncertainty about love affairs adds greatly to the interest of the story, and is a proof of the Author's taste; for nothing can be conceived more commonplace than the process of matchmaking which obtains in most novels. This innate sense of that which is proper or fitting, when possessed by a person of genius, makes an author of even greater value to the nineteenth-century reviewers. Such is the case, the reviewers say, with Mr. Smith, author of The For Bill, of whom this is written:

We hail him therefore as a powerful auxiliary in the ranks of imaginative writers, with strength and resources sufficient to interest and amuse during the absence of "The Master," and with an ease and a grace that belong only to genius and cultivated taste.

In this case, as in the first mentioned, the term taste is not defined; but the idea suggested seems to be an innate

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1 XCI (1821), 541.
2 LXXXVII (1827), 531.
3 XCIVII (1827), 429.
sense of the fitness and propriety of things. Sometimes this *good taste* seems a synonym for rationalism. Certainly that is the meaning the word has in the review of Spence's *A Traveller's Tale of the Last Century*, in which one learns that

the illusions of witchcraft and enchantment have been dispelled; daemons and ghosts have fled at the solemn mandate of *good taste*, and it is fervently to be hoped that the exorcism which banished them will never need to be repeated.¹

Another quality deemed desirable in an author is power (ability or sustained-force or energy), the possession of which is illustrated in Sir Walter Scott. Parts of his *Quentin Durward* furnish especially good examples of the power of the author.² However, although the term enjoys a tremendous vogue in the 1800-1832 period,³ it does not appear very frequently in this magazine.

In some respects related to power is genius, the best quality for an author to possess. Here again the term designating the faculty is undefined, but usually it suggests great general talent or sometimes even creative talent and artistic impulse. The latter interpretation (a newer one) is specifically indicated in this passage:

¹ LXXXIX (1819), 627.
² See "Quentin Durward," XCIII (1823), 440.
³ See also "Arne of Georgstein," XGIX (1829), 523; "Isabel de Barsas," XGIII (1823), 161; " Tales and Confessions, " XCIC (1829), 155; "The New Forest," XGIX (1829), 147. See also the sections on power in Chapters I, II, and III of this study.
We are quite willing on the present occasion to give Mr. Deniz credit for un-impaired talent. We are desirous of awarding him the honour due to creative genius and vivid colouring; but he will excuse us if we say that in the choice of his subject we do not think him equally happy.1

Genius may also denote a bold imaginative or inspirational spirit, as it does in the following sentences:

This novel, though very respectable, contains but few of those flights of genius, which characterize the novels of the higher classes. The incidents are rather intricately interwoven, but the adventures in general are tame. The last chapter betrays great poverty of invention.2

Furthermore, the inexplicable type of genius which shows itself in increased sensibility and in imaginative activity is uppermost in this very romantically worded paragraph:

There are chords in the human heart which Genius alone knows how to touch; which are not awakened by what is external; which rise uncalled only in the secret temple, where Genius presides; and which Genius only can direct so as to arouse them from the sleep which they have no power of their own to shake off.3

Whatever the meaning of the term, one point is clear, that the possession of genius is considered a very valuable asset. Moreover, the vague use of the term is an indication of the critics' equally hazy conception of its true meaning. It usually indicates a kind of artistic impulse, unconsciously obeying its own secret laws—a miraculous sort of creative talent incapable of analysis. One would expect a

1 "The Boyne Water, a Tale," XCVI (1826), 43.
2 "The Camisard; or The Protestants of Languedoc," XCV (1825), 625.
3 "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 530.
term of this sort to be used widely in romantic criticism; but amusingly enough, its employment in the Gentleman's Magazine is by no means excessive.

Invention and originality are also terms that one expects to be popular with reviewers, especially since they denote almost essential attributes of authors. The two terms are used synonymously so often that it is almost necessary to consider them together. In studying the application of the term invention, one finds the usual vagueness of application which is characteristic of much of the periodical criticism of the era. Presumably invention very frequently means a kind of creative imaginative ability in which the creation arises, not particularly from real or even imaginative experiences in the realm of the actual world, but from some sort of intuitive communion with a world beyond the experiences of most men. It may denote also the putting of the theme or idea into plot form, conceiving of and executing scenes and episodes and properly connecting them. Both Godwin and M. G. Lewis were evidently possessed of such a gift. The latter, being "possessed of a brilliant fancy and a happy turn for invention, of a peculiar and romantic taste," 1 won for himself much approbation. Even though he "indulged to so extravagant a length in horrible pictures of human and supernatural depravity," 1 he avoided the disapproval of the critics because his inventive faculty made him "capable of

1 "Romantic Tales," LXXIX (1809), 141.
producing pictures equally awful, new, and sublime.\textsuperscript{1}

All of this criticism of Lewis shows the influence of Longinus and the pre-romanticists. The \textit{invention} has the meaning of imaginative creativity; \textit{fancy} appears as a name for lightness of imaginative activity; and \textit{sublime}, unlike the pure Longinian term, merely denotes bold, impressive imagery. The criticism of Godwin shows the same somewhat romantic influence. In fact, the application of \textit{invention} in the following quotation is not only wildly romantic, but also even suggestive of transcendental experience:

Then (when "an excursive mind shoots far beyond the range of actual experience") it is that the mighty faculty of invention wanders into untraversed paths, and gives "a local habitation and a name" to beings who have not hitherto existed. The talents of our Author seem to require this extent of circuit. He has penetrated into new fields of "shadowy thought," and drawn aside the veil from airy regions, which have been hitherto hid to human sight.\textsuperscript{2}

The inflated language, as well as the meaning of the term \textit{invention} (an imagination concerned with the supra-sensible), suggests romanticism.

\begin{quote}
Imagination— but this time probably based on experience and observation of nature— is the meaning also in the statement that Scott and Banim "are akin in fertility of invention."\textsuperscript{3} The remark that Miss Spence excels other similar writers in "that faculty of invention, which
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1] "Romantic Tales," LXXIX (1809), 141.
\item[3] "Tales of the O'Hara Family," XCV (1825), 54.
\end{itemize}
penetrates the springs of human action, and reveals the secret working of the heart:* does give added information. So does the thought that the restrictions placed on the use of supernatural elements "have tended rather to stimulate than to repress the faculty of invention."* From these statements one concludes that the term invention is somehow connected, in the minds of some critics, with intuitive knowledge and instinctive understanding of the human heart; that it is associated, in the minds of others, with inspired or transcendent creative power.

*Originality* is also widely used, and the quality is extravagantly praised wherever it occurs. But little effort is made to define the term. Sterne, being the possessor of an "unrivalled vein of humour and the dazzling vein of genius,"* is called "an original writer."* This very likely means that he has native imaginative and creative ability, if one may voice a conjecture. The statement that "in Madame Dubarry we find a good deal of spirit and originality"* is equally non-committal as to the exact meaning of originality, though it is interesting to note the use of the term in conjunction with the word *spirit* (force or energy). The same two terms are used together also in the

2 "Sterne," LXX (1800), 32.
3 "The History of William Selwyn," LXXXVI (1816), 250.
4 LXXXVIII (1819), 243.
following critical evaluation of The Bachelor and the Married Man:

This Novel possesses sense, spirit, and originality: the Writer is evidently both a thinker and an observer; and, if this be a first performance, bears the stamp of talents which must quickly emerge from obscurity.\(^1\)

The addition of sense here to the terms spirit and originality suggests that native intelligence is also related to originality. In fact, an examination of the rest of the passage even indicates that thought and acquired knowledge may not be strangers to originality. Such an interpretation of the term is not, however, compatible with the usual use of the term.

In the review of the novel Marriage, "originality and genius"\(^2\) are mentioned together. This coupling of originality with genius gives the reader only the haziest kind of notion of the exact meaning of the term, but it is obvious that here again the emphasis is on native ability to imagine and to create. With this theory, of course, Edward Young would have been in complete agreement.

Fortunately, some attempt is made to define the term in the review of Tragic Tales, from which I quote:

Secondary Authors mistake particularly caprice for originality; and they think that superiority consists in difference. It is the reverse of this: it is in conformity to what is already in the minds of others, that the merit lies. It is true, that it must go beyond the materials of this visible world: it must enter into the worlds of spirits; it must draw forth intellectual existencies: but then it must delineate them in forms and colours congenial to their

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\(^1\) LXXXVIII (1818), 243.

\(^2\) LXXXIX (1819), 337.
nature, and not in the fantastic shapes which artifice substitutes, for want of admission to their mysteries.¹

The first part of this explanation is logical enough—fairly good, in fact—but the latter part becomes so metaphysical that an exact interpretation of its meaning is difficult. Even so, the criticism is noteworthy in that an analysis is at least attempted and in that the entire passage is at least not un-Aristotelian. Apparently, as used in the preceding passage, originality involves intellectual perception and means the quality of being creative, independent, or inventive in imaginative thought, without being eccentric or fantastic.

By those who praise originality, imitation is obviously deplored, especially that form of imitation related to plagiarism. It is that form, which is attacked here, much as Young made his attack in his Conjectures on Original Composition:

The only resemblance discoverable throughout this work to any other of the same kind is in one chapter, where the author offers, by a subjoined note, an apology, by no means unnecessary, for the height of colour given to some scenes, which bear a distinct similitude to "The Monk."²

¹ XCI (1821), 530. See also praise of D'Israeli as an "original" writer, "a noun substantive" in "The Jesuits," CII (1832), 259.

² "The Three Brothers," LXXIV (1804), 104. See also "The Renegade," CII (1821), 253, where the author is criticised because he "has taken the action of his hero from Wallace, his gloomy misconstructions of providence from Lord Byron; his heroine from Queen Elizabeth and the Ellen of the Scottish chiefs."
Originality and invention are thus seen to be essential qualities of novelists; consequently, imitation is taboo. Usually the implied definitions of the first two terms are not traditional, but denote intellectual intuition and imaginative creative activity. Though the reviewers may disagree concerning the definitions of the two terms or may, simply be neglecting to define them (which they do), force the reader to formulate definitions which he feels to be implied and which vary from review to review, one thought is so often repeated that it can scarcely be missed— that originality and invention are necessary qualities or talents.1

Furthermore, the closely allied, if not exactly synonymous, traits of fancy and imagination, the reviewers commend. The term fancy is the more frequently used of the two. In fact, imagination is generally employed in a casual way. For instance, the critic declares that the author of Tales of Old Mr. Jefferson is "entitled to rank in this superior class of writers of imagination."2 He attempts no definition of imagination. Nor does the reviewer attempt one in this passage concerning Allan Cunningham:

From an attentive perusal of Mr. Cunningham's Romance, we pronounce him to be decidedly the most imaginative of modern writers. His present excursion has been long and daring, and it may well excite our wonder that he has

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1 The term talent (usually denoting general ability) also appears in the reviews. For an example, see "Anne of Geierstein," XCIX (1829), 523.

2 "Tales of Old Mr. Jefferson," XCIII (1823), 254.
maintained it with such unflagging wing. We are sure that they who watch his flight, will often fear lest his be the fate of Icarus, or the boy who presumed to guide the chariot of his father through the boundless void.1

In fact, both lack of definition and absence of specific extravagant praise of the imaginative quality characterize the preceding quotation. Yet no upsetting conclusion may be drawn from these facts since fancy, highly praised, is often used in the place of imagination.

Fancy receives somewhat more extended treatment. Sometimes the term is used in such loose fashion that its exact meaning is far from definite. When one reads, for example, of a vividness of feeling and of fancy,1 one is not altogether sure of what fancy means, although it is certain that it is a desirable quality. But upon reading the following panegyric on Scott, a thoughtful person gets an impression that the term fancy is associated with a creative power, showing itself in the production, not of temporary poetic illusions, but of living ideals and truths:

To him whose marvellous fancy has again contributed an intellectual repast, that may serve for yet unborn generations, our praise and our thanks are due. We know no higher compliment than when we say that we see no symptom of exhaustion. He draws not from a reservoir of stagnant purveyance, but from a salient living spring, which, like his own diamond fountain, wells forth in sparkling and exhaustless profusion.2

In several other passages fancy applies to serious inventive or creative skill, to imagination of a higher type, not to

1 "Sir Michael Scott, a Romance," XCVIII (1828), 144.
2 "Tales of the Crusaders," XCV (1825), 44.
a kind of inventive power based on mere caprice. Here, however, the inventive fancy approaches the conventional meaning of fancy; and the old association of fancy with light ornamentation is suggested, despite the occurrence of the adjective creative:

We would willingly give many pages from the tale of John Doe; but must now dismiss the O'Hara Tales with hearty congratulations to the publick, that another Master Spirit has been awakened, who can array with the splendour and light of a creative fancy, the facts and experiences of an acute and intelligent mind.

At times fancy is given a much more exalted place by the romantic critics and is associated with spirituality, with understanding, and even with transcendent powers. For instance, the idea of spirituality is inherent in these words:

The fancy that is stirred by the heat of youthful blood, is of an earthly and groveling nature. But genuine fancy, the pure and spiritual part of our being, becomes stronger, and glows more brightly with age.

More than understanding, actually a kind of empathy, is indicated in the statement that "fancy alone can penetrate"

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1 For instance, see "Mandeville," LXXXVII (1817), 535.

2 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," XC (1825), 56. See also "Eveline Mountjoy," XC (1820), 53, where "inventive fancy" is associated with "ingenuity." Compare these uses of fancy with Dryden's use of the term in his "Preface to the Mock Astrologer."

3 "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 551. Note here the transfer of poetic theory to the novel. All of these passages have a definite relationship to Shelley's theory of the role of imagination in the function of the poet (expressed in his A Defense of Poetry), a theory which shows the influence of Plato's Ion, Symposium, and Phaedrus and of parts of Sidney's An Apologie for Poetrie.
Ma t M y  be sailed "the hidden recesses of the soul." 1

Moreover, here the critic suggests both transcendent understanding and prophetic power:

It is the business of a true, native, unfactitious fancy to behold these things in their progress; to have the secrets of the heart opened to it, and to see the future and the distant in the present. 1

So to its powers of serious or superficial (depending upon the reviewer) invention, fancy evidently adds spiritual powers and ability both to understand the human heart and to interpret various occurrences in the light of the past and of the future. It is in these latter associations that the term fancy most clearly shows its contact with romanticism. The best examples of the very desirable fancy are to be found, so say the critics, in the novel--that once despised form of literature. The reviewer of The Priest assures all readers of that fact when he writes:

Now, as Dramatists often refer to novels for their plots, so we would recommend Poets to numerous novels for exquisite flights of fancy, and very beautiful figures: and to none more than the work before us, which is unquestionably a book of no common merit. 2

Thus one sees that the term imagination is seldom used by the "correspondents" of the Gentleman's Magazine. Fancy, generally deemed of less value than imagination, has usurped the meanings usually attributed to imagination. 3

1 Ibid.
2 XCIII (1823), 54.
3 Note here that fancy (fantasy) has the same position in these reviews that it occupies in De Sanctis' History of Italian Literature. It, instead of imagination, is the creative, synthesizing faculty.
and taken for itself, in addition, other unusual meanings. It is not based upon mere caprice, but is instead associated with serious inventive or creative power, with spirituality and understanding, with transcendent powers of sympathetic feeling, and even with a kind of prophetic prowess. None of these meanings are specified, but they are implied. Indeed, the unspecific appreciativeness of romantic criticism is here quite apparent; but whatever the meaning given it, fancy is always highly praised, and its presence in novels adds appreciably to their fame.

What then are the requisites for novelists, or specifically for any famous novelist? He must have good sense, not ordinary and reasonable good sense, but an innate capacity to appeal to the human heart. He must have knowledge, not of principles of composition or of facts, but of the human heart and of human nature as a whole. He must have good taste, or an innate sense of that which is fitting; and he must have genius, meaning general ability or imaginative creative power involving sensibility and an indefinable kind of inspirational spirit or artistic impulse. To these traits should be added invention and originality, talent of a general sort, and fancy—not a whimsical creative power, but a creative power based on intelligence, spirituality, understanding, and prophetic or interpretative power. Any novelist possessed of these qualities is sure to win the unrestrained plaudits of the reviewers of the Gentleman's Magazine, at least during the romantic period.
requisites mentioned are chiefly those which one would expect in a romantic era. The indefinite, vague, inclusive application of the terms by means of which the critics express themselves is another mark of an era devoted rather to appeals to the imagination than to reason. There are some exceptions; but, in general, despite the continuing presence of some neo-classical terms, the mark of romanticism is boldly imprinted on many reviews and reviewers—particularly after 1820.

B Terms Applied to Novels

The major emphasis in criticism is not, of course, upon the personality and character of the author as seen in the novel, but upon the novel itself and its effect upon the readers. It is, therefore, important to consider next the terms—and the theories which they denote or suggest—applied to the novel. For the sake of convenience, these terms will as usual be separated into groups according to their application. For instance, style and those terms having to do with style will be considered in one section; description and its accompanying terms, in another; character with its terms, in still another section; plot and its terms; and finally, any terms used to express the function of the novel. Many of the minor descriptive terms

1 For the traditional meanings of the neo-classical terms used in this chapter see chapter I; and for specific references to earlier works in which most of them may be found, see corresponding sections in chapters I and III especially.
will be considered incidentally just as they occur in the passages containing the more important terms, and no attempt will be made to classify them or to give them extensive individual treatment, but some effort will be made to point out their deviations from traditional definitions and uses.

In considering style and language, one need not be concerned much about basic definitions of the terms, for they have not changed appreciably in this application to the novel. They mean just about what they did when the neo-classicists applied them mainly to poetry and the drama. Of much more interest are the terms describing the requirements for excellence of style and language, for these terms (usually descriptive adjectives or nouns appended to the words style and language) subtly influence what may be called the theoretical or figurative meanings of the major terms and give added information about the theories denoted by these terms.

The main requirement in regard to style is that it be simple and unaffected. In the case of Miss Edgeworth's *Patronage*, "simplicity" is "wanting."¹ This lack of directness of expression is displeasing to the reviewers. Neither is an artificial style particularly pleasing to the reviewers, especially to the one who writes of *The Labours of Idleness*:

¹ "Patronage," LXXXIV (1814), 265.
If the writer belongs to any school, it is, we think, to that which flourishes in Cockaigne—occasionally clever, not unfrequently puling; extremely artificial, much given to "babble of green fields," and to run riot in descriptions of pastoral life; yet withal the full flavour of London smoke is upon it.1

It should be noted here that the meaning of artificial is not "artful," as it is in Sidney's Defense, but the more recent one of "unnatural" and "labored." In praising the styles of various authors, reviewers are not always so specific. They may merely write, for instance, that a style is "throughout a masterpiece."2 In what particulars the style is superior, one can only guess. Yet there are other somewhat more specific comments, such as this one on D'Israeli, which, by the way, is significant because it tends to turn the criticism, not merely upon the objective work, but also upon the personality of the author as it is reflected in his work: "With regard to the style and sentiments of the author, we never met with a work that shows so clearly the extent of the writer's memory and library."3 In this passage—unless it may be ironic—learning and reading are considered to improve a style. But however attractive learning may be, "pedantry " is

1 "The Labours of Idleness; or Seven Night's Entertainment," XCVI (1826), 58.
2 "The Monastery," XC (1820), 335.
3 "Contarini Fleming," CII (1832), 240.
not. An excellent style, moreover, should be easy. In this particular, the book The Rambles of My Uncle Toby, an imitation of Sterne's Sentimental Journey, is by no means deficient. In fact, the reviewer says: "The style is easy, and the incidents natural; . . ." A style that is both "easy and sometimes elegant," may even redeem "every-day occurrences from insipidity, by the graceful tones in which such occurrences are related." In both of these cases, ease denotes natural and graceful fluency in expression of thought; and elegance, seeming to keep its older meaning, signifies a kind of light grace, not an "elaborate brilliancy." In other words, a fluent, graceful method or habit of writing is admirable. It is also by no means detrimental to a book's reputation to be written in a "powerful style." The application of the adjective powerful to style suggests here rather the general effect or tone of the composition, instead of the method of writing; and powerful means moving and forceful. The interest is shifted from the author and the composition to the effect of the work on the reader. To sum up, if an author desires his book to be praised, he should write

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1 "Fitz of Fitz Ford," C (1830), 157, where lack of pedantry and affectation is praised.
2 "The Rambles of My Uncle Toby," XCI (1821), 449.
3 "Yes and No and Herbert Lacy," XCVIII (1828), 55. See Scaliger's Poetics Bk. IV for this use of elegance.
4 "Tales and Confessions," XCIX (1829), 155.
in a simple, easy, unaffected, but powerful style.

Language, is, strictly speaking, the material of style; but there can be no harm in examining a few requirements for language separately. Much may be learned by examining first the faults found with the language used in several novels. Proceeding by this negative method, therefore, one learns that language should have "ease" (efficiency and fluency), but should not be "vulgar" (common) and "affected" (offensively unnatural). One learns further that language should be "in keeping" with the characters; and in this latter requirement The Alexandrians, for instance, is lacking, for the "slang" used in the novel is not appropriate for the characters. The opposite of the last statement is true of Thinks I To Myself, in which "the language is in general very neat and appropriate, and not unfrequently reminds us of the facetious writings of Sterne." A "neat and appropriate" language is one "stripped of superfluities" and suited both to the thought expressed and to the characters.

Acceptable also is any language which may be described as "animated" or as "strain of servile eloquence," or as

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1 In order see "Sandeville," LXXXVII (1817), 555; "Winter Evening Tales," XC (1820), 611; and "The Three Brothers," LXXIV (1804), 104 cf. Aristotle, Poetica, XXII.

2 "The Alexandrians," CI (1831), 135.

3 "Thinks I To Myself," LXXI (1811), 356.

4 "Leolin Abbey," XC (1820), 247.
having "warmth." Eloquence, here used with fervid, obviously signifies an impassioned and heightened mode of expression on the part of the author. The use of "animated" adds to the meaning of eloquence the idea of vigor, energy, and liveliness. Warmth, a term obviously borrowed from the sensory perceptions, is applicable to the effect of the language of the author on the reader and may be said to imply effectiveness in generating responsive feeling in readers.

More frequently mentioned than any of these other qualities, however, is elegance. In Consolata me Fille "the language is elegant," and in Alla Giornata it is "easy and elegant." The same quality of language, in addition to "force," is mentioned in the criticism of Graham Hamilton. The word elegant occurs yet again in this panegyric on The Epicurean:

Elegant in diction, beautifully grand and varied in incident, and vivid in delineation, we hail it as a master specimen of English composition, and the keystone of poetic prose.

Therefore, at the top of the list of terms denoting excellence in language one must place the term elegance, which, being used with ease (fluency) on the one hand and with force

1 "The Ball of Hellingly," XCI (1822), 348.
2 LXXXII (1813), 146.
3 XCVI (1826), 155.
4 XCI (1822), 441.
5 XCVII (1827), 150. Note here the use of grand and vivid, favorites of those who fancied themselves followers of Longinus.
(power or efficiency) on the other, may denote a graceful, effective refinement of language. Below this term will come the terms force, ease, propriety, animation, poetic warmth, and (lack of) both vulgarity and affectation.

In all of this criticism on language, the term language itself is not variable in meaning, but the critical terms by which it is described are. In general, these latter terms are used in the vague manner so typical of most criticism of the time. They are not defined; but from their applications in various criticism of literature, impressions concerning their meanings may be gained. On the basis of these impressions of the above terms, one draws the conclusion that the meanings given them are very rarely the traditional ones. Ease, for example, which once meant clearness or facility derived from practice and training, becomes general efficiency arising perhaps from natural ability alone or sometimes from a combination of native power and acquired skill. Another point is that more and more the language, like general literature, is being criticized, not on the grounds of its objective value in a finished composition, but on the basis of its effect on the imagination and thought of the reader.

The same change, of course, may be seen in the various passages on style. Style does retain the meaning of habit or method of writing acquired either by effort or without design. The term is beginning to be applied on rare occasions to the tone or general mood of the work, reflecting,
so to speak, the author's personality and aesthetic sense. The descriptive terms used with style, such as easy, simple, artificial, and powerful, often convey very different ideas from the earlier traditional ones. Artificial, for example, does not mean artistic; it means unnatural. Therefore, despite the verbal echo of neo-classicism throughout the discussions of style, there have been changes.

The term description, usually applied to objective presentations of scenes and characters, is one which, unlike style, was generally ignored in epic criticism. Indeed, the whole conception of description is fairly recent if we except the critics' concern about the resemblance existing between poetry and painting, in which matter description was considered incidentally. So its meaning, of course, remains what it was in the beginning. However, an examination of various passages in which minor terms appear with the major one—description—may be productive of interesting information.

Lady Bury's Alla Giornata, in which "several of the scenes and incidents" are described as "common-place and to be met with in many other novels, not above mediocrity,"1 contains "descriptive sketches" which are said to "be duly appreciated."1 Commonplace has the meaning of mediocre or trite, not the sixteenth century one--used by Sidney and Ascham--of universal truth.

1 XCVI (1826), 155.
In the first volume of Tremaine, moreover, "scenes are natural, well worked up,"¹ but in the second volume only the scene in which Tremaine is refused by Georgiana "is uncommonly well given."¹ The only term needing any analysis in the preceding critical passage is the word natural, which has the ordinary meaning, so frequently applied during the latter part of the eighteenth century, of true to the external world or nature.

The descriptions of scenes and of characters in The Talisman are considered to be of "great beauty,"² to be "accurate" (faithful to historical facts) and "vivid" (effectively clear and striking). The use of accurate in conjunction, not with the traditional language of the composition, but with scenes is a somewhat modern variation, as is also the application to literature of the term vivid borrowed from painting. In the case of the latter, however, its use may certainly be traced at least as far back as Blair's writings.

In short, aside from the doctrine that descriptions of scenes and of characters should not be commonplace but should be natural, accurate, vivid or beautiful, little specific information on the subject is to be gained from the reviews in this journal; but the point may be made that the terms used, though not new, are often employed in a

¹ XCV (1825), 56.
² "Tales of the Crusaders," XCV (1825), 44. For another use of vivid see "Ring an Gilhaise," XCIII (1823), 162.
different manner from that in which they are traditionally used.

The basic meaning of the term character is another that does not have to be considered at great length, for it is a term which has remained fairly consistent in meaning, at least from the eighteenth century on. Originally, of course, characters denoted representations of universal and of generic traits and qualities. These were the characters familiar to all readers of Aristotle and of the Greek dramatists. In the Roman plays, of course, we have mere generic type character. Since the eighteenth century, however, some characters have been representations, not of general types, but of specific and distinct personalities, each with a different disposition and with different motives for action. The emphasis in a way has shifted from a representation of the universal to what will seem a representation of the particular. It is fairly clear that the latter meaning is held by the Gentleman's reviewers, but it also is apparent that the bases for judging excellence of character delineation and the reviewers' ideas concerning what constitutes excellence of characters do change. It is, therefore, on

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1 Though the common practice of the Greek dramatists tended toward a representation of characters true to the universal and to their particular types, Aristotle's theory of character drawing would be excellent in any age. He required that a character be good, be appropriate, be true to life, and be consistent. Though he does admit that an artist should "preserve the type and yet ennoble it" for effectiveness, there is nothing here that could not apply equally to our modern characters. See Poetics, XV, in Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 43-44.
those qualities needful for the ideal character that the emphasis is to be placed.

In general, the remarks made by the critics with regard to excellent characters are not specific. For instance, they consent favorably on one book because its characters are "well delineated;" on another, because its dramatic personae are "marked and various;" on still another, because its character delineations are "truly beautiful" ones, and because "Shakespeare himself never drew finer portraits." All of these remarks are not especially enlightening, but they do indicate the reviewers' propensity toward employing empty, stock phrases.

In considering the matter of character delineation in greater detail, one notes first the relationship existing between the author's wit or humor and the characters he is drawing. The manner of Fielding, Smollett, and their imitators in delineating characters in "a spirit of humour and satire" is that winning the chief praise of critics. In fact, the presence of "much humourous delineation of character" outweighs even the ill effects of "gross improprieties, we might almost say absurdities," and often

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1 "Bannockburn," ACI (1831), 432.
3 "Tales and Legends," XCIII (1826), 243.
4 "Old Nick: a Satirical Story," LXXI (1801), 443.
5 "Marriage," LX XXIX (1819), 337.
the well-drawn humorous or amusing character draws the majority of the praise meted out by the critic. This is true of Mr. Gamble's Charlton, in which "The most amusing character in the work is a poor painter,"¹ the terms amusing, humour, and satire are used loosely and perhaps synonymously to denote the author's sense of the incongruous as it manifests itself sympathetically in the characters which he draws. This interpretation of the terms, which is relatively modern, is suggested by the use of humor and satire, together with knowledge of the human heart, and by the use of humor as opposed to absurdity and impropriety.

In addition, the critics show an evident liking for any such characters as "display the abundant wit of the author; and show that he can descend to buffoonery and soar to heights of heroism."² Here wit has not the traditional meanings of justness of reason, power of imagination, or conceit; it has rather the meaning of comical power, of a sense of the incongruous, but not necessarily a sympathetic sense. This meaning is somewhat modern.

The critics also prefer that characters be drawn with discrimination (the faculty or act of distinguishing). Consequently, Jane Porter's The Pastor's Fireside is a favorite because "the numerous characters are drawn with

¹ XCIV (1824), 169.
² "Castle Raynard," XCIV (1824), 152.
mush strength and felicity of discrimination. An even more important quality for characters to have, however, is true Aristotelian consistency. The importance of it is voiced thus by the reviewer of the *Fair Maid of Perth*:

One reason we think may be found for the breathless interest of this story, is the circumstance that from the first to last, the stage is crowded with characters who are destined to act most important parts in the drama, and that we are no sooner withdrawn from a scene of over-powering excitement, than another is presented, which satisfies us for the absence of the character we have lost; and yet each and all are engaged in the development of the plot, and fall naturally and unconstrainedly into an harmonious whole. The consistency of each is beautifully sustained, not only by action, but by appropriate language.

In the foregoing passage, as well as in those to follow immediately, consistency mainly retains the meaning which it had when applied to other forms of literature. It means uniformity or unity of impressions as judged from the point of view of the reader. Therefore, consistent characters are those which at all times are well sustained and at all times display a conformity or harmony between personality, motives, and actions. The basic meaning of the word is, therefore, traditional; but its application to fictional characters effects a slight modification in its connotative meaning. Many authors have trouble in preserving this sort of consistency of character. Even Scott's characters are

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1 "The Pastor's Fireside," LXIX (1817), 145. See also "Peep at the Pilgrims," XCV (1825), 628; and "Hurstwood," XCIV (1824), 258, where reviewer laments the "cooking" characters in most novels and wishes his author's *Pigeon Pie* to be the "higher seasoned."

2 "The Chronicles of Canongate," XCVIII (1828), 531.
not always consistent. For instance, "the character of Margaret Ramsey is one thing at the beginning of the book, and another at the conclusion."¹

The reviewers also indicate that an occasional character may, in his person, represent "doctrines" or a doctrine, as does Elinor Joddrel in Madame D'Arblay's The Wanderer.² The character may even be a sort of agency (a deus ex machina descendant) through which agency various deeds are accomplished. This is true of the character described below:

Here begins the mystery of supernatural sounds, and other supernatural appearances; and here enters upon the stage *Kate the Gypsy*, whose powerful and picturesque agency pervades the whole story. Kate is not an accidental personage, introduced for momentary effect; she is a necessary instrument, on whom all the instruments hinge.³

The characters may also be "embodied spirits, who walk the earth, but live not upon it."⁴ In short, characters may occasionally be personifications of doctrine, powerful agencies for actions, or even embodied spirits; but such characters, though allowed, are not the ones usually found.

For ordinary characters there are qualifications

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¹ "The Fortunes of Nisel," XCI (1822), 54. For other examples of the importance of consistency see "Thinks I To Myself," XCVI (1811), 357 and "The Foyne Water," XCVI (1826), 43.

² LXXXIV (1814), 579.

³ "The Hall of Hellingsley," XCI (1822), 347.

that one thinks of in connection with such characters as have been mentioned. For instance, there are the special requirements with regard to religion and morals. In the case of Scott's *The Abbot*, it is not so important that some of our readers will perhaps complain, that the character of Roland Graeme is but a resemblance of Halbert Glendinning while a youth, and that the similitude of Henry and Catherine Seyton is too strained.¹

But the religious constancy of Roland is somewhat more important, as the following indicates:

But young Roland must not be dismissed so easily; of his constancy we entertain doubts; not to his love, for he is sufficiently faithful, but to his religion . . .¹

This demand for "firmness in religion" is, of course, related to the tendency of the reviewers of the age to demand that literature be moral—a tendency very marked from Sidney's time throughout the entire neo-classical period.

To the same moral tendency, the following condemnation of the alliance of religion and superstition in a character may be traced:

Whatever may have been the credulity of the sixteenth century, the idle tales of ghosts and apparitions will never interest us at the present day. We cannot approve of such a delineation of character as in Lady Holton, where religion is so closely allied to superstition as to give some pretence to the sarcasms of the sceptical Sir William.²

Here again the aesthetic impression of the character is not considered. The major emphasis of the critic is on the moral welfare of the people who read about the character.

¹ *xc* (1820), 436.

² "Midsummer Eve; or, The Country Wake," XXXI (1801), 928.
Besides religious constancy and purity, high principles and moral worth are considered necessary in ideal characters, even though the presence of these qualities may detract from reality. Scott's *Feveril of the Peak* is commended for its characters because

The lovers are both exceedingly respectable—much more so than mere lovers either in fact or in fiction, are wont to appear. Their affection is cherished and supported by high principles.  

Numerous good qualities bring commendation also to the characters in *Domestic Scenes*; but in the following sentences, the adjective *good* (morally excellent) noticeably comes before the other adjectives, and the adjective *pattern* seems to refer to a character that is morally worthy of being copied rather than to one that is representative of the ordinary person in life:

The leading points are the character and behaviour of the two sisters, and the younger is an excellent pattern character for study—good, sensible, delicate, amiable, and elegant. This is not the case with all Novels; for the characters are often so commonplace and insipid, and the incidents so frivolous, that there is nothing impressive throughout the story.  

Again the emphasis is on the moral effect of the characters on the reader. The *good*, as has been indicated, precedes, but is coupled with *sensible* (possessed of good sense), *delicate* (having refined sensibility or fineness of feeling), *amiable* (having sweetness of disposition), and *elegant*

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1 *XCIII* (1825), 50.  
2 *XCI* (1821), 151.
(correctly fine). Many of these terms have modern applications and ethical implications, but verbally they echo eighteenth-century criticism.

When "Morality and Nature go hand in hand,"¹ as they do in the case of Mr. Isaac Woolman, a character in *But Which*, the character and the novel in which he appears are sure to be spoken of "in terms of warm approbation."¹ Morality here retains its traditional meaning, based on conventional and religious principles; but it is applied to a type of literature long considered naturally immoral. Nature, used vaguely, as is often the case, denotes human nature, objectively or externally considered.

Originality in characters, the reviewers always appreciate; and copies either of real characters or of other literary portraits, they frown upon.² Cumberland, however, takes great pleasure in congratulating himself for not having copied any living man; and he makes it clear in the following lines that he expects praise for his action:

"Be that as it may; the work is done; and done, not in the evil spirit of the time, but without a single glance at any living character. Conscious, therefore, that I have not endangered what is sacred to me as a gentleman, the Critics are most cordially welcome to everything they can find about me as an Author."³

¹ LXXVII (1807), 346.
³ "John De Lancaster," LXXIX (1809), 333.
Thus one concludes that reviewers denounced or barely tolerated most copies, either of real or of literary figures.

They also discouraged authors from drawing any characters that were unconvincing and incapable of arousing sympathy. A weakness in the novel *Maurice Powell* arises from the fact that

The *Hero of the Tale* is what novel heroes frequently are, a plain country gentleman, and brave officer, of confirmed loyalty, honour, and integrity; but here, as elsewhere, a man of tame correctness.¹

The same type of weakness is discoverable in Maria Edgeworth's characterizations. The reviewer declares: "Her heroine is uninteresting. Caroline Percy is intended for perfection in woman; and, like Richardson's model of perfection in man, Sir Charles Grandison, she is cold and correct."² To arouse the sympathy of the readers, characters must not then be perfect; nor must they be too unusual, too far removed from the readers' daily experience. The characters in Cunningham's *Sir Michael Scott* fail to arouse sympathy because they are "beings" that "are beyond our sphere."³ There is, however, something to be said for such characters, writes the reviewer, because "the same

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¹ XCII (1822), 620.

² "Patronage," LXXXIV (1814), 265.

³ XCVIII (1828), 145. By contrast, the characters in *The Husband and The Lover* do excite "sympathy." See LXXXI (1811), 260.
objection is applicable, in an equal degree, to almost
all the great works stamped with the seal of immortality.¹
In this same review one reads that characters should be
fairly represented; certainly not exaggerated. The reviewer
objects especially to the author's treatment of the monks,
stating that "to describe them as monsters of immorality,
and the incarnate agents of hell, is uncharitable."²

As is to be expected, much is written about the
realism or fidelity to nature of various characters. First,
there come to one's attention a few passages in which the
point is made that the characters are faithful reproductions,
not only of nature in general, but also of certain national-
ities. That appears to be the idea in the mention of
"tolerably faithful portraits"³ in The Alexandrians, but
whether the word portraits refers to reproductions of actual
personages or merely of national types is not clear. If the
word portraits should perchance refer to specific personages,
the reviewer is more lenient than most in countenancing
such copying.

The Irish are the national characters most fre-
quently noticed, perhaps most frequently drawn. In the
Tales of the O'Hara Family, the last story
abounds with national traits very faithfully depicted,
and exhibits the Irish character in its most varied and

1 Ibid., p. 145.
2 Ibid., p. 145.
3 CI (1831), 165.
antithetical form, in its most contentious bearings, and in its fine and generous enthusiasm: fierce in its revenge, gentle in its affections. 1

Thus the faithful delineation of national characters here wins plaudits from the reviewers.

Besides these delineations of national characters, there are many characterizations which, because of their various types of realism, justly deserve the encomiums of the reviewers. Generally, the truth demanded is that based upon information gained by close observation of the people about and by attention to their words and deeds. Sometimes, however, there is a different fidelity demanded of characters—a fidelity to principles, concerning which information can be gained apparently only through divine inspiration or some strange empathy. The latter theory is, of course, mainly a new development.

In Morier's *Aohrab the Hostage* the characters have a certain "truth." 2 They are imitations of human nature—of the external or behavioristic aspects of humanity. Moreover, the characters in *Mrs. Carey's Lasting Impressions* evidently are done with the same type of realism, for "they appear like pictures of real life." 3 In both cases the impression of realism may be gained through observation united with a knowledge of humanity as a whole and is not

1 XCIV (1825), 56. See also "Tales of My Time," XCII (1829), 526.
2 CII (1832), 446.
3 XCIV (1824), 451.
dependent upon knowledge gained through intuition or a sort of spiritual affinity with individuals.

An objective type of reality also characterizes Lord Normanby’s *Yes and No* and Mr. Lister’s *Herbert Lacy,* both of which are "faithful portraits of fashionable life."¹

But the characters, especially the main character, in Benger’s *The Heart and the Fancy,* have a kind of universal verisimilitude. The author maintains:

Valsinore, is no chimera of a romantic imagination; his story may be fictitious; but his character, divested of the singularity which might have attached to it half a century ago, is no longer even of the novel cast. Such a being is not only of our age, but our people; his prototypes are discovered in that country where the progress of civilization is still attested by the diffusion of truth and benevolence; by respect for the noblest prerogative of human nature, and for the best and dearest interests of mankind.²

One literal-minded reviewer insists, however, not upon fidelity to general truths, but to his own observations. He declares that he never knew "beauties who were not unselfish."³ Therefore, he says:

But there is a grand error in all Novels. Beauty is the characteristic of every heroine; and always accompanied with pure attachment to one object. This is not true, unless where Mind is the leading feature of the character; and happiness is founded upon reason and virtue.³

¹ *Yes and No and Herbert Lacy,* XCVIII (1828), 55.
² *The Heart and The Fancy; or Valsinore,* LXXXIV (1814), 160.
³ *Sir Francis Darrell, or the Vortex,* XC (1820), 529. The term Beauty, as it is used in the above quoted passage, has no real critical application, being merely a quality possessed by characters and to be apprehended by the reader. This meaning of the term often occurred in eighteenth-century criticism.
Thus far, the information examined indicates that reviewers wish fidelity to those universal truths of character which are understood by many and, in one case at least, fidelity to the information gained from their respective observations.

There are, however, other passages on characters which are not so easy to analyze. Such a passage is the following one, from which one gets the impression that Miss Austen's characters have at least an objective fidelity to middle-class manners and customs and probably fidelity to the universal traits of humanity, since they are said to appeal "to the heart and feelings of the Reader":

If "Emma" has not the highly-drawn characters in superior life which are so interesting in "Pride and Prejudice," it delineates with great accuracy the habits and the manners of a middle class of gentry; and of the inhabitants of a country village at one degree of rank and gentility beneath them. Every character throughout the work, from the heroine to the most subordinate, is a portrait which comes home to the heart and feelings of the reader; who becomes familiarly acquainted with each of them, nor loses sight of a single individual till the completion of the work. 1

This mention of "the heart and feelings of the Reader" is indicative of the romantic influence, and the application of accuracy to characters, instead of to language, is mainly a nineteenth-century development; but, whatever the development, the central idea of the need of natural characters is traditional.

In at least two other reviews, one distinctly

1 "Emma, a Novel," LXXXVI (1816), 240-243.
perceives the romantic influence on the theories of fidelity to truth. In this first one, no fidelity to the universal is demanded, or to truths learned through observation and experience, but evidently fidelity to natural instincts, untainted by education. Though nature, meaning primal instincts, was used even in classical times, there was not the objection to education and control, which marks the following passage as a clear example of the effect of the back-to-nature theories:

A fifth, an affected doll of quality; the last, but not least, a Lady Fanny Lambeth, a fascinating improved Die Vernon. In this character we think that the Authoress has done what very few are able to do, given us a correct picture of a truly lovely girl. Nature appears; and she is not converted by severe education into a mere cold handsome statue.1

The romantic influence shows itself also in the review of Tragic Tales, a review in which one seems to perceive at first a request for fidelity to universal traits of character instead of to particularities of individuals. The advocacy of the use of fancy in obtaining information about the essentials of human nature, however, makes one doubt the first interpretation and favor the explanation that here is a romantic theory concerning the acquisition of knowledge of the essential elements of character by a kind of empathy or sympathetic intuition, if one may so define fancy. The reviewer writes thus:

To copy the human character, as it appears under the disguises of society, is to represent a deceitful surface.

1 "Varieties in Woman," XC (1820), 150.
The energies that are bred and grow up in solitude within the unseen recesses of the soul, are hid from the observer of daily life; the fancy alone can penetrate them; the mind that creates only can develop their movements.¹

The reason given below for relying on such means of gaining information is an interesting indirect statement of the nineteenth century reviewers' theory concerning the close relationship existing between moral and aesthetic truth.

The truth of characters drawn from these sources stands upon a certainty, which no study of external individuality can reach. The represented connection, therefore, between moral causes and moral affects is more unerring and the instruction far deeper than the lessons afforded by what are called portraits of actual living beings.¹

Such a theory of characterization, involving an interpretation of truth as fundamentally both moral and aesthetic, is a romantic development.

Finally, to summarize the discussion. Character delineations indicative of the author's wit or humor are admitted—on some occasions, even encouraged. All characters are to be handled with discrimination, and all characters must remain consistent throughout the work. They must not be of one sort at the beginning and of another sort at the end. It is conceivable that excellent characters may be mere agencies or instruments through which the purposes of the novelist are accomplished, or that they may be

¹ XCI (1821), 531. This "Shelley-like" passage is distinctly reminiscent of Platonic and neo-platonic theory, of the concepts of the high service of the poet or "the maker" as Sidney styled him—all of which are discoverable in the works of numerous romantic poets.
embodied spirits; but such characters must be necessary
to the action, must be the exception and not the rule, and
must be very cleverly treated so as to give the semblance
of reality. Ordinary characters, to be excellent, should be
original. More often than not any attempts of the authors
to copy specific people or fictitious characters are dis­
couraged. Authors are urged to look to the morals and the
religious constancy of their characters. Otherwise, even
original characters are to be condemned, lacking in this one
respect. But novelists are also exhorted to avoid the perfect
characters, since perfect characters have two disadvantages.
They are not true to life, and they do not arouse sympathy
in the heart of the reader. Only fairly representative
characters can do that.

The most important requirement for characters is
that they possess some kind of realism, some type of fidelity
to life or nature. The best type of character possesses human
traits and qualities which are universal. Of course, this
theory is decidedly classical, as is also the one that a
character may possess certain peculiarities common to his
class, race, or nation—peculiarities which might be marked
by any careful observer. In addition to this type of reality,
there is another type mentioned favoring a romantic natural­
ness of character, achieved by stripping the individuals,
not only of non-essential peculiarities, but of all marks of
training or breeding and presenting him or her in his natural
state—obedient only to instincts, not to reason.
This is a Rousseauistic development, especially in its opposition to education and control. There is still another type of realism to be achieved only by that author who can penetrate the inmost recesses of individuals' characters and understand and interpret what he sees there, and it is distinctly not classical in tendency. Whatever else may be said, it is at least true that realism is essential and that the nineteenth-century influence upon the theories of realism, as well as upon the terms designating those theories, is marked.

Indeed, in all of the criticism concerning treatment of characters, even the less important terms employed are often either new terms or traditional ones which—with the exception of the ones denoting universality and consistency—very rarely have retained their old meanings. Usually they have swapped their old meanings for new ones which are less definite and less restricted in theory or in application. Excellent illustrations of the changing quality of the critical terminology applied to characterizations are such terms as wit, humor, satire, discrimination, consistency, originality, accuracy, nature, and truth. The term character itself, however, appears to have the meaning applied to it in the eighteenth century—that of a creation faithful to the universal laws of human nature, but sufficiently discriminated to appear individual. The major changes wrought by the influences of the nineteenth century have come, however, not in the basic meaning of the term character, but in the ideas concerning the means for achieving perfection in character and in the detailed require-
ments for ideal characters. These theories have imperceptibly influenced the connotative or figurative meaning of character. Therefore, the terms descriptive of the ideal character have been given much attention.

Reviewers, of course, say a great deal about plots also. The term plot usually means either the mechanical structure of the novel or the main story or fable. That the latter meaning is by far the more common, an examination of a few general remarks on the plot will indicate. Therefore, under the heading of the plot one may properly consider general comments made on the stories or the fables of several novels, as well as specific important requirements for various divisions or parts of the story. The emphasis will, as usual, be upon the essential and the figurative or implied meanings of the critical terms in use in the criticism of plots in general, of the use of rules to be employed in writing plots, of proper subject matter for plots, of types of realism needed in plots, and of theories of dénouement.

From this very exuberant praise of The Water Witch, one draws the conclusion that grandeur of incident is an excellent feature of the plots:

In incident this Novel has frequently all the grandeur of an epic poem. We have heroes, who, if they do not wield the thunderbolt of Jupiter, yet wave the trident of Neptune over the obedient ocean; and the Skimmer of the Seas carries off his Amphitrite, and Tritons blow their conches in Hymeneal rhapsodies. No critic in regard to this fine novel, can be addressed with "Cease rude Boreas, blustering railer," but long before he has gone through
it, he and all readers will break out involuntarily into "Rule, Britannia, Britannia rule the waves."

The application to the novel of the terms *grandeur* (denoting usually vast images or conceptions which are not over-complicated, but are stark and simple) and *epic* (usually applied to narrative poetry) is worthy at least of note, since it indicates the marked tendency of the romantic critics to apply to novels the critical terms originally applicable to other types of literature; to change or modify the meanings slightly in application; and to use them in a vague, loose manner.

Especially do reviewers commend any plot affecting the imagination or arousing legitimate feelings and sentiments. Acceptable to them, therefore, is a highly romantic and affecting plot like that of *Rudiger the Dane*.

This highly-wrought tale, breathing the spirit of Romance powerfully arrests the imagination: the haughty Rudiger inspires the utmost horror; whilst we sympathize in the hapless fate of Ella and Elburga.

Several of the terms used above are worthy of at least passing attention. *Spirit* here has the romantic meaning of inner life or feeling. *Imagination* appears to designate a kind of perceptive power on the part of the reader, not

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1 CI (1831), 152-163.

2 "Rudiger the Dane, a Legendary Tale," LXXX (1810), 246. Note that this critic, as opposed to the average critic of the eighteenth century, emphasized the appeal to the imagination of the reader. His use of horror, like the use of *grandeur* above, reflects the influence of the eighteenth-century Longinian theories.
a creative power of the author. The use of the descriptive term highly wrought in the preceding passage and in others\(^1\) is of interest, since the term seems to be comparatively new; but its meaning is vague. It appears to describe tales in which the interest is kept at a high pitch. Of these, the reviewers approve.

Ambiguous plots, however, they severely condemn, one of the first essentials of a plot being that it be clear to the reader. Such criticism as this, therefore, is by no means exceptional:

> The fiction is undoubtedly ingenious, we should rather say extraordinary, and in many places there is a spirit in the conversation, and elegance in detail, but still there exists a vagueness, an ambiguity throughout the whole, which is far from satisfying the mind of the reader.\(^2\)

The comic, witty, or humorous elements in plots are welcomed, however, provided that they be "perfectly free from anything like vulgarity."\(^3\) Vulgarity here implies immorality instead of impropriety.

Furthermore, that plots should also be "in good keeping" and be capable of producing excitement, one infers from these remarks on *The King's Secret*:

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\(^{2}\) "Carwin and Other Tales," XCII (1822), 622. For a similar attack on ambiguity see "Graham Hamilton," XCII (1822), 442.

\(^{3}\) "Braebridge Hall, or The Humorists," XCII (1822), 55. See "Oakwood Hall," LXIX (1821), 204 for a commendation of the "comic" elements in a plot.
We shall not make extracts, because the novel consists of incidents. These are interesting, truly mediaeval, in as good keeping as Froissart and St. Palaye, and wrought up so as to produce the excitement which we expect from novels.  

The linking of propriety and excitement as requisites of an ideal plot is evidently a modern touch and clearly indicative of the loose use of such terms as in keeping.

A plot, as one reviewer says, may even be of "slight texture," as is the "curious and not unamusing tale" of D'Iserieli's Contarini Fleming, especially if it is "merely intended to serve as a peg for what the author calls "a Psychological Autobiography." This, of course, is a new theory in the technique of plot treatment--one which does not appear in this magazine until 1832. It is especially interesting for its de-emphasis of the plot. Usually, however, reviewers required that the events of a plot be "at once probable and unexpected," and that the novel as a whole show "the Author's dexterity in managing the plot." All of these points represent no particular developments in critical terminology or in technique, though the close juxtaposition of probable and unexpected might not often have been found in earlier criticism.

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1 CI (1831), 59.
2 "Contarini Fleming," CII (1832), 240.
4 "The Acceptance," LXX (1811), 364. It is exactly in the particular point mentioned above that this novel is weak.
Since critics are much interested in probability, it is natural that they look with displeasure upon the extravagance in the plot of Mrs. Trollope's *The Refugee in America*. The reviewer declares:

In the work before us plot plays rather an extravagant part, and Mrs. Trollope has, by the suddenness of her incidents and a tolerably free infusion des horreurs, endeavoured, although mainly, to supply the corresponding deficiency. A story more prolific in moving accidents by flood and field, has scarce occurred since the good days of old Aubrey.¹

There is little in this passage, even in the use of the term extravagant (exaggerated), that is especially novel; but the attack on such extravagance, even in a plot possessing the usually commended moving (touching or pathetic) incidents, is deserving of a brief notice.

Complex and intricate plots or those interrupted by digressions of various types, the reviewers dislike too. One reviewer declares that had Sarah Henou "retained some of her heroines for a future novel, the plot (of *The Ionian*) would have been less complex and equally interesting."²

Also in the novel *Mariamne*, "the characters are so very numerous as to render the plot at times intricate."³ Yet, despite their dislike for complicated plots, the reviewers occasionally praise such a one for excellence in other

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¹ "The Refugee in America," CII (1832), 443.
² "The Ionian, or Roman of the Nineteenth Century," XCIV (1824), 256.
³ "Mariamne, an Historical Novel of Palestine," XCV (1825), 624.
respects. They inevitably marked as a failure, however, any "complicated" plot that won attention solely by the "mere excitement of a vulgar curiosity."

Exactly what is meant by this "vulgar curiosity," one can but guess. Evidently any complicated plot with nothing to commend it save a kind of hair-raising puzzle is taboo, though legitimate suspense is allowed. A number of Scott's plots like that of The Pirate, receive their share of adverse criticism because "the thread of the narrative is... frequently broken for the purpose of topographical disquisitions which have little interest for the impatient reader..."2

Although the "simple"3 and mechanically well-constructed plot, or the "inartificial" (natural) one3 gains the reviewers' unfailing approval, the one which is slightly but cleverly complicated is often highly commended. This is true of Hardenbrass and Haverill, where the episodes "are so managed as to be subservient to the main plot."4

The plot of The Pastor's Fireside, however, is, in many reviewers' opinion, the ideal type of plot--neither too simple nor too complex. Regular and consistent in its plan, the fable sustains

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1 "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 530.
2 "The Pirate," XCI (1821), 607.
3 "Maurice Powell," XCI (1822), 622, and "Pen Tamar," CI (1831), 536.
4 "Hardenbrass and Haverill," LXXXVII (1817), 529.
a constantly progressive interest, neither encumbered with episodes, nor impeded by those complex underplots which enter into the elaborate, yet clumsy machinery of unskilful writers.

In the two passages studied immediately above, the critic gives attention to the mechanical structure of the plot. The implication is that a plot is a series of related incidents leading to a climax. In general, the other passages considered gave indications of considering plot as a term meaning a story or a fable. Both definitions together probably constitute the idea of all critics concerning the term plot, for those who speak of "complicated" or of "simple" plots may have in their minds, not only the fable, but also the mechanical make-up of the novel. It is a synthesis of the two definitions, therefore, to which references will be made in further discussions of plot in this chapter. Whatever may be their definitions of the term, however, nearly all of the reviewers are in favor of a simple and uncomplicated (or if complicated, at least reasonably so) plot.

Another requirement of the plot or fable is that it be interesting, and many passages proving the truth of this assertion are available. Most of these indicate that

1 "The Pastor's Fireside," LXXXVII (1817), 145.
a work lacking interest can scarcely make up for that lack by other excellent qualities, not even by having "true pathos" and "beauty and power."¹ It is the lamp without a light—useless to reader and critic. But the mere statement, "Upon the whole the novel is interesting,"² overcomes the ill effects of countless defects. Even inconsistencies are overlooked, although some measure of probability and naturalness³ is usually required. Clearly, the fable or plot of a novel needs to have interest, even though the reviewers do not deign to give any prescriptions for the securing of it. Grandeur of incident, power to affect the imagination and the feelings of the readers, clearness, comedy or humor but not vulgarity, a certain propriety, ability to arouse excitement, probability, dexterity of management, simplicity (or at least lack of excessive intricacy)—all of these are additional qualities which an excellent plot may have. Most of the critical terms expressing these qualities seem traditional; but their vague, loose application often leaves the reader in doubt.

A very few typical considerations of the proper

¹ "The New Forest," XCIX (1829), 147.
³ See "Constantia Neville," LXX (1800); and "The Renegade," XCII (1822), 253; "Tales of The O'Hara Family," XV (1825), 56; "Placide," LXXXVII (1817), 533; "Isabel de Bargas," XCIII (1823), 161; and "Tor Hill," XCII (1827), 432.
subject matter for an interesting novel should suffice to give the general trend. In general, any subject which is interesting, moral— or at least not harmful—simple, and based on universal feelings, and emotions is acceptable. Here again is a neo-classical hangover. The preoccupation of the reviewers with moral or ethical subject matter is, of course, to be observed most frequently; for the worth of the subject, according to the critics, depends upon its possible effect on the reader. The subject matter in Mr. Banim's *The Boyne Water* is unacceptable because the feuds he (the author) is depicting are yet in full and distracting operation, and we cannot persuade ourselves that these are the works by which those unhappy differences can be at all lessened—we fear they may serve to keep asunder the children of the same soil, and by aggravating historical facts, furnish a precedent, and an excuse for that "bellum internecionem" which Protestant and Catholic Ireland is still ready to wage, to their mutual curse and sorrow.1

The subject matter of Mr. Gamble's *Sarsfield* is likewise unacceptable because it contains details of "low chicanery and vice."2 Another banned subject is theology, because a mixture of it and fiction is inappropriate. The reviewer remarks:

It is quite common now also to mix up novels and theology, which is much like January and May—marriage of a young woman with an old man. Not only is it unnatural and in bad taste, but it spoils both, the novel and the sermon, . . .3

The subject matter of John De Lancaster, however, is approved;

1 "The Boyne Water," XCVI (1826), 43.
2 "Sarsfield," LXXVI (1816), 250.
3 "The Alexandrians," CI (1831), 154.
for "the subject is a simple domestic tale, without any of the marvelous adventures usually met with in Novels."\(^1\)

Another critic approves Irving's Bracebridge Hall, because its author is interested "in the grander emotions of the mind, in those feelings which belong to our universal nature, in those moral axioms and reasonings which belong to all times and all countries."\(^2\) Tragic themes on these grander emotions were by no means debarred by critical judges, provided they presented beauties. It is evidence of such beauties that calls forth this judgment:

The horrible tragedy of Ines de Castro, forms the substance of the plot, and it is but justice to say, that there are very few beauties in the dramatic or the epic of our first poets, which Mrs. Bray has not most successfully rivalled.\(^3\)

The beauties (related to aesthetic perception) theory is, of course, a result of the Longinian influence on epic criticism and was especially favored by Addison. But, to get back to the main idea, a list of numerous favorite subjects is given in this excerpt from the review of Tragic Tales:

The niceties of human character; the conflicts between the good and the bad of those who mingle opposite qualities of intellect and of virtue; the tendency of particular errantions of the mind or of the heart; the charm of those emanations of goodness, which vivid feelings, directed by sublime principles, bring forth— are subjects worthy of being painted; and worthy the toils of the noblest genius.\(^4\)

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1 "John De Lancaster," LXXIX (1809), 334.
2 "Bracebridge Hall," XCI (1822), 347.
3 "The Talba or Moor of Portugal," CI (1831), 247.
4 "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 530.
Such passages are typical of the criticism of the age.
The use of *feelings, goodness, and sublime* is typical.
The sublime is obviously an attenuated, vague one related
to moral and ethical ideals, but not often to supreme
magnitude and power. The mention of toils with *genius* may
have no significance. On the other hand, it may affect the
meaning of *genius*, in which case the term will designate
a man, not only of innate talent and artistic power, but
also of zealous application. This interpretation is not
based on facts, but on inferences and is to be considered
as such; but it is clear that the terms in the passage
have no restricted and precise classical meanings. Even
"the artificial manners and fashionable vices of high life"
are admissible subjects for novels, especially when they are
depicted "with great spirit and some occasional displays of
keen satire."¹ Again, in these terms concerning subject
matter, changes of meaning from the traditional ones are
noted, artificial meaning *unnatural* and spirit standing for
*force* or *vigor*.

In short, the subject matter that can be described
as simple, moral, appropriate, and that which is, in addition,
based on universal feelings or experiences-- tragic or comic--
is a subject matter praised by reviewers and designated as
the proper kind for authors to use. But even if a subject
possesses only one of the above requisites, it is given

¹ "The Fair of May Fair," CII (1832), 538.
some commendation. Also, all phases of human nature that are so handled as to effect a triumph of good and a punishment of evil are deemed proper subject matter for a novelist. In making their decisions with regard to subject matter, the reviewers seem to have been actuated chiefly by one thought; namely, that subject matter must be such that the following may be said of the novel presenting it: "Still the chaste maiden and the prudent wife shall turn these leaves with no revolting hand, nor blush for having read them."  

Now to consider terms used in discussions of rules for plot construction. In a journal published during the romantic era it is somewhat interesting, even startling, to note the unqualified approval given the application of traditional principles of composition to plots of novels—at least in a few reviews. Evidently those terms most frequently mentioned are connected with unity; and, although there is no insistence upon strict observance of the three unities, unwarranted and excessive infringement of them all is severely attacked. This attack on Mrs. Trollope's *The Refuge in America* is a case in point:

We must pass over the summary method in which Mrs. Trollope deals with her dramatis personae, the broad caricature of the society at Rochester and Washington, and some other and slighter faults as licences; but the frequent episodes, leading to nothing, are outrageous. A novelist is not, it is true, bound like a French tragic author, to the strict observance of the unities; but there is a rule nevertheless, to which every one short of Baron Munchausen

1 "John De Lancaster," LXXIX (1809), 333.
is assemblage, and not even Prince Hussein's tapestry, or the flying tailor, ever made such free use of what the Yankees call their "locomotives," as do our trans-Atlantic wanderers.

As for unity of action, we have an American minister, a ci-devant Colonel and frequenter of the London halls, introduced to our notice in the back settlements, for no other purpose than to decoy our hero into a pitfall over the cataract of Niagara, in which charitable purpose however he is frustrated by his own niece, who of course marries the said Lord for her pains. The reverend Colonel then retires, and being inconvenient is made to die of fright lest his reputation should be injured;—this is in America however, where they tell hard stories.1

Though the moderate observance of unities is considered a good thing, it is notable that they are not defined and explained in any detail. Therefore, there is no way of knowing exactly to what extent the reviewers believe the traditional requirements should be followed and precisely what they mean by the unity of action. Nothing is said of the third unity in the review of Emma, but the fact is pointed out that

the unities of time and place are well preserved; the language is chaste and correct; and if 'Emma' be not allowed to rank in the very highest class of modern Novels, it certainly may claim at least a distinguished degree of eminence in that Species of composition.2

All three unities, however, are mentioned in the review of A Traveller's Tale of the Last Century:

Adhering faithfully to the legitimate unities, not only of time, but of place and action, Miss Spence has produced


2 LXXXVI (1816), 248.
a story, which, from its progressive interest, and its strong development of character, deserves to be ranked among the most successful efforts in the modern school of fiction. It is a tale of mystery of rather a higher cast and quality than the mere novel, and, by its striking alternations of dramatic incident, with vivid descriptions of natural scenery, will remind the reader of Mrs. Radcliffe's exquisite performance, "The Romance of the Forest."

Surely, the adherence to unities and to other principles of composition, though not required, is considered by reviewers to be an excellent and a praiseworthy procedure on the part of the writers of novels. Since little or no specific information with regard to the theories of the reviewers concerning these principles of composition and no definitions are given, it is questionable whether or not the reviewers interpret the unities when applied to fiction exactly as did the classical critics of the drama. At any rate, it is important that such neo-classical rules or principles are still considered good.

In these critical reviews of the early nineteenth century, the value of realism in plot is also greatly appreciated; but there is a great variance of opinion about what constitutes realism. Some reviewers insist upon factual accuracy, especially with regard to historical treatments; and to them that is what realism means; some

1 "A Traveller's Tale of the Last Century," LXXXIX (1619), 677.

2 The term realism does not itself occur in the criticism, though real and reality do. I have used it here in its broadest significance to cover all types of imitations—those faithful to universal principles (essence), those faithful to variable, individual details of life (accidents), those which might be conceded to be likely under certain circumstances (probability).
are loud in their praises of verisimilitude; others praise
truth to human nature or truth to universal facts; and
still others, probability. These various terms and theories
are so closely related that it is almost impossible to
classify them with a reasonable degree of accuracy. There­
fere, in the following discussion much overlapping of terms
is to be expected; but out of the confusion it is possible
that some outstanding facts may emerge that will indicate
the reviewers' attitudes toward the meaning of the terms
and the specific theories indicated by each.

First, there comes to the reader's attention the
matter of historical or factual accuracy-- imitations of
the immediate world, of living people or of those who have
lived, of events that have happened. In the main, where
facts and history are concerned the reviewers insist upon
complete and detailed accuracy, which they indicate by
terms like fact, truth, and accurate. Hence, they mete out
very severe criticism to some historical novels and to
others founded upon known facts. Almost regrettfully, one
reviewer admits that, though "founded on Historic Facts,"
the background of Bannockburn is "of too remote a period
to apprehend any material charges of anachronism."
Scott's works, on the contrary, the reviewers charge
with factual inaccuracies and anachronisms. Especially

1 xci (1821), 431.
does Kenilworth receive such criticism. In the case of Bedegauntlet, however, it may not be so much factual inaccuracy as impropriety which arouses criticism, for Scott allows his Quaker to use "some very strange and un-Quaker-like language." The reviewer opines sadly— in a parenthesis— that Scott does this "(for want of knowing more of his subject)." In case the general historical truth and ordinary accuracy are preserved, however, the novel based on fact may win the critics' unqualified approval. Anne of Brittany, for instance is commended thus: This story, founded on facts, is well-conducted, and does credit to the Author's judgment, in selecting incidents which might admit of this embellishment of individual character without violating the truth of history.

The ideal of the reviewers combines all the features mentioned in the preceding excerpts from reviews, as a glance at the following passage will prove:

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1 See "To Mr. Urban," XCI (1821), 389 and 520 and "Miscellaneous Correspondence," XCI (1821), 389, 387, where there are mentioned Scott's errors in having Leicester point to the Star of the Order of the Garter, in having Elizabeth quote "MidNight's Dream" at a time when Shakespeare could have been "only eleven years of age," and in having numerous other "time" errors.

2 "Bedegauntlet, a Tale of the Eighteenth Century," XCIV (1824), 559. See also "The Jesuits," CII (1832), 239 and "The Tor Hill," XCVII (1827), 432.

On the events connected with these circumstances, Mrs. Bray has framed a most amusing and spirited Romance, strictly adhering to the material and even the minor details of real history, describing, with no small antiquarian knowledge and precision, the manners of the time; interspersing her work with sound moral reflections, with lively poetical images, and exhibiting in the progress of her story a great variety of characters drawn with much truth to nature, distinctness of definition, and knowledge of the human heart.

Thus, one sees that accuracy in major and in minor historical matters—complete but not affectedly pedantic—when added to fidelity to nature as well as to moral reflections, forms a synthesis considered eminently satisfactory by the majority of the reviewers in the Gentleman's. It should not be forgotten, however, that detailed fidelity to facts is the type of realism demanded in novels based upon actual people or events.

There is another higher type of realism required of purely fictional material and, indeed, sometimes of historical fiction—that is, a resemblance to general truth or a type of verisimilitude. At times the air of reality required is of the best type based on universal truths and effected by probability. It uses details simply to aid the effect. But sometimes there may be a superficial kind of realism achieved through the clever use of realistic details, but not based on essential verity.

The latter type of reality is achieved in Godwin's Mandeville, in which "Names are borrowed from contemporary

1 "Iwhitehoods, a Romance," XCVIII (1828), 154.
history, which are of course intended to give a sort of reality to the tale. Evidently the reviewer understands verisimilitude, though he does not use the term, and feels that Godwin falls a little short of a perfect verisimilitude because of his method; yet the author does present a kind of unsophisticated verisimilitude, a type to be found in many novels of a very different sort. The Reformer, for instance, has a "sprightliness of the dialogue," which "is kept up just so long as to preserve the illusion of the scene, by making the reader believe that well educated people can and do speak thus in real life; . . ." In both of these novels a type of realism is effected by different means.

The novel Sophia also has "an air of reality," and so does the story Village Anecdotes. Of the latter it is said:

This novel has very little the air of fiction. The author has aimed at something so like the truth, that her tale may be easily mistaken for a reality. It displays at once simplicity and variety; simplicity in the descriptions, and variety in the characters; all, apparently copied from nature, and all written from the heart.

Though the theory of verisimilitude has been clearly indicated in the criticism just discussed, other terms like

1 "Mandeville," LXXVII (1817), 534-535.
2 "The Reformer," CII (1832), 154.
3 "Sophia; or The Dangerous Indiscretion," LXXXVIII (1818), 146.
4 "Village Anecdotes," LXXIV (1804), 861.
colours of reality or air of reality have taken its place;
but there are several reviews in which the term verisimili-
tude or vraisemblance occurs. Taking first Tales of my
Father and his Friends, one learns that

They have all a certain melodramatic air which in labouring
for effect seems to reject the probable--they want that
admixture of vraisemblance which could beguile us for an
instant into a belief that we were perusing narratives of
real life,—nor is there in the construction of the tales,
that originality which might partially redeem the faults of
which we complain.1

Here vraisemblance is coupled with probability; and the
implication is that, to be verisimilar, a work of fiction must
have essential truth as its basis and probability even in
its accidental features. It may be noted en passant that
the presence of originality (creative invention) appears
to be regarded as a partial excuse for lack of verisimilitude.

The same idea of the necessity of a basis of universal
truth to nature is to be inferred in the comment that Mrs.
Carey's Lasting Impressions has "an air of nature and veri-
similitude in its various and often high-wrought scenes,
which at once pleases the imagination, and satisfies the
judgment."2

One again finds the term verisimilitude in this
somewhat romantically phrased discussion of Scott's Anne
of Geierstein:

He has withdrawn the veil of past centuries, rolled away
the clouds and darkness which had settled on a romantic

1 "Tales of my Father and his Friends," XCIV (1824),
624.
2 "Lasting Impressions," XCIV (1824), 451.
period, and presented to us a vivid representation of
manners and customs, the relics of expiring feudalism, and
thus revived for us the spirit of those stirring times which
were not less remarkable for the high and glorious achieve­
ments they produced, than for the treachery and deceit that
deformed their brightest annals. It is in these contrasts,
and with these varying materials, that Sir Walter Scott
works, and revels,— the verisimilitude is perfect— no
clumsy anachronisms shock the taste of the antiquary, and
no historical discrepancies confuse the judgement of the
well-informed student of by-gone times;— yet over all is
(sic) cast the hues of a brilliant imagination, while a
correct judgment and a classic purity of fiction render the
perusal as delightful to the general reader as it is re­
freshing to the scholar, and recreating to men of all
enlightened and liberal profession.

From the above passage, which begins in a decidedly romantic
vein, much reasonable information may be gleaned on the
subject of verisimilitude. The reader infers that, especially
in the case of historical romances, verisimilitude requires
the accurate presentation of all known facts and the employ­
ment of judgment in the imaginative parts. This is another
way of stating what has already been pointed out in the
discussion of the first type of realism— namely, that all
facts, people, or actual events introduced into a novel
must be literally true to fact and that the imaginative
part of the novel must be based upon probability and essential
truth if the highest type of verisimilitude is to be achieved.
Now this is obviously a blending of the theories of veri­
similitude and of factuality— a blending perhaps inevitable
in the criticism of a novel uniting the actual and the
imaginative.

1 XCIV (1829), 523.
There are other terms descriptive of various types of realism or imitation. For example, there are the often-encountered words **truth to nature**. At times the words indicate, as they did often in the eighteenth century and even earlier, a fidelity to the physical and objective nature of men or things in the universe; they may even denote a fidelity to essences, to universal truths. In the first case, the realism is based on observation only; in the second case, on understanding and reasoning or even, according to some romantic critics, on transcendent feeling and intuitive perception. The last named interpretation is, of course, the one most definitely romantic and modern.

Very often, especially in considering fidelity to human nature, the nineteenth-century reviewers discuss morals, ethical principles of conduct, or general truths—all of which apparently mean the same thing to them. Because Anna Maria Porter, for example, is careful to preserve a certain fidelity to human nature and to the likely experiences of human nature (as she sees them), but above all because she places more emphasis on moral teaching than on fidelity to any type of universal truth, the reviewer with great satisfaction quotes the following section taken from the "Preface to The Hungarian Brothers": "To draw Nature as accurately as her acquaintance with it would allow, was the intention of the author; and to produce, from the circumstances of the story, some useful moral, was her aim."

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1 LXXIX (1809), 955.
This tendency to associate the aesthetic with moral and ethical truth, and yet to insist upon the moral first is a characteristic of the early nineteenth-century reviewers. Here, of course, the moral is still related vaguely to the religious and ethical principles. The next step is to identify the moral and aesthetic completely and to seek to show that the two are one. But that comes later. Now the reviewer is content to praise a union of moral teaching with truth to nature in which the moral or ethical purpose is given the advantage.

Although, as has been indicated above, its type of verisimilitude is open to slight criticism, Godwin's *Mandeville* is commended for the faithful representation of "deep and long revolved sentiment; and some of the secret movements of the human heart," as well as for its presentation of "general truths."¹ Here again, however, the praise is awarded more because of the truths presented than because of any fidelity to the inner qualities of mankind as intuitively perceived by the author. This emphasis on "inner nature" is a romantic growth, as is also the indefinite use of "truth," which may denote ethical principles of conduct or underlying universal verities.

There are many reviews, however, in which truth to nature is judged to be of major importance. In some of them are to be found references to holding a mirror up to mankind

¹ *LXXXVII* (1817), 534.
or nature. Cumberland, for instance, remarks:

Whether in Novel, Drama, or in Poem, I love the mirror that presents mankind in amiable lights; nor can I think that frowns or wrinkles are a mark of wisdom, or that asperity becomes the fact of Critick or Philosopher.¹

He obviously champions half-truths and would have unpleasant things omitted. The realism resulting from such a procedure would be only a pseudo-realism, not even faithful to all objective truth or reality.

The reviewer of Hannah More's Coelebs in Search of a Wife is interested in the fact that the novel gives evidence of the author's "holding the mirror up to nature."² The nature in question is that externally considered, concerning which information may be got by the observation of appearances and actions of men.

In the succeeding criticism of The New Forest, the nature mentioned is not merely human nature, but all objective nature: "Here is all life, animation, interest, and excitement; here everything is in perfect harmony, true to nature, and in good keeping."³ The use of "harmony" (unity of aesthetic effect) and "good keeping" (propriety) with "true to nature" is illustrative of the indiscriminate use of terms, with no effort being made by the critics to

¹ "John De Lancaster," LXXIX (1809), 333.
² LXXIX (1809), 151. For other examples see "The Viser Marries," LXXIII (1813), 52 and "Modern Vanners," LXXXVII (1817) 531-532.
³ XCIX (1829), 147.
limit or define the applications of the terms. Surely, 
harmony has not the exact meaning which it has in Ben 
Jonson's Discoveries; but what its new meaning is, one can 
only guess. In keeping, I believe, denotes the old idea 
of suitable or appropriate.

Thus far, there have been discussed briefly complete 
or partial fidelity to human nature and fidelity to all 
objective or factual nature; but nothing has been said of 
the type of truth denoted in the following philosophically 
worded passage--a truth of a nebulous, somewhat universal 
variety:

If History is Moral Philosophy teaching by example, 
Poetry and Fable are Moral Philosophy personified by Fancy. 
If what is personified be not truth, it is spurious; and 
(it may be added) not the fruit of genuine and solid genius. 
We do not mean truth in its narrow sense of matter of fact: 
we extend it to the mental movements; to all those visionary 
appearances, and internal impulses, which are native to 
the intellect and the soul.¹

This may mean a great deal, or it may mean little. The 
wording is influenced by romanticism; but the theory expressed 
seems a sound one of fidelity to the essential truths, on 
which the highest type of realism would certainly be based. 
It may, however, only refer to some knowledge or comprehension 
of the effusions of the soul and to such spiritual informa-
tion as may be gained by a genius—a person of increased 
sensibilities and exceptional understanding and instinctive 
knowledge. The former interpretation seems more likely.

Closely related to this fidelity to the universal

¹ "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 530.
or the essential is probability, a term often used by the
reviewers and often closely associated with plausibility
and credibility. For example, here is a general attack
on the incredible (or improbable) presentations of novelists
and an insistence on a type of realism:

Here, however, we stop: for it is still a transcendent
comfort, that we do not live in such a world as Novelists
and Poets create, where great scrapes, which may be easily
avoided by a little common sense, form the leading inci-
dents, upon the presumption that they are unavoidable
evils.¹

Such a novel as Maurice and Berghetta, which is, like those
attacked above, "incredible,"² is scarcely to be deemed
probable; but, if a novel is credible, it is also likely
to be probable. This is not the case with a plausible
novel, for probability usually has to be based on universal
truths. That plausibility is not based on such truths is
made obvious in the following passage, Horatian in tone:

No writer has ever long enjoyed fame, who has given
himself up to write what was plausible, rather than what was
true. The plausible writer may be easily piquant, striking,
and, to half-informed readers, amusing, so long as the pre-
vailing prejudices and fashions which he flatters continue
to rule; but as soon as these subside, the incredulus odi
[Horace's phrase] soon comes; the charlatanism is detected;
and the temporary favourite is cast away for an imposter.³

Yet the reviewer of Lionel links plausibility and probability,
when he remarks that the fable of the story is "neither
probable nor plausible."⁴ Though often used thus together,

¹ "The Renegade," XCII (1822), 253.
² XC (1820), 248.
³ XCI (1821), 529.
⁴ "Lionel," LXXXVIII (1818), 147.
the two terms have completely different meanings. Probability implies a basis of essential verities, and only the accidental factors may vary from exact factual accuracy. Even they must appear true or likely to become so. Plausibility suggests no such basis, and the accidental qualities may seem superficially true; but there is always the connotation that they merely seem, and are not, true.

It is accordingly chiefly with probability that the reviewers are concerned, but often they appear to have no clear idea of the meaning of the term and to confuse it with plausibility and verisimilitude. This fact will become clearer as reviews of so-called probable books are considered. But first, those of improbable books should be given a passing glance.

The critics constantly decry improbability. In a letter written to Mr. Urban about The Monastery, there is this passage:

When I have been reading of Characters introduced in this book, which our Histories have taught me to consider as true, I am surprised to find them rendered fabulous, by being described in the same chapter in which a preternatural appearance is telling a fortune. What can be more absurd than to say that a man, awake, and in his senses too, should see an airy vision in the shape of a woman, who after having sung several very wild songs, vanished away?

1 XC (1820), 405. For others attacks on improbability see "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 531; "The Ionian," XCIIV (1824), 256; "The Husband and the Lover," LXXI (1811), 260; "Wieland," LXXI (1811), 564; "The Tuileries," CI (1831), 248.
But, supposing this work is not what it aspires to, supposing that instead of a History it be a Novel, and on that account may deal in fictions, yet still that does not justify anything that is so improbable as I have here remarked. Horace says,

"Pieta, voluptatis causa, sint proxima veris."

This rule of that Great Critic has been in this book most certainly violated; . . . 1

This letter is remarkable, not only for its author's insistence on probability, but also for the mention of Horace as an authority on the subject. If there is "morality" 2 in the novel, however, the reviewers feel that improbability may be overlooked.

No matter how much the reviewers may censure, or excuse, improbability, they always praise probability. One reviewer lauds the novel Home as "a relation of probable events;" 3 and the critic of Delusion remarks that "the fable, if such it may be called, is carried on with probability to the conclusion." 4 The probability spoken of in these reviews is very likely a legitimate probability with its basis in essential truths and its accidental qualities likely but not necessarily factually true.

One may infer that there is a confusion of factual accuracy and probability in the review of A Traveller's Tale,

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2 "The Refusal," LXX (1810), 355. For a similar theory see "The Decision," LXXXII (1812), 59.

3 LXXIII (1803), 59.

4 LXXXVIII (1818), 243.
even though this would not seem to be the case if one noticed this sentence: "It would perhaps be too severe to reduce this department of Literature to still narrower limits, by insisting not only on the possible, but the probable." The impression of the confusion comes from this somewhat satiric passage:

If there be any romance in real life, it is most likely to occur in that brief period with which romance writers exclusively concern themselves. On a fair calculation the average extent of this period might be fixed at five years, and it would certainly not exceed seven. A heroine is scarcely producible under the age of fifteen, and she must positively be disposed of ere her twenty-first year be passed.

Behind the reviewers' praises of probability may be the reading public's demand for it. Some such idea is expressed in this excerpt from a review of *Edric the Forester*:

Of the credulity which might prevail when "Edric the Forester" is represented to have run his career, in the days of William the Conqueror, we have not now to determine; but, in the more enlightened period of the nineteenth century, the reader will require something like probability in the construction of a narrative, however, ingeniously his fancy may be arrested by the imprisonment of Knights and Damsels in the turrets of a Castle, or by the effects of supernatural appearances, or a guilty conscience.

After examining many reviews, anyone will admit that in them probability is recognized as an almost necessary quality for any good novel; moreover, improbability is to be overlooked only if the novel presents an excellent moral

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1 LXXXIX (1819), 623.

2 "Edric the Forester; or The Mysteries of the Haunted Chamber," LXXXVIII (1818), 617.
teaching or is admirable in every other respect. Usually the term probability is used in such a manner as to indicate that the reviewers mean a probability based on recognized essential truths, but in one case at least there is an apparent confusion of probability with factuality.

In summarizing the various types of realism (or imitations) already treated, I wish to restate a few important facts. Factual truth or actual realism is insisted upon in any novel in which real events, scenes, or characters are introduced—especially with respect to those events, scenes, or characters. No specious air of truth is acceptable. Each detail must be as it is, or was, in life. The imaginative part of the narrative must be in keeping with the actual historical part. Verisimilitude, or resemblance to truth or reality, is required of fictional material. This type of realism is quite different from factual reality, since it is based not upon facts, but usually upon universal truths with the addition of some realistic details. A third type of realism, closely related to the two just mentioned is that described merely as "truth to nature" or "fidelity to truth." The type of realism usually denoted thus is characterized by imitation of objective or physical realities, those concerning which knowledge may be gained by the five senses.

One of the most important so-called types of realism is probability, closely related to the other terms mentioned and even related indirectly by some writers to credibility
and plausibility. Since the term plausibility implies a kind of specious truth, in strict application it should not be related to probability. But if the latter is used loosely, as it often is, to denote a reasonableness or apparent truth, it may be vaguely related. Credibility is somewhat closer to probability since, to be probable, a novel must usually be fairly credible; or to be credible, it must be somewhat probable. The term probability is used in a vague fashion, but it usually means likely to be true. In its best form it is based on essential or universal truth, and often the critics show a complete understanding of it.

All of these types of realism appear, to the reviewers, necessary. Moreover, the loose and vague application of the terms designating the various types and the confusion of the different types of realism is typical of the era. However, the interpretation and use of probability and verisimilitude may, in many cases, be termed neo-classical.

Also very necessary and important to the plot is an excellent ending. The terms dénouement (or ending) and catastrophe are so closely related that they may be considered together. Of course, the former may apply to a happy or an unhappy ending; whereas the latter refers only to unhappy endings. Since catastrophe, traditionally applied to an entire tragic experience, has been narrowed to such an
extent that it is now used strictly to denote the tragic outcome of an experience or a series of experiences, it is synonymous with the broader term dénouement or ending. Therefore, the critics' attitudes toward the requirements for dénouements and catastrophes of various novels may reasonably be discussed together.

That an ending is thought to be a very important part of the plot is a point made in this discussion of Charles Brockden Brown's Carvin and Other Tales:

The Tales are in an unfinished state, owing to the decease of the author during their composition; this, it may be urged, does not in any degree diminish the merit of the work; we will grant it to be so; but it certainly cannot fail to detract from the interest of the story. A Tale, like a Sermon, should be well wound up at the conclusion; if it be not, all the force of the argument, all the beauty of the language, are 'wasted on the desert air.'

Granting the need for an end or a "conclusion," one wonders next about what constitutes an excellent dénouement. That is a question which may possibly be answered after a study of several excerpts from review.

A "lame and disappointing" ending, such as Godwin's Handeville presents, is naturally to be avoided. So too is a "dénouement" like the one in The Priest, though there

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1 XCII (1822), 622.

2 "Handeville," LXXXVII (1817), 535. I should like to point out another romantic tendency, illustrated in the above passage, the application of such adjectives as lame and disappointing (often applied to human beings) to fiction.
is no specific critical reason given for the adverse criticism, save the implied one of exaggerated absurdity. Nearly all reviewers agree too that the dénouement should not be foreseen, should indeed be especially "well concealed." Nearly all reviewers agree too that the dénouement should not be foreseen, should indeed be especially "well concealed." There is, however, little indication that these reviewers recognize the fact that mere concealment is not enough. The problem is one of motivation, or, again, of probability.

Often the dénouement is associated with a moral or with poetic justice; and though it may be an exaggeration to say that endings should, in reviewers' opinion, always present a "moral" or "poetic justice," it would not be an exaggeration to say that such endings especially are certain of praise. Zastrossi, for instance, is indeed exceptional in the critic's opinion, for, as he says:

The story is so artfully conducted that the reader cannot easily anticipate the dénouement, which is conducted on the principles of moral justice: and, by placing the scene on the Continent, the Author has availed himself of characters and vices which, however useful in narratives of this description, thank God, are not to be found in this country.

Some part of the satisfaction which the reviewer feels in the dénouement of the novel may be due, not especially to

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1 "The Priest," XCI (1823), 54.

2 "The Refusal," LXX (1810), 355. For a similar statement see "The Three Brothers," LXXIV (1804), 104. There dénouement denotes the end of each episode and incident, not the finale of the book.

3 "Tales of the Ardennes," XCV (1825), 626; and "Xariamne," XCV (1825), 624-625-- the first, attacked, the second praised for "poetic justice."

4 LXXX (1810), 258.
the dénouement, but to his own somewhat self-satisfied assurance that such vices as are mentioned are not to be found in his own country.

Thus, the ideal dénouement of the critics is one not completely foreseen from the beginning. It is characterized by moral or poetic justice, and it fittingly concludes the events of the whole book. In one review, however, it is to be remembered that dénouement, instead of designating the ending of the entire book, apparently denoted simply the ending of various episodes or incidents. In that case, all that has been said of the dénouement still applies, except that these pseudo-dénouements may fittingly conclude only an episode or incident instead of an entire book.

The catastrophe, by which term a gloomy or tragic dénouement is known, usually subscribes to the same rules governing the dénouement and adds a few principles of its own. In discussing Kenilworth, the reviewer asserts:

At the close of the melancholy catastrophe with which the Romance concludes, the mind is too deeply sunk in gloom; and the intense interest excited throughout is apt to be absorbed in the sad complication of human woes. Some happier circumstances might have been successfully interwoven, in order to excite more pleasurable sensations at the dénouement of the tale.¹

This theory of putting in "some happier circumstances" for exciting "more pleasurable sensations"¹ is one which

¹ "Kenilworth," XCI (1821), 253.
may possibly be traced to the romantic influence, but probably it is traceable to the ancient practice of pandering to the theatrocracy.

Almost the same thought is expressed in this criticism of *The Tale of Massenburg*:

> It is written in a familiar and easy style; but the denouement is enough to give the fair reader the horrors. It has been defined that tragedies end in the church-yard, and comedies in the church. So we consider that romances of horror should terminate like the former, and novels and tales like the latter; but our authoress has made her hero a suicide, and her heroine a maniac without one redeeming or pleasurable emotion to relieve our sorrow at the fatal catastrophe.¹

The ground on which the reviewer bases his request for a "pleasurable emotion" is one of appropriateness. He decides that a completely tragic ending is inappropriate in a novel, and he reaches his decision after consulting his own personal preferences and some vague impression of parallels existing between principles governing tragedies and comedies and those governing romances of horror and novels. But his distinguishing fictional types is unusual.

Indeed, reviewers generally deplore tragic endings or catastrophes in the novels. One reads with considerable interest this advice given the author of *The Vortex*:

> In a new Edition, we recommend Mr. Dallas to expunge the concluding note: for nobody likes Novels to end badly, unless the instruction turns upon the catastrophe, as in George Barnwell, the Father.²

Under only one condition, then is a catastrophe acceptable in a novel—when "the instruction turns upon the catastrophe;"²

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¹ "The Tale of Massenburg," XCV (1825), 62.
² XC (1820), 530.
for instruction is more important than the reader's satisfaction.

If the novel does have a catastrophe, what qualities, in addition to a moral value, must it have, or should it have? Apparently satisfying to the reviewer is the catastrophe in Ryderley's novel, The Catastrophe. He merely writes thus:

Some of the incidents as well as the catastrophe remind us of the popular but dangerous tale of Walter and Charlotte; the personae dramatis, however, are more various, and of course the interest is heightened.1

Such a statement furnishes very little information about the catastrophe; but possibly one may assume that the catastrophe is "affecting,"1 as well as interesting, since the entire story is so described. Slightly more enlightening is this brief excerpt from a review of Leolin Abbey:

Most readers will frankly acknowledge the delight these volumes have afforded them, which are constructed with that dramatic skill which prevents the slightest anticipation of the catastrophe, and are related in a strain of fervid eloquence alternately serious and gay according to the changeful complexion of the incidents.2

In conclusion, a few important facts should be repeated. With reference to the meaning of the two terms just discussed, there are only one or two remarks to be made. Dénouement mainly designates the happy or unhappy ending of a complete novel, though at times it applies only to the ending of an episode. Catastrophe, showing the nineteenth century influence, does not refer to a complete

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1 LXXIII (1803), 951.
2 "Leolin Abbey," XC (1820), 247.
tragic experience, but denotes only the tragic ending of an experience, or experiences, in a novel. In general, the rules applied to denouements may be expected to apply also to catastrophes, or tragic denouements. Both should be unforeseen or at least not definitely anticipated by the reader. Denouements should represent moral justice; moreover, it is better for the novel not to end in a catastrophe unless it is necessary for it to do so in order that moral justice may be done or a moral lesson taught. Even then, the more acceptable type of catastrophe is not to be wholly tragic, but is to present some happier circumstances that will arouse pleasurable emotions, thus alleviating the deep sorrow arising in the heart of the reader as a result of his reading the catastrophe. This last requisite is, of course, peculiar to the catastrophe and does not apply to the general dénouement.

Before turning to the very important matter of the function of the novel, one may properly review briefly the main points made concerning the plots of novels. The plot should be interesting, simple, probable, and possessed of the power to affect the reader's imagination. It should be written on subject matter that is interesting, simple, appropriate, and based on universal feelings and emotions; but above all it should be moral. In presenting this subject matter, the novelists, in the opinion of a few reviewers, should pay particular attention to the unities. They should see that their works also have either one type,
or preferably all types, of realism—factual accuracy, truth to nature, verisimilitude, and probability. The last three types are so closely related that it is very difficult to distinguish them, and all may be traced to classical or neo-classical origins. So, too, may the term catastrophe, although its application strictly to the tragic dénouement is a comparatively new development. It is the business of the writer to see that his novel not end in a catastrophe unless the moral justice demands it; and it is also his business to see that the catastrophe or the happy dénouement be unforeseen.

All of this criticism shows the influence of neo-classicism, especially in terms; but the meanings of the terms and the applications of them often have a vagueness that may or may not be a result of the romantic influence. Certainly romantic, however, is the emphasis on emotions and on the human heart— an emphasis noted in a number of reviews from 1816 to 1832.

C Function of the Novel

The same mixture of influences detected in the general study of the plot may be discovered in the study of the function of the novel. The classical and neo-classical theory of the useful and pleasing is perhaps the ruling theory, but the useful receives the greater homage. However, in the wording of the critical passages and in the type of teachings most consistently praised, romanticism makes
itself felt.

All novels should serve some purpose. This fact is universally agreed upon by the reviewers. The only disagreement is with regard to what specifically shall be that purpose. In discussing the question the reviewers almost constantly use a few common terms—amusement, entertainment, utility or usefulness, morals and instruction. A few critics imply that the major function of a novel should be to entertain; a few indicate that a novel should above all be useful in presenting a moral lesson or other instructive material; a very great number demand that a novel furnish both entertainment and instruction. In short, the Soration utile-dulci is still in force, but the utile is likely to be limited mainly to moral teaching.

First, there comes to one's attention the theory that amusement is the major function of the novel. Richard Cumberland writes thus at the end of the third book of his John De Lancaster: "I have only to say, that I am doing my utmost to amuse you; and if you shall lay down this volume with any appetite for the second, I hope you will not find that my exertions flag."¹ Assuredly, this statement is an indication of his opinion concerning the importance of the novel's furnishing amusement. However, one must consider the fact that he also declares he is

¹ LXXIX (1809), 333.
striving to amuse and edify" his readers. Even here it may be significant that he places "amuse" before "edify."

Certainly amusement is considered foremost in this passage:

We must, therefore, confine ourselves to saying, every collection varies in the excellence of its parts, consequently it is the case in the Romantic Tales of Mr. Lewis; but we cannot help observing that we were amused with the least interesting, and highly entertained with the best of them.

The implication is that, if a novel be entertaining, various defects are to be overlooked, since it has performed its most important service. Almost the same thought is expressed in this sentence written about Jane Austen's *Emma:* "It is amusing, if not instructive; and has no tendency to deteriorate the heart." In the latter passage the reviewer considers amusement in a novel to be of more importance than instruction. He hastens to add, however, that the novel will do no harm. Therefore, from these two passages just examined, the student draws the conclusion that a main, though not the main, function of a fictional work is to furnish entertainment without doing any harm to the

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1 Ibid., p. 333.

2 "Romantic Tales," LXXIX (1809), 142-43.

3 "Emma," LXXXVI (1816), 249. For other examples of concern about amusement, see "Italian Tales. Tales of Humour, Gallantry and Romance, Selected and Translated from the Italian," XCV (1825), 616, where "satire" is deemed an unsatisfactory, "means" of amusing. See also "She Thinks to Herself," LXXXIII (1813), 236.
heart (whatever the latter phrase may mean).

A greater number of critics place usefulness far above entertainment in the novel and consequently demand—in the neo-classical tradition—that novels give some type of useful information or teach some moral lesson, as well as amuse. Moreover, many pay no attention at all to the idea that a novel should amuse, but center their whole attention on its moral or instructive features.

In an article written on Reverend Edward Manning’s *An Essay on Light Reading, as it may be supposed to influence Moral Conduct and Literary Taste*, there is to be found so much information on the failure of the novel to perform its proper service that some detailed attention may deservedly be given it. According to the author of the article, we have long wished that some champion would stand forth to advocate the cause of Morals and Literature, to rouse the attention of those who have the care of youth to a proper sense of their duty, and to warn them of the evils which must necessarily and unavoidably result from the perusal of such abominable trash as modern Novels. This *desideratum* is at length most ably supplied.

Having thus unquestionably sanctioned the work of Reverend Manning, the critic hastens to review in great detail what he considers the perfectly justified attacks on specific writers and their works. Considering first those works "excelling in interest, ability, and the power of doing mischief," he declares:

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1 "An Essay on Light Reading, as it may be supposed to influence Moral Conduct and Literary Taste," LXVIII (1808), 914-915.
Under this head, Fielding's works claim a priority of rank, and, first, "Tom Jones," a book probably read by almost every male and female in this country who can read at all, displaying considerable wit, talent, and great immorality.\(^1\)

As for Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* and *Roderick Random*, the critic affirms that he agrees with the author "that the female who has read these works has nothing bad to learn."\(^1\) Moreover, the "Letters of Worter" are "contemptible and infamous";\(^1\) and under no circumstances are "wit and talent" a sufficient excuse for immorality in a novel. Indeed, excellent novels are actually more dangerous than those not demonstrating wit and talent. Moreover, it is no satisfactory defense to maintain "The most obscene and licentious characters in them are copies from life, and therefore ought to be known."\(^1\) There are a number of other somewhat pertinent remarks made to the effect that Mr. Mangin is to be considered a competent judge of the worthless, immoral literature since he is a fair critic, inclined to bestow praise where it is due. In the words of the reviewer: "Mr. M. is not one of those snarling critics who condemn every author. He bestows some high and just encomiums on Richardson; and dwells with rapture on Goldsmith."\(^1\) In addition to their being harmful to the morals of readers, the reviewer agrees with Mr. Mangin that modern novels have other pernicious influences. "There is no room to doubt that one of the most frequent causes of unhappy marriages arises

\(^1\) Ibid., pp. 914-915.
from the perusal of Novels. This amusing, but nevertheless serious, condemnation of the novel is just another indirect commendation of the species, for clearly it shows a recognition of the potentialities of this long despised literary genre.

In short, novels judged to have harmful effects on morals are severely attacked; nor are such novels excused because they are copies of life or because they give evidence of the talent of their authors. All modern novels appear to be banned, but some older ones are considered worthy of being read. The important point is that here is recognition of the power of the novel, and here is a specific indication of how strongly the reviewers felt about its being the chief function of the novel to reform or at least to edify.

The number of reviews in which the major purpose of the novel is given as the teaching of morals and in which the term moral actually appears, is great. It would, therefore, be almost impossible to discuss them all; but a few may be mentioned as examples. A general remark with which many reviewers would agree and which may be regarded as somewhat typical is this passage on novels:

If they impress moral truths and augment knowledge of life, no objection can be reasonably made to a perusal of them; and if they do treat chiefly of courting (under

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prudent forms), and end in matrimony, certainly that is
the only moral and legitimate object of courtship.¹

Preferably each novel should have "a moral which he who
runs may read."² Then there will be no excuse for the
reader's not understanding the lesson taught. It is
interesting to note also the very sanctimonious phraseology
used in recommending the morals in specific books, particu-
larly to "female readers," who seem to have been thought
either to be in greater need of such lessons or to be more
susceptible to such teachings than male readers. This is a
typical example:

It (A New England Tale) has a healthy spirit pervading it,
which is highly favourable to its longevity, and we can
safely recommend it to our female readers as a work of good
taste and sound morals; inculcating forcibly and illustrating
admirably, those difficult lessons of genuine practical
religion, submission to the divine appointments and the
necessity of sacrificing every selfish feeling and indulgence
on the altar of Christian duty.³

Particularly lauded were novels which, like
Precaution, showed "the great importance of early education,
in cultivating religious and moral principles,"⁴ or which,
like The Country Curate, "intended to instruct and edify

¹ "Tales of Four Nations," C (1830), 56.
² "Yes and No and Herbert Lacy," LCVIII (1828), 55.
³ "A New England Tale," XCII (1822), 542. For other
passages commending books denoting lessons suitable for
girls, spinsters, wives, and mothers, see "Ontague Newburnh,"
LXXXVII (1817), 612; "Sophia," LXXXVIII (1818), 146;
"Isabella," XCIII (1823), 345-346; "Leonora," XCIX (1829),
619.
⁴ "Precaution," XCI (1821), 264.
observing moralist.¹

Obviously the idea of the critics is that the state of morals is so "relaxed"² that each novelist is to be urged to teach moral lessons whether he thereby loses his entertaining value or not.

The reviewers were not satisfied with requesting the presentation of morals in the novels. They also demanded that the novelist "not palliate any faults in the characters by attractive accompaniments, which weaken the salutary impression through interesting the feelings."³ They even preferred that the moral be further impressed upon the mind of the reader by the author's presentation of poetical justice, which may, by the way, be termed a decided classical survival. Madame D'Arblay is, therefore, congratulated because her novel,

"The Wanderer" is an example of inflexible rectitude, suffering every privation that a fertile imagination could invent, and at length emerging from her miseries, with an unsullied reputation, a pure mind, and a reward such as poetical justice should ever bestow as a return for the exercise of the best qualities of our nature."⁴

It is to "serve as an historical antidote to any lurking

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² "Rome, a Novel," LXXIII (1803), 59.

³ "The Oxonians," C (1830), 253.

remnants of poisonous doctrines that still make their appearance at intervals."

In the review of The Wanderer, moreover, Madame D'Arblay's conception of the function of the novel is quoted by the reviewer thus:

"Divest," she adds, "for a moment the title of novel from its stationary standard of insignificance, and say: what is the species of writing that offers fairer opportunities for conveying useful precepts? It is, or it ought to be, a picture of supposed, but natural and probable human existence. It holds, therefore, in its hands our best affections; it exercises our imagination; it points out the path of honour; and gives to juvenile credulity knowledge of the world, without pain, or repentance; and the lessons of experience without its tears."

Her opinion is, therefore, that the novel is not only to teach morals, but also to give other instruction. This is a view shared by many reviewers, but somehow the moral idea is the one usually given the emphasis. In the majority of the passages just considered the word moral actually occurs, but there are many that may be cited in which moral or religious principles are treated, though the term moral does not appear.

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1 Ibid., pp. 579-581.

Any book attacking the modern philosophy or philosopher is likely to find a sympathetic reviewers, and any author presenting the new philosophy is likely to win at least a rebuke for his pains. St. Godwin, accordingly, is deemed most interesting "when attacking and turning into ridicule the fallacious doctrines absurd principles, and pernicious dogmas, of the modern philosopher."¹

Therefore, reviewers deem the function of the novel as a vehicle for morals and especially for religious principles to be of utmost importance but do not consider that novels should promulgate rigid doctrinal beliefs, bigotry, or especially the new and much despised philosophy. In all of these cases, one again observes that the practical utility of the novel is stressed.

There seems to be no end to these expressions about the usefulness of novels, not only in giving varied instructions, but also in attacking undesirable qualities and traits of all kinds, and in giving desirable information. Terms like judgment, self control, virtue, vice, useful and correcting appear.² Miss Edgeworth's effort at "correcting the

¹ LXX (1800), 160. For another attack on modern "philosophy" see "Henry Willoughby," LXXII (1802), 742.

² "The Village Nightingale and Other Tales," XCIX (1829), 60; "Hardenbrass and Haverill," LXXXVII (1817), 581; "Tragic Tales," XCI (1821), 530; "Mr. Picart's Novel, entitled The Novice or Man of Integrity," CV (1825), 626; "Sir John Chiverton, a Romance," XCVI (1826), 621; "Sir Francis Darnell," XC (1820), 550; "Pidelia," XCI (1821), 540; "Solitary Rambles Through Many Lands," XCVIII, 536.
heart* and at advancing scientific education¹ is adjudged a proper service of fiction; yet there is some doubt as to the efficacy of such a performance.² In general, there is ample evidence of the reviewers' hearty appreciation of the educational possibilities of the novel and of their belief that the utility of novels is of more importance than the entertainment to be furnished by them.

In the case of tragic novels this was especially true. Indeed,

To purge the human heart, and extract from it the first incipient seeds of crime by holding out a terrific picture of its progress and its consequences, has been promulgated by critics from early ages to be the purpose of Tragedy. Lord Brokenhurst is a dreadful tale; but perhaps it is, notwithstanding, much too short.³

Here is the old theory of the purpose of the tragic drama transferred to the tragic novel. Of course, it is somewhat perverted (being given moral significance here) and attenuated in the transfer. Moreover, the traditional theory of catharsis, though perhaps vaguely hinted at, is practically non-existent here, or, if existent, certainly misunderstood. The reviewers have so far departed from

¹ See "Rosamund," XCII (1822), 155; and "Harry and Lucy," XCV (1825), 624.

² "Correction, A Novel," LXXXVIII (1818), 147. See also praise of instruction in "Tales for Mothers," XVIII (1824), 355; "The Son of Genius," LXXIV (1814), 363; "Augustus, or the Ambitious Student," XCVI (1824), 158.

³ "Tragic Tales," XI (1821), 531.
the philosophical method of criticism and bowed so low before the altar of expediency and utilitarianism that they lament a too tragic novel, not for esthetic reasons, but because they fear that the too-tragic novel will be too unpopular for its lesson to be widely disseminated. That thought, doubtless, prompts the following criticism of De Renssey:

_This Novel is deeply tragic through the whole, too much so to procure itself, we fear, that extensive reading which the instruction conveyed by it ought to command._

In addition to the numerous reviews in which there is an emphasis on the moral and practical use of fiction, there are a number in which both the useful and the pleasing functions of the novel are presented; and many reviewers insist upon novels' being both useful and pleasing.

Even the reviewers who insisted upon both the useful and the pleasing features of the novel, however, were sometimes inclined to consider the useful as being the more important. The reviewer of _The History of an Officer's Widow and her Young Family_ discourses at great length on the moral of the novel and only incidentally calls the work "this very interesting little story." In fact, most

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1 "De Renssey, or the Man of Sorrow," XCII (1822), 62.

2 "The History of an Officer's Widow and Her Young Family," LXXIX (1809), 499. See also "The Heart and the Fancy, or Walsinore," LXXXIV (1814), 159-160. For other examples of emphasis on morals or instruction rather than one amusement, see "Josephine; or The Advantages of a Summer," LXXIX (1810), 52; "The Adventures of Poor Puss," LXXX (1810), 52; "Coelebs in Search of a Wife," LXXX (1809), 151; "Maria," LXXXVIII (1818), 146; "Constantia Neville," LXX (1800), 663; "The Son and the Ward," XCIX (1822), 446."
reviewers agree that "It is something for an Author to exercise and amuse the fancy;— it is much more to instruct and elevate while he amuses." ¹

In many cases, however, judging solely from the reviews, one infers that the critics think entertainment and instruction to be equally important. A student is inclined to that decision when he reads, for instance, that Thinks I to Myself is "a most entertaining, and, we should hope, instructive tale, calculated, by laughing with good humour at the follies and absurdities of the day, to exhibit them in such a light, as that all may profit by his admonitions." ² The reader's decision is strengthened when he reads also that Seabrook Village and Its Inhabitants is "an amusing moral Tale."³ But there are a few in which the pleasing motif may be accorded more attention. For instance, this is written about Tales of my Father and His Friends:

The volume, however, may be taken up for the amusement of an idle hour; and in justice to the Author we would add, that the moral he would enforce is always unobjectionable.⁴

When all is considered, it would be unwarranted for

¹ "The Hall of Hellingsley," XCII (1822), 347.
² "Thinks I to Myself," LXIXI (1811), 356.
³ "Seabrook Village and Its Inhabitants, or the History of Mrs. Worthy and Her Family," LXX (1812), 58. See also "Barbeaud, or the Soatherd of Er. Taurus," LXXVIII (1818), 617; "Bannockburn," XCI (1821), 432; "Waldegrave, a Novel," XCII (1829), 252; "Burstwood: A Tale of the Year 1715," XCIV (1824), 256; "Fitz-George," CII (1832), 623; "Tales of the Early Ages," XII (1832), 153.
⁴ "Tales of My Father and His Friends," XCIV (1824), 624. See also "Conradian; or the St. Kildians," LXXXIX (1819), 237; and "Tales of Modern Day," XCIV (1824), 451.
me to say that more than a very few reviewers place the power of a novel to amuse above its power to instruct. Only a few indeed consider the furnishing of entertainment to be the major function of novels. A much greater number believe that the entertaining and instructive powers of a novel are equally important; and a much greater number, though recognizing the importance of both utility and entertainment in novels, consider the utility far more important. The greatest number indicate their belief that the primary function of the novel should be to teach morals (principles of right and wrong applicable to human conduct and thought), or to give additional useful information. This overwhelming insistence on the practical use of the novel is certainly worthy of attention; so is the fact that the terms used in expressing all the theories on this subject have no startlingly new meanings; as has been indicated. Morals is a word usually referring to conventional principles of conduct. The theory, the old one that literature must teach a moral or give useful instruction to justify its existence, probably had its inception in classical times. There is not yet any evidence of the theory (to be expected) that it is not the function of the novel to teach or preach morals, but rather to be moral because, being literature, it must be so. In fact, all of these theories on the function of the novel are basically rather traditional but, of course, not expressive of the extremely rigid idea that the moral lessons which literature must inculcate are actually foreign to the nature of the fictional literature itself. In other words, the novel is not deemed, in and of itself, immoral.
In concluding this treatment of the criticism contained in the Gentleman's Magazine, I wish, not only to summarize the major conclusions to be drawn from the criticism, but also to point out one or two important facts incidentally introduced in the reviews but not given sufficient critical attention to warrant their examination in separate sections of the paper.

In the first place, there is very little mentioned in the reviews concerning the mechanical technique of novel-writing, but there is this remark on the use of notes in novels:

It may be also remarked, that notes, whether personal or illustrative, which have a tendency to bring the reader from the illusion to which he has willingly submitted his imagination, back to the present time, had much better be incorporated in the introduction, or at least be placed at the end of a work of fiction. It is in our opinion, and we care not what authority may sanction a contrary practice, very erroneous judgment to let the reader too frequently behind the scenes.

How this criticism is interesting, not only because it is one of the very few treatments on technique, but also because it clearly indicates the reviewer's conception of the function of the novel to create an "illusion."

There is yet another important point not often repeated in the criticism. Throughout the journalistic reviews the theory that modern fiction is definitely inferior to much older fiction is reiterated. Usually the blame for this is assigned to the authors, or to no specific person; but a

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1 "Fitz of Fitz-Ford," C (1830), 157.
different idea is expressed by the reviewer of Sir Egerton Brydges Tragic Tales. He avers that the decline of fiction may be traced to periodical criticism, which follows "the prejudices and passion of the multitude."¹ This statement suggests Plato's theories concerning the impotence of the theatocracy as a competent judge of literary value and is, indeed, a faint echo of the classical cry that no pandering to the multitude is justifiable. Whether or not the reviewer can be considered correct in his assumption that the pandering quality of periodical criticism is the cause of any decline in fiction is a point which need not be discussed here. But something on the subject may be learned from the information contained in the brief review—to be given below—of the major facts already discussed in this paper.

In general, the criticism contained in the Gentleman's Magazine is somewhat typical of the era in which it is written. The use of old terms along with new ones, the use of traditional terms with their classical meanings and of traditional terms with new meanings, the absence of specific definitions, and the very loose and hazy application of all terms—these practices are characteristic of most of the criticism of the romantic era and certainly of that in the Gentleman's Magazine. On the surface, much of the criticism appears

¹ XCI (1821), 529.
classical or neo-classical in terminology and theory; but especially after 1820 the terms applied to the authors show romantic influence. Some of the theories concerning the novel proper are fairly sound classical and neo-classical ones, but many are influenced by the romanticists' desire to appeal to the heart and to arouse emotions. Little attention is paid to aesthetic values, the emphasis being on utility and psychological appeal.

In this criticism, as has been mentioned, there are statements concerning the author's own personality and character as it projects itself on his work; there are remarks made concerning the value of the work taken objectively as a finished composition, and there are those made about the effect of the work on its reader. In this study no attempt has been made to separate the last two types of criticism; however, the terms (and the theories denoted by them) applicable to the authors have been considered in one section and those applicable to the works of the authors have been considered in another section.

All, or nearly all, of the traditional terms applied to authors have meanings that are somewhat different from the traditional ones. Usually, since they are loosely used and are not defined, they can afford to be, and are, more inclusive than, if not completely different from, the old terms. The ideal author is required to have good sense (an innate ability to appeal to the human heart), knowledge (of the human heart and of human nature), good taste (an
instinctive sense of the appropriate), genius (imaginative, creative and intuitive power), invention and originality (powers of intellectual perception and creative thought), talent, imagination, and the much more frequently mentioned fancy (involving creative activity, spirituality, transcendent understanding, sympathetic feeling, and even a kind of prophetic power). Though the list of requisites is not particularly unusual, the meanings implied in the applications of the terms are unusual. If any proof of the loose, vague use of terms is to be sought, surely it may be found in an examination of the implied definitions of such terms.

Almost the same conclusions may be drawn from a study of the terms applicable to the novels—to the style, descriptions and scenes, characters, plots, and function of a novel.

In considering style and language, I found that, though the meaning of language had not changed, that of style had—at least in a few reviews. Style here has the neoclassical meaning of a habit or method of composition; but what is of more importance—it even denotes, on occasion, the tone or general mood of the work reflecting the author's personality and aesthetic sense. The descriptive terms used with style, such as easy, simple, artificial (unnatural), and powerful (forceful and moving), are terms which have applications. So do ease (general efficiency), force (power), animation, and others applied to language; but there are those
like propriety, that have fairly traditional meanings.

The terms applied to descriptions of scenes and characters also show the influence of changes, either in their meanings or in their particular applications. Commonplace, for example, has the very modern meaning of "mediocre," not the sixteenth century one of universal truth. Also the application of such a word as vivid (effectively clear and striking) to a fictional scene represents the growing tendency on the part of reviewers to apply to the novel, terms borrowed from the arts.

In the consideration of characterization, the term character is found to be undergoing no immediate startling change in root meaning; but there are many changes in the implied or figurative meaning of the term, changes recognized in any examination of the requisites of an ideal character. Of course, the term no longer applies to type representations presented by the neo-classicists and by many seventeenth-century critics in particular, but to realistic representations of individual personalities. Even in discussions of the representation of characters the utilitarian bent of reviewers shows itself, for they mention many requisites solely because these will permit the character to perform his proper function of influencing the reader by his (the character's) represented actions and ideals. Therefore, the critics urge authors to handle each character with discrimination (a term vaguely denoting the act of distinguishing or making distinctive); to make him consistent (uniform in character and in action)
throughout the novel; to make him necessary to the action; to be sure each is original (neither an imitation of a real person or of a fictional character); to look to the character's religious and moral constancy; to be certain that each is realistic (either faithful to objective nature or to universal truth) and not perfect, lest he be unable to arouse sympathy in the readers. Why are all of these instructions given? Simply to be sure that the characters' effect upon the readers is the right one. All the terms by means of which these requisites are expressed, as well as the reason for giving these requisites, show the influence of the early nineteenth century and the late eighteenth century.

Like character, the term plot has no absolutely new meaning; but it is usually employed in its more inclusive sense. It denotes, not merely the mechanical structure of the novel, but the entire fable or story. The terms designating the requisites of the plot are employed in a very loose fashion, and those which are not new seldom have retained their traditional meanings. Interest, grandeur of incident, power (to affect the imagination and the feelings of the readers), clearness (lack of ambiguity), comedy or humour (that is free from vulgarity), a type of propriety, dexterity in management, simplicity—all of these words or phrases are used to express qualities that are though ideal in a plot.

Proper subject matter for these plots is designated by one or all of these descriptive terms: simple, appropriate,
moral, based upon universal feeling or experience and upon human nature. If these subjects are so handled as to effect a triumph of good and a punishment of evil, the novelist is sure of praise. Therefore, of the descriptive terms just considered, moral is obviously one of the most important, if not the most important.

In judging plots, strange as it seems, some reviewers appear to countenance observance of the unities, especially the application of the theory of the unities. However, the unities as understood by the critics, are not sufficiently explained; and the reader is left unenlightened on the question of whether the unities praised are classical ones or not.

In their insistence upon realism in the plot, the reviewers use various terms such as reality, verisimilitude, probability, and truth to nature, or fidelity to truth. These terms are so closely related as to make it difficult to distinguish them. In general, the truth insisted upon in historical novels, means factual accuracy, especially with regard to any real events, scenes, and persons. Verisimilitude, or a semblance of truth and essential realism, is required of strictly fictional material. Another type of realism designated as truth to nature or fidelity to truth is closely related to the first two types and involves imitation of objective or physical realities, of manners, customs and outward traits of human beings, or even (rarely) of transcendent universal truths and of the
thoughts and feelings of human beings. But one of the most important types of realism is probability, associated with the terms already mentioned and even with credibility and plausibility. **Probability** designates the condition of being likely to be true, and in its application to plots it denotes a kind of consistency, based on those things which have been proved to be usually true and limited only by the author's aesthetic sense of what is and ought to be. The vague meanings of the terms and the relationships existing among them may possibly be due to a romantic influence, though a good deal of vagueness is found even in neo-classical criticism. Certainly the terms and theories are traceable to classical and neo-classical criticism. The theory of verisimilitude, for example, is advanced by Aristotle and echoed by his followers through the centuries.

One notes the same vagueness in the terms and theories applied to the endings of novels. The use of catastrophe to refer, not to the entire tragic experience, but to an unhappy ending is a deviation from the strict classical meaning of the term; and the insistence that catastrophes be used only when they are necessary to teach a lesson or to enforce poetic justice is a new development. In fact, the theory that all denouements should represent moral justice and enforce moral teaching is not in keeping with traditional theories.

In considering the function of the novel, it is not necessary again to enumerate all the minor terms and
to show how their meanings have changed and how new terms have been introduced, but it is well to point out the excessive use of the term *morals*. There is as yet no indication of the theory discoverable in later criticism, that moral sense and literary intuitions are closely related or even identical. There are a few reviewers who emphasize the pleasing or entertaining possibilities of the novel; many who stress both the pleasing and the useful functions of the novel; and a great number who consider the utilitarian function of the novel to be the important function or at least the more important function. The latter group point out the great amount of instruction and information which the novel may present to its readers, but their particular pride is its possibilities for presenting moral and religious teachings and principles.

In short, throughout the criticism there are some of the old classical terms, wearing their customary garb and rubbing shoulders with their contemporary terms that have been rendered almost unrecognizable by their complete renovations. The variations of meanings implied in the new terms, the deviations from traditional meanings to be observed in the case of classical and neo-classical terms, and the indiscriminate use of both kinds of terms in connection with totally unrelated terms take a saleee, over which a sort of romantic haze of apparently deep significance is spread. Now and then a clear pattern emerges—a definite and distinct interpretation of a group of terms expressing
a reasonable theory, classical, neo-classical, or new. In thinking over all of this criticism in the Gentleman's Magazine, one is forcefully reminded of a passage in Through the Looking Glass. "Alice is talking to Humpty Dumpty, who says:

"When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more or less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be the master--That's all."

No reader of this criticism can doubt the stand taken by the reviewers on this question. Their use of terms shows them to be the masters.
Since the Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine did not appear before 1817, it may be expected to present a smaller number of terms inherited from eighteenth century criticism of earlier literary forms than did the older Gentleman's Magazine. Set up as a more "nimble and familiar" quarterly Review, Blackwood's was edited for six months by James Cleghorn and Thomas Pringle. They turned it over to John Wilson (Christopher North), James Hogg, and John Gibson Lockhart. Under the guidance of the latter group the publication "presented more original criticism" than had previous periodicals. In addition, the works of Scott, Galt, and MacKenzie "brought fame to it." One of its most interesting features, however, was the "Nocetes Ambrosianæ," a series of witty dialogues (1822-1835). Of these, North contributed forty-one; but Maginn, Lockhart, Hogg, and Gillies assisted him "in writing the earlier installments." The criticism produced by these men began to have a wide circulation and assured the magazine of a place of importance. Today, "it

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1 See Walter Graham, *English Literary Periodicals*, pp. 274-280. In this magazine Hogg was called the Ettrick shepherd, and Tickler was a pseudonym for Wilson's maternal uncle.
is still a literary periodical of first importance."¹

From the beginning, the critics in this magazine considered the novel seriously. As early as May, 1823, there appeared the following expression of their attitude toward a genre which had long been judged somewhat inferior to the epic and drama:

We consider it one of the advantageous changes in the public opinion in letters, that the novel has now attained a rank in literature much above what it was some time ago allowed to assume. It was formerly looked upon as a kind of reading only fit for the idle among the young, who might skim over the pages of novel in the moments of hair-dressing, (when hair-dressing was the fashion); and, if not positively hurtful and demoralizing, was set down as a waste of time, as a relaxation enfeebling the mind, destructive of those common sense views of life which its romantic or sentimental fictions wished to discredit, as opposed to practical wisdom or useful benevolence.²

A change had also occurred in the novel itself. The reviewer of Percy Hallory discusses this change at some length. I quote from this review:

Among the rest of those sciences, beneficial and ornamental, which have been making huge strides of progress during the last fifteen years, the advancement of the art of novel-writing (in this country) stands very eminently distinguished. "Mrs. Roche" has ceased to rave; and, if she raved still, no man would mark her. "Mrs. Latham" can no longer terrify the 'prentices, nor "Anne of Swansea" now delight the ladies' boarding-schools. "Mrs. Bluementle" (alas poor "Bridget") has washed her hands (of ink) forever; and but a water colour kind of reputation is left to Mrs. Medcliffe and Mrs. Helme. Harp of Leadenhall Street, thy strings are cracked past mending!—Messrs. Lane and Newman's "occupation's gone!"

For a new array of combatants have burst into the literary field, who canter, and caracole, and bear down all before

¹ Ibid., p. 280.
² "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsey," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XIII (1823), 548. Since succeeding references not otherwise indicated will be to the Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, I shall not repeat the name of the journal.
them! There is the Waverley knight-he of the hundred weapons!—and his war-cry rings loudest on the plain. There is the author of Valerius, in his Roman armour; and the Ettrick Shepherd, with his knotted club; and there is Hope, on his mare of the desert; and Galt, in his pawkie costume; and Maturin, with his frightful mask; and Washington Irving, just in his silk doublet, throwing darts into the air, and catching them again, and riding as easily as if he were on parade; and then there are the Amazons, equipped after every fancy and fashion! Miss Porter, waving her Polish lance, and Miss Edgeworth, holding up her ferula, and the authoress of "Marriage," (in Miss Jacky’s green Joseph) tucked up upon a pillion; and Lady Morgan, astradelle, (and in French breeches) since she has taken to be mad about politics!

A modern novel, indeed, if it hopes ever to be out open, must shew talent of some kind or other. Accordingly, we find one author trusts to passion, another, to invention; one, to an acute perception of what is; another, to a vigorous fancy for what cannot be. One brings to market wit—another, metaphysics—a third, descriptive force—a fourth, poetic feeling—a few, like the Waverley writer, bring the rare faculty of managing a long story; but very few venture to come at all, who cannot bring some faculty or other.

Many critics felt that the better novels of the age would live for a long time; but often they made predictions about the life of a novel, not on the basis of the merit of the novel as such, but on the basis of the novel’s being a kind of glorified history. For instance, there is the prediction that Galt’s Archbishop "will live when most Novels we see now are forgotten, as a history." Many maintained that the novel was more important than the drama, that the novelist had to have dramatic talent and other talents as well; that the novel, having lately "assumed a very

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1 "Percy Vallery," XV (1823), 25.
2 "Noctes Ambrosianae," XIII (1823), 608.
superior stile," should be termed "the epic of comedy."¹ The
editor of Blackwood's affirmed that the good novels came
in the place of new dramas and that they were better fitted
for the "present state of public taste" since "the public
are merely capable of strong sensations, but of nothing
which requires knowledge, taste, or judgment."² He declared
also that the chief difference between the drama and the
novel was the acting. The novelist Godwin, moreover,
comparing the novel both with drama and with other literary
types, finds the novel superior. It is superior to the
drama, because the novelist may accompany the language
made-use-of by his characters with explanatory comments
concerning their inmost thoughts, whereas the dramatist is
limited to the exact word to be spoken by the actors. It
is superior to the history, for the novelist "is much less
liable to be cribbed and cabined in by those unlocked-for
phenomena, which in the history of an individual seem to
have a malicious pleasure in thrusting themselves forward
to subvert the best digested theories."³ This particular
passage is decidedly Aristotelian in tenor.

The novel compares favorably with poetry also. One

¹ "Remarks on Vandalville," II (1818), 403.
² "Hootes Ambrosianae," XI (1822), 368. See also
"Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 410 and "On the
Dramatic Powers of the Author of Saverley," XIX (1826), 152.
Compare these with the Quarterly Review, XXXIV (1826), 358.
³ "Cloudesley; A Tale," XXVII (1830), 711.
reviewer roundly rebukes Sir Egerton Brydges for stating that nobody reads Cervantes, Fielding, and other great novelists and that nothing continues to be read for generations "but standard poetry of pure and rich ore."\(^1\)

The critic of one of Scott's novels states that many varieties of characters and actions have been delineated in prose tales that could not have been introduced into poetry. Furthermore, "by prose are the common sympathies of man with man, in the important transactions of this life, more generally and certainly excited than by poetry..."\(^2\)

These quotations tend to show at least one thing, that the novel was being considered as a serious piece of work on a par with, or superior to, poetry, drama, and history—the traditional forms that had long occupied the greatest creative minds and held the reverential respect of critics.

Various types of novels, some new and some old, were also being carefully examined by the critics. The novel of character and the novel of manners particularly interested them. In one review, Scott mentions the strong resemblance between the novel of character and "what was called, in the seventeenth century, plays of humour."\(^3\) In other reviews one

\(^1\) "Sir Egerton Brydges's Recollections," XVII (1825), 510.
\(^2\) "A Preface to a Review of the Chronicles of Camoëns," XXII (1827), 551. See also "The Epicureans," XXII (1827), 375.
\(^3\) "The Omen," XX (1826), 52.
reads of novels of fashionable life that appeal to the British "mania for gentility." Upon this type of novel the reviewers were wont to vent their fury. They wrote of raising money "merely by cramming the mouths of the asinine with mock majestic details of fine life." The epistolary novel also came in for its share of criticism. Despite the sense of reality given by the epistolary method, Scott thought it arrested "the progress of the story, which stands still while the characters show all their paces, like horses in the menage, without advancing a yard." 

All of these points are helpful in giving one an understanding of the general attitude of these critics toward the novel. But now it may be informative to consider the nature of the terms by means of which these critics expressed their opinions. Here, as in previous chapters, I wish to consider first those terms specifically expressive of qualities of the novelists, then those terms applied to the novel as a finished composition, and finally those indicating either the effect of the novel upon the reader or the proposed function of the novel.

A Terms Applicable to Novelists

In their praise of various qualities possessed by

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2 "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 409.
good novelists and in their condemnation of the lack of these desiderata in inferior novelists, the reviewers employ many traditional terms, usually in a loose, general fashion. Certainly, the commendations of "acuteness of observation,"¹ of "sterling good sense" and "knowledge of the world,"² of a "powerful and original mind widely versed in literature and book knowledge and keenly observant of human nature"³—all sound remarkably like the "genius, practice, and knowledge" theory furnished by classicists and neo-classicists. But whether the meanings of all the terms remain the ones attributed to them by the neo-classicists can only be settled by an examination of the terms in specific passages. The most important terms of the group are perhaps fancy, imagination, and genius; but power, talent, originality, invention, conception, knowledge, and taste also appear.

The emphasis on imagination and fancy to the detriment of reason, logic, and technique is a romantic tendency; and an examination of the passages concerning imagination and fancy yields valuable information about the theories of the critics upon the subject. But first consider the term fancy.

Fancy, like imagination with which it is sometimes

¹ "Emeline," V (1819), 186.
² "Nootes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 533.
³ "Reginald Dalton," XVI (1824), 102.
interchanged, the reviewers use in a loose manner. One critic notes that Mary Brunton's works exhibit her common sense, which keeps "in subordination to itself both feeling and fancy—so that at times these latter qualities seem rather to be wanting in her works." Here and in some later passages the term apparently refers to the faculty for creating the non-existent—or the fantastic—and presenting it in vivid images and is, of course, somewhat Addisonian. No effort is made by this reviewer, however, or by others, to analyze or to define the term fancy. One reads of Scott's fancy which seems always "to brood with peculiar relish over the ludicrous" and which is especially discernible "in his humorous dialogue." One learns that German novels similar to Valerius "have either wandered into extravagant fiction, or oppressed the fancy by laborious prolixity"; that the superior richness of Smollett's fancy "is recognizable chiefly in his profusion"; and that "the fancy of the lightness, the spirit, the wit, and the vivacity of the Diable Boiteux" are evident even in the French version. In

2 "Third Series of Tales of My Landlord," IV (1819), 340.
3 "Ivanhoe," V (1819), 279.
4 "Valerius," XI (1822), 94.
5 "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 413-414.
all of these references to fancy there is not one indication of analysis, but the last is somewhat similar to the fancy which Schiller describes as sporting "with the stuff of the world." The same meaning is implied in the praise of a novel which is described as "far indeed from being a mere dream of extravagant fancy." Evidently, although fancy—whatever it may be—is desirable, a surplus of it is not.

In a verse satire on the novel, fancy resembles Addison's imagination, a faculty which imitates reality, it is true, but also heightens its beauty. For instance, here are several lines from the poem about Lockhart's tale:

Creative fancy gives a lovelier green
To Godstowe's glade and hallowed all the scene
Where Love's low whisper sooth'd their wildest fears
Till Joy grew voiceless and flow'd forth in tears.2

The term has the same meaning where Tickler declares that, if John Galt had written "as he began, leisurely condensing, in brief compact tales the harvest of a quiet eye," his books: The Ayrshire Legatees, The Annals of the Parish, and The Provost, "would have been considered as mere prologues and inceptive experiments of his fancy."3 And perhaps the reviewer who credits Chateaubriand with "a poetical fancy,"4

2 "The Novel, a Satire," XXVIII (1830), 624-627.
3 "Noctes Ambrosianae," XX (1831), 537.
4 "Chateaubriand," XXXII (1832), 217.
thinks of fancy in the same way. Precisely what poetical means, however, he neglects to say.

To sum up the matter, these critics favor fancy and characteristically employ the term very loosely. They evidently consider it a synonym for a sort of imagination— for creating the non-existent and presenting it in vivid images.

During the earlier years (1813-1821) the most common meaning for imagination—in so far as one is able to determine—is the faculty for producing either vivid, heightened imitations of reality or fantastic images. The reviewers are, accordingly, very much concerned about problems of credibility and probability in connection with these products of the imagination. Although one critic defends the introduction of supernatural beings because people believe in such creatures and admits delight at a "poetical imagination," he refuses to countenance the altering of "the laws of nature."¹ But the author of the article "Phantasmagoriana" reminds us of Reynolds' theories, for he describes imagination as "that noble faculty of our souls"² and asserts that stories which defy "the attempt of a probable natural solution" but which appeal to the imagination are justified by that appeal. On the other hand, the reviewer of Candide notes with approval


that nothing is introduced "for the sake of the imagination"\(^1\) in Voltaire's novel. Most agree, however, that the possession of imagination is an invaluable aid to any writer of fiction. For instance, Charles Brockden Brown's "dark, mysterious power of imagination"\(^2\) prompts the quotation of these lines:

> Indeed, it is the divine attribute of imagination, that it is irrepressible, unconfined; that when the real world is shut out, it can create a world for itself;...Such was the world of pomp and pageant that lived around Tasso in his dismal cell at Ferrara, when he conceived the splendid scenes of his Jerusalem...\(^2\)

This theory of imagination suggests the creative theory of art.

> During the years 1821 and 1822, imagination continues to receive the approval of the critics. The truth of this statement is made clear in the following commentary on an episode in *Anastasius* (erroneously assigned to Lord Byron):

> The adventure with the Jew is full of absurdity but it is redeemed from contempt by the rich embroidery of imagination which is thrown over the greatest improbabilities. All Byron's stories are of this sort; they are either wild, wonderful, or absurd. His exuberant fancy alone makes them interesting and beautiful.\(^3\)

The use of imagination on the part of the reader of novels

\(^1\) "On the Candide of Voltaire," IV (1818), 156.


\(^3\) "On Anastasius," X (1821), 203.
is also commended, for it is by this means that the reader of a novel "blends the whole into a harmony which is not found on the stage." Here there is a faint hint of Coleridge's "esemplastic power," which fuses the raw materials of a literary work into an organic unit, productive of a single effect. But the reviewers continue to urge the restraint of an "exuberant imagination within the bounds of good taste." In short, neo-classical and romantic theories appear side by side from 1818 to 1823.

From 1823 to 1825 imagination continues to be regarded as almost essential for any novelist, although an occasional reviewer remarks that a slight power of imagination may be supplemented by other gifts. For instance, there is evident in The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay "less of pure imagination" than in other novels. Yet the work is worthy of praise because it shows "a stronger mastery over the affections and a deeper insight into the affairs of that humble, but often agitated, world." Yet the reviewer


2 "Graham Jamilton," XI (1822), 731.

3 See "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 412-414.

4 XIII (1823), 549. See also "The Inheritance," XV (1824), 559.
of *Three Perils of Woman* perhaps indicates his romantic tendency in that he values fancy and imagination more highly than he does intelligence. He writes, in words reminiscent of Coleridge: "You are a man of an original mind, a shrewd, noticing intelligent man—Nay more, than that, a man of fancy and imagination."¹

Until the end of the romantic period the English reviewers praise imagination. Generally, they continue to refer to the author’s ability to create the non-existent and present it in vivid images.² But Reynolds’ theory (mentioned above) of the imagination as an intuitive feeling for universal truth is also indicated. For example, one reviewer deems imaginative works vastly superior to works based on facts, for, once the curiosity is satisfied about facts, "the delight is for the most part at an end."³ But works of the imagination "address themselves in turn to every feeling and passion of our nature; and as long as we retain those feelings, so long are we enchained by them."³ Another reviewer, commenting on the belief that this is the only world, asserts:

But to the mind sublimed by the ether of imagination, that creed is a self-evident contradiction; the sole entities are then felt to be thoughts; systems on systems, not the less real because transitory, are created as at a breath, sub-natural, super-natural, preter-natural. Yet all

¹ *Hogg's Three Perils of Woman,* XIV (1823), 427.
³ "Fact and Fiction," XX (1826), 685.
formed on the model of what we call nature, and intelligible to all who know anything, however dimly, of what nature is and received among our persuasions, and beliefs and convictions, which are in themselves immortal, though at times asleep, and although disappearing, never extinguished or destroyed.1

A better example of what might be called metaphysical romanticism would be difficult to find; and, despite the very great lack of clarity here, there may be resemblance to Coleridge's theory.2 But subsequent uses of the term indicate only the power to reproduce heightened imitations of reality,3 a power generally commended. The "lamentable want of all imaginative power,"4 for example, which Lord Normanby, Mr. Lister, and Mr. Robert Ward display, brings forth severe censure from a reviewer; but no such censure falls either to the lot of Mudford, who is a "master of a vividly original and picturesque imagination,"5 or to Theodore Hooker, whom North urges "to attempt something really worthy of his imagination."6

1 "The Epicurean," XLI (1827), 386.
2 But compare this passage with the theories of Schiller, to which it seems more closely related. See F. Schiller, On Simple and Sentimental Poetry and On the Use of the Chorus in Tragedy, both reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 694-697, especially.
3 See "Chronicles of Canonzate," XXII (1827), 560.
4 "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1828), 52.
6 "Noetes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 532.
There is no doubt in the minds of these critics of the early nineteenth century that imagination or fancy is an excellent, even an essential possession of a novelist. Many of them consider imagination superior to pure intelligence, and they consider it sufficient for success even when it occurs in a person who is without any knowledge of the principles governing composition. Very few—and these early in the century—express the need of any restraint of imagination at all. It is here especially that they show their romantic tendencies. Where any attempt at an analysis of imagination is made, the analyst's is characterized usually by great vagueness.

Genius is an even more important term in the reviews than was either fancy or imagination. In fact, the faculty which it represents is mentioned by nearly all reviewers early and late. In 1817, one reviewer remarks that the "resources of real genius" are inexhaustible; and in 1819, another writes that "great genius may be shewn" in novels exhibiting the "internal growth and progress of sentiments and passions, and their conflicts." In both cases, the term probably means consummate general ability, although, in the latter case, the emphasis is upon inventive, creative ability or originality. Both of these meanings are common in this criticism. The latter meaning is especially empha-

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1 "Harrington, a Tale and Ormond, a Tale," I (1817), 580. For other similar uses see "Ivanhoe," VI (1819), 262; and "Kootes Ambrosianae," XVII (1830), 688.

2 "Remarks on the Romance of Antar," IV (1819), 395.
sioned before 1827. Indeed, several reviews contain passages similar to the description of Naturin as "gifted with a genius as fervently powerful as it is distinctly original."\(^1\) But in this sentence written in 1828, the word in question is synonymous with inspiration or with spirit: "A different genius illumines the brain, a different spirit rules the heart, and a very different hand governs the pen."\(^2\) So, too, is it in this one: "How thrills the touch of Genius through the mind."\(^3\) In fact, from 1827 to 1832, the term very frequently has the original classical meaning of spirit or inspiration—a meaning particularly appealing to romantics. But even more unusual are two uses of the term in connection with the theories of the continuing stream of universal genius and of the world soul. In 1832, a reviewer says that in the case of Chateaubriand "the stream of genius, instead of gliding down the smooth current of ordinary life, has been broken and agitated by the cataract of the revolution."\(^4\) But a similar sentence in the much earlier review

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\(^1\) "Melmoth, the Wanderer," VIII (1820), 163. For similar uses of the term see "American Writers, No. V," XV (1825), 414; "Cloudesley," XXVII (1830), 711; and "Noctes Ambrosianae," XVIII (1826), 780.

\(^2\) "Tales of the O'Hara Family," XXIV (1828), 470.


\(^4\) "Chateaubriand," XXXI (1832), 218.
of Eleanora has an even greater Schlegelian vagueness:

Her writings were neither so numerous nor so splendid as
to endow her with that character; nor did they so prevail
over the minds of men as wholly to sink the idea of her
own private and living self in some abstraction of a great
and creative genius.¹

Genius here may be said to have donned a transcendental
robe; and by comparison, the statement in another review
that never were "the long-gathered stores of most extensive
erudition applied to the purposes of imaginative genius
with so much lavish and luxurious power,"² seems lucid. At
least there is no reluctance in the latter case to couple
transcendent ability or native power of invention with erudi-
dition. As a matter of fact, especially before 1823 there
is an occasional reiteration of the neo-classical theory of
the need for training even in the case of great genius. One
reviewer, for instance, writes of the author of Adam Blair:
"Let him remember that it is not enough to possess genius or
invention without cultivating the one or regulating the
other."³ In most cases, these theories of genius seem espe-
cially akin to Young's concepts. For instance, Young mentions
the "stream" of genius, emphasizes the originating power
of genius and divine inspiration, and even points out
that "an evocation of the fruits of genius...depends on

¹ V (1819), 193.
² "Ivanhoe," VI (1819), 262.
³ "Adam Blair," XI (1822), 467.
externals,"¹ in just the way that the reviewer of The
Epicurean does here:

That man is fortunate, who either stumbles by accident, or
is led by sagacity, on some nook of virgin soil that will
return a sudden harvest of an hundred-fold. The world
attributes the wonderful produce entirely to his own genius
and skill—forgetting the joint and genital influence of
the elements all happily tempered and combined.²

There are several conclusions to be drawn concerning
the use of the term genius from 1817 to 1832. Though not
defined, it probably denotes general ability; consummate,
inexplicable originating power; spirit or inspiration; or an
emanation of the world soul. Early in the criticism there
are hints of the need for learning; but later there is
stress upon the untutored, natural, inexplicable theory of
the inspired genius. At the very end, 1827 to 1832, there
is credence given to the concept that genius is influenced
by the age in which it exists. Only the transcendental
theory is new, but the tone of the whole is remarkably ro-
mantic.

Another important term in the criticism is power,
which is sometimes coupled with genius, sometimes used as
a synonym for the latter term. For instance, one reviewer
mentions that "superior power which many reverence under the

¹ R. Young, Conjectures on Original Composition, as
reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 420 especially.
² XXX (1827), 370.
name of genius. Generally, however, the term merely denotes either the innate ability to produce an effect or general forcefulness of expression. Closely related to both power and genius are the terms talent and inspiration, though talent is often considerably more limited in scope than the first two. Usually, talent refers either to a specific aptitude such as the "talent of describing well what he (the author) feels with acuteness" or to general ability, ability (usually of less importance than that indicated by genius) as in such an expression as "a man of sober talent—nothing more."

Inspiration appears much less frequently than does talent, though one would expect reviewers in a romantic era to use it often. Generally, the critics employ it very

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1 "Tremaine," XVIII (1825), 518. See also "American Writers, No. V," XV (1825), 414; and "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1826), 53.

2 See "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 329; and "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXVII (1830), 843.

3 See "Cyril Thornton," XXII (1827), 103; "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," XI (1822), 673; "Cloudesley," XVII (1830), 713.

4 "Ballantyne's "novelist's Library," XV (1824), 412. See also "The Omen," XX (1826), 52.

5 Ibid., 412. See also "Remarks on Altham and his Wife," II (1818), 545; "Noctes Ambrosianae," XIII (1823), 594; "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1827), 55; and "Cloudesley, A Tale," XXVII (1830), 712.
casually and make no effort to define it or to emphasize its importance. One urges an author not to sacrifice "any part of his inspiration which is and always must be essentially poetic."¹ Another writes that Chateaubriand has "drunk deep of inspiration at all the fountains where it has been poured forth to mankind."² In all of the uses of these three terms somehow related to genius—power, talent, and inspiration—there are no new theories or meanings. One notes especially that power and inspiration, both of which have romantic connotations, appear very seldom before 1823.

Associated at times with imagination, genius, power, and talent are the vaguely synonymous terms originality, invention, and conception—all denoting qualities which these reviewers deem essential. Usually invention refers to creative or imaginative power and at times specifically to the production of incidents and forming them into coherent plot structures. The latter type of invention, one critic, agreeing with Aristotle, feels to be "a higher and rarer power than delineation of character."³ In general, however, critics are not so specific but merely deplore want of general "inventive faculties"⁴ and praise the presence

¹ "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," XIII (1823), 550.
² "Chateaubriand," XXXI (1832), 218.
³ "Notebook of a Literary Idler," no. 2, XVIII (1825), 238.
⁴ "Letters of Timothy Tickler Esq. to Eminent Literary Characters," no. 18, XI (1824), 298. See also "Legends and Traditions of the South of Iceland," XVIII (1825), 55.
of invention. It follows obviously that they praise originality, too, since originality is merely another term for invention or imaginative power. The reviewers write of the "originality and power," of one author, and of the "powerful and original mind of another." Interestingly enough, although one critic says that Irving has no "inventive power," another feels that he has "great power—original power." Most critics agree on the subject, however. North writes that "originality" is "a charm that never fadeth away." In general, his opinion is shared by the other reviewers. They consider also that conception, the power or process of forming original ideas, is important; and they use the term often. Scott's "depth of conception," for instance, brings

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1 See "O'chertey on 'Werner," XI (1822), 422; "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 412.

2 "The Inheritance," XV (1824), 695. See also "Adam Blair," XI (1822), 349; "Pen Owen," XI (1822), 349.

3 "Reginald Dalton," XVI (1824), 162. See also "Matilda," XIX (1826), 27; and "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1828), 61.

4 In order see "Letters of Timothy Tickler," XVI (1824), 296; and "American Writers," XVII (1825), 59.

5 "Noctes Ambrosianae," XVIII (1830), 843. See also "Noctes Ambrosianae," XIII (1823), 609.

6 "Ivanhoe," V (1819), 262.
him praise; and Goethe is described as "great in conception." So too is Hope. In short, originality, invention, and conception are terms that appear often in these reviews.

Most of the terms discussed, we generally associate with inherent qualities. Taste is like these somewhat inherent but also often to be cultivated. As it is used here, the term is neo-classical rather than romantic in its connotations. It may refer either to decorum or to personal preference or to a sense of discrimination. Generally it denotes the Popean ideal, an innate and cultivated feeling for that which is suitable. The restraint of "good taste" is constantly praised. One reviewer, for instance, commends Vieland for the "exquisite taste" that "would not permit him to detail the grossness of sense." Taste appears rarely after 1826.

The terms knowledge and observation, however, appear


2 "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1828), 54. See also, for similar remarks, "Vargas," XI (1822), 730; "Remarks on the Novel of Matthew Wald," XV (1824), 572.

3 See "Matthews, Dibdin, and Morgan," XI (1822), 695.

4 "Fragment of a Literary Romance," I (1817), 106.

5 "Graham Hamilton," XI (1822), 731. See also "The Inheritance," XV (1824), 659; "Hogg's Three Perils of Woman," XIV (1823), 427; "Remarks on Altham and His Wife," III (1818), 545.

6 "Horae Germanicae, no. XXI," XVI (1825), 374.
even in 1832. They indicate qualities or faculties involving conscious application and cultivation. Knowledge is the one which appears more frequently; and particularly emphasized here, as in the journals already examined, is the "knowledge of human nature," though all knowledge receives some praise—knowledge of Spanish manners, "knowledge of strange manners," "knowledge of mankind," "knowledge of facts," and "knowledge of the world." Since this knowledge of manners and customs of men is gained partly from observation, "acute" and "extensive" powers of observation or "observation and reflection" are also praised.

But never, of course, is the praise accorded these latter qualities as great as that given to genius, imagination, and fancy—or even as great as that given invention, conception and originality. Of the terms applied to the author, the ones which show the greatest influence of newer thought are, naturally, genius and imagination, both of which

1 "Graham Hamilton," XI (1822), 731. See also "Pen Owen," XI (1822), 634.


4 "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 531.
have been affected by a sort of transcendental belief. Otherwise, the terms and the theories inextricably connected with them echo the criticism, especially the very liberal neo-classical and the pre-romantic sorts, discoverable in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Taste, however, suggests even earlier critical tenets.

B Terms Applicable To The Novel Proper

But consider the production of the novelist and the terms applicable to it. Before examining the terms specifically applicable to various phases of the novel—to the descriptions, the characterizations, and the plot, including both the structure and the story—there are several passages that should be noted. Two—almost unique in the periodicals—emphasize the need for thought and planning on the part of the novelist before he attempts his task. According to one reviewer, Godwin, "who has arrived at the highest species of perfection, his department of art affords," employs a method worthy to be imitated by others.

He sketches in his own mind, with a comprehension and bold imagination the plan of his work; he digs at the foundations, and learns all the due bearings of his positions; he examines his materials, and sees exactly to what purpose each is best fitted; he makes an incident; he unerringly divines the results, both of the event and passion, which this incident will bring forth. By dint of the mastery of thought, he transfuses himself into the very souls of his personages, he dives into their secret hearts and lays bare, even to their anatomy, their workings; not a pulsation escapes him,—while yet all is blended into one whole, which forms the pervading impulse of the individual he brings before us.

1 "Glaudesley," XXVII (1830), 712.
Such terms here as unerringly, very souls, and secret hearts are exuberantly enthusiastic; but the stress throughout is on planning, on thoroughness, on careful attention to cause and effect. The idea is one involving analysis and foresight. "Blended into one whole" is, of course, the total unity, the organic entity expressed to some extent by Longinus and Schlegel and certainly by Coleridge.¹ In another article North makes the very valid statement that purely "from want of previous meditation"² Bulwer and others like him have failed to produce the desired effect. Even Scott errs in this particular. But it is worthy of mentioning that not before 1830 is there any such emphasis upon planning.

True, the reviewers mention the advisability of having some sort of unity or of basing novels upon some kind of principles of composition. The terms rules, canon, unity, les regles, and law appear—though infrequently—from 1818 to 1830. In 1818, however, one reviewer declares that non-conformity to "established rules of art" is better in the case of a work designed "to express habits of thought and sentiment."³ But another later mentions approvingly


² "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 531-533.

the "canon that in no tragic story should there be more than one great,... consummated tragic event."¹ He also discusses a somewhat romantic unity—the "unity in the ruling passion of the tale."¹ On the other hand, the very traditional rules come to the forefront in a consideration entitled "French Literature."² Here the reviewer reminds us that in the past whatever French author "endeavored to follow nature rather than les regles, was by unanimous consent, convicted of barbarism." Continuing, the critic admits that this "habit of attention to the rules, while it cramped the bolder flights of imagination,... gave ..., a neatness and correctness of expression." His opinion is worthy of note in an era when "the controversy waxes strong between the classique and the romantique; and the latter party,... are gaining ground."² Somewhat similar is the stand of another critic who proclaims the necessity of "a certain degree of obedience to rule and law."³ But, of course, the laws to which he refers seem to be the kind advanced by Coleridge and by Reynolds.³ The reviewer declares that Shakespeare, far from being "irregular" is "the closest follower of these laws, for he has a scope and an aim, which,... he fulfills."³ Moreover, "merely copying from our own

¹ "Chronicles of Canongate," XXII (1827), 563-564.
² XXVI (1829), 206 and 208.
hearts will no more form a first-rate work of art" than will "exquisite representations" of nature "form a good painting" if none of the rules of grouping and colouring are followed.\textsuperscript{1}

There is here apparent, especially from 1827 on, a rejection of the "thoughtless" concept of art. The emphasis is upon the necessity—not for the application of stringent rules of the neo-classicists, perhaps—but for sensible, thoughtful planning, for attention to somewhat liberal principles productive of form and of unity of effect. Thus one finds the old terms unity, rules, and principles designating slightly different concepts from those which Rymer, for instance, held.

Having planned his work and considered the principles applicable to the whole, the novelist is expected, while writing, to keep in mind certain points with regard to his descriptions, characters, and plot.

In the descriptions, fidelity to nature is the requisite most often mentioned before 1822. For example, the descriptions of landscape in \textit{Frankenstein} are good because they contain "the choice requisites of truth, freshness, precision and beauty."\textsuperscript{2} The description of the tournament in \textit{Ivanhoe} wins the epithet "exquisite," because

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid.}, 712.

\textsuperscript{2} "\textit{Frankenstein}," II (1818), 619.
it has "all the truth and graphic precision of Froissart—all the splendor and beauty of Ariosto," besides being "im pregnated with a spirit of power and pathos." In spite of the somewhat exaggerated nature of the praise bestowed upon Ivanhoe, the passage is significant in that it represents an application to description of the traditional terms—truth, precision, power, pathos, beauty, and splendor. But there is a new tendency to demand a warm, animated reality in description instead of a stereotyped background for the action of the characters.

From 1822 on, the reviewers' interest in descriptions increases. Coupled with the demand for fidelity or truth in descriptions comes here the theory that not only should the descriptions show the good taste of the writer, but that there should be preciseness and clarity of detail:

The improved taste in description is among the most remarkable and advantageous changes of modern writing. Mrs. Radcliffe's fine poetic pencil was wasted in a languid and general picturing; all her descriptions wore the same features, and all their features were obscured by the same lavish and absorbing colour. She looked on sea and mountain, forest and valley, through the same Claude Lorraine glass. Latter times have taught better conceptions; the distinct and the picturesque now supersede the graceless and the confused.

The extreme Gothic, one might say, is giving way to a purer Longinian theory. But the attention to methods and to taste

1 "Ivanhoe," V (1819), 266.

2 "Valerius," XI (1822), 96. This is, of course, an attack upon the eighteenth-century picturesque fashion.
reminds one of the neo-classicists. Especially interesting is the theory that descriptions should have some purpose in a story. This indicates a newer tendency—this time toward functional, modern criticism. To this requisite, the descriptions in Adam Blair do not measure up; for, though "well delineated," they are "not always necessary to any purpose in the story, and but slight adjuncts to it." Moreover, despite their pleasing "particularity in detail," they are too prolix to keep the attention of the reader.

Succeeding reviews introduce no important new concepts. In them, the terms discoverable in the works of neo-classicists and pre-romanticists appear side by side. There are such terms as external nature, power and originality; true to nature and melancholy; brilliant and sublime. In the criticism of Scott's later descriptions, "truer than painting" suggests the pseudo-Horatian theories; and, stretching a point, one may concede that a faint, flimsy implication of


2 "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," XI (1822), 54.

3 "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," XIII (1823), 553.

4 "Hajji Baba of Ispahan," XV (1824), 51. For other uses of sublime or sublimities, see "Fragment of a Literary Romance," I (1817), 577; "Ivanhoe," V (1819), 270; "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 414.

5 "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 412.
Lessing's theory occurs in this sentence: "There is an extent in the grouping and a minute variety which no pencil could picture." Here, however, resemblances to Lessing's concept, to classical or pseudo-classical theory ends, for the author pours forth this rhapsody:

"We tremble at the brink of a precipice, and listen for the voice of the waters that are raging and roaring below. We shudder at the approach of a devouring flood and at the rapid ruin which it spreads as it advances."

Raging, roaring, tremble, shudder, devouring, precipice—these suggest the romantic spirit—specifically the earlier concepts of the sublime. Although to Scott's descriptions more unreserved praise is given, those of other authors—of Hope and Miss Edgeworth, for instance—received commendations. Those of the former are "vivid and vigorous." Those of the latter, whether "humorous" or "pathetic" are "just" and "vivid."

In terminology, therefore, from 1822 to 1832 one finds little new. Neo-Longinian and neo-classical terms dominate the criticism of descriptions, but the proportion is worthy of remark. The somewhat enthusiastic, aesthetic terms are beginning almost to outnumber the others.


3 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," XXIV (1828), 469.
Obviously, as has been stated above, the critical
dictum considered most seriously and frequently from 1818 to
1832 is that of fidelity to life or nature; but usually
even that theory is vaguely understood or at least loosely
applied. Yet there is also at least one case of stress
upon functional relevance, a matter generally ignored by
earlier critics of poetry and drama upon the few occasions
that they deigned to consider the matter of description at
all. And this application of an old Aristotelian principle
in a comparatively modern fashion is, therefore, of some
significance.

To some extent, much of the treatment of character-
ization is similar to that of description. The major emphasis
is upon fidelity to life here also; and most of the terms
indicate that emphasis. From 1817 to 1824 especially, terms
like truth, fidelity, keeping (denoting appropriateness to
type and consistency), human nature in the abstract (denoting
the universal), and real or reality (denoting either factual
accuracy or verisimilitude) abound.\(^1\) There are two points
worth noting in addition. In contrast to neo-classical
theory, one reviewer defends the "want of a hero," or

\(^1\) In the order named see, for examples, "Tales of My
Landlord," I (1817), 298; "Remarks on Godwin's New Novel
La Haville," II (1817), 275; "Tales of My Landlord, Second
Series," III (1818), 570-572; "Adam Blair," XI (1822),
the absence of a "leading spirit influencing and stamping the destinies of all toward one great consummation."\(^1\) He feels that the presence of "many leading characters" can be defended because it allows each reader to select from the group his own hero and because it renders the novel "like reality."\(^1\) The second point is the especial attention given to "low" characters—somewhat in the Wordsworthian tradition. Of especial interest is the attention given Mr. Calt's Jew, in whom the "lowest passions of our nature" are given "a tragic interest" by combining them with others that are not low and showing their united operation "in the soul of a traveling dealer in small wares."\(^1\) Here, to the theories of realism, of the acceptability even of common characters is added perhaps the romantic notion of the good existing beneath unattractive exteriors.

Of both actual and fictitious characters, the reviewers have a good deal to say from 1823 through 1824. Though the introduction of actual personages is not forbidden, there is an intimation that, if such are to be presented, they must be drawn with detailed factual accuracy. Mrs. Shelley, for instance, errs in her failure to present "the keen Italian wit" of Castruccio.\(^2\)

\(^1\) "The Entail," XIII (1823), 78-80.
\(^2\) "Valperza," XIII (1823), 223-224.
In fictitious characters, a major demand is for a kind of realism of detail, which is said to be lacking in the characters of The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay. The latter have a kind of tepid universality or type character, their "amiable as well as their unamiable traits being of a general kind," entirely destitute of "individual features."\(^{1}\) Another objection is that there is too little of relief in the delineations of character, and in the circumstances of the persons introduced into it. But the author may reply, that Nature, in the simple forms in which this tale is meant to exhibit her, does not deal in extremes, and is best represented in those middle tints which belong to the world as it is.\(^{1}\)

Much of this criticism gives a definite impression of romanticism despite the author's attempt to elevate a type of realism and to ward off suggestions of violent romanticism. The impression comes no doubt from the somewhat muddled fusion of the theories of vraisemblance and actuality, as well as from his attitude toward Nature.

A decorum of character is sometimes considered necessary. This, the hero of Hajji Baba of Ispahan lacks. "From beginning to end," Hajji Baba is "a low character," "a rascal," to whom his author denies "even the advantage of personal courage."\(^{2}\) If Hajji must be a rascal, the critic opines, he "ought to be a rascal like a gentleman."\(^{2}\) Here

\(^{1}\) XIII (1823), 552.

\(^{2}\) "Hajji Baba of Ispahan," XV (1824), 53-57.
the theory is, of course, the neo-classical decorum. Moreover, many of the terms appearing in this criticism are definitely those used by the neo-classicists. One reads such expressions as "true to nature," "minute style" of characterization, "distinct," "individual and peculiar character," and "want of taste and feeling" in management of characters.

Of course, there is also, especially in Scott's criticism, some new and romantic phraseology with the old. Scott says Smollett was "a searcher of dark bosoms, and loved to paint characters under the strong agitation of fierce and stormy passions." At times Scott's wording applies to the emotional reaction of the readers, at times to that of the characters, and definitely shows Scott's relationship to the "shudder" school. He says:

Fathom is a living and existing miscreant, at whom we shrink as from the presence of an incarnate fiend, while the villain of Fielding seems rather a cold personification of the abstract principle of evil..., absolutely tiresome.

He mentions also "the sure tact and accurate development" of Le Sage's characters. One notes especially the emphasis upon the term development, not stressed greatly in earlier criticism. The recognition of the power of the novel to

1 "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 409-415.
present the development of character apparently prompts another reviewer to consider the question of technique. When the "chief object is the development of character," he writes, "the use of the first person furnishes him (the novelist) with infinitely superior facilities for the easy and full attainment of the purpose he has in view."¹

So continues the criticism, old and new terms appearing together. Susan Ferrier, we learn, is particularly gifted in characterization. She has "added new characters to the stock."² Not like Miss Austen, feeble "whenever she steps beyond that walk" of her small world, Susan Ferrier paints all types. The "flower of the flock," however, is her Miss Pratt, "quite new—fresh—complete—perfect—the best old maid without exception, ... since ... Miss Western, in Tom Jones ..."² The test for excellency, in the words of this critic, is that characters, if well drawn, "will delight you and will live in your memory forever."² The emphasis upon the aesthetic reaction of the reader, the refreshingly different terminology are worthy of comment even though one may not agree with the critic's judgment of the respective merits of Miss Austen and Miss Ferrier. Thus, in

¹ "Remarks on the Novel of Matthew 'sald," XV (1824), 568.
² "The Inheritance," XV (1824), 659, 664, 674. But see "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXX (1832), 533, where Tickler laments that Ferrier's characters are often "caricatures."
1824, alone, one finds that critics run the gamut of terms from *decorum*, *truth* to *nature*, and *individuality* of characters to new appreciative ones like *flower of the flock*.

From 1825 to 1832 a similar diversity of terminology appears. More or less in chronological order one reads of "particular and precise bits of human nature,\(^1\) embodied in characters; of Wieland's characters drawn with such "consummate art" that, though "every trait is minutely marked," all details "serve only to present us with a beautiful and harmonious whole.\(^2\) Then one reads of Cooper's character:

"Ralph" is nobody. He is an afterthought, we guess: a sort of interlineation; a bit of running accompaniment of mystery and surprise—like "the Spy" himself, without meaning or probability.\(^3\)

The reviewer makes his demand for probability and verisimilitude very strong, upbraiding Cooper for fearing to make "an idiot behave like an idiot," or "to put bad grammar into the mouth" of an illiterate lest he, Cooper, be thought an idiot or unlearned. "Truth," declares the reviewer, "whatever people may say truth is, is not vulgarity; nor is untruth refinement."\(^3\) Here is the old terminology—probability.

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1 "New Series of Sayings and Doings," XVI (1825), 221.

2 "Horae Germaniae," XVII (1825), 674.

3 "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 326. Most American writers receive adverse criticism, but Cooper's character Leatherstocking is praised in "American Writers," XIV (1824), 427, and that of Washington in The Refugee is commended for its truth in the former article, p. 327.
truth, vulgarity, refinement; but, of course, the theory is scarcely one of desiccated neo-classical decorum.

Though the criticism of characterization is interesting, there is not much that is notable after 1825 save some rather analytical remarks of Scott's as to the difference between the characters in the historical novel and those in the novel of character, where (as here in The Omen) the interest centers, not upon the incidents, but upon "the peculiar turn of mind of the principal personage who is active or passive under them."¹ This brand of novel Scott likens to the earlier plays of humor in that both produce characters that border on "the grotesque or unnatural."¹

The terms denoting realism still are in the majority. Miss Mitford's characters are "truthful and vigorous."² Moreover, in accord with the newer tendency to praise the "humble" characters, the fidelity of "her pictures o' poachers and tinklers" charms the Attick Shepherd. In Alethe in The Epicurean, "every touch is true to nature";³ and anyone who does not recognize the excellence of her must be "cold, blind, and deaf, in sense and soul."³ Scott's introduction of greater "varieties of character"⁴ than could have been introduced in poetry and the "fidelity" of his characters

¹ "The Omen," XX (1826), 52.
² "Noctes Ambrosianae," XX (1826), 777-780.
³ XXII (1827), 393.
to "national" traits, North praises. Moreover, another critic declares that, if one will grant the premise to the author of *Five Nights of St. Albans* that people actually once believed in the supernatural, then the characters in that novel appear like "real men and women" and react naturally to superstition. With real, one finds also terms like *well-drawn* and *caricatures*; and, in the criticism of Scott's characters, figurative expressions like "not spectres—but giant flesh and blood or glad and glorious." Then, of course, Aristotle's theory of the universal, the essential verity (adopted by Johnson and others) forms the basis for the statement that Cervantes, Shakespeare and Scott alone have penetrated "to the deep substratum of character" which, however disguised by "varieties of climate and government" is "at bottom everywhere the same." Hence, they have found "a responsive echo in every human heart."  

To sum up the matter of characterizations. From first

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3 "*Noctes Ambrosianae*," *XXVII* (1830), 668.

4 "*The Maid of Elver*," *XXI* (1832), 983.

to last the terms found here in greatest abundance are those like distinct, individual, fidelity, reality, truth, nature, real, life, probability; but no one of them is used in excess.

The one clear stress upon need for unity of effect even in a character (harmonious whole), the definite understanding of the advantage of the novel form in presenting the development of character and varieties of character; the use of terms stressing the readers reaction to the character, like delight, memory, shriveling; the attention to technique—all help make the criticism of characterization here seem fairly good—certainly interesting.

From 1824 on, newer terms and theories appear with the old. The praise of "low" characters appears in 1823, but most new terms appear later. The most enthusiastic and romantic discussions came, I believe, in 1852; but even here the enthusiastic praise rests upon the Aristotelian theory of the universal.

In considering specific requirements of the plot (including here, as in other journals, both fable and framework), the reviewers regard "material" as "perhaps the first point toward success." They mention "vain dreams of fantastic or phrenzied imaginations," "the humbler features exhibited by human life;" "actual existences, and not... pastimes of imagination"; "manifestations exhibited in

1 "Hajji Baba of Ispahan," XV (1824), 51.
3 "Thoughts on Novel Writing," IV (1819), 394-395. The absence of definition here makes his precise meaning doubtful.
fashionable life" with "no root in anything permanent";¹ the life of the middle classes;¹ "the internal growth and progress of sentiments and passions, and their conflicts"— the latter type being called by one reviewer "a spurious sort of literature" affording "temporary excitement"¹— human "frailties";² "purely poetical materials";³ and certain American subjects.⁴ Of the last, the reviewer declares: "No art can make stamp acts or tea duties romantic."⁴ As for the other subjects, all are defended at times, opposed at times. In general, materials too poetical or those concerning recent history are opposed. The only tendencies to be pointed out—and they may be indicated only tentatively—are toward a greater use of "historical events and characters"⁵ following Scott and a more extensive presentation of "passions, affections and wills of men"⁶ as part of the movement against the novel of manners, which, after Burney and Austen, went into a considerable decline. Scott pleased all reviewers by writing "in lines of light the annals of

¹ Ibid., 395.
² "Adam Blair," XI (1822), 358.
³ "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," XI (1822), 670.
⁴ "Notebook of a Literary Idler, No. 1," XVII (1825), 738–759. See also "Late American Books," XVII (1825), 317.
⁵ "The Omen," XX (1826), 52.
⁶ "A Preface to a Review of the Chronicles of Canon-gate," XXII (1827), 545. North (Wilson) especially commends the "passions" that are "primary and permanent" as suitable material. These, he says, Scott uses.
the chivalrous and heroic days of auld feudal Scotland.\(^1\)

Feeling, sentiment, passion, and pathos\(^4\)—these terms often indicate subject matter which the critics deem exceptionally suitable for the novel. The reviewers quote both Wordsworth\(^5\) and Johnson\(^6\) upon the matter of sentiment in Richardson. From Johnson, these lines are quoted:

"Thy, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story your impatience would be so much fretted, that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story only as giving occasion to the sentiment."

In general, the reviewers agree with Johnson that some sentiment, some passion is acceptable—pathos, especially so—but not "squeamish puleing lady-like sentimentality."\(^7\)

Like the terms associated with serious emotions,

\(^1\) "The Maid of Elver," XXI (1832), 218. Concerning this term, see J. W. Bray, op. cit., p. 110.


\(^4\) "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 408. See also "American Writers, No. 4," XVII (1825), 64. "Notes Ambrosianae," IXVI (1829), 567; "The Five Nights of St. Albans," XVI (1829), 563; "Notes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 533; "Chateaubriand," XXXII (1832), 218. For a similar use of the term in the preceding century see J. Carton, Essay on Pope, 1, 32.


\(^6\) "The Unwilling Author," XIV (1823), 480.

\(^7\) "American Writers, No. 4," XVII (1825), 64. See also "Cyril Thornton," XXII (1827), 99.
those connoting lighter feeling—wit, humor, comedy, and satire—also appear in the reviewers' considerations of material. The terms themselves, however, may apply to qualities of the author as well as to his material. Generally, all of these terms refer in a somewhat synonymous fashion to the comic elements in the fables. But there are some slight distinctions. As Scott uses the terms in discussing Smollett, Le Sage, and Fielding respectively—and most reviewers use the terms similarly—humor indicates the agreeably ludicrous and is associated with judgment; wit denotes pointed, ingenious and amusing association of dissimilar ideas and is connected with fancy; satire is wit directed to practical or ethical ends; and irony signifies a "grave" form of humor—the type which Fielding possesses.1 Throughout the period the reviewers praise humor2 and wit,3 although being somewhat inclined to favor humor as more "natural."4 "Keen satire"5 or trenchant wit they also regard


3 "New Series of Sayings and Doings," XVIII (1825), 224.

4 "American Writers, No. 4," XVII (1826), 64.

as excellent in its place. The uses of the terms are quite neo-classical. There is perhaps less stress upon the terms sense and judgment than was found in earlier criticism; but the latter terms do appear. Exceedingly neo-classical in terms is a verse-satire on the novel in which appear these terms: wit, humour, fancy, sensible, polished, truth and nature.

The attitudes of the reviewers toward the use of the supernatural, though perhaps more liberal than that of the neo-classicists, is considerably more restrained than one might expect. In the discussion of the suitability of supernatural subjects, as in the case of the comic ones above, the selection and meanings of the terms are largely derivative. One reads such terms and expressions as marvelous, refined, supernatural, laws of nature, probable, miracles, and logical precision, as well as common, familiar, spectral appendages, pleasurable horror, thrill the soul, superstition, legendary terrors, laws of the subterranean or of the supernat-

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2 “The Novel, a Satire,” XXVIII (1830), 627.

3 “Remarks on Frankenstein,” II (1818), 613-614.

4 “Phantasmagoria—de recueil d’histories de apparitiones, de Spectres, de Revenons, Fantomes,” III (1818), 591-592.
ural, 1 magic, mysterious and unholy horror, and superstitious dread. 2 Most of these terms appear in works published during the eighteenth century or earlier—works of liberal neo-classicists and pre-romanticists. 3 Scott's position is that the supernatural should be introduced merely to show the effects of superstitions upon believers in them and thus "to open new trains ... of thought." 4 But the author should deduce the consequences of such beliefs "with logical precision," should present a probable narrative. 4 All reviewers, like Scott, require a certain reasonable treatment of the irrational and supra-sensible once these elements are introduced. When care is taken in the handling of the supernatural, these elements are classed with the "beauties," as here in the criticism of Scott's materials:

And then what a world of beauties of another class altogether! The high romantic chivalries, the dark superstition, the witchcraft by which the dead are reanimated, the grave, the

1 "The Epicureans," XXII (1827), 386.
4 "Remarks on Frankenstein," II (1818), 613-614. Compare this stand with the similar one taken by Walpole in the Preface to The Castle of Otranto, ed. Caroline Spurgeon, pp. lv-lvi.
grandeur, the magnificence of the prose, that is all
that poetry ever was, or ever can be.¹

This is, incidentally, an example of the "beauties criticism"
estespoused by such critics as Lennis, Boileau, and Addison.
Altogether, despite the rather obvious approval given such
subject matter, there is scarcely the spontaneous, unthinking
clamor for every kind of thrill that one might expect to find.
In other words, there is no complete adherence to a simple
pattern. Certainly, the supernatural, along with the comic,
and the pathetic, is acceptable to these critics.

The general critical opinion with regard to the con­
struction of plots, once the material is chosen, is that
plots and plot structure are considerably less important
than other essentials. This opinion is voiced more often in
later numbers of Blackwood's than in the earlier ones, and
very seldom indeed are specific principles of plot structure
advocated. North even goes so far as to say that no story
should be "well-constructed," since no "real life" story is
well-constructed.² The tendency at least until 1829 is away
from analytical criticism of any sort, certainly away from
any rules which may govern the construction of plot. Yet in

¹ "Notebook of a Literary Idler, No. II," XVIII
(1825), 238.

² "Preface to the Chronicles of Montrose," XXII
(1827), 554. But note that later he attacks Hook for having
"a fable as weakly transparent as ever issued from the loom
of Minerva Lane." See "Rootes Ambrosianus," XVI (1831),
532-533.
their vague and appreciative way these same reviewers often remark, without trying to justify their statements, that various novels have good or poor plots. Their terms are usually those earlier applied to poetic and dramatic forms. We read of plots that are "defective both in design and in conduct," that are "complex" or not; that are composed of incidents, each serving an end; that do not give evidence of "skill in the structure" and are "flimsy and inartificial" (lacking in artistry); that are neither "skilfully arranged" nor possessed of "artificial development"; that are "well constructed" and have a "natural and unexpected" development; that are "unconnected" save that all incidents "befal the same personage"; that are "well conceived and carefully executed."¹ Thus the critics' of plot design and conduct runs. One author is "unmindful of proportion";² another presents a skeleton (either constructed by himself or "the gift of a friend") which "walks its way gracefully and vigorously";³ another presents "a train of events each naturally


² "Cyril Thornton," XXII (1827), 103.

flowing from the other. In this passage appearing in 1829, there are traditional terms; and there is also a stress upon the functional that is modern in tone:

Every scene, every description as well as every incident introduced has a direct bearing on the evolution of the fable. There is no secondary plot, there is no describing merely for describing's sake. The structure of the fiction is one and entire; the whole action occupies but five days; the scene is not once changed; and, through three volumes, attention and interest are sustained...

But this passage is only one among many quite different passages in which good plot structure is admittedly an advantage but certainly not a necessity.

Thus one sees that these critics allow almost any subjects for plots provided that the material be handled so as to seem interesting and realistic and that they admire well constructed plots but place interest and other qualities considerably above excellence of plot structure. However, very important to them is some semblance of reality in plots. This quality they discuss often, using such terms as nature, probability, verisimilitude, reality, and truth.

Usually they do not use imitation to denote copies

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1 "Cloudesley, A Tale," XXVII (1830), 712.
3 See "Tremaine," XVI (1825), 519; "Notebook of a Literary Idler, No. II," XVIII (1824), 238; "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 326; "Matilda," XIX (1826), 27; "The Epicurean," XXII (1827), 285; and "The Maid of Alvar," XXXI (1832), 985. All emphasize interest and employ such terms as interest and dull.
of reality, as many other journals do. Here the use of imitation is similar to that in Young's conjectures on Original Composition; that is, it denotes a copying of the work of others. Moreover, the term nature is used mainly to denote imitations of reality. Nature, however, has various slightly different meanings, all somewhat synonymous. One reviewer writes that there are two types of fiction: first, those that "bound the events they narrate by the actual laws of nature," and second, those that "passing these limits, are managed by marvellous and supernatural machinery." Nature in this case seems to mean the various principles or essential forces of the world, comprehended chiefly through the five senses and the reasoning power of man. Nature also frequently denotes man's native or original state or man's native desires, instincts, and appetites. It is this latter variety of nature to which the critic refers when he says that, once "the lights and instincts of nature have been lost sight of (as they always must be after a long series of artificial compositions), it is only by the

1 For instance, Valeria is called "an apt imitation of the German novel of the Wertherian cast." See "Madame Krudener," IV (1819), 111. For similar uses, see "Adam Blair," XI (1822), 349; "Pen Owen," XI (1822), 635; "Hajji Baha of Ispahan," XV (1824), 51; and "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 320.

2 "Remarks of Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus," II (1818), 113.
influence of philosophy that literature can be regenerated."¹

However, nature usually refers to universal laws and principles governing human behavior or to the external evidence of these. In the expression human nature, the external observable behavior is very often indicated. Chateaubriand, therefore, ranks well because: "His writings are less a faithful portrait of any particular age and country, than an assemblage of all that is grand, and generous, and elevated in human nature."²

Novels with plots imitative of nature (especially when the term denotes the universal) are usually probable; hence, highly desirable. These reviewers often use the terms probable and improbable. Generally, by probable they mean a plot which is consistent in its development, which is capable of being believed because it has a certain fidelity to past experiences of human beings or to their customary behavior.

Very frequently the term is synonymous with verisimilitude. The emphasis is nearly always upon the effect, however; that is, upon probability as a means for obtaining credibility.

The reviewers, therefore, object to the "improbable" in such novels as Mandeville, Frankenstein, The Heart of Mid-Lothian.

¹ "Thoughts on Novel Writing," IV (1819), 396. The differences between nature and art is indicated here. In the nature-versus-art controversy nature (denoting both instincts and innate gifts) usually gains more emphasis, though art or skill is not ignored. For uses of art or artifice and nature with the meanings just indicated see "The Entail," XIII (1825), 78; "The Novel, A Satire," XVIII (1830), 626; "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXX (1831), 531, 534.

² "Chateaubriand," XXXII (1832), 217, 218.
Percy Mallory and Sayings and Doings. They especially object to James Fenimore Cooper's Lionel Lincoln, where the hero, a man "escaped from an English madhouse," can "pass in and out of the beleaguered city of Boston as easily as fairies are said to get through key-holes." This action seems to the reviewer to be "more revolting critically speaking, more improbable than a ghost." But the reviewers do, upon occasion, defend the improbable. For instance, concerning Charles Brockden Brown, one reviewer writes: "To object that he is wild and improbable in his story is not enough unless we can shew that his intention failed, or was a bad one." The theory expressed in this passage is somewhat unusual, a trifle Aristotelian in spirit perhaps since Aristotle, too, emphasized artistic effect. Yet it differs from the theory of the Stagyrite in that the latter believed probability to be needful for effect. So perhaps this theory instead points the way to Irving Babbitt's in his essay on Spingarn. But there is a decided echo of Aristotelian phraseology in the review of Anastasius, where the improbability is overlooked, since by virtue of the author's "wit and

1 In the order named see II (1817), 403; II (1818), 570; IV (1824), 26; and XV (1824), 341.

2 "Late American Books," XVII (1825), 325.


4 See I. Babbitt, "Genius and Taste," Nation, CVI (1918), 138-141.
genius" the novel "acquires that air of impossible probability which constitutes one of the most powerful sources of the interest of his remarkable productions."1 Moreover, despite the fact that in The Omen the events are "improbable and slightly tacked together," Scott gives Galt "some indulgence." After all, according to Scott, "It is not possible at the same time to preserve consistency and probability, and attain the interest of novelty."2

On the whole, the critics in Blackwood's give a casual lip-service to probability; but there is no analysis of the probability or improbability of stories. If the story is good otherwise, mere improbability appears a very minor fault. There is greater emphasis here upon effect than is discoverable in much of the criticism after Dryden's time. So even probability takes a second place. Still, the recurrence of the term is another evidence of the prolongation of the life and extension of the use of a critical term of classical origin.

The reviewers employ other terms to denote a certain imitation of reality. They use fidelity to life and true to life.3 They use verisimilitude (denoting an air of

1 IX (1821), 205. Compare the phraseology with that in Aristotle's Poetics, XXIV, 10, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 56 especially.

2 XX (1825), 57.

3 See "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," XIII (1823), 548; and "Ivanhoe," V (1819), 263.
reality) and urge that it "never be lost sight of in
the narrative."¹ They use truth (generally referring to
observable human behavior) as in such phrases as "like the
truth"² or "impression of truth"³ or "the truth of the pic­
ture in its details."⁴ At least once there is some slight
connection of truth (present fact and universal verity) with
morality. In an article on "French Literature" we read that
Voltaire shut his eyes to truth, but that Rousseau described
"what he saw or imagined he saw as though it had been, what
he believed it to be--true." Rousseau's presentation "is true,
but it is not the whole truth." Hugo's Dernier Jour D'un
Condamné, however, has at its core, truth; for though an
"overwrought" production, "it is the exaggeration of truth,
not the extravagance of affectation." Moreover, the details
of the misery of a creature in so wretched a situation, are
"drawn with a curious fidelity, which makes us start back
from the picture as from a horrible reality."⁵ In the pre­
ceding criticism, of course, truth is used in a vague sort
of way; and much of its force comes from its connotations.
The term is used with greater precision in cases where his­
torical fiction is discussed. There truth denotes usually

¹ "Hints for a Young Author from a Very Old One,"
XII (1822), 466.
² "Noctes Ambrosianae," XX (1825), 780.
³ "Annals of the Parish," IX (1821), 205.
⁴ "The Kuzzilbash," XXIV (1828), 54.
⁵ XXVI (1829), 207-208.
historical fact and rarely fidelity to the "spirit" of a period. The critics pounce immediately upon "violations of historical truth," especially of what has been "always acknowledged as historical truth." Their insistence upon "strict historical accuracy" brings trouble to Cooper, who ventures "to make George Washington play bo-peep with a pretty girl; between two armies both of which were sadly in want of him." Of course, the concept prompting such a demand for literal truth is a heritage from Sealiger and Rymer; whereas Cooper could be defended on Aristotelian grounds.

Closely related to truth (denoting both historical fact and universal principles) are the terms real or reality, actual, actuality, and fact. The relationship between these terms can be seen here, where most of them appear:

The simple and almost uniform journal of Mr. Balwhidder is so little extraordinary as to claim from us somewhat of a belief in the reality; an advantage which belongs to those narratives that give the portrait of actual life (such as the works of Richardson), with so little of what we may call in a painter's language relief in the picture as to appear flat to some romantic readers but which have a powerful charm for such as like to look on nature in its native garb, without the ornaments in which fancy or refinement delights to dress it, and there is, as in the works of that great painter of ordinary life, an individuality and minuteness

1 "On Sitting Below the Salt," I (1817), 33.
2 "The Omen," XX (1828), 682.
3 "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 325.
in the description of the person and in the detail of the little incidents, which, in their very tediousness have the strong impression of truth and reality.¹

**Reality** generally applies to the actual, to present fact or the semblance of it and is, hence, somewhat narrower in scope than **truth**.² With respect to plots, however, **reality** sometimes signifies, as it does above, such a vivid imitation of human behavior that the imitation seems actual. **Gil Blas**, for example, seems "as it were, a reality"³; and then there is the "vivid reality"⁴ of Godwin’s work. **Fact** is usually even more limited in scope than **reality**, and denotes most often just what **actual** does, the accidents of human existence as opposed to underlying general principles. But **fact** may be a synonym for general truth. I quote:

"Fact, then, is the primary substratum—the primitive granite—upon which all fiction is formed. And this being so, fiction has always more or less of the advantages of truth, besides super-added knowledge peculiar to itself. In its employment we have this privilege. We can, at will, produce such a concatenation of supposed and yet natural events, as may be requisite to bring about the effect, and teach the lesson we wish."⁵

On the contrary, **fact** has its narrower meaning in the statement

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¹ "Annals of the Parish," IX (1821), 205.
² See, for instance, "Letters of Timothy Tickler, Esq. to Eminent Literary Characters," XVI (1824), 294.
³ "Ballantyne’s Novelist’s Library," XV (1824), 417.
⁴ "Cloodesley, A Tale," XXVII (1830), 711.
⁵ "Fact and Fiction," XX (1826), 582.
that Sir Walter "steals his facts to serve his own purposes." ¹

All of these terms denoting imitations of reality with respect to plots are similar to those to be found in earlier criticism of other types of literature. Here they are applied to the novel with little change. ² It is perhaps significant that truth and real or reality are used here almost as frequently as probability and nature. None are used to excess. All are subordinated to the achievement of effect, but there is a continuing insistence upon accurate historical truth.

With regard to terms denoting the endings of the plots, again one notices the continuing use of terms from earlier criticism of drama and poetry. Critics use ending, denouement, and catastrophe in a synonymous fashion, as an

¹ "A Preface to a Review of the Chronicles of Canon-gate," XXII (1827), 555.

examination of specific passages will show.

One critic objects to the "sunshiny dénouement" because it "admits of little to move or interest."\(^1\) Another reviewer commends in an objectionably sentimental sort of way "a lamentable end," which he calls "almost the most touching thing in the world."\(^2\) The dénouement then should be tragic if it is to be interesting. It should also be "artful"\(^3\) and certainly not "contradictory and inconsistent."\(^4\) On the basis of such meager evidence one dares not attempt to phrase a general theory governing the dénouement; but certainly "lamentable endings" have the vote of two critics and logical endings, the vote of one.

The theory of catastrophes gains considerable attention; but the term catastrophe generally signifies merely an unhappy ending.\(^5\) In the reviews of some of Scott's novels a detailed consideration of catastrophes in general as well as of the catastrophes of individual novels may be

\(^1\) "Tales of My Landlord, second series containing The Heart of Mid-Lothian," III (1818), 571.

\(^2\) "Notebook of a Literary Idler," XVIII (1825), 238.

\(^3\) "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," XI (1822), 674.

\(^4\) "Cyril Thornton," IXII (1827), 100.

\(^5\) See "Vargas," III (1822), 730; "Matilda," XIX (1826), 34; "Noctes Ambrosianae," XXVII (1830), 688.
found. The following passage indicates the reviewer's conventional thoughts upon the subject:

Whatever befalls a race of people exalted and placed aloof from the common crowd of mankind is seen distinctly both in reference to its causes and its results; but the catastrophes which overwhelm more obscure individuals, appear insulated and unprepared, and are less interesting, because we cannot have so long a retrospect into the fatal concatenations of circumstances which lead to them. ¹

Writing more specifically, the same reviewer comments that no other novel of Scott's has "a catastrophe so complete" and one which "shakes the mind so strongly as that of the Bride of Lammermoor." ¹ His concept of the inevitable catastrophe involving "the chosen ... victims a terrible destiny" is classical; but his mention of a "deep and pensive" shadow gives a romantic touch. Also his sanction of "ludicrous" characters and incidents in a pure tragedy, supposedly effecting the desired Aristotelian catharsis of "pity and terror," ¹ is the outgrowth of newer theory.

Aristotelian, however, is the theory of catharsis presented in a discussion of the catastrophe of The Monastery. This novel, being a type of fiction which goes through the mind "like a salutary storm," wins the acclaim of the critic. He expresses the following theory of

¹ "Third Series of Tales of My Landlord," IV (1819), 341-342. For further discussion of Scott's catastrophes (tragic endings) see "Percy Mallory," XV (1821), 26, where the reviewer compares the reader, "tiptoeing" after Scott's catastrophe, to a horse "coaxed forward by a pole with hay upon it." See also "A Preface to a Review of the Chronicles of Canongate," XXII (1827), 554, 564, and 570.
catharsis—a theory fully as orthodox as was Milton's and more orthodox than any other theory that has come to the attention of the student in any criticism in the interval between Milton's day and that of the critic in question:

Whatever violent emotions may have been awakened in the course of the narrative the catastrophe should, if possible, beseech us to restore the mind to a state of equilibrium, and dismiss the reader satisfied with having seen out the moral tendency and natural results of the different impulses to which his feelings have been subjected—and in that point of view the saddest morals are very frequently the best. 1

In his essays which are affixed to each volume in the published series Ballantyne's Novelist's Library, as well as in his reviews and novels, Scott indicates that he himself has definite ideas concerning catastrophes. He criticizes Smollett because the adventures recorded by the latter have no "bearing upon each other, or on the catastrophe." 2 He declares that The Omen is weakened because "the nature of the interest and of the catastrophe is changed in the course of the narration." 3 Both of Scott's statements indicate at least a verbal obeisance to the

1 "The Monastery," VI (1820), 693. See also "Noces Ambrosianae," XXVIII (1830), 446-447, where Be Quincey, defending Scott's use of "canine champions," incidentally indicates a slight understanding of catharsis. He uses the expression "to purge the soul both by pity and terror."

2 "Ballantyne's Novelist's Library," XV (1824), 412. See also p. 408, where the reviewer of Scott's work doubts that a "sublime" catastrophe can atone for other faults. Certainly, he believes it cannot in the case of "such a heap of lumber as Clarissa Harlowe."

3 "The Omen," XX (1826), 57.
Grecian theories of catastrophe.

Catastrophe is used loosely both in the article "Fact and Fiction" and in the criticism of Cyril Thornton. In the former, "an instructive catastrophe"\(^1\) indicates the Horatian theory of utility; and in the latter, "catastrophe"\(^2\) refers to a tragic incident, not an ending. Furthermore, the association of moral instruction with the catastrophe appears in the following passage:

At the catastrophe of a Tragic Tale must we lean our brow on our hands, begin inquiring at the soul within us, what is the conclusion to be drawn from the acted agonies of all the phantoms that are now gone into darkness and dust. One continuous master emotion must have been with us from the uplifting to the letting down of the curtain, making us, if we have looked and listened aight, better because wiser men, with more power over the passions of our individual selves, because with more knowledge of the passions that belong to human nature at large.\(^3\)

It is possible that here is expressed a misinterpretation of catharsis as having the effect of a weak dose of moral medicine pleasantly flavored with a plot. Obviously, the theory of consistency and continuity of plot leading to the catastrophe and the concept of universality implied above

\(^1\) XX (1826), 682.

\(^2\) XXII (1827), 86. For other comments upon catastrophes see "Matilda," IX (1826), 34, where the author's power "in working up ... the scene of the catastrophe" is commended. See also the attack on the premature catastrophe in "Vargas," XII (1822), 730.

\(^3\) "The Epicurean, A Tale," XXII (1827), 401.
are legitimate. Yet there is great vagueness of presentation.

To summarize. The reviewers use catastrophe, denouement, close, ending, conclusion, and letting down of the curtain somewhat synonymously. Of endings in general, the reviewers seem to prefer tragic, artful, and especially logical or probable ones. They use catastrophe more frequently than they do the other terms, and they have various theories regarding catastrophes. Most critics demand what North calls "a catastrophe novel and unexpected" rather than the kind which North himself prefers; namely, one "of which it may be said, in the great words of Milton: 'Far off its coming shone."

Some of these reviewers understand the Aristotelian meaning of catastrophe as involving an entire tragic experience, and one at least gives an unusually clear statement of catharsis. Of course, others give the theory of catharsis a moral turn. Some even think of catastrophe as denoting either an unfortunate incident or an ordinary sad ending.

C Terms Denoting the Function of a Novel

Like the other reviewers, apparently these writing for Blackwood's began to consider, even before they reached the end of the novel, precisely what function it had served.

1 "A Preface to a Review of the Chronicles of Canongate," XXII (1827), 554.
So in their reviews they made use of numerous terms. All of them are as traditional in nature as those applied to the endings of the novels. They repeat the old Horatian aut pro-
desse aut delectare or utile dulci or English equivalents of the Latin terms. Some writers emphasize the useful; some, the pleasant; some say that a novel exists solely to give pleasure; others, that it exists only for use. Many give both the useful and the pleasant their just due. In this magazine, the term useful, interpreted most often as the moral or the instructive, holds the winning hand; but there are a few tricks that still fall to the pleasant, a few perhaps to the moving.

The terms moral and didactic occur too frequently in the criticism for one to consider all of the passages in which they appear. Too, they are used precisely as they are in the journals previously examined and as they have been used during the preceding century. But a few passages may properly be examined.

The moral value of Harrington is considered at great length by one critic, who feels that Miss Adgeworth comes forward "too ostentatiously in propria persona as a moral teacher." But the moral treatment of Graham Hamilton is

1 "Harrington, a Tale, and Ormond, a Tale," I (1817), 635.
worthy of approval, for

it has a moral kept sufficiently in view without being
offensively obtruded upon the attention at every moment,
as has been done in some didactic tales, which tend rather
to disgust the reader with their pedantry, than to allure
him to improvement.1

Approved also is The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay, which in-
culcates "the purest morality and the most sincere piety."2

However, critics are even more pleased when a book has other
qualities to recommend it, when, for instance, it is "both
interesting and instructive."2 Susan Ferrier's books, there-
fore, are a source of delight to the reviewers because

she unites the perfect purity and moral elevation of mind
visible in all Mrs. Baillie's delightful works with much of
the same caustic vigour of satire that has made Miss
Edgeworth's pen almost as fearful as fascinating.3

Moreover, a didactic tendency is an asset even in novels of
such general excellence as the reviewers believe Scott's to
be. One critic, inspired by Scott's moral tendency, speaks
of the novelist as "true to the cause of virtue" and "faith-
ful to the Polar Star of duty"--a writer who "has not left
one line which on his deathbed he would wish recalled."4

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1 "Graham Hamilton," XI (1822), 732.
2 "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," XIII (1823), 557.
Contrast with the charge of "ineffectual immorality" levelled
against Hunt's Art of Love. See XI (1823), 780.
3 "The Inheritance," XV (1824), 659.
4 "Chateaubriand," XXXII (1832), 219.
Yet, however prone they may be to praise moral or instructive works, the critics demand some standards. All are not inclined promiscuously to praise morals. One critic, agreeing that stories of the "middle classes" may be called "moral" because of their "didactic purpose," violently denies that novels of sentiment or passion are "didactic works," since "no person in reading them, ever picked up rules of practical prudence, or gained more control over his passions."\(^1\) Another objects to abrupt and frequent intrusions of "moral reflections."\(^2\) He objects also to the type of "poetical justice" of the particular novel he is reviewing, since he believes that the punishment for the crime is excessive. Too, a decided hint of the neo-classical decorum enters his consideration since he is greatly perturbed about the "indelicacy of some parts of the story; the loose dress... of the heroine."\(^2\) Then there is this very well-put comment of Lady Morgan's upon the methods of eighteenth-century novelists and of a few of the nineteenth century:

\begin{quote}
Think ye the "morals" ye drawl for that last
Shall shield, like penitence, your actions past;
Even though your rake by one unchanging rule,
Is tamed and married to a flirt or fool.\(^3\)
\end{quote}

\(^1\) "Thoughts on Novel Writing," IV (1819), 394-395.

\(^2\) "Adam Blair," XI (1822), 466. For another use of poetic justice see "Fact and Fiction," XX (1826), 682.

\(^3\) "The Novel, A Satire," XXVIII (1830), 626. But see "Matthews Dibdin and Morgan," XI (1822), 695, for the remarks of one critic about Lady Morgan's *Wild Irish Girl*, which he believes immoral.
Thus in all of these statements concerning morals efficiently presented,\(^1\) inefficiently presented,\(^2\) or not offered at all,\(^3\) we find, in addition to the terms already mentioned, such diverse terms as indelicacy and poetic justice.

A few articles in Blackwood's indicate a definite leaning away from the didactic function of novels and toward the entertaining and perhaps the "moving" function of novels. In these appear mainly terms like pleasure, pleasant, feeling, and passion. For instance, one writer declares:

Novels are pleasant reading in warm weather. I am not in jest. It is actually a relief after having harassed yourself with the hard reading of polemics, under a thermometer indicating tropical heat to turn to a book, in which no demand is made upon your thinking faculty. Gray used to say, that his idea of Paradise was lying on a sofa, and reading eternal new novels.\(^4\)

Such statements as this one tend to disregard any basis for criticism save that of entertainment. The novel, then, is to be reduced to the status of a game or of a toy, of which the sole purpose is to furnish amusement for a few minutes or hours.

Although various forms of fiction are considered

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1 See especially "The Earthquake," VII (1821), 450; "Notes Ambrosianae," XX (1826), 52, and "New Series of Sayings and Doings," XVII (1825), 225.
3 See "On the Candide of Voltaire," IV (1818), 156.
4 "Notebook of a Literary Idler," XVIII (1825), 238.
"potent changers of the face of society," another critic believes that "fiction has probably contributed in a double proportion to the sum of human delight." Furthermore, he declares:

There are, to be sure, certain worthy, and, upon the whole, well meaning persons, who make a loud outcry about what they exclusively call "utility." If, however, you happen to ask them of what use is utility, excepting to administer to the pleasure and comfort of mankind they (bless their fine wits) are at a non-plus.

If such sentiments indicate nothing else, they do indicate a romantic tendency coupled with a distinct leaning toward analysis. One recalls Plato's sorrowful renunciation of Homer because Homer was not moral and in this criticism sees a contrasting decision made to exalt the purely pleasing above the didactic and moral or merely factual historical output.

The conclusion is then that, although utility and morality are exalted above pure pleasure, there are some indications that critics seek to justify their preference for literature that has only an entertaining function. The utile dulci of Horace remains in fashion, especially the utile; but it is a limited utility—not a higher morality, but a somewhat circumscribed didacticism. Yet at the very end of the period critics admit that novels need not teach a specific moral but may instead be merely moral in tendency.

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1 "Fact and Fiction," XX (1826), 684.
Conclusion

Now to sum up the whole discussion. From the first issue of this journal on, the contributors believe that the novel is an important literary genre. Much may be said about the methods of criticism they use. There is evidence of climatic or environmental criticism,\(^1\) of purely personal criticism, of impressionistic, and appreciative criticism. There are even arguments against any analytical criticism and other arguments concerning the proper basis for criticism.

Some of the critical comments lead one to believe that the critic's sole object is to express himself as fancifully as possible in order to focus the attention of the reader upon the critic instead of upon the work criticized. "We have," says one reviewer, "in these three volumes, the cream, the butter, and the cheese of his experiences—the pail, the churn, and the press."\(^2\)

Furthermore, the intrusion of the personal element is taken note of in this satiric comment:

A book, especially, of which the charm and fascination are in its progressive movement of incident and passion, must, on no account whatever, be analyzed unless, indeed, you are a private enemy to the author in which case we recommend a minute and masterly analysis.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) See "Remarks on Mandeville," II (1818), 405; and "Horae Germanicae," XVI (1825), 674.

\(^2\) "Hogg's Three Perils of Woman," XIV (1823), 428.

\(^3\) "Cyril Thornton," XXII (1827), 85.
Then again, when a critic wishes to condemn a novel, instead of applying set standards to it and pointing out the shortcomings, he often merely remarks that it is "beneath contempt," that he could not finish it, that he is happy to have escaped reading all of it and "with God's blessing," hopes "to escape" forever. The fact of the inferiority of the book is obvious, but the wherefore of the inferiority is left to the imagination of the reader. When a critic is "disappointed" in a book and yet feels that it has some promise, he gives vent to what may be called mildly impressionistic utterances, such as: "Still, though it is not, the very thing that we require, it is a type, a 'shadow,' a somewhat, in the shape thereof; the 'shadow' perhaps of a coming event"—who knows? Moreover, North describes a volume of Miss Edgeworth's in a decidedly romantic fashion, as being "as light as a many winged butterfly, wavering, like an animated flower, in the sunshine."  

Yet there are indications of a demand for the use of a critical basis in determining value. The reviewers mention "entireness of effect" as an indication of worth. They

1 "American Writers," XVII (1825), 189.
2 "Late American Books," XVIII (1825), 325.
3 "Nectes Ambrosianae," XXIV (1828), 675.
also discuss as a measure of worth the "intention"\(^1\) of the author. The questions concerning this theory, as many have pointed out, are how is one to judge whether the intention is good or bad, and who is to judge the intention. An equally vague criterion is the one requiring that the novel be so good that no man can put it down "without reading it to the end." However, the reviewer does add that the novel should be "full of life," "full of sense and shrewdness, wit and veracity, savoir faire, and savoir vivre."\(^2\)

Even in the somewhat effervescent criticism of Blackwood's the old neo-classical terms form the backbone of the criticism throughout the period. But they are greatly enlivened by the addition of many figurative expressions from contemporary life. In treatment of the author the old terms like genius, imagination, fancy, knowledge and observation appear. In the character delineations objective terms like distinct, individual, fidelity, reality, truth, nature, real, life, and probability appear along with terms like delight, memory, shrink, emphasizing the reader's reaction, and with low, humble, and common, showing perhaps Wordsworthian influences. The newer types of terms appear, however, mainly after 1823. Especially notable here is the stress upon


\(^2\) "Pen Owen," \textit{XV} (1822), 635.
unity of impression (harmonious whole) even in characterization and upon the advantages offered by the novel for presenting the development of characters. In discussions of plots appear such terms as feeling, passion, humor, wit, pathos, supernatural, manners, well-constructed, one and entire, direct bearing, nature, verisimilitude, truth, real, probable, denouement, catastrophe, purge, virtue, vice, moral, pleasant, moving, useful, interesting, and close. Most of these are inherited. But newer terms were also present, and changes in the old ones appeared at intervals.

From 1816 to 1822, except perhaps for the mention of "low characters" and for transcendental interpretations of genius and imagination, there is no great change in the terminology. It remains what it was in poetic criticism of the past. But from 1822 on, especially after 1828, terms more specifically connected with the novel appear. There is accent upon these terms: development (of characters), harmonious whole, one and entire, details (as a means), purpose. There are also terms associated with romanticism like raging, roaring, shudder, terrible, grandeur; but there is even greater emphasis upon terms denoting means for achieving emotional effects or unified impressions. Hints of the influence of Schiller, Schlegel, Coleridge, Corneille and Wordsworth appear along with pure Aristotelian touches (catharsis and catastrophe). North's criticism during these
years is sometimes good, sometimes scarcely reasonable—often jaunty and figurative, his figures of speech being taken from contemporary life.

Toward the year 1832, the criticism grows more appreciative and, at least with respect to Scott, more generously laudatory. This "boast of Scotland, the glory of Great Britain, an honour and an ornament of human nature" causes the reviewers in Blackwood's, whether because of the true worth of the novelist or because of his nationality, to vie in extravagant praise of him.

Whether the London Magazine contains terms similar to those in Blackwood's and shows an equal tendency toward Appreciative criticism during the later years, only an examination of its individual reviews will show. Such an examination is now in order.

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1 "Chateaubriand," XXXII (1832), 218.
IN 1820 the London Magazine began as a miscellany with more of its contents devoted to writers and books than is to be found in any preceding periodical of the time. Its first editor, John Scott, was one of the best judges of literature in his era. "His appraisals of Walter Scott, Keats, Wordsworth and Byron put to shame the blundering ineptitudes of most of his contemporaries--Lockhart and Jeffrey, in particular." \(^1\) John Scott died in 1821, at the height of his career as editor and critic, and Taylor and Nessey purchased the magazine. With Thomas Hood as his sub-editor, Taylor attempted to edit the periodical, of which Scott had made a success. But his refusal to let the writers have a free hand caused him to lose many of the excellent contributors, among whom was Hazlitt.

According to Graham, "by the autumn of 1824, the New Monthly was gaining ground and the London was in desperate straits." \(^2\) In 1825, the magazine passed to Henry Southern,

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\(^2\) Ibid., p. 283.
"and sank into insignificance"; but the end did not come until 1829.

Because of the importance of the criticism published by the *London* during the years that it had such contributors as Lamb, Hazlitt, and Cary and particularly during the time that it had John Scott as editor, any study of critical terminology in periodicals of the period would be incomplete without a consideration of that magazine. Of particular interest are the reviews published during the heyday of the publication. To these reviews, therefore, I expect to pay special attention. But I shall consider also the terms used in numerous typical reviews published during the later years of the magazine's existence. First, however, there are a few general remarks which should be made.

There is some purely romantic criticism in the *London Magazine*, like this passage from Hazlitt's review of *The Pirate*:

> Who will summon the spirits of the northern air from their chill abodes, or make gleaming lake or hidden cavern teem with wizard, or with elfin forms? There is no one but the Scottish Prospero, but old Sir Walter, can do the trick aright.

But much criticism is neither the strict formalism of the neoclassicists nor the unrestrained enthusiasm of the true romanticists. Few of the critics would apply strict rules to the novels; but, at the same time, few would unreservedly agree with this statement of DeQuincey:

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But the truth is this: novel reading is so purely a piece of sensuality (elegant sensuality no doubt), that most readers resent the impertinence of criticism in such a case, as much as he who sits down to a carouse of immortal wine resents a medical intrusion: the day after he may bear it; but not when he is imbibing the nectar, preparing to imbibe it, or having just imbibed it.  

Indeed, many feel the need of some good— but not rigid— standard of criticism and deplore the lack of one in readers and in critics. The reviewer of Tales of the Crusaders, for instance, writes thus:

Unable to refer to a real standard for want of reading and reflection, they (presumably the readers) take that one which the author himself furnishes, and then, trying him by his own scale, pronounce on his truth. 

Then there is the reviewer of Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship, who opposes the application of the traditional rules but who obviously does not sanction mere romantic outpourings in the guise of criticism. He uses such terms as good sense and judgment and even quotes directly from Horace here:

But with regard to a novel, there is no rule which has obtained any “prescription” (to speak the language of civil law) but the golden rule of good sense and just feeling; . . . How do men generally criticize a novel? Just as they examine the acts and conduct, moral or prudential of their neighbors. And how is that? Is it by quoting the Nichomachean Ethics of Aristotle? Do they then proceed as the French Counsul did when the Dey of Tunis informed him that he meant to cut off his head? Upon which

The Counsul quoted Wiclcrfort
And Puffendorf and Grotius:

And proved from Vattel
Exceedingly well,
Such a deed would be quite atrocious.

1 “Walladmor,” London Magazine, X (1824), 380. For De Quincey’s comments upon the novel and novelists see The Collected Writings of De Quincey, ed. Masson (London: Blackwood, 1897) XI, 12-19, 222-256, 322-335; XIV, 132, 145 and especially 370-372, where De Quincey defends the presentation of “love” in novels upon the basis that novels try to satisfy the “secret craving of the reader,” who himself seeks “to realize ideal.”

2 London Magazine, n.s., II (1825), 597.
Now they never trouble Puffendorf and Grotius; but try the case "proprio marte," appealing only to their own judgments and their own feelings. . . . In this way they judge of actions, in this way of a novel; and in this way we shall judge of Wilhelm Meister; and cannot allow that our criticism shall be forestalled by any pretence that we are opposing mechanical rules, which do not and cannot exist, to the natural and spontaneous movements of the unprejudiced judgment.

"Scribendi recte sapere est principium et fons." . . .

This is orthodox doctrine all over the world, or ought to be.

The extent to which the unspecific appreciativeness of romantic criticism has influenced the traditional terminology of the reviews of the novels can best be seen, however, in the individual terms and in the critical theories which these terms are used to express. For the sake of convenience, I shall divide the terms into two major groups—those denoting the requisites of the author and those describing his work. I expect to study, as in preceding chapters, both the denotative and the connotative meanings of the major terms and of the minor ones associated with each major one so that I may ascertain whether the majority of the terms are borrowed from earlier criticism of the drama and of poetry, whether they are new coinages influenced by the romantic writers, or whether they are the old traditional terms with new meanings—meanings perhaps better suited than the old ones to the criticism of the comparatively new literary form, the novel.

1 "Goethe," London Magazine, X (1824), 292. From this point on, unless otherwise indicated, all references will be to the London Magazine; therefore, I shall not repeat the title of the journal.
Terms Applied to Authors

Most of the terms used by the typical reviewers of the London Magazine to express the requisites of the good author are of the sort found in other periodicals of the time. There is, however, considerably more emphasis given here to the terms genius, power, imagination, and fancy than is usually the case.

Since genius and power are sometimes used as synonyms, it is logical to think of them together; but each has interpretations that are different from those given to the other.

Genius is the more significant of the two terms in the criticism. At least, it appears more frequently. But so vaguely and loosely is the term used at times that it is difficult to assign any specific meanings to it. In most cases, however, "creative power, or creative facility, or inventive talent"1 fits the context very well. The ease of interpretation vanishes, however, with the consideration of a multiplicity of examples. There is Hazlitt's remark that Godwin's "genius is wholly adverse to the stage."2 Here genius is almost a spirit (or the deus in nobis of Ovid, mentioned by Ben Jonson and adopted by many romanticists). This "moving

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2 "The Drama," I (1820), 434.
spirit" within the artist is suggested also by another reviewer's description of Fouque's "genius and disposition" as "impressed with a wild, dreary, shadowy character."1 This same classic meaning (spirit) broadened and generalized to denote a creative force, inflaming and enkindling both artist and reader, is implied in the description of the author of Tremaine as having a genius that "is anything but ardent."2

But there are still other meanings for the term, some of which seem more nearly akin to the romantic conceptions of genius. For instance, Hazlitt describes Cobbett and Scott as "two original geniuses who write as they feel."3 Although his use of the term verbally echoes Young's "genius concept,"3 Hazlitt's further discussion shows that his "original geniuses"3 are not studying themselves, that they are not unrestrained. Instead, they are relating literature to life, conjuring up "recollections connected with an old castle," for instance—not throwing "new light upon the subject," but "engaging in a sort of poetic memory."5 So here we do have a suggestion of

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1 "Sintram and His Companions," II (1820), 65.
2 "Tremaine," n.s., I (1823), 533. A similar meaning is attributed to the term even in passages where it is not applicable to the author. For instance, the reviewer of Hans d'Islande writes of an "evil genius" that "hover over our literature." VII (1823), 472.
4 Ibid., p. 206.
Coleridge's theory of fancy. We do have connotations that are perhaps new, but the original impulse or creation is limited by the known, by the probable connections with life—in a sense, by the author's mental associations.

On the whole, whether we think of genius as a creative spirit or as an ardent force, as inventive ability or talent, or even as a man endowed with the power of giving literary expression to his original creative impulses, we are impressed with the paucity of completely new associations with the term. Some of the meanings, like the spirit of fire or of creation, appear romantic; but they are actually found in the works of the classicists and of the neo-classicists who quote the classicists. This being true, we are inclined to agree with Pater that even "in Greek and Roman work there are typical examples of the romantic spirit." 1 Certainly, in the genius of the romantic era are traces of neo-classical ideas. But the emphasis upon the term and the re-introduction, in several passages, of its basic classic meanings indicate a variance from neo-classical usage.

Like genius, power is a term often associated with romantic criticism. Frequently, it is used as a synonym for genius or as a specific quality of genius, as for example,

1 Walter Pater, Postscript to Appreciations, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 740.
in the words the "transcendent power of genius." The connotation here is one of an innate creative or imaginative force of such magnitude that it cannot be comprehended through ordinary experience. Too, a similar meaning (creative force or imaginative spirit) fits both the "gusty and unequal" power in the review of Sintram and his Companions and Hazlitt's mention of power which "throws into objects more than ordinary opinion or feeling connects with them."

On the whole, the term power is associated with creativity, invention, imagination or origination; and mainly it denotes either an innate quality or an impulse of a creative mind. The stress, however, may be upon the specific nature of this faculty or capacity; or it may be upon the forceful effect of the literary product upon the reader. It is upon specific abilities in the article on Godwin, where it is said that the age in which the novelist lived "animated his powers." This last criticism interests us particularly because of the great interest taken by later critics like Sainte-Beuve and Arnold in the influence upon an author's work of the era in

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1 "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 77.
2 n.s., II (1820), 65. See the "New Edition of the Waverley Novels," XXIII (1829), 612.
3 "Peveril of the Peak," VII (1823), 206.
5 "Godwin—Chiefly as a Writer of Novels," II (1820), 167.
which he lives. The emphasis shifts, however, from author to reader, when we come upon the expression "pathetic power." Then we think of power as exemplifying still a natural talent, but this time one for moving or affecting the reader through the medium of written compositions.

The whole power-genius theory can scarcely be said to be new, though the emphasis upon feeling and force is a deviation from the neo-clasical tradition. But at times, as, for example, in the review of Tales of the O'Hara Family, judgment is used in connection with powers in a way that would be acceptable even to Pope.

Although genius and power are the two terms perhaps more frequently used than any others to denote praiseworthy qualities of novelists, the critics very often mention fancy and imagination and along with them invention and originality. Indeed, so closely related are these faculties or qualities in the minds of the reviewers that much of the criticism offers proof of Poe's statement in his Review of Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales. There he says that "invention, creation, imagination, originality" really represent one "trait which, in the literature of fiction is positively worth all the rest."

In the London Magazine, the reviewers exert little effort to distinguish between the two more popular terms of this series, imagination and fancy. And they make no attempt to define the terms or to use them exactly. Fancy, it is

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1 "Madame de Staël," IV (1821), 397.

2 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," n.s., III (1825), 135.
true, does denote a lighter, less significant form of imagination sometimes; but at other times it is the equivalent of imagination. It may indicate "a work of invention" or fiction as opposed to fact, as in a "tale of fancy."\(^1\) It may signify merely the whim of the author in such an expression as "according to his own fancy."\(^2\) These types of fancy, the reviewers criticize. But because the author of *The Ayrshire Legatees* possesses "vigilant common sense guiding and controlling the exercise of his fancy,"\(^3\) the critics praise his fancy. In the neo-classical tradition, the control of sense is still in the forefront of their thinking. This control of fancy by sense remotely suggests Coleridge's "Good Sense," but very probably the theory is more closely related to Hobbes' concept of a worthwhile fancy, guided by philosophy.

One of the most interesting uses of the term— one definitely in the romantic vein— occurs in the review of *Anastasius*. There, the author's "fancy" is "like the flower of the churchyard, (which) derives its bloom and its gaiety, from what is rank with corruption and appalling to our instincts."\(^4\) His fancy is more than just an innate, creative

3. "The Earthquake," III (1821), 92. Fancy has a similar meaning in "Kenilworth," III (1821), 139, where the creations of Scott's fancy are said to "darken their hues as time advances, not less surely than those tangible objects which constitute the external world around us."
4. I (1820), 77.
faculty of the mind. It is a thriving growth, a plant, or perhaps actually a creative spirit, feeding upon earthy elements, nourishing itself with the decayed and corrupt matter. The connotations, I believe, are comparatively new. Certainly the interpretation is in the Hurd-Marton-Young line of concepts rather than in the Boileau-Pope-Johnson tradition. Fancy, then, usually somewhat unimportant, often represents the eighteenth-century critical theories but at least once is specifically different in its connotations from what it meant to the earlier writers.

Imagination, too, very frequently has the same meaning or meanings that it bore in its applications to the poetry and the drama of the eighteenth century; but sometimes there are suggestions of changes. More and more frequently there is apparent a laxity in the application of the term. It may denote a faculty of mind possessed by the artist, or it may apply specifically to the artistic invention of this creative faculty, as it does in the phrase "the chivalrous vivacity and grandeur of his imagination." Sometimes the term is

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2 "Kenilworth," III (1821), 168.
applied to the mind of the reader or the hearer. But here we are interested chiefly in its application to the author.

"Let him [the author] trust to his observation more and to his imagination less," writes the reviewer of Tales of the O'Hara Family. In this sentence, imagination and observation are in opposition to each other as though the imagination might be a minor faculty of the mind. Instead of being "the residence of truth," as Reynolds described it in his Thirteenth Discourse, it is merely the source of images that have little connection with life and actual events. The reviewer of Hajji Baba of Ispahan, taking the opposite view, commends Forder's accuracy in depicting manners but deplores the fact that the novel is "inferior as a work of imagination"—that is, as a work which ought to present such vivid and realistic images that they would arouse the readers' emotions. This interpretation is similar to that one used during the eighteenth century.

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1 See "Woodstock," XV (1826), 177, where the reviewer rebukes Scott for believing that what is efficacious in drama will also be effective in the novel and reminds the novelist that Coleridge said "dramas subjected oculis fidelibus excite the imagination more keenly than those merely reported." This passage is notable also for the reviewer's consciousness of the need for a different technique in the novel from that used in the drama.

2 n. a., IX (1825), 136.

One or two passages, however, are suggestive of newer ideas, and certainly indicative of a keener desire (than is usual in the reviews) on the part of the reviewers to consider imagination in a careful, critical manner. Hazlitt writes that Godwin's imagination works "like the power of steam, with inconceivable and incessant expansive force, but it is all in one direction, mechanical and uniform."1 Another reviewer, probably John Scott,2 writes of Godwin that the age in which the novelist began his work "chiefly impregnated his imagination."3 This latter statement somewhat forcefully suggests the theory advanced much later by Arnold in The Function of Criticism. In both excerpts the term imagination refers to the creative faculty of the mind. So the meaning of the word is not unusual; but the fact that Hazlitt indicts Godwin for lack of variety is both interesting and in keeping with Hazlitt's definition of imagination given in his essay "On Poetry in General."4 Moreover, if the core of the theory is not new, at least the figurative connotations bear the stamp of novelty.


3 "Living Authors, III," II (1820), 167. See also "On the Writings of Mr. Maturin," III (1821), 514, for a similar use of the term.

4 He says: "Imagination is that faculty which represents objects, not as they are in themselves but as they are moulded by other thoughts and feelings into an infinite variety of shapes and combinations of power."
So do the associations with John Scott's statement. The suggestion of the sowing of the seeds of literary creation in the receptive womb of the mind is refreshingly different, even though it is faintly reminiscent of Young's theory that "the mind of a man of genius is a fertile and pleasant field." In both of these passages the duty of the artist merely to observe and to imitate is supplanted by the need for his creative reaction and for his conscious effort at achieving variety. He needs also to aim at exciting the "passions and imagination"\(^1\) of his reader.

To summarize then. One must admit that the objective meanings of imagination are acarcely different in this criticism of the novels from what they were in that of other forms of literature during the preceding century. Either imagination signifies the creative faculty of the mind—sometimes controlled by "common sense"—or it denotes an imaging process (a mere imitation of objective or accidental life or nature) or a vivid creative process by which an ideal world is so successfully represented that it may seem real and may thus arouse the emotions of the readers. But the figurative associations with the term and the great amount of importance attached to it are significant. Even more so are the efforts sometimes made by the reviewers to effect slight changes or modifications

in the application of the term so that it will fit the novels and the novelists being criticized.

Along with imagination, the reviewers sometimes mention invention and originality. At times these terms refer either to a faculty of the mind or to the power of the mind to imagine, but they may refer also to the process and to the product of imagining or creating. Therefore, they may be considered as synonyms of imagination. For instance, Hazlitt states that Godwin "cannot be denied to possess the constructive organ, to have originality and invention in an extraordinary degree; but he does not construct according to nature; his invention is not dramatic." It is possible that originality and invention here are innate faculties of "the constructive organ." Then they refer to the power of the mind to produce new or different mental images. But these images (or products of the imagination) of Godwin's are not "imitations of nature." They are not creations, which, though new and different, can be conceived by the reader to be probable or consistent with his previous experiences and observations. This leads us to the

1 "The Drama," I (1820), 434.

2 There is no suggestion that nature refers to "accidental" or historical truth. What is meant is a sort of verisimilitude (a similarity to general truth). See also "New Edition of the Waverley Novels," XXIII (1829), 612, where the reviewer deplores the fact that the latter novels of Scott are "rifacimenti of old memoir writers," rather than "the offspring of Sir Walter's recollections and fertile, and brilliant invention." Yet Scott is still considered superior to most of the novelists of his time with regard to originality and invention. In the Marginalia of "The Reviewer Reviewed," X (1827), 27, the editor comments that Horace Smith's novels (unlike Scott's) are "the elaborate works of a servile imitator, with some little portion of taste, but who is wholly destitute of talent."
latter use of invention, which appears to apply specifically to the product of the imagination. In short, as Hazlitt uses the term invention, it may mean imagination or the product of the imagination. In that it is, as a product, "an imitation of nature" (albeit a poor one here), it may be a synonym for originality, which in its turn also may denote either the power to produce new images or a product of such power (new but imitative of nature).

But it is the imaginative faculty of mind to which the reviewer has reference when he writes of Sir Walter Scott:

If his invention (imagination) fails him, or if he is too idle to draw on it, his mechanical skill, if so we may call it, still remains to him. . . .

Here invention has intellectual connotations in that it requires conscious effort on the part of the artist instead of mere reliance on unconscious inspiration. On the other hand, the reviewer of Redgauntlet is obviously designating the instinctive imaging process when he uses the expression "extraordinary facility of invention."2

Whether invention applies to a faculty of the mind, to a process, or to a product, therefore, it usually may be considered a synonym of imagination. Invention and originality

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1 "Woodstock," XV (1826), 174. See also "Redgauntlet", I (1824), 74, where Scott's "poverty of invention with respect to character" is mentioned as the "striking defect of (his) mind."

2 I (1824), 69.
are both used as vaguely as imagination and fancy. All four terms, previously applied to other forms of art, are now transferred to the novel with little appreciable change in their meanings, except that they are somewhat more inclusive, more general.

The reviewers have a moderate amount of interest in the mind and in the intelligence of the author also but not nearly as much as they have in his power or genius or imagination or originality. They may mention "intelligence" along with "taste" and "pathetic power,"¹ in the case of Madame de Stael. They may speak of Scott’s "matter of fact mind"² or of the great "fertility"³ of his mind and recommend reflection on the part of the author and selectivity with regard to his output. They may even compare an author’s mind with "a sort of magic lantern" which causes even an "insignificant" idea to cast "a gigantic shadow on his pages."⁴ But they do not express extravagant praises for the mind or the intelligence of the author. As they use the terms, mind and intelligence are generally synonyms; but sometimes mind refers specifically to the thinking organ, to general creative power (imagination), or to literary talent. Often the author is urged to subject

¹ "Madame de Stael," IV (1821), 397.
² "Peveril of the Peak," VII (1823), 206. See also "Living Authors I", I (1820), 11-12.
³ "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 69.
⁴ "Tremaine," n.s. I (1825), 533-535.
his mind to some fixed control— to the "rules laid down by
taste"\(^1\) or to some training or to judgment.\(^2\) The restrain-
ing influence of the neo-classicists is still perceptible
here.

In addition to the major qualities considered
exceptionally desirable by the reviewers, there are some minor
ones which are noted from time to time in the reviews. If to
"talent"\(^3\) and to "facility in composition"\(^4\) we add "shrewd
observation of the world,"\(^5\) some "dramatic skill,"\(^6\) "perceptions"
that are quick and true, "intuitive tact" (or taste),\(^7\) deep
feeling,\(^8\) and "a grasp of the human heart,"\(^9\) we have most of

\(^1\) "Sketch of Foreign Literature," VII (1823), 472.
\(^2\) See "Tales of the O'Hara Family," n.s., III (1825),
125, and "Tremaine," n.s., I (1825), 535. Yet "learning" with-
out "literary talent" is never sufficient. See "Letters from
Paris," n.s., I (1825), 277.
\(^3\) "Letters from Paris," I (1825), 278. See also "Sketch
of Foreign Literature," VII (1823), 472.
\(^4\) "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 70.
\(^5\) "The Earthquake," III (1821), 116. See also "Tales
of the O'Hara Family," n.s., IX (1825), 136, and "Tremaine,"
n.s., I (1825), 534-535.
\(^6\) "Walladmore," X (1824), 330.
\(^7\) "Kenilworth," III (1821), 188.
\(^8\) "Letters from Paris," n.s., III (1825), 359-361.
\(^9\) "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54.
the qualities praised by the reviewers but less frequently commended than the major qualities already discussed—imagination or fancy, genius, and power, intelligence, excellence of mind, originality, and invention.

All of these qualities, one may find mentioned in earlier criticism of different types of literature. The insistence upon observation is not foreign to the criticism of the eighteenth century, and only the emphasis placed upon knowledge of the human heart and upon intuitive or perceptive faculties could denote some romantic influences.

In general, all of the qualities possessed by the novelists and praised by the critics are familiar ones. Occasionally, there are some changes in meanings, but often one cannot be sure of the changes since the terms are so loosely used. The possible interpretations are sometimes classical in origin, sometimes neo-classical, less frequently romantic, and almost never completely new. Here the reviewers show that they have been influenced by romanticism, not in the specific terms they use, but in the mental associations which they have with them. A passage in which the traditional terms occur may be—and sometimes is—full of romantic

1 See especially S. Johnson, The Prince of Abissinia, or Rasselas, Chapter X, especially pp. 65-68. See also his Lives of the English Poets, reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 462,463, 465, 467, for a similar use of terms denoting desiderata of poets.
phraseology and fraught with romantic concepts. For instance, mind is a traditional term; but when the mind of one author is compared with a magic lantern that distorts all his ideas, even the term itself seems new.

The two terms most frequently used in the reviews—namely, genius and power—express theories dear to classicists, neo-classicists, and romanticists alike, though power is much less frequently used in eighteenth-century criticism than it is in these reviews. Genius (denoting creative power or a moving spirit or a man endowed with the power of giving literary expression to original creative impulses) and power (meaning either an innate creative force or a capacity for originating compositions that move the reader) are both terms sometimes modified by the reviewers to fit the novel.

Other terms like fancy (a whim, a lighter form of imagination, or a creative power or faculty), imagination (the creative faculty of the mind, a mental product), invention (also a creative faculty of the mind or the product of imagination), and originality (either innate inventive talent or a quality of work impressing the reader as new, yet logically an imitation or a semblance of reality) are used almost as synonyms; but the first three terms appear more frequently than the last. All are familiar to the student of criticism. Even their meanings are usually those implied—or actually expressed—by critics of the preceding century. Only in the qualifying or explanatory passages containing these terms and the minor ones mentioned above is there anything new noted.
B Terms Applicable to the Works of Novelists

Since there are an even greater number of terms that may apply to novels than apply to the novelists, I shall consider here only the major ones in detail. The minor ones which have some connection with the major ones will receive passing notice only. For instance, I shall mention descriptive adjectives used with the term style or with characterization or with plot; but I shall not attempt to analyze them or to trace their history in toto.

The meanings of the term style itself may, for the most part, be traced to classical and neo-classical times. The poetic critics used style to denote a habit or a method of writing acquired either by effort or without design. They even used it as a synonym for language. In many of the periodical reviews the second meaning (method) is the one suggested, but frequently the term is narrowed to denote merely diction and grammatical accuracy. Most of the criticisms of style in the London Magazine are directed at the language.

In view of the close relationship between style and language, it is almost impossible to divorce them. But in so far as it is possible to do so, I shall consider style along with its periphery of descriptive terms first in an

1 See Smith and Parks, op.cit., pp. 63-64, 204, and 260, for definitions of style given by Aristotle, Ben Jonson, and Longinus, upon whose definitions many of the later critics relied.
effort to determine specifically what qualities the reviewers believed a good style should have. Assuming then that the qualities praised are the desirable ones, one may get a fairly good notion of the reviewers' concepts of a good style.

The best style (manner of writing) should not be "laboured" or "forced"; it should not be characterized by "clumsiness" and "coarseness," by "slovenliness" and by "badness of the grammar"; by "obscurity, straining after effect, and exaggeration"; by "vagueness, affectation and indistinctness" even when these last faults can be traced to the "jaded public taste." It should sometimes have a "light grace"; it may sometimes have vigour; but it should above all be "clear." One reviewer remarks that a style

1 "Bracebridge Hall," VI (1822), 439. Here the reviewer comments in a vague fashion upon the "purely pathetic" style of a story—a style of which he highly approves, but apparently he refers to the subject matter, not to style, despite his use of the latter term.

2 "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93.

3 "The Pirate, V (1822), 89.

4 "Lodoiska and Her Daughter," II (1820), 407-409. See also "Letters from Paris," n.s., III (1825), 230, where "affectation" of style is overlooked because the book "says something."

5 "Winter Evening Tales," I (1820), 660.

6 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," n.s., III (1825), 136.
should be "genial, or cordial, or easy or unaffected,"¹ as well as "artfully done."¹ All of these qualities required in the ideal style are those that might have received the praise of Dryden or Boileau. There is indeed little new here either in words or in theories if we except the relatively new (as far as criticism is concerned) adjectives cordial and genial. These are aesthetic terms denoting the impression made upon the reader by the personality of the author as seen in his work. They may be considered as synonyms for warm and kindly. As they are used here along with easy (fluent or facile) and unaffected (unstrained), they indicate the importance of spontaneity in style as opposed to a "strain of composition"² everywhere apparent in a novel like The Earthquake.

Up to this point it has been possible to separate style and language, but now we come to this criticism of Goethe:

For the 'style' of Goethe, in the true meaning of that word, we profess no respect: but, according to the common use of the expression as implying no more than a proper choice of words, and a proper arrangement of them (pure diction in a collocation agreeable to the idiom of the day), we know of nothing to object to... Living in a court, ..., Goethe of necessity speaks and writes his own language as it is commonly written and spoken in the best circles.³

In another article on "Goethe," the critic notes that the Wilhelm Meister" is thrown more perilously upon the necessity of relying, in part, upon the graces of its style,⁴ since

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¹ "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93.
² III (1821), 93. For emphasis on ease of style, see also "Woodstock," XV (1826), 174.
³ "Goethe I," X (1824), 190.
⁴ "Goethe II," X (1824), 195.
the translator himself admits that "for the friends of the sublime, for those who cannot do without heroic sentiments, there is nothing here that can be of service." The reviewer further states that, in view of the high commendation given the work, there ought to be "the most exquisite burnish of style, that all things may be in harmony, and the casket suited to the jewels."¹

Both of these passages on "Goethe" show the influence of the eighteenth-century terms and theories. Even the concept of style "as implying" pure idiomatic diction is not new, and certainly the implication that the court language is the one suitable for literary purposes is purely neo-classical. The varied terms like master and idiomatic might be found in the works of such authors as Dryden, Harvey, and Addison; and grace, elegance, sublime, and profound remind the reader of Pope, of Burke, of Warton, and of Blair.² The emphasis is upon the polished style.

In some apt criticism "On the Writings of Mr. Maturin," there appears the same concept of the efficacy of a consciously achieved artistic style of language. His language is "elevated" (dignified and heightened), but seldom "inflated" (exaggerated), and it is "totally divested of meagerness and vulgarity" (lack

¹ Ibid., p. 105.

of refinement). "It is at once classical and natural, teeming with allusions which 'smell of the lamp' and with graces to be acquired only in good society--. . ."¹ Most of the terms and surely the underlying theory here expressed are familiar to the readers of the criticism of the drama and of poetry—criticism published during the eighteenth century. The same statement may be made with regard to one reviewer's objection to the indiscriminate coining of words and to the general "coarseness" of language in one novel.² Derivative too is another reviewer's insistence upon "ease and idiom" in language as opposed to "stiff, stilted language, such as was never spoken"³—to those "inversions of language, which had, we thought, gone out of vogue forever with the Minerva Press breed of romances."³ In the case of this criticism of Scott's language, the emphasis is not upon conscious artistry, but upon apparent smoothness and naturalness of expression which may result either from innate ability or conscious effort or a combination of the two.

¹ III (1821), 514-515.
³ "Woodstock," XV (1826), 180. The opposition to "romances" and all that they stood for is worthy of note, appearing as it does here toward the end of the romantic era.
The terms used are those employed, it is true, by the abler critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but this emphasis upon seeming spontaneity is indicative of the trend away from a narrow neo-classicism, either back to a pure classicism or forward to modern concepts. None of it, I believe, should be termed romantic.

Yet there are some treatments of language in the romantic vein. For instance, the figurative description of the language of Sintram and his Companions as "soft and greasy" is both new and expressive. Even more romantic is the discussion of the "highly coloured" diction of Lodoiska and her Daughter—a diction "which is still more remote than even the occurrences of the narrative from what may be termed common life." This theory is similar to Wordsworth's "selection of language really used by men." Moreover, the reviewer continues thus:


2 II (1820), 66.

3 II (1820), 408.

4 William Wordsworth, Observations, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 500.
Her language, and the strain of sentiment and feeling in her productions affect the mind similarly to the sounds of an Eolian harp: the tones are deep and impressive, they penetrate the heart; but they die away too abruptly, and do not possess that rich fullness and enchanting connection that testify to the triumphs of art.¹

Here, strictly speaking, is a bit of impressionistic criticism combining the new with the old— the emphasis upon the appeal to the heart (romantic) and upon the need for some conscious art (classical).² The whole remotely suggests Poe's later theories.

In the terms applied to style and language, then, one must admit that there is apparent the influence of neo-classicism and of classicism. Some marks of romanticism of a higher type can be discerned, but they are proportionately few.

Neo-classical is the use of terms such as 

*laboured, forced, clumsy, vague, and affected* to describe a style of which the reviewers do not approve; of such terms as *clear, graceful, elegant, burnished, idiomatic, vigorous, easy, unaffected* and *artful* to characterize an approved style. All of these words are derived from an older criticism— one applied to poetry chiefly. But *genial and cordial* are fairly recent, and their use indicates the critics' increasing demands for naturalness and spontaneity of style.

¹ "Lodoiska and her Daughter," II (1820), 407.

² It is worthy of noting en passant that most of the impressionistic and faintly romantic criticism of language occurs during the time of John Scott's editorship. Later the trend seems to be back toward neo-classical criticism.
About adjectives used with language, almost the same statements may be made, especially since style is often a synonym for diction. Particularly neo-classical is the insistence upon polished and appropriate diction. Moreover, such diverse terms as elevated, inflated, grace, vulgarity, ease, stiff, stilted, highly coloured are all to be found in the criticism of the eighteenth century. But the soft and greasy are impressionistic. Moreover, the picturesque tenor of the analysis of the language of at least one novel, as well as the insistence upon ordinary language, is somewhat romantic. Even here, however, the criticism has a sound basis; and though it seems new, it is actually related to earlier standards of criticism.

Just as the terms applied to style showed the lingering effects of neo-classicism, and rarely the influence of romanticism, so, too, do the terms associated with description. Again, as was true in the case of style, it is not with the major term itself that we need be concerned, but with the adjectives and the nouns used in discussing the various representations of scene and character.

There is no new theory of description emerging. Lessing's Laocoon has had no influence on the reviewers. They are still prone to regard descriptions as paintings in words—portraits of characters (without development) and representations of scenes (without action). Here they have merely transferred a concept from the criticism of poetry to that of fiction.
The completeness with which this transfer is affected becomes quite clear when we examine the words which the reviewers use in praise of specific excellent descriptions. For instance, one critic writes:

From Sterne it was that I received my earliest impressions about France and French people: it was he who first excited in me the desire to become personally acquainted with scenes and characters over which his descriptions (faithful and correct as I have found them to be) had thrown the charm of romance.\(^1\)

Except for the aesthetic term *charm*, which was infrequently used, the words herein are ones which we have often seen in eighteenth-century criticism.\(^2\) Both *faithful* and *correct* refer to an imitation of actuality. In this respect *correct* is different, for in earlier criticism it usually signified an accurate selection and method of arrangement of words, not fidelity to reality. The same statement may be made with regard to "accuracy,"\(^3\) which is applied to the descriptions of Picard. So though there may be verbal correspondence between the criticism in these reviews and the criticism written in the past, the meanings are often different.

There is one passage, however, that is exceptionally reminiscent of Addison, both in thought and in word. Having

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\(^1\) "Sterne at Calais and Montreuil," n.s., I (1821), 38.

\(^2\) See J. Addison, *Spectator Papers*, no. 418, in Smith and Parks, *op. cit.*, 683. There *charm* does not refer to the pleasing effect of the composition but to individual aspects of the imitation.

\(^3\) See "Sketch of Foreign Literature," X (1824), 537; "Letters from Paris," n.s., I (1825), 274; and n.s., II (1825), 141 and 197; for similar uses of the terms *faithful* and *accurate*. 
explained the probability that many naval heroes were persuaded (by reading Roderick Random) to go to sea, the critic continues:

He (Smollett) has not indeed decorated his scenes with any seductive colours; yet such is the charm of a highly wrought description that it often induces us to overlook what is disgusting in the objects themselves, and transfer the pleasure arising from the mere imitation to the reality. ¹

Of course, Addison is talking about "the Dunghill" and the reviewer about life at sea, but the theory is the same. Moreover, terms like charm, imitation and reality are not new.

Most of the minor terms used are borrowed ones. This fact becomes more evident with each review considered. The descriptions of Winter Evening Tales are "striking and lively."² Those of Don Esteban are "spirited and forcible,"³ those of Today in Ireland are "picturesque";⁴ those of Tales of the Crusaders have "vivacity."⁵ Especially commended are the


² I (1820), 659.

³ n.s., II (1825), 221. See also "Lodoiska and her Daughter," II (1820), 403, where the author's descriptions are termed "forcible" and also "worthy of the highest praise."

⁴ n.s., I (1825), 384.

⁵ n.s., I (1825), 597.
"vigour and truth" of the scenes in Tales of the O'Hara Family, and the "power" and "the almost unequalled reality of his [Scott's] descriptions of external nature." There is mention too of the "strength" of Mr. Maturin's descriptions. All of these descriptive terms have appeared in the works of Pope, Addison, and Johnson.

Indeed, one of the few marks of romanticism appears in the criticism of Sintram and his Companions--criticism, which in terminology is still reminiscent of the eighteenth-century's interest in the sublime, but which is generally impressionistic. The "nightmare solemnity" of a scene is mentioned. According to the critic, "nothing is distinctly made out,--but the shadows roll about so as frequently to produce grand and awful pictures." Fairly romantic in wording, too, is the comment that the "opening description" of the funeral in one story "is extremely touching."

Altogether, there is very little new in the theory of description. The terms, with a few exceptions, are the old ones used by the neo-classicists. The best descriptions

1 n. s., III (1825), 135.
3 "On the Writings of Mr. Maturin," IV (1821), 516.
4 II (1820), 163.
5 "Bracebridge Hall," VI (1822), 14.
are striking and lively; forcible; faithful, accurate, and correct (all three with regard to reality or probability), strong, picturesque, vivacious, vigorous, true or real, powerful, and charming. Only powerful (forceful) is comparatively new, and perhaps the meaning of the term charm (or charming), which here denotes the aesthetic effect of the entire scene.

In the criticism of character treatment, just as in the criticism of descriptions, one is not so much concerned with the major term itself as with the minor or descriptive words somehow influencing the concept of the major term. Character itself has the same meaning which Samuel Johnson might have attributed to it in the past century—namely, that of a personality universally true. In fact, the entire theory of characterization— including the minor terms—may be said to have changed little (at least in most cases) since the publication of Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare; but there is perhaps a slight emphasis upon the use of details that is new. A somewhat detailed examination of the reviewers' analyses of the characters created by various authors however, will reveal specific information about the derivative nature of most of the terms.

Much of the criticism of Godwin's characters is especially good. In an essay on "The Drama," Hazlitt remarks that Godwin's characters, except Caleb Williams, "stand alone,
self created, and self supported, without communication with or reaction upon any other."¹ In short, they have no effect either upon other characters or upon the action of the story.

In another article, entitled "Living Authors," John Scott writes that "a world peopled with his (Godwin's) characters" would be "truly appalling,"² for they have "all the enthusiasm of passion, with all the blindness and inevitability of a property of matter." From some experience or circumstance, over which he has no control, each character receives an impression "as the metal takes one from the die with which it is struck,—passively and permanently." Thus it is "within the nature of the man himself" that Godwin "lodges his fatal principle." But he sends down "no cloud 'instinct with fire and nitre'" to prevent "the fall of his characters." He subjects them to the inevitable ruin to which the permanent defects in their characters condemn them. Then he fails to save them, as the Greek dramatists sometimes rescued their heroes, by a force from without. In fact, he subjects "spiritual existence to the laws which govern dead matter."²

This suggestion of the tragic flaw in the hero and the very thorough analysis of the defect in Godwin's use of theory immediately precede another Aristotelian concept, that of the need for consistency in characters. The "abrupt changes of general character to draw on fearful catastrophes."³

¹ I (1820), 435.
² II (1820), 163-164, 167.
³ Ibid., pp. 167-169
involve inconsistency, and the representations of irrational passions are sometimes "inconsistent" with the nature of the character and "out of harmony with the circumstances." Moreover, the "misrepresentations" in Caleb Williams are "inconsistent with our state of manners." In short, either the character is not the same at the end as he was represented to be in the beginning or the character's actions are not in keeping with his nature or with what our knowledge of people leads us to believe his actions could possibly be. There is here an indication of the need of realism of character and an especial emphasis upon the term consistent or inconsistent.

It is doubtful that Godwin "has displayed the depths of the human heart." Indeed, his characters "may be said to form subjects for lecturing on the properties of human nature and human institutions rather than to be actual examples of their life and real influence." True, "they proved a part, . . . but the whole they misrepresented." They are not then "true to life," and they are not probable. Nor do they "inspire love" and sympathy and pity as do Scott's characters. Rather, they gain merely "the protection of our philosophy." But the character of Marguerite in St. Leon is an exception, inspiring this rhapsodic praise:

. . . she seems to shine with a purer light than that of the daily earth; the power of her virtue, and the magnanimity of her prudence, produce the effect of passion from their intensity— and entirely preserve the conception from wearing that

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1 Ibid.
air of coldness and insipidity which generally belongs to faultless personages.¹

In all of this criticism appear most of the points of the Aristotelian theory of characterization. The characters should be good, true to life, consistent, and probable. The hero should have a tragic flaw, since faultless characters will not move the reader.² The wording of some of the passages is exceptionally enthusiastic perhaps, but basically this is sound technical and psychological criticism.

Most of the terms (and the theories) mentioned in the criticism of Godwin's characters are applied to the character-delineation of other authors.

There is emphasis, for example, upon the interrelation of characters, upon the necessity for their promoting the action of the story. Goethe's Mignon influences "the movement of the story" too little. "Nothing is either hastened or retarded" by her. "She neither acts nor is acted upon."³ Scott's Joshua Geddes "promotes the action" of Redgauntlet "about in the same ratio that a midge bouncing against the posterior part of the earth propels it towards Aries."⁴

¹ Ibid.,
² See Aristotle's Poetics, IX and XIII, XV, in Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 37-44. For later adaptations of these theories and terms see S. Johnson, Preface to Shakespeare in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 443 ff.; and J. Dryden A Parallel of Poetry and Painting and Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy, both in the Ker collection, XI, 115-153, and 17, 202-229.
³ X (1824), 208.
The characters should also be consistent. But Scott's, for example, frequently are not.

We see a character in the opening promising great dignity, and the occupation of the highest range, but it suddenly dwindles into insignificance, and walks very quietly down into the kitchen.1

Yet the "murderous consistency"2 of Mr. Naturin's creations certainly does not redeem their lack of resemblance to life. On the other hand, even "ghosts, phantoms, and evil spirits may be introduced into a work in a way to afford the imagination of the reader an appropriate and lively feeling of their natural consistency."3 The truth is that consistency aids in the achievement of an illusion of reality,4 even in the case of spirits; but mere consistency is not enough in creations that are supposed to be imitations of general nature. Those imitations must be probable and natural.

Most of the reviewers make no effort to distinguish between the appropriate character (faithful to type) and that true-to-life (an imitation of universal or general human nature). They even confuse both of these theories with the one of probability (that a character speak and act in a way which can be

1 "Woodstock," XV (1826), 173.

2 "On the Writings of Mr. Naturin," IV (1821), 517.


4 For examples of the need for consistency, see "Sayings and Doings," n. s., I (1825), 335; "Don Esteban," n. s., I (1825), 221.
conceived as necessary and probable under the given circumstances. Indeed, their main requirement (in which they include all three of the Aristotelian theories) is that a character be natural; and they use a variety of terms to express this requirement.

They say that Scott's characters in his earlier books have "the actual lineaments of nature." That is, they are true to the universal but yet seem individual. Some of them "possess, like Fergus, and Burleigh, and Dick Hetterick, . . . an absolute and permanent existence in the imagination." Others, usually in the later books, are like Fenella in *Peveril of the Peak*, too "improbable." There is only Robin O'gin in *The Two Drovers* to remind the reviewer of the naturalness of Scott's earlier characters. In the others "we miss that reality of character which it was the author's duty to discover and apply." Even the highly praised Saladin is a failure because, being a "Norman Knight, rather than Arab," he is not faithful to type.

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1 "Living Authors," I (1820), 13 and 15.
2 "Kenilworth," III (1821), 189.
3 VII (1823), 205.
4 See "The Chronicles of Canongate," XVIII (1827), 409.
5 "Tales of the Crusaders," XII (1825), 597. See also "Ivanhoe," I (1820), 81. See "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 73, where the figures are described as "mere blotches."
Terms denoting truth to life and probability are reiterated in the reviews of the works of all authors. In *Tales of the O'Hara Family*, the Irish characters are "well and truly exhibited."¹ The character of Brashleigh in *Sayings and Doings* is "a copy from the life" with a "well preserved air of truth."² But Hogg's creations in *Winter Evening Tales* are often "inefficient and improbable,"³ and those in *Melmoth, the Wanderer* are not sufficiently real for us "to regard their actions as subordinate to their characters."⁴ To some extent, this defect is due to their not being sufficiently individualized.

This lack of distinction or discrimination of characters is a major flaw in some authors' works.⁵ Only a few, in the opinion of the reviewer, can give "breathing individuality" to characters like "that of Doriforth and Miss Hilner," both "conceived with intuitive tact,"⁶-- a gift peculiar to the "female genius." Smollett's characters, it is true, are extravagantly individualized. Indeed, they are grotesque representations of the specific man, not imitations "of classes of men"; and they have the "appearance" rather "of being broad

¹ n.s., III (1825), 135.
² n.s., I (1825), 383. See also "Letters from Paris," n.s., III (1825), 548.
³ I (1820), 667.
⁴ III (1821), 188.
⁵ See "Anastasius," I (1820), 77; "Lodoiska and her Daughter," II (1820), 408.
⁶ "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54.
caricatures from real life." But his is a "happy burlesque," not real character-delineation. Thus, as caricatures his creations are highly approved.

The reviewers also praise novelty or originality in characters, but they are fairly lenient when the imitations (copies) of other characters are well-drawn. For instance, the characters in Tremaine, which are "copied from books," are "very weak and ordinary productions— the mere shadows of shades;" but the character of Poor Peter Peebles, based on "an original" in Peregrine Pickle, is so "well drawn" that it is "worthy to supplant the original" in our memories. Obviously, the reviewers approve the latter, but not the first. They do not agree with Young's theory of the inevitable superiority of the completely original character.

Sometimes the reviewers mete out praise or blame depending upon various other qualities of the characters. It is Martin Everard's "moral dignity" that wins him commendation.

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1 "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Tobias Smollett," VI (1822), 33.
2 For emphasis on novelty see "Tales of the Crusaders," XIII (1825), 597.
3 n. s., I (1825), 535.
4 "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 72. See also "Tales of the Crusaders," XII (1825), 597, where Edith is said to "remind us too much of Rebecca."
5 "Woodstock," XV (1826), 179. For condemnation on grounds of "moral vice" see "Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair," V (1825), 490; and "Tremaine," n. s., I (1825), 527.
Moreover, some agents of a novel may be "interesting" or not.¹ Too, like Rebecca, they may be so "well drawn" that they "will live"; or they may not be either "striking or fascinating."³ The reviewers object to the anachronistic use of famous literary and historical figures.⁴ They therefore like Elizabeth in *Kenilworth*⁴ and dislike Queen Mary in *The Abbot.*⁵

To summarize the material on character then. Nearly all of the terms (and the theories) can be traced to criticism of other types of literature. Most of that criticism on Godwin and much of that on other writers is Aristotelian. If we add to that some of the theories expressed by Johnson in his *Preface to Shakespeare,* I believe we have a basis for all of the criticism in the *London.* True, the emphasis on the individualized character is somewhat new— but not entirely so. Hints of it appear in Johnson's criticism.

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² "Ivanhoe," I (1820), 81.

³ "The Abbot," II (1820), 428.

⁴ "Kenilworth," III (1821), 188 and 200.

⁵ "The Abbot," II (1820), 428.
Certainly the expressions true to life, appropriate, probable, good or moral, natural, consistent, and real are all old ones. The terms in general are not used exactly, and those denoting some type of reality are the most loosely employed of all. It is perhaps significant that none of these terms are overworked. The need for having the character play a significant part in the fable and the necessity for the character's arousing the feeling of the reader (which, of course, involved having a character with a flaw) are suggestive of revived classical criticism. Differences appear only in the picturesque and figurative manner in which the criticism is expressed, in the stress on the individualized character, and just possibly in the critics' notable restraint in the use of real, probable, and natural, though they do use frequent synonyms for them.

Of course, the reviewers say a great deal also about the plots of novels. Here again, they are not particularly interested in the major term itself, plot, but in the minor descriptive words used to denote the ideal plot. It is obvious at the start, however, that they use plot loosely—sometimes to refer merely to the mechanical organization, more frequently to designate the fable, and most often to signify both the fable and the author's technical management of the material.¹

¹ Throughout this study I use the term in its broad significance.
They are quite conscious of the author's need for technical skill in the management of his plot. The "clumsiness" of the "machinery" of any tale, they say, impairs its general effect. On the other hand, an "artful" and "well-maintained" fable assures the success of even an "elaborate" work. This emphasis upon conscious artistry is, of course, reminiscent of neo-classical tendencies; and the terms are particularly so, except that, instead of artificial, we have artful.

Especially derivative in nature is some of the criticism upon "the plan and conduct" of Scott's novels. As a matter of fact, in judging his plots, the reviewers use expressions originally applied to the epic. One of his Tales of the Crusaders is a "perfect Epopee;" but the other is a failure in "epic dexterity"; mainly because of Scott's fondness for introducing "irrelevant" material. Since he often breaks the thread of his narrative thus, it is rare indeed that a critic can call a plot of Scott's "well connected."

1 "Don Esteban," n. s., I (1825), 221. See also "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93.


3 n. s., II (1825), 594-597. See also "Woodstock," XV (1826), 174-178; and "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 77. The term epopea is also used in "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54.

In general, the reviewers demand that an author "consider his plot" carefully so that he may not present one that is "confused" or "perplexed". They dislike the "epistolary method" because it tends to produce an intricate, "unnatural" plot. They do not care much more for the type of fable inherited from the romances, "a mere cluster of episodes." But even that kind may win grudging approval if the influence of a prominent character is carried through all of it.

In the passages just considered, the plot is thought of as a technical arrangement of ideas and criticized as such. Usually, however, plot means the story or fable as a whole (including the skeleton but emphasizing the body). As such, the reviewers prefer that it be sometimes simple and unaffected, (the natural and the usual) usually original or at

1 "Lodoiska and her Daughter," II (1820), 408.

2 "The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan," IX (1824), 194. This, of course, suggests the theory of the unity of the hero attacked by Aristotle.

3 "Lying in all its Branches," n. s., II (1825), 105. See also "Bracebridge Hall," VI (1822), 436-437.
least not imitative (a copy of another author's plot)\(^1\) and certain of sufficient interest and power (movement and vigor) to maintain suspense.\(^2\) It may have elements of wit, humor or satire; and it may have propriety and decorum. But there is a great deal of insistence upon its being affecting or moving, upon its presentation of sentiment, feeling and pathos.

Of all the terms used in the journals, propriety and decorum especially suggest neoclassicism. Moreover, the criticism in the London Magazine (up to 1825 especially) is notable for the almost complete absence of these terms. The reviewers do mention words which are closely related to these and which also suggest neoclassical tenets, but they mention such terms rarely. They remark on the "want of keeping"\(^3\) of some stories and the obvious shocks to our "sense of fitness"\(^4\)

\(^1\) See "Letters from Paris," n. s., I (1825), 275; "The Modern Athens," n. s., II (1825), 507; "The Reviewer Reviewed." XVIII (1827), 27; "Woodstock," XV (1826), 173. Of special interest is the attack on imitation in "Letters from Paris, 3," n. s., III, (1825), 280. Here the reviewer voices one of the numerous objections (to be found in the London) to the attempts made "to puff" novels of an inferior quality, particularly those that are "imitations."

\(^2\) V (1822), 80. For other expressions of the need for interest and suspense see "Ivanhoe," I (1820), 93; "Godwin, Chiefly as a Writer of Novels," II (1820), 168. "Peveril of the Peak," VII (1823), 201; "Sintram and his Companions," II (1820), 66; "Winter Evening Tales," I (1820), 669.

\(^3\) "Sayings and Doings," n. s., I (1825), 380.

\(^4\) "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93. Here coarseness also appears, denoting in this case awkwardness of device.
in others; of the presence of "bad taste or coarseness" \(^1\)
or "vulgarity." \(^1\) The first two are related both to appropriate and probable, since they denote a sort of suit-
ability, judged upon the basis of knowledge of past events.
The others suggest the narrow neo-classical concept of con-
ventionalized refinement.

Suggestive, too, of criticism of the past are the terms
wit, humor, satire, and comedy, used to denote qualities gen-
erally considered desirable. Of the group, wit (a sort of intellectual humor involving fancy) \(^2\) receives considerably less attention here than the other terms. Perhaps it means a conscious, somewhat sharpened expression of the incongruous. Again it appears to denote either the author's intellectual sense of the incongruous or even his fancy. Satire (wit used for an ethical purpose) \(^3\) also occurs very seldom; and the satire on "vulgarity" \(^3\) is not appreciated by at least one reviewer; however, humor, comic, ludicrous, and droll appear fairly frequently, often in the same passages, as though in the reviewers' minds (just as in Fielding's) these terms were closely related. Humor is a much more general word than wit or satire and a much less consciously intellectual one. It
denotes that which is agreeably ludicrous, or comic, or droll.

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1 "Talladger," X (1824), 380. See also "Winter Evening Tales," I (1820); 667.
2 See "Letters from Paris", n.s., II (1825), 141; and "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54.
3 See "Sayings and Doings," n. s., I (1825), 387.
Extravagance as well as affection is in keeping with it. But humor that is "pantomimic, coarse, strained, and practical," that involves "exaggerated caricature" and "buffoonery," is decidedly obnoxious to the critic. Sometimes the mixture of the "ludicrous" and the "pathetic," of the comic and the affecting, even of humor and pathos (compassion and pity) appeals to the reviewers; but if either quality is obviously exaggerated, the critic tends to use sarcasm, to say in effect "Laughing is catching, so is yawning, and so we suppose is crying." Humor and satire are in the traditional line, but the great emphasis upon the term humor (or its equivalents—droll, ludicrous) and especially its association with pathos suggest more recent developments.

Somewhat suggestive of romantic tendencies is the great attention paid to terms denoting emotional effect. But then there is a definite renunciation of sentimentality.

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2 "Highways and By-ways," n. s., I (1825), 196. See also "Sayings and Doings," n. s., I (1825), 386.

3 "Bedgaurlet," (1824), 73. See also "Living Authors, I," I (1820), 13.

4 "Highways and By-ways," n. s., I (1825), 196. See also "Review of Wilhelm Meister," X (1824), 303.
and of the sentimentalists, who are too eager "to draw tears." The author of *Highways* and *By-ways* gives the critic the impression of having attempted a short cut to the lachrymary ducts of the sympathetic reader. He seems to have construed rather too literally—

--- Si vis me flere dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi.¹

"A sigh and a burst of tears,"¹ the critic thinks, are not sufficient to make a good novel. This is reasonably sound criticism based upon a good standard of values—certainly no indication of rampant romanticism. In general, however, the reviewers respect and praise the success of any novel in drawing both tears and smiles: "*a i e risus essent movendi aive lacrymæ.*" ²

All of the major terms which the reviewers used in the discussions of feeling and its related terms are inheritances from the eighteenth century. True, some, like sensibility, have no exceptionally great currency until the nineteenth century; but they do appear earlier. Passions is used

¹ *n. s.*, I (1825), 196. See also "Letters from Paris," *n. s.*, III (1823), 280. Both passages are suggestive of Dryden's theories explained in Smith and Parks, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304. For very figuratively expressed attacks on sentimentality (mawkishness and melodrama) see "Highways and By-ways," *n. s.*, I (1825), 196; and "New Edition of Waverley Novels," XXIII (1829), 612.

² "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54.
in its traditional sense as a synonym for strong emotions. To some extent, feeling has superseded passions in popularity with the critics. Being used somewhat loosely and having a broader range of meanings and applications than the latter term, feelings may refer at times to the author’s own emotional experience, to his sympathetic or intuitive perception of essential qualities, or to his intellectual understanding; at other times, to the emotional reaction or mood to be aroused (or actually aroused) in the reader and to the passions of the characters in the novel; or merely to sentiments in general.

Of course, feeling is related both to sensibility and to sentiment, and at times all three terms are used interchangeably. The third term denotes a pensive feeling involving the imagination rather than the intellectual processes.

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2 See in the order named "Letters from Paris," n. s., III (1823), 280; "Living Authors," I (1820), 11; "Ivanhoe," I (1823), 31; "Sintram and his Companions," II (1821), 165; "Winter Evening Tales," I (1823), 668; and "Living Authors," III, II (1820), 163.


and it is associated with love or melancholy. It may mean passion, that associated with pathos, or it may signify thought in general. This last meaning is very old, and none of the terms named are particularly new. Any excess of sentiment (mawkishness) led, of course, to sentimentality and sure condemnation; for the sentimentalist, one reviewer says, "like Ophelia, has the faculty of turning everything to prettiness," or "like a French cook," does not rely "on the excellence of the thing he dresses, but on the richness of the sauce." He will "pique himself on making a savoury dish of an old shoe." 

Like sentiment, the term sensibility is also used loosely. It usually means feeling of various sorts. It is sympathetic and intuitive, or imaginatively creative. It is a comparatively new (that is, to criticism) term, but even it appeared before 1800 in the works of such authors as Reynolds and Schiller.

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1 "Letters from Paris," n. s., III (1825), 545.

2 "Highways and By-ways," I (1825), 189.

3 "Godwin, Chiefly as a Writer of Novels," II (1820), 169.

4 "Highways and By-ways," n. s., I (1825), 196. For an attack on excess of sentiment—on melodrama—see "New Edition of Waverley Novels," XXIII (1829), 612.

5 See "Letters from Paris," n. s., III (1823), 280, and "Highways and By-ways," n. s., I (1825), 196. See also Smith and Parks, op. cit., pp. 483 and 693.
Therefore, as far as terminology is concerned, we do not have a change, except in emphasis. In this magazine the great amount of attention paid to terms like feeling indicates the importance with which the quality is regarded. And justly so, for even critics as far apart in time as Longinus and Johnson attested the importance of the passions, of sentiment, and of feeling. As a matter of fact, Aristotle himself comes to our minds when we read of the desirability of arousing emotions, of the necessity for temperance in the expression of sentiment. Very familiar indeed seems one section in the review of *Kenilworth* about the lack of any relief for the "feelings from the weight of painful interest."1

This criticism is classic in its suggestion of restraint and in its insistence upon the efficacy of emotion and the passions. Sometimes— but rarely and then late in the magazine's history— the reviewers are dogmatic; but mainly their general criticism of plots is good.

The favorite fiction-material of all the critics is the passions or feelings of humanity. But because of their

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applicability, not merely to the material of the novel, but to the entire composition, I have considered those terms and others like them in other sections of this paper. However, there are some terms in the reviews which are applied so specifically to the subject matter that I feel they should have separate treatment.

The reviewers warn of the dangers of "writing upon everything,"\(^1\) and mention various subjects forbidden to the novelist. As one reviewer has it,

There are some subjects too sacred, and some too accursed, for familiarity. The name before which the world bends, and the name at which the world shudders, are not legitimate topics of romance. Their interest is too awful for contact—their mystery is too sublime for penetration—\(\ldots\)\(^2\)

Moreover, this reviewer continues,

\(\ldots\) the novel is no place for polemical disquisition—the acerbities of sects, and the subtleties of theologians are quite opposed to the levities of romance—they are like the passing of a thundercloud, dark and heavy, and death-fraught, athwart the tinted sky of an autumnal evening.\(^2\)

The imagery of this criticism does not blind us to the fact that the reviewers’ concern here is for the decorum of subjects—a theory frequently voiced in the eighteenth century with regard to poetry and drama. Even the terms awful and sublime remind us of the pseudo-Longinian sublime so much discussed by the critics of that time.

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\(^1\) "Redgauntlet," \(X\) (1824), 70.

\(^2\) "On the Writings of Mr. Naturin," \(IV\) (1821), 512.
On the basis of propriety then, "religious" subjects and subjects "appalling to our instincts" are ruled out; but there are others eliminated because they are too remote from reality or because they are immoral. No matter what the specific grounds for criticism, the reviewers nearly always relate these reasons to suitability, decorum, or good taste— all neo-classical terms. Most of the attacks on such romantic subjects as "the false supernatural," "exaggeration and humor" have their basis in the "rules laid down by taste," and they remind one of Johnson's attacks on the material of romances. Of course, the ban on immorality, particularly that upon "adultery," suggests the moral theory reiterated by critics from the time of Sidney on. As a matter of fact, the mention of Maturin's presentation of adultery "almost before the curtain" is a verbal echo of the neo-classical concept (borrowed from Horace) that certain events in drama should not take place upon the stage. So here the subject matter is found wanting in decorum and in morality.

But these are subjects definitely approved:

The passions, dispositions, adventures and varieties of man—the pleasures and perplexities of life— the countless modifications of human character— the vices, virtues, incidents, and phenomena of earth, . . .

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1 "Anastasius," I (1820), 77.
2 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," n.s., III (1825), 135.
3 "A Sketch of Foreign Literature," VII (1823), 472.
4 "On the Writings of Mr. Maturin," IV (1821), 515, 516 and 518.
Thus it is clear that the reviewers approve of a wide variety of subjects. They like subjects based upon the author's own experience and observation—since these have a greater verisimilitude, a greater probability than others. They allow representations of "manners and customs," but prefer "the passions" and the "feelings." Aesthetic and faintly impressionistic (but not usually aimlessly appreciative) criticism falls to the lot of tales that are both moving and moral. One tale which emphasizes the virtue of a young girl, "her little endearments and hopes" is especially approved because the "beauty of its effect" is "softened by Fate, and you seem to read it to the tolling of the funeral bell."

Thus one sees that the subject matter should above all be of the sort that will affect the reader. There is here a little less insistence that the subject matter be specifically moral and consequently less frequent use of the term moral than there was in most criticism of the past century. There is perhaps a little more stress upon the reality of the subject matter but no over-use of any one neoclassic term denoting reality. In general, the terms applied to the ideal subject matter are inherited ones. Even

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1 "Winter Evening Tales," I (1820), 667.

2 "Letters from Paris," n. s., III (1825), 544. See also "A New Edition of Waverley Novels," XXIII (1829), 612; and the discussion of feeling (given above) in this study.

3 "Bracebridge Hall," VI (1823), 436.
the meanings are often traditional, but the difference in emphasis (that great importance attached to pathos and feeling, for instance) marks a slight change.

As I have indicated above, the reviewers tend to like subject matter which is based on reality. In fact, they like a semblance of truth or nature to be apparent in the whole plot—not merely in the material of it, but in the entire fable.

The terms by which they denote this reality are quite numerous and for the most part are used in a very aimless and general fashion. So much so that formulating a workable definition of any one of them is a difficult process. But the critics were concerned about probability, verisimilitude, truth to nature or to life, truth to fact or to history.

Generally speaking, the reality to which they refer is an imitation of one of three things. It is first an imitation of external nature or of the individual accidents or experiences of human nature (the phenomena of sense or Plato's ἀιτωνική) — an imitation then of facts, of actuality, of history. The second type is an imitation of the essence or the universal (Aristotle's ἡμιοφορία) — the great common truths underlying individual facts or human experiences. The third type is an imitation of external nature or of accidents heightened and changed to produce either a special effect or a specific ideal (Plotinus' concept). To say that the reviewers keep those types separate and distinct would be far from the truth. Their theories about reality are decidedly confusing to the reader. Perhaps, also to them. But it is significant
that they do use the terms and that they are concerned (as were the critics of poetry) about probability and versimilitude, and about the proper place of history or fact in fiction.

Probability is used less frequently in the reviews of this magazine than in numerous others of the period. But it does appear a sufficient number of times to justify some attention. At times the reviewers associate it with decorum, with a "sense of fitness."1 On other occasions, it denotes a general correspondence to known past events or such a consistency of plot that the story can be conceived of as possible.2 Of course, some of the time neither of these meanings fits exactly. The reviewer merely remarks in a vague manner that the plot is "improbable and confused."3 Under some circumstances a reviewer actually defends improbability because he feels that it "is not an objection to a romance,"4 or because (in the case of children's stories) "the rich improbability makes them golden."5 None of the meanings of the term are new, but the defense of improbabilities even on reasonable grounds is unusual. So too is the comparative infrequency of appearance of the term.

1 "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93. See also "Sayings and Doings," I (1825), 320.


4 "On the Writings of Mr. Maturin," IV (1821), 523.

Reality (or real) also appears relatively seldom. It may denote either observable phenomena or essence (universal essentials). It may signify verisimilitude (based upon the universal or upon the deceptive phenomena of sense, or ideally, upon a combination of the first two). For instance, Hazlitt says that Scott bases plots wholly upon "realities"—upon what "ordinary opinion and feeling connects" with events. John Scott, however, remarks upon Sir Walter's knowledge of "the real springs of action" (meaning here the universal) and states that this knowledge enables the novelist to present "conduit and incidents in the vivid light of natural phenomena." In short, his plots have verisimilitude because they are based upon "the inevitable causes" to be intuitively perceived beneath all the "experience" of life. But any author's attention to consistency of plot (to a cause and effect relationship) will "have on our minds an impression of reality" even though the action presented by him be impossible.

All of this study of reality brings us to a consideration of the term verisimilitude, or vraisemblance—a term used much less frequently than either real or probability. When verisimilitude does appear, it denotes a very specious sort of reality based upon the appropriate or the suitable

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1 "Peveril of the Peak," VII (1823), 206.
2 "Living Authors, I," I (1820), 12.
3 "Sintram and his Companions," II (1820), 66.
and is closely allied to good taste. For instance, the re-
viewer of Sayings and Doings mentions the "familiarity"
permitted by the author between the different social classes
in order to advance his plot. This practice, says the re-
viewer, is "a gratuitous shock to vraisemblance." In
various other words, the reviewers indicate conceptions of
verisimilitude more closely related to the original theory
than this one. They mention "the matter-of-fact air" of
some novels, or they discuss the "air of truth" apparent in
others.

Throughout this criticism, one notices the reviewers' propensities for using a variety of terms to express similar ideas with regard to reality, truth, or naturalness instead of overworking any specific, inherited terms. Nearly all of these terms, they use in a general manner.

They may use truth to denote moral justification or to denote a general correspondence to past human experiences or to life in general. They use nature, natural, or unnatural more frequently than they do other related terms; and in this

1 n. s., I (1825), 380.
3 "Sayings and Doings," n. s., I (1825), 385.
4 See the section on "Character" above.
5 See "Tremaine," n. s., I (1825), 533.
practice they have the precedent of eighteenth-century critics. Natural generally refers to the usual, the probable, the apparently spontaneous fable as opposed to the artificial and affected one (which the reviewers label unnatural). 1 To the term nature, the reviewers apparently ascribe the meaning of human experience objectively considered or a conformity to the known order of past events. They present no concepts in advance of those held by Pope and Johnson upon the subject. Indeed, one reviewer "dismisses" Goethe's Wilhelm Meister "to oblivion" on the basis that it has "no foundation in nature and good sense." 2 The works of other authors are condemned on the same basis—that they are "untrue to nature." 3

What seems to me to be noteworthy about the truth-to-nature question is the absence on the one hand of any allusion to the nature versus the ancients question and on the other of any hint of the glorification of nature in the raw (the uncontrolled instincts) or of any transcendental concept of the universal principle pervading all plants and animals including man. The terms are derivative. So are their meanings,

1 See "Bracebridge Hall," VI (1822), 436; "Lodoska and her Daughter," II (1820), 408; "Sayings and Doings," n.s., I (1825), 352; "The Earthquake," III (1821), 93.

2 "Goethe," X (1824), 196.

3 "The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan," IX (1824), 194. See also "The Drama," I (1820), 434. For other illustrations of the novel's need for fidelity to human nature see the section "Terms Applicable to Character."
but there are no extremes. The ideal is exemplified in some of Sir Walter Scott's works, where, to use the highly appreciative words of Haslitt, "actions, thoughts, scenes, ... everywhere speak, breathe, and live."¹ There is no need for "affidavits to the truth to nature of his incidents."²

As a matter of fact, the reviewer states definitely "that the reality of the Fictions will be seriously injured by the introduction of the reality of Facts."² With this conviction, most reviewers would agree; for, as a rule, they object to any mixture of "matter of fact" with "romance,"³ to the introduction of a "real character" into a work of "fiction."⁴ Even in the case of historical novels they usually prefer a novel which presents "a general and faithful picture of the spirit of the age" to one in which "celebrated characters" are introduced only to confound real facts with mere fiction.⁵ In short, they prefer verisimilitude in fiction, truth to fact in history. In this preference they remind us of Castelvetro's theory with regard to poetry and history.⁶ Scott's earlier

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¹ "The Pirate," V (1822), 85.
³ "Don Esteban," n. s., II (1825), 22. See also "Letters from Paris," n. s., I (1825), 264, where the reviewer states that readers of Trognon's book, thinking they were "pursuing a chronicle," threw it down when they learned that "it was a novel."
⁴ "Today in Ireland." n. s., II (1825), 387.
⁵ "Sketch of Foreign Literature," VIII (1823), 300.
⁶ See H. E. Charlton, Castelvetro's Theory of Poetry (Manchester, 1913), pp. 66-70.
historical novels were completely satisfactory; his later ones, offensive to the taste of the critics. According to John Scott, Sir Walter's earlier novels are as valuable as history and descriptive travels for the qualities which render these valuable, while they derive a bewitching animation from the soul of poetry and captivate the attention by the interest of the romantic story.¹

To summarize then. The reviewers believed that the plot should be real or true to human experience. In expressing this belief they use terms borrowed from the earlier criticism of different types of literature, and usually they do not change the meanings.² They employ such words and expressions as probability, real, matter of fact, air, vraisemblance, true to nature, true to life, truth, nature and natural, as well as faithful, and matter of fact. Few of these expressions are applied so precisely that one can be certain of their meanings, and not one of them is employed to an excess. Probability and real appear less frequently than we might expect. Nature (or natural) is most frequently used. Generally it refers to human experience or to known principles of conduct of human beings. The mention of essence or the universal as opposed to facts and accidents reminds us of

¹ "Living Authors, I," I (1920), 16.

Aristotelian theories. Moreover, the critics' theories with regard to the relationship between fact (or history) and fiction recall similar concepts of the relationship between poetry and history, expressed by such critics as Aristotle, Horace, Sidney, Dryden, and Johnson.

The infrequency of occurrence of such words as probability and real is not as notable as the scant attention given by the reviewers to terms applicable to endings. Indeed, theorising about denouements is not a characteristic of this criticism. The reviewers remark upon the author's "indiscreet haste to get to the end of his work,"¹ or upon the fact that "it is easy enough to foresee the event (ending) at a very early period."² They may mention a "fearful catastrophe,"³ or "a catastrophe we deplore."⁴ One reviewer even writes resignedly:

This catastrophe is rather wantonly tragic; we have a regard for the poor usher, and are sorry to see him knocked on the head, but authors have an indisputable right to murder their own offspring.⁵

They use the old terms ending, end, denouement, and catastrophe, with no distinctions save that catastrophe usually denotes merely an unfortunate or tragic ending. But there is

¹ "Redgauntlet," X (1824), 78. See also "Tales of the O'Neill Family," n.s., III (1825), 135, where there is mentioned the author's "shuddling and hurry" to end his work.
² "Tales of the Crusaders," n.s., II (1825), 594.
³ "Living Authors, II," II (1820), 167.
⁴ "Kenilworth," III (1821), 189.
⁵ "Sayings and Doings," n.s., I (1825), 386.
no trace of its classic meaning—an entire tragic experience. The reviewers believe, then, that the denouement should be "interesting," not one "common in France of the seventh century," for example. They believe that it should not be readily foreseen, that it should not give evidence of hasty composition, that it should not be unbelievably tragic or too improbable—"out of keeping" with the preceding events. It is not pleasing to have (as Scott does in Woodstock) an ending "like the scene in Tom Thumb," where the persons whom we all accounted dead in law, rise up in better circumstances than ever, and all go about their respective affairs just as if no treason, sedition, ... , and sudden death, had happened. Beyond the making of these general remarks concerning the interest and the suitability of the endings, the reviewers do not go.

C Terms Denoting the Function of the Novel

The moderation of the reviewers in the use of various inherited terms applicable specifically to the plots or fables of the novels is to be discerned also in their employment of terms expressive of the function of the novel. To some extent, the criticism here is in the Minturno, Jonson line—that is, the reviewers believe that the novel may teach,

1 "Letters from Paris," I (1825), 277
2 "Woodstock," XV (1826), 176.
3 See Ben Jonson, Discoveries as reprinted in Smith and Parks, op. cit., p. 263.
delight, and move. But "the heresy of The Didactic" is certainly not pronounced here.

The reviewers use interchangeably such words as entertaining or entertainment, pleasant or pleasure, and amusing to describe novels of which they are in favor. For instance, *Today in Ireland* is "entertaining"; some sections of *Sayings and Doings* are "amusing"; and *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* is a novel "pleasant to read." All terms mean about the same; and in all these cases, we are reminded of Castelvetro's theory that the poetry should amuse and recreate the reader.

Then there are numerous passages in which the emphasis is placed upon the ability of the novel to "move" the reader—to draw "tears and smiles." There are some passages in which the main point is the function of the novel to present "useful"

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2 *n. s.* II (1825), 379. For other uses of the terms entertaining and entertainment see "Sayings and Doings," *n. s.* I (1825), 385; "Winter Evening Tales," I (1820), 668: "Tales of the O'Hara Family," *n. s.*, III (1825), 136.

3 *n. s.* I (1825), 387. See also "Today in Ireland," *n. s.* II (1825), 307.

4 IX (1824), 197. The reviewer also uses entertainment to apply to this novel (p. 194).

5 "A Plea for Female Genius," X (1824), 54. See also "Highways and By-ways," *n. s.* I (1825), 196. See also section under "Terms Applied to Plots."
and "moral lessons,"¹ and there are also some attacks upon immorality in the novel.²

Upon the whole, the general attitude of the reviewers toward the utile dulci theory is well represented in the somewhat ironic and amusing review of *Tremaine*. There, after remarking that the "didactic" nature of the book "will not recommend it to the novel-reading million," the critic maintains that this book has "a fault common to almost all books of this didactic order"—namely, that it attaches "as much importance to things of inferior moment as to objects of the very first concern." The novelist, a "high-mettled moralist," may take offence at something as harmless as the opera—"to him "a soul corrupting abomination," and then he will proceed to "show off his points of virtue."³ Indeed, he thinks that a man may lose his soul at the opera as he loses his handkerchief or snuffbox, without knowing anything about his misfortune, till he finds suddenly that the article is gone.³ Yet, in the reviewer's opinion, this author is "either instructive or amusing" except when "he argues or moralizes."³

As a matter of fact, it is enough for these reviewers that a novel be pleasing, or moral, or moving. If one can be all three, so much the better. If it must serve one purpose
only, they prefer that it be affecting. Their second preference is for interest or amusement, but they do not object to a sensibly written moral or didactic work, and certainly not to an "entertaining and instructive" one. They do object to an obviously immoral novel.

Most of the terms and expressions like to teach, to delight, to move, entertainment, pleasure, interesting, affecting, moral, and instructive, the reviewers could have found without any difficulty in such a work as Johnson’s Preface to Shakespeare. They have all been applied before this to drama and to poetry. Even their meanings remain the same. The only change comes in the frequency with which the critics use interesting, affecting, and moving, and in their very moderate employment of such words as instructive and moral. The Horatian utile dulci with emphasis upon the utile is of decidedly minor importance. It is not overlooked, but it is not here a sine qua non for the success of a novel.

1 "Tales of the O'Hara Family," n. s., III (1825), 135-136.
Conclusion

It is exceptionally difficult to draw any conclusions about the criticism as a whole, for the quality of the articles published during the first four years of the life of the *London Magazine*—and especially of those printed during the first year—is markedly superior to that of the later reviews. From the latter part of 1824 through the last number published in 1829, the critical comments in the reviews are very ordinary—that is, if we except a few reviews like those by Hazlitt. The terms are the old neo-classical ones, very loosely—at times inexactely—applied. The remarks are sometimes a bit churlish, sometimes exuberantly enthusiastic, and often uninspired. Often the reviewers, as though afraid to commit themselves one way or another, quote at length from the novels and limit their own criticism to a few generalities with regard to the characters or the plots.

For the most part, therefore, I find myself giving the detailed consideration to the earlier issues of the magazine. These are worthy of extensive study.

As far as terminology is concerned, I do not find much that is new even here. Most of the terms are borrowed from an earlier criticism of a different type of literature—that is, different from the novel. What is interesting is the use made of these old terms and expressions by the critics.
The reviewers here are very much interested in the personality of the author as it shows itself in his work. They, therefore, frequently employ terms denoting particular mental qualities of the authors. But they do not even attempt to explain them. They merely write that certain excellent phases of a particular writer's literary art are traceable to his genius, his power, his fancy or imagination, his invention or originality, or perhaps to his mind or his intelligence. Sometimes they declare that an author needs talent, learning, tact (taste), powers of observation, perception, and knowledge of the human heart. Nearly all of the terms used are derivative in nature; even their meanings are not new. There are, however, a few points worth noting. Genius (creative power, a moving spirit or a force, or a man capable of giving expression to his creative impulses) and power (a creative force or a capacity for originating moving compositions) are the two most popular terms; but fancy (a whim, a lighter form of imagination, a creative power) and imagination (the creative faculty of the mind, or a mental product) are only slightly less frequent in occurrence. Of the latter two terms imagination is the favorite of the critics. Next in order come invention (which has approximately the same meanings as imagination) and lack of imitation (servile copying of another's work) or the presence of originality (innate inventive talent). The great emphasis upon genius, the considerable use of the hitherto very infrequently employed
power, the reviewers' concern about the minds (creative talents or learning faculties) and the intelligence (general mental ability) of the various authors— all of this is worthy of comment. So, too, is the reviewers' tendency to employ the old terms in the way in which they appear in classical, rather than in neo-classical literature, as well as the critics' stress upon the need for the authors to experience the feelings which they wish to portray. The great importance attributed to knowledge— not of the ancients— but of the human heart is also new; but here again, of course, there is a precedent in classical criticism.

When we come to a consideration of style and language, we find an even greater preponderance of terms borrowed from the critics of the poetry and the drama. The term style usually refers to the language or the diction of the individual author. The ideal style— regardless of how picturesque or figurative the passages seem— is quite similar to the ideal described by the neo-classicists. It is artful; but not laboured, forced, clumsy, vague, or affected. Indeed, almost the only new adjectives used with the term style are genial and cordial; and then there is artful, which is not new but which has not before this been as frequently employed as artificial.

The ideal language should be appropriate to the character and the time. It should be clear and graceful, polished, easy, and elevated; but not inflated, stiff, stilted, vulgar, or too highly colored. Once there is a
suggestion of the need for the use of the language of the
common man—a suggestion that reminds us of Wordsworth's
tory. There are also a few new descriptive terms like
soft and greasy, and there are some unusual comparisons.
For instance, the language of Lodolska and Her Daughter
is said to have the same effect upon the reader that the
strains of a harp do. On the whole, however, the emphasis
is upon naturalness, clarity, and restraint in language.
The excessive ornamentation of neo-classicism (in its
worst forms) and the unselectivity prescribed by the newer
writers are alike condemned. Aristotle's "clear but not
mean" dictum appears to be the guiding principle of these
reviewers in the matter of language and style.

Like the terms applied to style and language,
those used with description are mainly borrowed ones. As
for description itself, we can remark only that it means
just what it did to the critics of the eighteenth century,
namely, a painting in words. But these twentieth century
reviewers do stress the importance of the description's
being true or real—a faithful and accurate imitation
of the phenomena of reality. They do emphasize the fact
that it should have a decided effect upon the reader.
All of this reminds us somewhat more definitely of classic
than of neo-classic criticism; but the terms are old ones,
except a few (dating only to the previous century) like
powerful and charm. To tell of the ideal description
the critics use such terms as striking, lively, forcible,
faithful, accurate (but note here that this last term does not refer to correctness of grammar but to fidelity to external nature), strong, true or real, picturesque, vigorous, powerful, and charming.

The words employed by the reviewers in their analyses of characters are such as Aristotle might have used or as Johnson did use. In fact, the psychological treatment of many characters—especially in the reviews written by John Scott—is decidedly similar to sections in Aristotle's Poetics. Moreover, the theory that the term character should denote an imaginary creature that is "true to life" (in that he represents the universal and yet has a sufficient number of traits peculiar to his type or race to make him seem an individual) is slightly reminiscent of Johnson's statements about Shakespeare's characters. In addition to true to life, the critics use appropriate, probable, natural, good or moral, consistent, and real; but probable, good and moral appear much less frequently in this criticism than in that contained in many other journals of the time.

This notable moderation in the use of terms is also obvious in the consideration given plots. The major term plot denotes either the technical arrangement of the material or the fable as a whole. It should be artful, simple, unaffected, well-maintained, and not confused, perplexed, or episodic. It should not be imitative. It should have interest and power. It may have humor or pathos, but above all it must be moving. The reviewers
prefer the feelings or passions as subject matter; but they praise any material that is suitable, in good taste, and moral. They do not even insist upon its being moral provided that it is not definitely immoral. They believe that the entire story should be related to reality—that it should be probable, real, verisimilar, natural, or consistent. Yet they do not use either verisimilitude or probability as frequently as do the writers in the Monthly Review or in the Edinburgh Review, for instance. They are much more likely to use synonymous expressions like a matter of fact air or true to nature. Nature or natural is the most popular term of this type with these critics. In none of this terminology is there anything new; but the propensity of the critics to rely upon Aristotle and the absence of an excessive application of any specific terms are notable.

There is nothing new either in the consideration of endings. The critics use catastrophe, dénouement, and ending as synonyms; but usually they apply catastrophe only to an unhappy outcome. Actually these reviewers pay very little attention to the problems of endings.

They do concern themselves greatly about the proper function of the novel. First of all, they insist that the novel must move its readers. They like it to be pleasant, entertaining, or amusing; and they are well pleased if it is both instructive or moral and pleasing. They do not, however, insist that it justify its existence by teaching
a moral. In this respect, they differ from most of the neo-classicists; but they have precedents among the classicists and the Italian critics of poetry.

In thinking over all of the criticism to be found in the London Magazine, I recall some qualities that particularly impressed me. The great interest of the reviewers in relating the book to the author of it and (at least in the criticism of Godwin) in tracing the connection between the novelist and his times; the presence of apt impressionistic and romantic criticism of a sort that can be logically explained; the somewhat penetrating analysis of the "mainsprings" of the characters' actions; the advocacy of classic clarity and restraint as efficacious in the production of a unified aesthetic effect upon the mind of the reader; the insistence upon a powerful appeal to human feelings made principally through an action that is based upon the universal— all of these theories, if we may call them that, suggest what is best in Sainte-Beuve, what Arnold is noted for, what Poe sometimes expressed. Most of them have their roots in Aristotelian principles, which the English critics adopted and used, along with Horatian principles, certainly from the sixteenth century on.1

But after 1824 this sort of criticism disappears from the pages of the *London Magazine*. The excellent journal has turned into a Cinderella after the ball. Gone are her robes of classic beauty, enlivened by a dash of color borrowed from the romanticists or by a chaste ornament from the neo-classicists. She has become an ordinary serving maid, clad in cast-off finery. And no John Scott comes to rescue her.
Having discussed in detail the terminology in the leading or model periodicals of various types, I do not believe it necessary to give an extended treatment to the others. Because I have not examined any of the weekly publications, however, I expect to devote a major part of this last chapter to periodicals of that sort. Then I shall allot a limited amount of space, first to the followers of the *Monthly Review*; second, to the imitators of the *Edinburgh Magazine*; third, to the lesser or later descendants of Cave's popular miscellany, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and to various other periodicals. Some of these imitators are important; and only the excessive length of this study and, in some cases, the extensive work already done on the specific periodicals prompts me to limit my consideration of them.¹

But the weeklies, fore-runners of the modern, highly specialized weekly literary publications deserve an adequate investigation at this point.²


² In this chapter, as in preceding ones, I do not usually indicate the authors of the reviews unless the name of the writer appears in the journal.
A Terminology in the Weeklies

Among the weekly journals published during the first half of the nineteenth century, two of the most interesting are Leigh Hunt's Examiner (1808-1821) and William Jordan's Literary Gazette (1817-1860). Of the two the Examiner is generally conceded to contain better criticism, but the Literary Gazette offers more critical information about the novel.

Hunt virtually ignored literature in the Examiner until Shelley and Keats began to need his support against the "vilification waged by Croker, John Taylor Coleridge, and others of the quarterly group."1 When the need for him to defend his friends passed, the great literary influence of the journal vanished. So there is little of critical importance before 1820 and almost nothing of literary interest save the reviews of the "Literary Examiner" department after 1830. Even these reviews seldom contained "criticism of value."1 As a matter of fact, there is not a great deal of information here for the student interested in the novel, Leigh Hunt's attention being given mainly to drama or to poetry. What does exist, however, is of sufficient interest to warrant study.

After Leigh Hunt's editorship ended in 1821, the criticism became more conventional; and most of the reviews

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1 Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals, pp. 311-314. For additional information see Edmund Flunden, Leigh Hunt's Examiner Examined (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928).
of novels were of the type that appeared in the various
other periodicals of the day. Hence in this study I have
largely confined my remarks to the relatively small body
of criticism of the novel which appeared before 1822.

Some of this material is of the type that one might
expect to find— but does not— in the periodicals of the
romantic era. That is, it is appreciative and impression-
istic. What little analysis appears, is not usually based
upon any fixed standards. Probably it might better be
termed an examination of the reader's general impression
of the specific work, of his thoughts and his feelings
upon reading it. There are numbers of the old terms used,
but they are not employed with the profusion that charac-
terized the criticism of poetry and drama of the past
century. Very often their meanings are completely altered;
and they are so loosely used that it is impossible to
determine what the words do signify.

The critics evince an interest in the personality
of the author as it reveals itself in his work, and they
give a great amount of attention to tracing qualities of
composition to specific traits or qualities of the writer.
They revere genius and imagination; but they do not fail
to mention such diverse qualities as "taste and judgment,"¹

¹ "The Sketch Book," the Examiner (London: John Hunt; April 16, 1820). For other uses of taste, tact, or talent see "Palmyre et Flaminie" (April 6, 1821), and "Mr. Godwin," (Dec. 28, 1818). Since succeeding references will be to the Examiner unless otherwise indicated, I shall not repeat the title of the weekly.
"sentiment,"¹ "talent,"¹ "power" or "force,"² "reason" and "sensibility,"³ as well as "originality,"⁴ and "force of conception."⁴ They even write of the desirability of "external observation" and of "knowledge of the world,"⁴ as well as of the need for "personal experience."⁵ Save for the terms genius, imagination, and sensibility (in its connection with genius),⁶ the words designating the desirable qualities of the authors have about the same meanings which they had in eighteenth-century criticism. Even the linking of taste with judgment, instead of with intuition, is traditional.⁶

There are, of course, some uses of genius and imagination that suggest the theories of Addison, of Hurd, or of Young. Young's "original genius,"⁷ has at least one verbal counterpart here; and genius, denoting an innately gifted person, also appears. Then, when one reads Shelley's

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¹ Ibid.
² "The Pirate," (December 30, 1821). See also "Mr. Godwin," (December 28, 1818).
³ "The Round Table, No. 36," (April 14, 1816).
⁴ "Mr. Godwin," (Dec. 28, 1818). The meanings of this term in this journal are nearly always similar to Hazlitt's definition. See U. C. Hazlitt, "Works, ed." Haller and Glover, IX 423, 428.
⁵ "Palmyre et Flamme," (April 8, 1821).
⁶ "See especially the chapter on the London Magazine for similar meanings and uses of the terms.
words, "no root in the genius of virtue," he thinks of
the pure classical meanings of the term—source or some-
times an animating spirit. The most interesting of all,
however, are these statements about Rousseau: "His genius
was the effect of temperament. He created nothing,...
by a pure effort of the understanding."
Moreover, it is
his "extreme sensibility, alone which exalts him." This
association of genius (creativity involving the senses and
feeling) and sensibility represents a fairly new develop-
ment. Yet one must admit that Diderot did express virtually
the same theory earlier.

Also writing of Rousseau, Madame de Stael calls his
imagination "the first faculty of his mind" and says that
it "absorbed all the others." Her concept of the fusion
of mental faculties suggests Coleridge's theory of the imagina-
tion. But the reviewer believes that Madame de Stael errs.
In his opinion, Rousseau's "strength both of imagination
and reason" is "borrowed from other faculties." Hence
these faculties are "artificial" and "secondary" to the
author's "sensibility." For the most part, this interest
in the difference between sensibility and imagination and
between reason and imagination is a nineteenth-century
development, voiced by Coleridge and by Shelley, who follows

1 "The Pirate," (December 30, 1821). See also "The
Dandy School," (November 19, 1827).

2 "Godwin's Mandeville," (December 25, 1817).

3 "The Round Table," (April 14, 1816).
his lead.\footnote{See J. H. Smith and R. E. Parks, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 555.} Here Rousseau appears to have feeling, but not the power either to reproduce the actual, which he has observed, or to create the ideal existing beneath the phenomena of sense. He merely expresses his sensations with regard to real experiences.

Though this treatment of the imagination is very interesting, there are other passages which deserve mention. For instance, it is one reviewer's opinion that Godwin "launches into the ideal world and must sustain himself and the reader there by mere force of imagination."\footnote{"Mr. Godwin," (December 28, 1818). See Joseph Addison, \textit{The Spectator Papers}, as reprinted in Smith and Parks, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 682-684; for verbal correspondence. But Addison's imagination represents one faculty only.} Here \textit{imagination} appears to denote a fusion of mental faculties under the guidance of a creative faculty, which, divorcing itself entirely from reality, forms an ideal. In the later reviews—especially those of Scott's novels—\textit{imagination} refers to the production of vivid, realistic images.\footnote{See "Kenilworth" (March 1, 1821); "The Pirate," (Dec. 30, 1821); "Tales of the Crusaders," (July 5, 1825).} This latter meaning is, of course, an inheritance from earlier criticism; consequently, not of as much interest to us as the other ones.

So here in the \textit{Examiner} we find some traditional terms used to denote the qualities of authors; however,
at least in the meanings of genius and imagination, we sense the revolutionary effects of the romantic movement upon the criticism of the novel.

Likewise, in the terms applied to the novels themselves, we perceive changes. Here, especially before 1821, there are not many of the old terms used. These critics—often romantic poets—apply to the novel almost the same methods of criticism which they use with regard to poetry. That is, they seek to arouse in their readers the feelings which they themselves had upon perusing the novel; and they trouble very little with analyses of the artistry—or lack of it—in the completed composition. Sprinkled throughout these pages of feelings, there are, however, a few of the old terms (loosely employed) and many of the inherited theories (expressed in new ways). To these inheritances one should give some attention.

There is little said about descriptions if we except some incidental remarks made when the main consideration is the power of the imagination and a few very ordinary discussions of Scott's ability in depicting scenes. No new theory emerges; the same ut picture poesis applies in the case of the novel. The only notable feature is the

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emphasis upon the influence of the scenes on the feelings
of the reader— upon the effects of the novelists' own
sensations upon their works. Rousseau, we are told,
"interests you in objects by interesting you in himself."
Both he and Wordsworth "wind their own being around whatever
object occurs to them." Therefore, Rousseau's descriptions
appeal to the senses— not merely to the eye. They have a
certain "warmth and luxuriance," a sensuous appeal and
rich imagery. On the other hand, Scott's descriptions are
based rather upon observations of reality than upon his
feeling about objects. His scenes are "informed and
accurate" (true to life), "easy and spontaneous," "true"
and "real" (imitations of external nature). Most of these
terms are not new ones, though accurate has a significance
different from that given it in earlier criticism (of poetry);
and the number of words with sensuous appeal is greater
than in previous critical works.

In the matter of style and language also, there
is not much that is worthy of note. Usually the two terms
style and language are synonyms; but occasionally style
does denote method. In the "Literary Notices" published
after 1822, the descriptive adjectives with the major words
are approximately the same as those employed in the average
reviews of the time. Before that time the reviewers gave

1 "The Round Table" (April 14, 1816).

2 See in the order named "The Pirate" (Dec. 30,
1821), and "The Fortunes of Nigel" (June 2, 1822).
little attention to the style and language of the various novels. True, one critic did remark upon Irving's style. He even used traditional terms to describe it, calling it "gentle and flowing" but marred by a "tendency to flowery ornament." Moreover, Shelley described Godwin's language as "sweet and various" but with a certain "energy and directness." In the opinion of another critic, "verbosity" marks Rousseau's diction, which passion has lent "force and reality," so that his "words supply the place of imagination." Nearly all of these terms appear in earlier criticism, even force and reality (vigor and a sort of attenuated verisimilitude). Reality, however, does not here signify an imitation of actual language. It refers rather to some vague quality which we may term the essence or spirit of language. This conception of language as a sort of emanation of the author's feeling and this application of a great number of sensory terms like gentle and sweet to language and style are new developments.

When we come next to a consideration of character, the material has a familiar air—possibly because Aristotle's principles of character delineation, upon which most characterization is based, have an appeal for all sorts of critics. In general, these reviewers say that the characters

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1 "The Sketch Book" (April 16, 1820).
2 "Godwin's Mandeville" (Dec. 28, 1817).
3 "The Round Table" (April 14, 1816).
ought to seem real or true to nature; they ought to suit
the situation (be appropriate); they ought to be sufficiently
discriminated to appear individual; they should appeal to
our emotions; and sometimes they should be virtuous. This
last requirement, however, is of less importance than
either realism of character or the capacity of the character
to affect us.

Real (faithful to universal human qualities)
characters—like Jeanie Deans, Laddie Dimont, and Rebecca—
give nature and substance" even to "dress, decoration,
and scene painting." But to accomplish this feat, they
have to be "individuals," not mere copies of the universal,
not "mere classes," like the creations in the Tales of the
Crusaders. They can not be "all angels," as one critic
ironically styles John Amory's women. Nor may they be
"modifications of the author's own being, reflections and
shadows of himself," for then they have not sufficiently
distinctive personalities. Least acceptable of all are
such characters as those in Sayings and Doin's and in
Vivian Grey because they are mainly "titles without charac-
ters." As know not how they "feel," but how they are "dressed."

1 "The Talisman," (July 3, 1825).
2 "The Round Table," (Sept. 17, 1815).
3 "The Round Table," (April 14, 1816).
4 See "The Dandy School," (November 18, 1827).
One of the greatest aids to verisimilitude of character is a certain "probability."¹ By this the reviewers sometimes mean consistency or appropriateness of the characters' actions under certain circumstances; sometimes, that the characters should not be "out of keeping"² with our general knowledge of human nature. For instance, the reviewer of Palmyre et Flaminie believes it "unnatural" to represent every seducer as "a sceptic."² Scott's Queen Elizabeth, however, is an excellent example of a "probable"¹ character. She is a "faithful" imitation of "the woman and the queen,"¹ being true to the universal (qualities of humanity) and to the type (that of a queen in her era). Yet the characters in many of Scott's later novels lack this appealing probability since they are frequently mere loans "from previously exhausted conception."³

Despite their emphasis on probability and reality, the critics seem to be of the opinion that even these qualities are of secondary importance, that they are merely a means to an end. That end is the arousing of the reader's emotion. Thus, Lamb's Rosamund is successful because her

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¹ "Kenilworth," (March 11, 1821)
² (April 8, 1821).
"goodness" moves the reader. Richardson's heroines also are "affecting," though Hunt says the author writes "like a sentimental familiar of the Inquisition." Moreover, Falkland, whom Godwin "persuades us personally to love," is superior to Godwin's Landeville, who "challenges our compassion and no more." The difference in the affecting power of the two arises because Landeville's errors are due to the "immutable necessity of internal nature"; whereas Falkland's spring from a "perverted conception of human nature."

This last somewhat vague passage is of interest, not only because of its treatment of the necessity for emotional effectiveness of character, but also because of Shelley's analysis of character divorced from action. Such analysis has been attempted very seldom in previous English criticism of any type of literature.

For emotional appeal, a character does not necessarily have to be morally good, since the wicked ones are frequently

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1 "The Works of Charles Lamb," (March 7, 1819). Lamb's practice reflects his critical theories. In his few remarks upon Cervantes, Smollet, Richardson, Fielding, and even De Foe he is very much concerned with the emotional effect upon the reader of a contemplation of the "inner" life of the characters--an emotional effect morally "salutary." He sees Don Quixote as "tender"; Lovelace as tending to incite "Vice"; Tom Jones and Parson Adams as purging "the mass of iniquity which the world knowledge of even a Fielding would cull out." See Charles Lamb, The Complete Works, R. B. Shepherd, editor (Bromley, 1874), pp. 54, 287, 305 on Smollet; pp. 39, 204, 269 on Cervantes; p. 268 on Richardson; p. 305 on Fielding; and p. 358 ff. on De Foe. Note the use of such neo-classical terms as purging, world knowledge, appearance of truth, and beautiful, with the Wordsworthian inner life and low and common, and homely.

the more attractive. For instance, Hazlitt says, "The character of Sir Charles Grandison is insipid compared with that of Lovelace . . ." Yet he also declares that Don Quixote, "a vessel dedicated to virtue and honour," is "the finest serious development to be found of this character." Moreover, there is Hunt, who maintains that "goodness in its most passive shape is greater and more powerful than vice in its most active." Hence, the appeal of Lamb's Rosamund.

In character treatment, therefore, there is little new. The terms denoting the ideal are the traditional ones: true, real, natural, probable, original (certainly not imitations), and sometimes virtuous. Only the occasional psychological analyses, the critics' lack of emphasis upon the morality of characters, and the insistence upon the emotional appeal of characters are departures from the norm of criticism written during the eighteenth century.

In the treatments of plots, just as in those of characters, numbers of old terms appear, especially during the years following Leigh Hunt's editorship. But since

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1 "On Rochefoucault's Maxims," (October 25, 1814).
2 "Guy Faux," (November 25, 1921).
they are used during those later years very much as they are in the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and in the other journals already considered in this study, I shall confine my remarks mainly to the plot-criticism of the earlier years.

Usually plot is an inclusive word, referring to the fable and to the author’s management of it, to story and to framework. With regard to the subject matter of the plot the reviewers say little. In discussing the excellence of *Mandeville*, however, Shelley mentions “varieties of human character, the depth and complexity of human motive” and intimates that they “are just subjects for development in a work of fiction.”¹ But his is one of the few specific statements on the subject. So-called “indecorous” or “delicate”² subjects, “affectations,”³ “stale” and “melodramatic”⁴ subject matter, exaggerated “horrors”— “Radcliffe redivive”⁵— these, the critics dislike but sometimes tolerate. They approve of “love,” provided that it is not handled in an “insipid”⁶ fashion. The “feelings,”⁷ almost any “original” subjects (not imitations or copies of other

¹ "Godwin’s Mandeville," (December 28, 1817).
² "Hazlitt’s Lecture on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth," (March 19, 1820).
³ "The Dandy School," (November 18, 1827).
⁴ In the order named see “Redgauntlet,” (July 11, 1827); “The Fair Maid of Perth,” (June 1, 1828); and “The Talisman,” (July 3, 1825).
⁵ "The Round Table," (April 14, 1816).
author's materials), exaggerated "romantic and imaginative"2 matter, certainly any "imitations of life" or "copies of nature" (universal and particular experiences of human beings)2— all are acceptable. The expressions applied to epic and drama are prevalent—true to nature, real, true to life, romance, indecorous, and delicate.

A few words with sensuous appeal such as stale and insipid are fairly new to criticism, but most of the terms connected with subject matter are the neo-classical ones. Save for the attention given to feeling (especially to the emotions of the writer) and to the deep studies of human character—somewhat divorced from action—there is little that is new in this phase of criticism. Even in the preceding century Johnson had attacked the subject matter of romances in his Rambler essays. Moreover, numbers of earlier critics had deplored excessive sentimentality or melodrama and praised decorous, original, and realistic subjects.3

Since these writers for the Examiner concerned themselves little about plot structure also, one finds them

1 "Mr. Godwin," (December 28, 1818); See also "The Sketch Book," (April 16, 1820).


using very loosely a few old terms peculiar to plots and almost no new terms of that sort. For instance, the reviewer of *Redgauntlet* writes that the plot is "badly managed."¹ He objects, as do other critics, to Scott's unskillful use of letters and journals. In addition, referring both to the material and to the management of it, another writer says *The Talisman* is "as wild as Ariosto,"² and yet another reviewer mentions the inferiority of the "tissue of incident"³ forming the plot of *The Pirate.*

There is a little more interest on the part of the critics in the plot as a whole: that is, in plot, meaning both structure and fable. The ideal plot is "interesting,"⁴ "original,"⁵ and sometimes "powerful."⁶ In fact, Shelley says that Godwin's *Mandeville* has such power that it is like "a wind which tears up the deepest waters of the ocean of the mind."⁶ To be exceptional, a novel does not always

¹ (July 11, 1824). See also "Guy Mannering and the Stranger," (Nov. 19, 1826).

² (July 3, 1825). The phrase here used, which appears as far back as Sir William Temple's *Some Thoughts Upon Reviewing the Essay of Ancient and Modern Learning,* occurs several times in novel-reviews, especially in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.*

³ (December 30, 1821).


⁵ "Mr. Godwin," (Dec. 28, 1818). See also "Caleb Williams," (August 6, 1818); and "Redgauntlet," (July 11, 1824).

⁶ "On Mr. Godwin," (December 28, 1818). See also "Godwin's Mandeville," (December 28, 1817).
have to have power; but it must not be like Hook's works, which have "a dearth of invention" (imaginative origins) and a certain "dreary monotony." Indeed, Hazlitt remarks ironically upon that "genealogy of modern taste" (natural aesthetic preference) which chooses Hook instead of "the quintessence of truth and nature," well represented by Scott. In his opinion and in that of other critics, the best fiction is an imitation of "truth and nature" (the universal human experiences) an imitation that is preferably "probable" in its development; that exemplifies no "want of keeping" (appropriateness to the time, to previous events, and to the nature of the characters presented); that has sufficient "variety" or emotional "relief." Its "catastrophe," by which term the critics denote happy and unhappy endings, is never "lame and inconsistent."

There is no insistence in the Examiner that the novel must teach some lesson or paint some moral. The

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1 "The Dandy School," (November 18, 1827).
2 "Actors and the Public," (March 16, 1828).
3 "The Pirate," (December 20, 1821).
4 "The Round Table," (Sept. 17, 1815).
5 However, the term more frequently denotes unfortunate endings.
6 "The Pirate," (December 20, 1821). See also "Guy Faux," (Nov. 25, 1825).
reviewers do, however, always take note of moral tendencies in the fiction. Shelley writes of the "strength" of Godwin's "moral speculations"; Hunt, of the appeal of "goodness" in Lamb's work. Moreover, there is a faint suggestion of the principle of catharsis in his statement that the work is "painful yet delightful." Even Hazlitt, after humorously asserting that novels "do not make men valiant," admits they are a better "cure of ennui" than painful risks of "life and limb." And, in a more serious vein, he writes:

It was formerly understood to be the business of literature to enlarge the bounds of knowledge and feeling; to direct the mind's eye beyond the present moment, and the present object, to plunge us in the world of romance, to connect different languages, manners, times together; to wean us from the grossness of sense, the illusions of self-love; by the aid of imagination, to place us in the situations of others and enable us to feel an interest in all that strike them; and to make books the faithful witnesses and interpreters of nature, and the human heart. Of late, instead of this liberal and useful tendency, it has taken a narrower and more superficial tone. All that we learn from it is the servility, egotism, and upstart pretensions of the writers.

All of this is very much in the useful-pleasing-moving tradition, which had long been accepted by critics of drama.

1 "On Mr. Godwin," (December 26, 1818).
3 "Guy Faux," (November 25, 1825).
4 "The Dandy School," (Nov. 18, 1827). For similar attacks on the "fashionable novel," see the Athenæum, IX (1829), 433-434; the Atlas, I (1829), 170-171; Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XXIV (1828), 52.
and poetry. There is a liberal sprinkling of the familiar terms: knowledge, imagination, interest, faithful, nature (human experience), and—notable—useful.

Now to summarize this criticism in the Examiner. In the "Literary Notices" published after 1821, there are discoverable more of the hereditary terms used in a conventional fashion than are to be found in earlier articles and reviews. To discuss these inherited terms in detail here is unnecessary since their use in the Examiner is similar to their treatment in the corresponding issues of other journals already discussed in previous chapters.

Concerning the evaluations of the novel during and immediately following Leigh Hunt's editorship, however, some remarks are necessary. Much of this criticism is extremely personal, subjective, and aesthetic. The stress is upon the senses, upon the intuitive, upon the spiritual, rather than upon reason and judgment or upon analytical evaluation of form and content. Thus one finds the critics examining their own emotional reactions to the total effect of the particular novel; and one observes their use of such words as dreary, tone, movement, strength, force, power, vigour, or gentle, sweet, affecting, and painful. Then they proceed to analyze—impressionistically—the characters, not by considering the author's descriptions or the actions of the individuals, but by establishing a sort of intuitive or instinctive affinity with them. Through their spiritual communion with the characters, the critics
come to understand the agents of the novel, whom they love and pity or hate, as the case may be. Thus, to the terms already listed above, we may add love, pity, cold, and delightful. By the same sort of spiritual communication the reviewers see the character of the author in his work and understand his particular brand of genius, power, or imagination; and they often use the terms genius and imagination.

In short, they use the traditional words, but they use new ones also. Moreover, in some of the earlier reviews and articles the emphasis is not upon the probable, the universal, the real, and the moral, but upon the words denoting feeling and emotion.

Unlike the Examiner, the Literary Gazette devoted most of its contents to the belles lettres. "In its pages, the student may find a cross section of the literary activity of three decades."¹ This fact is especially true during the years with which this study is primarily concerned, for then the terminology of this weekly is quite like that of the great monthly and quarterly reviews. There are few deviations from the sort of criticism appearing in the Monthly Review, for instance, before 1826. Afterwards, there are some variations from the common-places of criticism, chiefly in the form of different interpretations of old terms.

¹ J. Graham, op. cit., pp. 315-316.
Before discussing the specific terms applied to novelists and to novels, however, I should like to mention briefly the critics' growing awareness of the difference between the novel and the drama and their deep interest in the special requirements of the novel.

For instance, the reviewer of Maturin's *Women* writes that it is "unsuitably called a novel," for it is a drama in chapters, with more of expansion than is allowed to characters on the stage, but with the distinctness of person, singleness of catastrophe, and undisguised application of moral that belong to the higher order of drama.¹

Then in 1832, in several similar passages the critics indicate what a novel should be. One declares that "a novel should be what *genteele comedy was*-- the picture of actual manners." Furthermore, he maintains that the modern novel should afford "development of mind, the interest of the feelings, lively sketches of peculiar and general character, and something, too, of instruction."² The reviewer of *The Buccaneer* mentions approximately the same requirements for historic fiction; but he also demands "truth as the foundation of any known personage introduced" and reminds any would-be author that "the past can only be reanimated by present feeling, and the mind of the writer must bestow its own originality."³ In addition to these statements

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¹ "Women," the *Literary Gazette* (July 11, 1818). Unless otherwise indicated, succeeding references will be to the *Literary Gazette*, and I shall not repeat the title.
² "The Contrast," (April 14, 1832).
³ (November 24, 1832).
there is the warning given in a review of The Invasion, that "an epic, a novel, a treatise on political economy, and an antiquarian essay are materials that do not assimilate."\(^1\) The terms in all of these passages—catastrophe, moral, actual, truth, and originality—are mainly inheritances; but the reviewers' acceptance of the novel as a worth-while literary type and their serious considerations of its special requirements as such are notable.

To be successful, the reviewers think the novelists should have certain qualifications. They should, of course, have genius, imagination, talent,\(^2\) and powers of invention.\(^3\) In addition, they should have various other types of power (natural force or effectiveness)—especially "soul-stirring power" or power over the readers' imagination.\(^4\) They should possess knowledge of the heart,\(^5\) of truth or life or nature;\(^6\)

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\(^1\) (January 7, 1832).

\(^2\) See "Tales and Confessions," (Dec. 6, 1829), and "Tales of my Time," (Oct. 31, 1829).

\(^3\) "Destiny," (April 2, 1831). In "Tales of the Passions," (Jan. 24, 1829), the reviewer uses the term to denote the creation of new imaginative events and says that, since invention is exhausted, authors return to the passions now as material for novels.

\(^4\) See "Ivanhoe (Dec. 25, 1819), and "Gaston de Blondievile," (May 27, 1826), where there is a hint of the Aristotelian catharsis. See also "The Tor Mill," (Nov. 11, 1826); "The Provost," (June 22, 1822) and "Tales of Fault and Feeling," (March 26, 1825).

\(^5\) See "Felham," (June 7, 1828).

\(^6\) See "Tremaine, 3rd. ed.," (Sept. 24, 1828); "Crochet Castle," (Feb. 19, 1831); "Devereux," (June 27, 1829); and "The Disowned," (Nov. 29, 1828).
a refined taste and cultivated intellect;¹ judgment;² as well as good sense and rational views.³ All of these various qualities would have pleased Pope or Johnson, who would have listed them as desirable for poets or dramatists. The seriousness with which the novel has come to be regarded is implicit in the reviewers' choice of terms, most of which indicate that it is "foolish to think the deepest study is not necessary"⁴ for the successful novelist. Of these words, only genius, imagination, and perhaps fancy need special attention; for all of the others have approximately the same significance which they had when applied earlier to other types of literature.

For that matter, even genius usually has the traditional significance of innate creative ability.⁴ But it is interesting that one reviewer mentions the lack of affectation and morbidity "in the genius of Mrs. Radcliffe" and remarks that "a singular characteristic of her genius" is her tendency to moralize even when her inventions are the "wildest."⁵ Apparently, instead of the restraint of reason or learning we have the curb of moral concern. But at no

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¹ "May You Like It," (June 7, 1823); "The Two Reeters," (Sept. 25, 1824).
² "Tales by the O'Hara Family," (Nov. 25, 1826).
⁴ See "The Heidenmauer," (July 1, 1832); "Ouidine," (Nov. 29, 1817); "The King's Own," (Apr. 10, 1830).
⁵ "Casson de Blondeville," (May 27, 1826).
time is there any enthusiasm for the unlettered genius. Like genius, fancy varies little from its eighteenth-century counterpart. As applied to the novel, it denotes either "sportiveness" of the imaging faculty or "unbridled extravagance." But imagination, with which fancy is often synonymous, does sometimes differ from its earlier usage. Of course, it most frequently applies in a general way to the creative faculty. It may be closely related to reality. For instance, the imagination of the author of Destiny is defined as her "power of recreating the images impressed on her mind" by real experiences. Moreover, the imagination of another author is considered his ability to work "reality to the most immense pitch of interest." At times, however, the quality is completely opposed to reality. Then it is similar to fancy. The most interesting and unusual use of the term comes in the review of The Young Duke, where the author is said to be gifted with that higher species of imagination which creates and combines—which out of impression extracts reflection, and which bursts of feeling full of the poetry of thought alone can give a true sense of the beautiful.

1 See "A History of New York," (Oct. 21, 1820); "Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations," (July 26, 1823); and "Melincourt," (Mar. 22, 1817). In all cases the need for the guidance of "sound taste" is mentioned.

2 "Anne of Geierstein," (May 16, 1829); "Tales of Fault and Feeling," (Mar. 26, 1825); "Peveril of the Peak, (Jan. 25, 1823).

3 See in the order named "Destiny," (Apr. 2, 1831); and "The Disowned," (Nov. 29, 1828).

4 See "Authorship," (April 33, 1831), where the author is advised to be guided by "the rule he despises," since "taste" is needful. See also "Guidine," (Nov. 29, 1817) and "Sydenham," (Feb. 6, 1830).

This passage is decidedly an outgrowth of Coleridge’s theory of the ecomplastic imagination and possibly of Shelley’s adaptation of it. In fact, much of the treatment of the imagination here is Coleridgean since even that imaging quality acting upon realities has its counterpart in Coleridge’s fancy.

Thus, in the listing of qualities desired in the novelists, the old terms appear; but those denoting innate instead of acquired or trained excellencies predominate. Too, the interpretations (of imagination particularly) have changed. Nevertheless, the need for taste, judgment, and learning is not entirely ignored. It merely assumes a secondary place.

In the selection of terms to be applied to the novels, the critics again show a tendency to mix the old and the new. This statement is equally true of their evaluations of descriptions, of style and language, of characterization, of plot, and of the general function of the novel. But most of the newer tendencies show themselves during the last years of this romantic era.

There is, it is true, no whole new theory of description; but the reviewers see that the artists ought to animate the landscape and instil some of their own feeling into their scenes in order to arouse similar emotions in their readers. Thus, although they make use of ordinary terms like affected, beauty, true to fact, original,
and picturesque,\(^1\) which were common in the works of Addison, Johnson, and Pope, they also employ adjectives with sensuous appeal like sweet, soft, dream-like.\(^2\) They describe an "olive grove made sad by the recollections that haunt it"; and, in true Wordsworthian manner, they discuss various scenes depicted "with the truth of reality" and permeated by "that spirit of romance which throws its own beauty over what it touches."\(^3\) Moreover, one reviewer writes that "Wilson has flung over pastoral life in Scotland all the poetical beauty of his own imaginative tenderness" and that Galt "has blended humour and pathos" into his painting of "everyday occurrences of actual life."\(^4\) The terms in these latter quotations—truth, reality, beauty, poetical, humor, actual, and pathos—are inheritances. Even their meanings are not changed; however, the great emphasis of the reviewers upon what one might call the spirit and the sensibility of scenery is a departure from the norm of past treatments of description.

There is no similar change apparent in the evaluations of the style and language of each novel. The reviewers mainly repeat cliches, speak in general terms of the tone

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\(^1\) See in the order named "The King's Secret," (April 2, 1831); "The Rivals," (January 2, 1830); "Continental Adventures," (June 17, 1826); "The Dominie's Legacy," (Feb. 27, 1830); "The Barony," (May 8, 1830).
\(^2\) "Gaston de Blondeville," (May 27, 1826).
\(^3\) "Tales of the Wars of our Times," (May 30, 1829).
\(^4\) "The Dominie's Legacy," (Feb. 27, 1830).
of the work, or ignore the matter entirely. Usually the words *style* and *language* are synonyms; but sometimes *style* does refer to the manner or method of composition. Applied to *style* are such terms as *ornamented, beauties, elegant, animated* and *delightful, graceful* and *flowing, polished, pleasing* and *playful, easy* and *pure*—all of which would be very much at home in the writings of Thomas Wilson or Ben Jonson, or of Dryden and Pope. In addition, there are the slightly different adjectives *slovenly, sharp, and desultory.*

With *language*, the reviewers use the same sort of terms. The majority are such words as *brilliant, ornamented, plain, elegant, correct,* and *graceful;* but there are a few slightly different ones like *impudent* and *un-ladylike.* None of this material is particularly new.

Nor is there much that is different from the old concepts in the reviewers' character-discussions. Usually they say that each character should have "influence on the

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1 See in the order named "Sir John Chiverton," (July 8, 1826); "The Writer's Clerk," (Jan. 29, 1825); "Hamet," (July 8, 1826); "Tremaine," (March 12, 1825); "The Exile of Palestine," (Dec. 11, 1825); "Marianne," April 23, 1825); "Highways and Byways," (Nov. 11, 1823); "Gramby," (Dec. 10, 1825); "The New Era," (June 19, 1819).

2 See "The Betrothed," (July 25, 1825) and "Tales of the Crusaders," (July 2, 1825).

3 See "Tales of the Crusaders," (June 25, 1825); "The Human Heart," (Aug. 21, 1824); "Tales of Humber Life," (March 19, 1825); "Alla Giuliana," (July 15, 1826); "Herbert Lacy," (Dec. 22, 1827); "The Tor Hill," (Nov. 11, 1826); "Trials of Life," (Nov. 15, 1826); "The O'Triens and the O'Flahertys," (Nov. 3, 1827).
Action of the story but should be "subservient" to it. Acceptable characters are "varied," "well-imagined," and "original," or at least not servile imitations of others. Each portrait has to be drawn "with discrimination" so that it will be "actual" and "individual." This demand that the character seem "natural"—that is, drawn from "human nature"—is constantly voiced, even though one critic does doubt whether anyone can know what human nature is, nor that it is greatly "modified by education and controlled by circumstances." Of course, the reviewers use various expressions for stating this same theory. Truth, real life, human life, and even air of reality are

1 "The Outcasts," (August 7, 1824). See also "Brambletye House," (Feb. 4, 1826); "The Lost Heir," (Jan. 30, 1830).
2 "Harrington," (July 4, 1817).
3 "The Discrowned," (Nov. 29, 1829).
4 "The Exiles of Palestine," (Dec. 11, 1830).
5 "The Contrast," (April 14, 1832). See also "Legend of Montrose," (July 3, 1819); "The Usurer's Daughter," (Nov. 25, 1831); "The Templars," (July 17, 1830).
6 See in order "Lasting Impressions," (Nov. 13, 1824), and "Laurie Todd," (June 7, 1828).
7 "The Tor Hill," (Nov. 4, 1826). See also "Gilmour," (Nov. 20, 1824), and "Tales of my Time," (Oct. 31, 1829).
8 "Pelham," (Nov. 8, 1826).
9 "The Last of the Mohicans," (April 1, 1826); "Highways and Byways (Dec. 25, 1824); "The Manners of the Day," (Feb. 6, 1830); "Granby," (Dec. 19, 1825).
11 "Our Island," (Oct. 13, 1832).
12 "Heiress of Bruges," (Oct. 2, 1830).
common. Obviously, any presentation that detracts from the naturalness of characters, such as their being "governed by . . . predestinated necessity, instead of free will," is unacceptable.

But in all their criticism the reviewers use these terms very loosely. Most of the time, however, when they write real and actual they mean fidelity to fact; when they employ truth, air of reality, nature, or human nature, they denote imitations of types or races rather than copies of the universal. To these representations of types may be added certain individual traits (accidents) or details so that each agent may have a "Defolsh" verisimilitude. One reviewer has the unusual opinion that such pseudo-realism is better achieved when characters are "drawn with tact rather than with depth," since "the motives of the many lie on the surface." Shallow imitations are "more generally true," therefore, than deep analyses of specific individuals. In all of these terms and theories there is little that is strictly new. Only the occasional demand that a novel show "development of character," not mere portraits, strikes a different note. In this particular at least, one sees some recognition of the specific requirements of the novel as a literary type. Otherwise,

1 See "The Earthquake," (Dec. 23, 1820). For a similar expression see "Flirtation," (Nov. 24, 1827).

2 "Mothers and Daughters," (Jan. 15, 1831).

3 "Destiny," (April 2, 1831).
these terms and theories could well apply to the epic.

As far as the plot (including both the framework and the fable) is concerned, the reviewers show the same propensity toward using old terms that they displayed in the case of character delineations.

In the discussions of suitable subject matter for plots, some slight indication of changing tastes is visible. Lingering still are a few faint traces of the eighteenth-century's fondness for the sublime. Thus one finds in listings of approved subjects such familiar terms as gorgeous, terrible, and beautiful; but outnumbering them are words like true, simple, life, facts, and feelings. Feeling, however, must not degenerate "into sentimentality," the reviewers warn; and all subjects must be "suitable" (appropriate or in good "taste"). Therefore, the "supernatural" is permitted only if (as Coleridge might say) the mind is "wrought up to accept it," if the ghost is "preceded by slow music."5

But at the end of the romantic period, the trend in subject matter is completely away from the supernatural,.

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1 "Emir Halek," (Nov. 10, 1827).
2 "Sydenham," (Oct. 28, 1826).
3 "The Human Heart," (Aug. 21, 1826).
4 In the order named see "Romance of the Early Ages," (March 24, 1822); "Tremaine," (March 12, 1825); "Pelham," (Nov. 8, 1828); and "Penelope," (May 10, 1828).
5 "Tales of Fault and Feeling," (March 26, 1825).
even from "battles, murder, and sudden death"—all considered good at earlier times. One reviewer declares that the change is necessary because the "incidents of invention are exhausted." Hence the authors must turn to "sentiments." Yet this shift from "facts to feeling," from extravagant adventure to history or to "simple and natural" material brings the danger of making the novel "a sort of antiquarian's diary." For the "law of perpetual imprisonment," some novelists are substituting "dates and dryness." One extreme is as bad as the other.

The terminology in these discussions of subject matter is not new; but the prevalence of the terms feeling, simple, and natural is perhaps indicative of the reviewers' consciousness of the unsuitability for the novel of some subjects used in earlier epics and romances. Certainly, these critics are beginning to examine all materials carefully with a view to determining which are especially effective in this new literary type.

They are not, however, as much interested in the details of plot-management. A few reviewers do note that an author should manage his plot "cleverly," whether it

1 "Rustace Fitz-Richard," (Jan. 28, 1826).
2 "Tales of Passion," (Jan. 24, 1829).
3 "Tales of the Nest," (Feb. 9, 1828); "The Human Heart," (August 21, 1824).
4 "De L'Uomo," (August 14, 1830).
be "intricate" and "full of episodes" or "simple" in design. Too, one critic refers to "compliance with the laws of unities"; but the average writer in this journal has little interest in the subject. The terms used are the inherited ones like intricate, simple, complex, contrived, unconnected, and unities. The only point worth noting is that the one reviewer who commends observance of unities feels that he must defend the author's use of them. This attitude is a complete reversal of the neo-classical one. It is the exception, however, since most of the terms and theories on plot-management are the conventional ones.

Likewise, in their evaluations of the story as a whole, the reviewers use numerous inherited terms and theories. They object to "imitations" of stories by other authors. Since the term has here the meaning attributed to it by Young, it follows that these critics praise "original works"—those imaginative creations which have the air of novelty. In these original works, they sometimes admire "keen, lively, uncommon wit" (an intellectual, intellectual, intellectual)

1 "The Story of a Life," (May 28, 1825). See also "Hans of Iceland," (March 10, 1825); "English Fashionables Abroad," (May 5, 1827).

2 "The Sisters of Mansfield," (March 19, 1825).

3 "Gaston de Blondeville," (March 27, 1826).

4 See "The Abduction," (March 19, 1825); "De Foix," (March 25, 1826).

5 "Miserimus," (Dec. 22, 1832); "Adventures of a Younger Son," (Feb. 18, 1832); "Arthur Seymour," (Aug. 7, 1824); "Frankenstein," (Nov. 19, 1831).
barbed humor); and humor, whether it be a "mixture of the
ludicrous and appalling" or whether it be closely allied
to pathos. Indeed, their preference is nearly always for
a work "rather made to be felt than criticized," even when
the feeling engendered is "intense and painful."

But most of all they value the work which seems
ttrue. To express this concept they use a number of terms
in a loose fashion. True, air of truth or of reality,
verisimblance or verisimilitude, and probable—all

1 "Pelham," (June 7, 1823).

2 In the order named see "Hans of Iceland," (March 19,
1825); "Tales of the Alhambra," (April 28, 1832). See also
"The Adventures of Barney Mahoney," (June 2, 1832);
"Balladmoor," (Jan. 1, 1825).

3 "The Writer's Clerk," (Jan. 29, 1825); See also
"Tales by the O'Hara Family," (April 16, 1825); "Clouesley,
(March 6, 1830); "The False Step," (Oct. 22, 1831).

4 See "Gertrude de Mars," (March 25, 1826); and

5 See "Pitz of Fitzford," (Feb. 6, 1830); "New
Landlord's Tales," (Jan. 15, 1825); "The Contrast," (April
14, 1832).

6 "The Invisible Gentlemen," (Dec. 22, 1832); and

7 See "The Witch Finder," (May 29, 1824); and "The
Monastery," (March 25, 1820). In the latter review, the
critic objects to the destruction of verisimilitude caused
by tracing real events "to absolute fairyland." For other
uses of verisimilitude, see "The Boyne Water," (May 20,
1826); and "Our Village," (Oct. 28, 1826).

8 See "Tales of Humble Life," (March 19, 1825).
For attacks on improbable events because they do not "excite
sympathy" see "Lionel Lincoln," (March 5, 1825); "Tales of
the O'Hara Family," (Nov. 25, 1826); "The Betrothed,
(July 2, 1825); "Clarence," (August 7, 1830).
appear. All are usually synonymous. Sometimes, however,
true means factual or historical accuracy of details; at
other times, it designates events that are faithful to the
*spirit* of the period presented (the classical appropriate,
in short); and on some few occasions it denotes a correspond-
ence between events and universal human experience. 3

Air of truth and vraisemblance are similar to true; but in
this criticism, the usual significance of these terms is
either fidelity to the universal or faithfulness to typical
events or customs in a particular place or during a certain
era. Though one would assume that probable would signify
events which would give vraisemblance to a novel, he finds
rather that the two terms are often not distinguishable.

On the whole, however, probability refers to general con-
sistency of plot, to an arrangement in which there is "no
effect without a cause." 4 All of these terms were once
applied in almost the same fashion to the epic and to drama.

In fact, especially in the terms applied to the
endings of novels, the reviewers make no distinction what-
ever between the novel and the earlier types of literature.
The reviewer of *The Lost Heir* even speaks of the ending

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1 For examples see "De L'Orme," (August 14, 1830);
"The Persian Adventurer," (Nov. 27, 1830).

2 "De L'Orme," (August 14, 1830). See also
"Marianne," (April 23, 1825).

3 See "Fitz of Fitz Ford," (Feb. 6, 1830); "The
Contrast," (April 14, 1832).

of the novel as "the curtain"\textsuperscript{1} and requires that "suspense and curiosity\textsuperscript{1} be sustained until it falls. Naturally, many critics refer to the conclusion as the "catastrophe\textsuperscript{2} (meaning either a happy or an unhappy ending) or as the "denouement\textsuperscript{2} or simply as the "end\textsuperscript{2}\ and they prefer that it be "unexpected\textsuperscript{5} or at least not too readily "anticipated\textsuperscript{3}. If the story is "wound up with perfect poetical justice\textsuperscript{4} in traditional fashion, so much the better. All of these terms— ending, denouement, and especially catastrophe and poetical justice— are true neo-classical echoes.

So too are the theories of the function of the novel. Just as Pope and Scaliger demanded of poetry some usefulness, these reviewers demand that the novel furnish "amusement and moral instruction\textsuperscript{5}\ and they use such familiar terms as delightful, pleasant, amusement, along with pure, virtuous, moral, instruction, and knowledge.

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\textsuperscript{1} "The Lost Heir," (January 30, 1830).

\textsuperscript{2} In the order named see "Tales of the O'Hara Family," (April 16, 1825); "Tales of Fault and Feeling\textsuperscript{a}," (March 26, 1825); "The Heiress of Bruces\textsuperscript{b}," (Oct. 21, 1830).

\textsuperscript{3} See in the order named "Walter Colyton\textsuperscript{c}," (April 17, 1830); and "Tales by the O'Hara Family\textsuperscript{d}," (April 16, 1825). See also "Bramsteyte House\textsuperscript{e}," (reb. 4, 1826); "The Exiles of Palestine\textsuperscript{f}," (Dec. 11, 1850).

\textsuperscript{4} "The Talisman\textsuperscript{g}," (June 25, 1825); "The Tor Hill\textsuperscript{h}," (Nov. 11, 1826).

\textsuperscript{5} See "The Neighborhood\textsuperscript{i}," (March 4, 1820); "New Tales\textsuperscript{j}," (August 16, 1818); "The Foresters\textsuperscript{k}," (May 21, 1825); "Granby\textsuperscript{l}," (Dec. 10, 1825); "Fitz of Fitz Ford\textsuperscript{m}," (Feb. 6, 1830); "The Young Backwoodsman\textsuperscript{n}," (June 9, 1832).
For the most part, the emphasis falls upon moral, especially on that based "on religious feeling"; but occasionally entertaining and amusing are in the forefront.

Thus, whether the terms are applied to novelists or to novels, they nearly all have their roots in past criticism, particularly in that directed toward the epic and the drama. With regard to the desiderata for the authors, the major changes occur in the meanings of imagination. Both it and fancy show the influence of Coleridge. In the case of terms related to style and language, there is little new; but in the treatments of descriptions a few passages have a Wordsworthian tone, and adjectives denoting feeling and emotion are plentiful. The terminology of character delineations, however, is inherited; and only the mention of the need for "development" of character is indicative of changes. Where plots as a whole are the issue, again the terms are the old ones: suitable, real, true, natural, probable, verisimilitude, humor, pathos, wit, catastrophe, and poetical justice. These reviewers make use of the terms true and pathos considerably more frequently.

1 See "Alice Allan and Other Tales," (Dec. 4, 1824); "The Writer's Clerk," (Jan. 29, 1825); "The Contrast," (June 14, 1826); "Devereux," (June 27, 1829); "Tales and Novels of Maria Edgeworth," (June 2, 1832); and "Say You Like It," (June 7, 1825).

2 "The Barony," (May 8, 1830).

3 See "Highways and Byways, third series," (Dec. 25, 1824); "At Home," (June 21, 1828); "The Shepherd's Calendar," (March 14, 1829); "Sayings and Doings," (Jan. 25, 1825); "Brothers and Daughters," (Jan. 15, 1831).
than did the neo-classical critics. The former still, however, denote the function of novels by the adjectives moral, useful, entertaining, delightful, and instructive. The old Horatian utile dulci reigns in the reviews in the Literary Gazette.

The criticism in the Literary Gazette more closely resembles that found in the various monthly and quarterly reviews than do the critical articles in the Examiner. There are only a few newer concepts voiced in the Literary Gazette, though the make-up of the weekly is quite similar to that of modern publications. The Examiner, on the contrary, contained many of the revolutionary theories and terms employed by the "Cockney" school. These latter theories and terms appeared in numerous publications by Hunt.

The Indicator was one of these—a weekly essay publication, which lasted only seventy-six weeks (1819-1821). Since the terminology of its criticism of the novel is very similar to that in the Examiner, it is scarcely necessary to discuss it. One notes the emphasis which is placed upon emotional effect—emphasis, of course, in the Aristotle-Winturno line of influence—and observes the frequent appearance of such terms as pain, terror, sentiment, heart, passions, goodness, moral and sympathy. The reviewers urge the authors to make "the sentiment sufficiently prominent," to draw characters that are "easy

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and true" but that also arouse "sympathy." Yet the

critics believe stories that give "mental pain to no purpose"
to be "gross mistakes" and indications of "puerile" talents,
such as Mr. Lewis possessed. Moreover, they warn that when
the pain is "too long-drawn out," even the "undoubted
genius" (transcendent creative ability) of the author cannot
wholly redeem the fault. Lamb is the critic's ideal
with respect to his treatment of pain and pathos. In com-
parison with him, Richardson seems very inept. In all of
this criticism the writers' great interest in emotional
effect is dominant; and, as has been indicated, the termin-
ology of the journal shows the effect of this interest.

A similar interest is discernible in the criticism
of The Athenæum, but in the latter journal emotional
feeling is not emphasized to such an extent as it is in

1 "Thieves, Ancient and Modern," The Indicator
(Dec. 22, 1819).

2 "A Tale for Chimney Corners," The Indicator
(Dec. 15, 1819).

3 "The Destruction of the Cenci Family," The
Indicator, (July 19, 1820).

4 See "The Works of Charles Lamb," The Indicator,
(Jan. 31, 1821). See also the discussion of the review of
the Works of Charles Lamb in the chapter on the London
Magazine.

5 This study omits other publications like Leigh
Hunt's Companion (1826) and The Literary Examiner (started
by John Hunt in 1823), in which the terminology is very
similar to that in the Examiner. But see L. Marchand,
"The Athenæum"-- A Mirror of Victorian Culture (Chapel
the Indicator. The Athenaeum, with which the Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review was incorporated in 1828, contains reviews and articles couched in terms current in such magazines as Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine and Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country. In short, it contains numerous traditional terms; but many of these have new or romantic meanings. In addition, it has some new terms.

To the reader it appears considerably more analytical in its critical methods than is either the Examiner or the Indicator and seems somewhat more definitely related to the criticism of the Victorian times than to that of the early eighteen hundred's. "The Sketches of Contemporary Authors" by Frederick Denison Maurice, for instance, shows the reviewer's interest in the philosophy of each author. Scott, it seems, is a great "observer," but he is not concerned about "the why or the wherefore" of history, about the relationship between "outside nature" and "higher principles" or "moral and religious truth"; that is, the universal spirit penetrating even inanimate objects. He merely associates his scenery with the "beautiful"; hence, it is never "the drapery of the thoughts." Moreover, his work as a whole is not strictly "moral," since it does little "toward making men wiser or better."¹ As far as

¹ The Athenaeum, (March 11, 1828). For similar uses of terms, see the essay on "De Treuba," (April 4, 1828) and Scott's Novels--The New Edition of Waverley," (June 3, 1829).
human nature is concerned, Scott scarcely knows that man has an "inner life."\(^1\) He has not the "clear and all-embracing intelligence"\(^1\) of Goethe. But his "genius" (special talent) really lies in drawing characters filled "with a spirit drawn from the form of ordinary human nature."\(^1\)

This concept of genius as a kind of intuitive perception of the universal principles of behavior underlying the accidents (individual phenomena) is a new use perhaps for the term, but the basis for the theory is Aristotelian. It is, however, interesting to note the separation here of man's behavior and man's intellectual life (the outer and the inner existence).

In the great majority of critical essays in this publication, then, one finds the old terms like beautiful, real, nature, moral, truth, talent, pleasing, ease, and judgment.\(^2\) As is true in the essays mentioned above, however, there are throughout the reviews a few new interpretations for old terms like nature and genius; and there is a

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\(^1\) See "Sir Walter Scott and Goethe," The Athenaeum, (May 27, 1832). For a very figurative use of genius—"the grave of genius"—connected with morals, see "Norman Abbey," (Jan. 28, 1832).

\(^2\) See "Count Robert of Paris," The Athenaeum, (Dec. 3, 1831), "Castle Dangerous," (Dec. 10, 1832); and the "Fair Maid of Perth," (May 21, 1828). For emphasis on "touching passages," see "The Buccaneers," (Nov. 24, 1832); and "Sir Ralph Eskar," (Jan. 28, 1832). See "Contarini Fleming," (May 12, 1832), where the author's style is described as "feverish," as well as "wild and extravagant," and "Otterbourne," (Dec. 5, 1832), where, in conventional terminology, the style is called "stilted." In general, this mingling of usual and unusual terms occurs throughout the criticism.
good deal of stress upon philosophy along with that upon "touching passages." 1

Thus, in these weekly publications-- the Examiner, the Literary Gazette, the Indicator, and the Athenaeum-- the same mixture of old and new terms discoverable in the other types of periodicals shows itself. The Examiner offers a greater number of new interpretations for old terms than do the others. The Literary Gazette has the most traditional terminology of the group. The terms in the Athenaeum are often old ones with new interpretations.

B Followers of the Monthly Review

The Critical Review, the Anti-Jacobin, and the British Critic, all followers of the Monthly Review, contain less that is new or different in their terminology than do the weekly publications. Since they are so completely similar to their model, they need little attention here.

The Critical Review, for instance, is a routine register, which ended in 1817. In it one finds the same sort of terms that have been discussed at length in the first chapter of this work. They are nearly all definitely neo-classical. Style and language should be elegant and correct, not affected or pompous; 2 the characters should be animated

1 Ibid.

and real;\(^1\) the story should be "probable in its incidents";\(^2\) and it should definitely inculcate morality.\(^3\)

As a whole, the reviewers in this journal do not think much of the novel as a literary type.\(^4\) However, with regard to Maria Edgeworth's fear that Belinda might be called a "novel," one critic does query whether it is necessary to "discard the title of novel from its own rank and place because many bad novels are in existence."\(^5\) But he is the exception; for until about 1815 most reviewers not only use inherited terms, but have the general eighteenth-century attitude toward the novel.

Like the Critical Review, the Anti-Jacobin Review and True Churchman's Magazine, or Monthly Political and Literary Censor (1798-1824), closely resembles the Monthly Review. Since this periodical, edited by John Richards Greene (John Gifford), was "primarily a corrective organ," its "service to literature was slight."\(^6\) Its terminology is thoroughly derivative and conventional. The terms applied to the ideal author are the ones familiar to any reader of

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1 "Cordelia," XCVIII (1800), 235-236.
2 "Guy Mannering," N.S. I (1815), 600.
3 "Old Mortality," N.S. IV (1816), 614.
4 "Waverley," N.S. I (1814), 288.
5 See XXIV (1802), 235.
6 Walter Graham, op. cit., p. 223.
Johnson's or of Pope's works. "Acuteness of observation"; 1
"knowledge" (the factual type); 2 "invention" (creativity),
and "originality" (Young's type, the opposite of imitation); 2
"ingenuity"; and, of course, "genius" (inherent creative
ability) 3 and "imagination" (power of producing vivid images
usually unrelated to reality) 4—all these qualities are
mentioned. Preferably, imagination is to be controlled by
"art and education" or by "judgment." 4 Moreover, any
author's "fancy" (original creativity) should be "chaste." 5
All of this is fairly neo-classical.

So is the criticism of the other phases of the novel.
The good style is polished and pleasing. 6 Excellent charac-
ters have "fidelity to nature" (to universal human qualities),
or they are "real," or lacking in "inconsistency." 7 At rare
intervals a critic, like the reviewer of Liberality, will

Since succeeding references will be to this journal, I shall
not repeat its title.

2 In the order named see "Woman," XXXII (1809),
360; "Liberality and Prejudice," XLV (1813), 538; "Sophia
St. Clare," XXV (1807), 399, 389.

3 "Thaddeus of Warsaw," XVII (1804), 50. "The Mor-
lands," XXIV (1806), 158; "Black Rock House," XXXVIII (1811), 89.

4 See "The Loves of Celestine and St. Aubert," XXIX
(1811), 414; "Sophia St. Clare," XXV (1807), 389; "Woman,
XXXII (1809), 364.

5 "Woman," XXXII (1809), 364.

6 For terms applied to style see "St. Leon," V (1803),

7 See "Corinne," XXXII (1809), 454 and "Black Rock
House," XXXVIII (1811), 90. See also "Ferdinand and Ordella,
XXXVIII (1811), 74 and "Heart of Mid-Lothian," LV (1812), 212.
opine that characters should act in the novels. Moreover, there is applied to the plot the fairly unusual term ingenious (referring to a skillful arrangement), in addition to such old words as probable and real. In the discussion of the function of the novel we do find a hint of the theory that a novel must arouse the emotions of the reader in order to effect a temporary belief in the reality of imaginary characters and events. But usually the discussions of function are ordinary; and the term moral pre-eminent. Very often, too, amusement and improvement or instruction appear in true Horatian tradition. However, at least one reviewer questions the propriety of using novels as "vehicles of religious and moral instruction." He even defends Sterne because of the author's "touching sensibility."

As a rule, these reviewers look upon novels as "repositories of unmeaning sentimentality and ridiculous frivolity." Very, very seldom does a critic assert that

1 XLV (1813), 534.

2 In the order named see "The Cave of Cosenza," XIX (1804), 105; and "Ferdinand and Ordella," XXXVIII (1811), 74. See also "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," LV (1818), 212.


4 "The Morlands," XXIV (1806), 159.


6 "Ferdinand and Ordella," XXXVIII (1811), 74.

people need not be "ashamed to read novels for amusement."1

The terminology of these reviewers reflects their views.

To some extent, the same views dominate the critics and the criticism in the British Critic (1795-1825). This "instrument of the Tory and High Church factions and a real successor of the Critical Review" contained little "valuable literary criticism."2 Its terminology is not new, being mainly what one would find in Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare or in his Lives of the English Poets. There are no specific adaptations of these terms to the novel. They are used here just as they are in the criticism of the earlier drama or poetry.

Writing of the novelists, the critics employ such terms as judgment, good sense, and observation;3 knowledge (of human nature, of the world, of life);4 powers of invention (innate creativity, producing force or effectiveness in composition);5 and, of course, imagination (vivid

1 Ibid.
2 W. Graham, op. cit., p. 221.
3 "The History of Myself and My Friend," The British Critic, Ili (1816), 204. Since succeeding references will be to the same journal, I shall not repeat the title of it.
4 See "Tales of Passion," XXXIII (1809), 415; "Tales of Fashionable Life," XXXIV (1809), 73; "The Royal Exile," XXXVII (1811), 415; "Sense and Sensibility," XXXIX (1812), 827.
Genius; and fancy (a lighter imagination). Usually all of these qualities were to be guided by judgment and taste. The most frequently used term of this sort, however, is activity, not common in earlier criticism, though its adjectival form appears in the works of Dryden and of Johnson. The word refers to skill in managing and contingencies. It is innate, but it may also be cultivated; and it is sometimes associated with taste, talent, and originality. None of these terms represent completely new developments.

But are there any new developments in the treatment of the novels. In general, the reviewers agree that, like popular, a novel must be "always sentimental and occasionally pathetic"; that it must have "hair-breadth escapes, perhaps a duel"; that its "close will be imperfect without the catastrophe of a marriage." But this is not the critics' ideal. It must possess other qualities. It has a "correct" and "elegant" style;

1 "Romantic Tales," XXXIII (1809), 251; "The Heart and the Fancy," XLI (1813), 410; "St. Clair," XXXVIII (1811), 523.
2 See "Cottage Sketches," XL (1812), 356.
5 "The Adulteress," XXXV (1810), 186.
it has "easy graces" and no "vulgarity." 1 It is never an "endless effusion of sounding words," which, when the author "would raise them to sublimity, fall into blank verse." 2 All of these terms and theories are decidedly neo-classical.

In the case of words describing the ideal character, we have the same situation. The excellent character has "novelty" or "originality," "consistency," "force, and truth," with respect to "human nature." 3 It is "accurate" (usually to type or to race), "well-discriminated" (individual), and "well sustained." 4

In a like manner, one finds the terminology of plot-criticism to be largely derivative. There is a decided renovation of "extravagance of sentiment," of "outrageously romantic" or "marvelous" subject matter. 5 Acceptable materials are "love, tenderness, pathos, disappointments, danger"; 6 any original materials or any "imitations of real

1 In the order named see "Adonia," XVII (1801), 316; "Farther Excursions of the Observant Pedestrian," X (1802), 648; "Romantic Tales," XXXIII (1809), 251.

2 "Nubilia in search of a Husband," XXXV (1810), 167. For other terms used with style and language, see "The Scottish Chiefs," XXVII (1811), 255; "The Wedding Day," XXXII (1808), 321; "Silvanella," XII (1812), 302. In the last reference the Aristotelian "clear without being mean" is suggested.

3 See in the order named "Rebecca," XXXII (1808), 89; and "Mainclaire," XXXIII (1808), 190; "The Scottish Chiefs," XXXVII (1811), 250; "Corinna," XXXI (1808), 523; "The Posthumous Works of Mrs. Chapone," XXXI (1808), 60.

4 In the order named see "Tales of Fashionable Life," XXXIV (1809), 73; "Laetitia," XVIII (1801), 667; and "Sense and Sensibility," XXXIX (1812), 527.


6 "Warion," XL (1812), 641.
events.\footnote{1}

The author's arrangement of his material, his plot structure, could be "intricate" only if it was "well-conducted."\footnote{2} His plot as a whole, the fable, had to satisfy certain definite requirements of "consistency and probability," implying a cause and effect presentation of events.\footnote{3} But an occasional improbable story that was not "beyond possibility"\footnote{4} was praised. Usually, in describing the approved fable, the reviewers used such expressions as real (with reference to historical facts and to general human experience),\footnote{5} truth (usually historical fact or general customs of special races or ages),\footnote{6} and propriety.\footnote{7} All of these terms are derivative ones. So are those designating the ending, especially catastrophe\footnote{8} (which at no point refers to an

\footnote{1} In order see "Romantic Tales," XXXIII (1809), 250 and "The Refusal," XXXVI (1810), 60.

\footnote{2} "Anecdotes Sentimentales," XXXVII (1811), 635.

\footnote{3} "The Brothers," XLI (1818), 196. See also "The Enchantress," XVII (1801), 436. "Ned Bentley," XXXIII (1809), 411.

\footnote{4} "Self Control," XXXVIII (1811), 213.

\footnote{5} See "The Husband and the Lover," XXXIV (1809), 74; "Tales of Fashionable Life," LXII (1813), 412.

\footnote{6} "The Scottish Chiefs," XXXVII (1811), 247; "Tales of Other Realms," XXXVII (1811), 520.

\footnote{7} "The Officer's Daughter," XXXVI (1810), 135.

\footnote{8} See "The Adulteress," XXXVI (1810), 188; "Rebecca," XXXII (1808), 89.
entire tragic experience, but merely to an ending, happy or unhappy), and denouement. With catastrophe sometimes come the familiar words poetical justice. One reviewer remarks, for instance: "Mrs. West has managed her catastrophe . . . according to her own ideas of poetical justice." He further explains that he agrees with her conception of poetical justice since she largely "leaves it to God." However, the average reviewer believes in the standard sort of poetical justice, which involves rewards to the good at the end.

In their opinions regarding the function of the novel, these reviewers are equally imitative of earlier critics. The Horatian utile dulci in the original Latin or in the equivalent English appears often. Moreover, sometimes pleasure, amusement, and entertainment receive approval from the critics; but the favorite terms are always morals, morality, and virtue. They are convinced that novels may possibly inculcate morals; yet in many of their discussions of historical romances, they express doubts about the

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1 "The Refusal," XXXVI (1810), 59-60. See also "Black Rock," XXXV (1810), 109.


3 See "Sailors," XXXII (1808), 190; "Demetrius," XLII (1813), 197; "The Curate and his Daughter," XII (1816), 411.
possibility of a novel's teaching history. Indeed, romance and history appear to them "irreconcilable." In brief, the terminology of this periodical has nothing to distinguish it from that of the Monthly Review except, perhaps, the more frequent appearances of the term ingenuity.

The terms in the British Critic, those in the Anti-Jacobin Review, and those in the Critical Review are mainly inherited ones that seldom have their meanings changed.

C Imitators of the Edinburgh Review

Next to be examined are some of the imitators of the Edinburgh Review: namely, the Westminster Review, the Eclectic Review, and the Annual Review. In this group of publications, the Westminster Review is the most important and is, therefore, the only one to which I expect to give much attention.

The Annual Review (1803-1808) owes to the reviews of Mrs. Barbauld, Robert Southey, and William Taylor of Norwich "any scanty literary value it has today." On the whole, the reviewers in this publication did not look with favor upon novels; for they thought these works likely to

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1 See "Adonia," XVII (1801), 316; "Old Nick," XVII (1801), 435; "Mrs. Leicester's School," XXXIII (1809), 77; "Delworth," XXXIII (1809), 185; "The Are We Live In," XLII (1813), 80.

2 See N.B. II (1814), 549.

"Exalt the imagination, and inflame the passion, thus rendering life tasteless and more solid books insipid." Moreover, they believed that reading fiction would "lessen the morals of the youth of both sexes." As might be expected, such terms as moral, goodness, utility, and virtue predominate in this journal.

Such words also hold an important place in the *Eclectic Review* (1805-1866), a "sectarian religious organ of the Dissenters." Some of the writers for this publication express the opinion that reading novels "tends to dissipate and commonly to mislead the mind." Hence, they do not put forth their best efforts in criticism of fiction; and the terms they employ, like those in the *Annual Review*, differ from those in the *Monthly Review* only in the greater number denoting moral tendencies. Therefore, no separate consideration of this publication is needed here.

From the standpoint of literary criticism of the novel, the most important of these imitators is unquestionably the radical *Westminster Review*, started in 1824 by James Stuart Mill. But none of its contributors except

1 See the *Annual Review*, I (1803), 720-721 and II (1803), 597. Compare these passages with those from the *Christian Observer*, in section V of this chapter. For a defense of the novel see *The Literary Panorama*, XI, 97-101.


3 See the *Eclectic Review*, I (1805), 60. See also the review of *Tales of my Landlord*, published in the *Eclectic Review*, November, 1820.
"Carlyle, John Sterling, and J. J. Fox had the qualifications of true critics"; consequently, they seldom "produced lasting critical opinions and interpretations as was the case in the Edinburgh and the quarterly."¹ The attitude of many of its reviewers toward the novel was one of suspicion, and Elizabeth Landon's feeling "that the novel is the very highest effort" ² of authors was quite unusual.

The terminology in the Westminster Review is similar to that in the Edinburgh Review except that there are in the former even fewer variations from the terms inherited from earlier criticism.

In their discussions of novelists the reviewers list the familiar "knowledge of human nature" (universal and particular qualities of human beings),³ "powers" (force and effectiveness of imaginative creativity or sometimes merely talent),⁴ and "fancy" (usually a light, whimsical imagination divorced from reality).⁵ Most of their attention, however, goes to genius and imagination; for they revere innate

¹ See Graham, op. cit., pp. 251 and 254.
creative ability even though they do sometimes praise a "successful imitator" (one who adapts the work of another artist).  

To them genius usually denotes either innate ability—mainly creative—or a sort of animating or creative spirit peculiar to a certain nation or locality. Both of these are meanings which can be traced either to classical or to neo-classical criticism. Though the latter meaning was not common in the dramatic or poetic criticism of the eighteenth century, Addison used it in his *Spectator.*  

Most of their uses of the term imagination, however, closely parallel the applications of the word which were current during an earlier era. In general, these reviewers refer to an innate power of producing images which are opposed to reality, to "copies of human life." One author, for example, is commended for consulting "the deep imprints of experience, rather than the brilliant shadows of imagination." Yet, in examining at least one review, we observe a similarity to the kind of imagination discussed by Coleridge and by Shelley. This sort "proceeds not by the aggregation

1 "St. Johnstown," I (1824), 279.  
3 "Truth," VII (1827), 342.  
4 "The Adventures of a Younger Son," XVII (1832), 34; see also "Cloudesley," XII (1830), 492; "Pelham," X (1829), 180.
of parts, but by the comprehension of wholes." Furthermore, it "must in some measure animate and impersonate, or at least verify what it describes."¹ Thus we have an intuitive faculty for comprehending the universal soul (which inter-penetrates all things) and for transmitting this comprehension to the reader through created images.

Nearly all of these terms applied to authors have retained their neo-classical meanings. So have those applied to the author's style and to his language, with which style is usually synonymous. We see in these reviews of the novels such focean words as ease, grace, elegance, flow, agreeable, poetical, affectation, pure, and exact.³ Of course, there is also an occasional noun like sleekiness² that is unusual; and there are some very figurative descriptions of style, like this one: "Hia Perseus spreads and rustles his wings, and after all only goes off in a canter."⁴ Here the reviewer expresses his dislike of the overly "ambitious" style which the author employs at the beginning.

¹ "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1826), 427. Compare with A. Schlegel's theory of genius in Lectures in Dramatic Art and Literature, I, and with S. T. Coleridge, Complete Works, III, 175; IV, 54 and 75.

² "Cleodesley," XIII (1830), 492.


of his novel—a style which he does not maintain. But for
the most part there is a little new either in terms or in
theory here.

Nor is there much that is new with respect to
description if we except the distinction made between
more scenic copy and "imaginative description," a type
which animates and verifies what it describes. Striving
for a certain novelty of expression, some of the reviewers
use fairly apt comparisons or figures of speech in their
treatments of description. For instance, one reviewer
writes of descriptions which combine the "dignity of
history with the familiarity of a newspaper." But mainly
we read here such descriptive adjectives as we may find in
the works of Burke or Addison or Johnson—beautiful,
dramatic, grand, vivid, true, crude, coarse, appropriate.

Moreover, in their discussions of characterization
these critics show the same tendency to employ the terms
once applied to poetry and the drama. Sometimes they
merely remark upon "striking and agreeable" characters
or "vivid and forcible" ones or upon the great "variety"

1 "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1828), 427.
See the discussion of imagination above.

2 "The Fairess of Bruges," XIV (1831), 155.

3 See in the order named "The Sasan Wife," I (1824),
276; "St. Johnstown," I (1824), 279; "The Albigenses," I
(1824), 554; "The Outcasts," I (1824), 556; "The
Hungarian Tales," X (1829), 105.
of characters, all "well-contrasted and well-supported."¹
But they are especially interested in consistency in
characters—"not only with human nature, but with them-
selves."² They are concerned, too, about "distinction and
individualization in the characters"³ and about "fidelity
to the original" (whether that be a type or an actual charac-
ter in history).⁴ The quality in which they are most
interested, however, is the "truth"⁵ of the characters, by
which term they designate a sort of verisimilitude. Even
the supernatural characters may have this quality provided
that they are artfully managed— that they have either
"a real, external being" or an existence solely in the
"diseased imagination" of the "supposed writer."⁶ But they
can not have both. In addition, the author must always
have "plausible motives"⁶ for the interference of such
beings in human affairs.

In general, however, the representations of such

¹ See in the order named "St. Johnstown," I (1824),
278; "Don Esteban," VI (1826), 278; "Truth," VII (1827), 360.
² See "Sayings and Doings," I (1824), 543; "Fazel,"
VII (1827), 462; "The Albigenses," I (1824), 553.
³ "The Italian Novelists: Boccaccio," VII (1827),
117. The characters of Boccaccio want this distinction.
But see also "Anne of Geierstein," XI (1829), 211.
⁴ See "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1828), 426;
⁵ See "Pin Money," XV (1831), 436.
⁶ "Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified
Sinner," II (1824), 561.
being are not encouraged. At best, they can have only
a superficial verisimilitude; whereas imitations of
human beings may have the higher type of truth. This
latter kind, the authors may achieve if, like Jane Austen,
they base their representations upon knowledge of the "human
heart" and upon "exact analyses of character and disposition."¹
The novelists should also have a sympathetic understanding
of the "motives and mental processes" of the type of
characters represented—such an understanding as Fielding
and Balzac have.¹ In short, the Aristotelian ideal (Poetics,
XV) of the universal and appropriate character still holds
the attention of the critics. But one critic does add to
this concept the theory that such truth can not be gained
if the author "inserts ill-timed reflections" in his own
person instead of "letting his characters develop them­
se­lves in dialogue."¹ This latter statement indicates, it
seems to me, the growing realization on the part of the
critics of the need for special techniques adapted to the
novel.

Most of the critics, however, have advanced little
in the theory of characterization beyond that expressed by
Johnson in his Preface to Shakespeare. They dislike "cold
copies" and recognize the limitations of the type-character
drawn "after the fashion of La Bruyere."² In referring to

¹ National Tales of Ireland," IX (1828), 445, 428,
431.
² "Romance and Reality," XVII (1832), 207.
approved portraits, they are still using the old terms like consistent, distinction, nature (human nature), real, fidelity, and truth.

Similarly, when discussing the plots or fables of the novels, these reviewers habitually employ many of the classical and neo-classical words as well as theories.

In writing of subject matter for plots, for instance, one reviewer states that the "domain appropriate to the novelist is the history of remoter periods," because if recent events are used, they must have their interest increased. Then they "lose their probability." Other critics deplore the use of "metaphysical" or "theological" materials or of "maudlin sentiment" or even of the "exterior surface of human proceedings." Most critics agree that the subject matter should be "natural," that it should be "based upon passions, not manners; upon the eternal feelings of the human heart, which do not change." Most of these theories, and the terms in which they are expressed, are survivals

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1 "Charlton," I (1824), 278.
2 "Tremaine," IV (1825), 295.
3 "Sayings and Doings," I (1824), 543.
4 "The Italian Novelists," VII (1807), 118.
5 "St. Johnstown," I (1824), 279.
6 "The Brave," XVI (1852), 183. See also "Laurie Todd," XII (1830), 403; "Hungarian Tales," X (1829), 103; "Polham," I (1829), 180. In these there is considerable emphasis on the use of pathos and some on humor, wit and irony.
of neo-classical or classical tenets. Appropriate, probable, and universal— at least the Greek equivalents— are key words in Aristotle's Poetics and in the works of the Stagirite's disciples throughout the years. These adjectives and others like them appear in the reviewers' examinations of plot structure and of the threads of story.

In traditional spirit and words, the critics decry "episodical" or "disconnected," "wild and unconcocted" plots, as well as "careless and inexpert" construction. 1 They remind the authors that "two halves" do not "equal to one whole." 2 They indicate that plots "not badly conceived" 3 or unskilfully connected may be either "intricate" or "simple." 4 In either case, they receive due praise. So much for structure and management.

The story which is built upon an excellent structure and which can be described, like Laurie Todd, as "so real, so consistent, so probable," 5 is the ideal. The preceding adjectives (denoting imitations of known human experience,


3 "Comes Arias," X (1829), 156. See also "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1826), 425; and "Don Esteban," VI (1826), 278.

4 "Laurie Todd," XII (1830), 405.

5 XIII (1830), 40.
logically developed and capable of being assumed possible) have indicated the artistic in plots of all sorts from the time of Aristotle certainly through that of Johnson.

However, more frequently used in this journal than the terms real or probable are the closely related truth and verisimilitude. Carwell, for instance, in a "sad" story and "very like the truth, not the truth meant by founded on fact, but the truth founded upon the large experience of the chances and changes of life."¹ This definition is notable at a time when most reviewers used terms loosely and carelessly.

Even in this journal most critics remark vaguely upon novels that have "fidelity to life"² or that are "faithful" (usually to historical facts)³ or that are "natural" (presumably based upon known human experience).⁴ But by whatever terms it may be designated, "a natural and probable course of events,"⁵ which is therefore verisimilar, is always preferred to the "entangled situations, the mystery, and the obscurity"⁶ of the romantic fiction.

¹ Ibid., p. 40.
³ "Sandoval," VI (1826), 290.
⁴ "Goodstock," V (1826), 410. See also "The Italian Novelists," VII (1827), 118, where distinctions are made between events faithful to the universal and those copies of "the exterior surface of human proceedings." There is also mention made of "inanimate nature."
⁵ "The Fair of May Fair," XVII (1832), 469.
Thus any plots that were "copies of human life,"¹ but not
imitations of earlier works of others or of the author in
question,² received due praise. It follows that the favorite
terms of the critics in discussing the threads of story
were true, consistent, verisimilar, natural, and probable.

As far as the ending of the story is concerned,
one need remark only upon the occasional objection to the
author's making his "plot follow in the wake of the denoue-
ment."² The reviewers believed that this practice destroyed
the suspense that should be kept to the end. It also took
away the artistic and emotional effectiveness of the ending.
These conclusions, the critics designated by the ordinary
terms— ending, conclusion, or denouement, and rarely
catastrophe. They were synonymous.

At the end, some reviewers insisted upon having
"poetical justice strictly administered." Even though the
rewarding of the good might destroy the absolute accuracy
to life, it was thought that this disadvantage was more
than offset by the "delight" which such a representation
afforded the "moral sense."³ This argument, of course,
pleased those who believed the inculcation of morals to
be the prime purpose of the novel.

Indeed, in discussing the function of the novel,

¹ "Cloudeley," XII (1830), 491.
² "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1828), 431.
³ "Truth," VII (1827), 342. See also "The Fair of
      May Fair," XVII (1832), 469.
these writers often employed good and moral and censured any absence of virtue. They, though there were a few among them who emphasized the dulci tradition and used adjectives like amusing or entertaining, the average writer was careful to employ such words only in connection with those indicative of utility, like didactic or instructive.

There were then very few passages on the function of the novel which differed appreciably either in theory or in terminology from the average eighteenth-century critical work. But there are two which I wish to mention.

In the first, the critic notes that Fazim's "scenery is remarkably in unison with the wild and gloomy moral features of his works." This expression of the value of unity of effect is similar to one of Poe's made at a later date.

As this first passage looks forward, so the second looks back; for it is a restatement of the old theory of catharsis, now given a moral slant, I quote:

If it be a purifying exercise of the feelings, as the ancients thought, to enter into the fictitious woe of the

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1 See "Don Esteban," VI (1826), 303 and "The Epicurean," VIII (1827), 354. Of special interest, however, is "Truth," VII (1824), 341-342, where the reviewer says that morals are "not connected" with religion and that doctrinal novels present inaccurate views of life since "nature has no special doctrine."

2 "Peleas," X (1829), 180.


4 "National Tales of Ireland," IX (1828), 428.
the poet's creatures even to the pitch of anguish, a strong
course of Carrell may be recommended to all corrupt natures.¹

To sum up this discussion of terms in the
Westminster Review then. Most are of the type once applied
to the epic and the drama. The line runs fairly straight
backward through the criticism of Johnson and of Pope,
of Dryden, of Sidney, of Scaliger and Vida, of Horace, to
Aristotle. Descriptive of the successful novelists are the
terms like genius, imagination, fancy, and knowledge (but
the stress is upon knowledge of human nature now). In
their comments on the novels, moreover, these reviewers
show the same predilection toward the old terms. Describing
the ideal style, they use appropriate, correct, polished,
and elegant. Consistent, probable, natural, appropriate,
real, true, and verisimilar designate both the excellent
characters and the approved plots or fables. Poetical
justice is sanctioned. morality, utility, amusing, instructive
and sometimes moving denote these critics' conceptions of
the function of the novel, just as they once signified the
function of the epic and the drama. Only an occasional
variation in a meaning or a slight change in emphasis or
an exceptionally figurative expression suggests that this is
the era of romanticism.

It is indeed true, however, of the Westminster Review
and of all other imitators of the Edinburgh Review that they

fellow its lead in basing most of their criticism upon a well-established standard, one tried and proved in its application to poetry.

D Followers of the Earlier Magazines

Likewise, many of the imitators of the original magazines orient themselves upon a well-established critical canon. Their terminology reflects their practice. But several publications like Fraser's Magazine and the New Monthly Magazine have been more susceptible to newer influences than others of their ilk like the Scots Magazine and the Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure.

Among the journals retaining the form of the original miscellanies are some which are of little value to the student of novel criticism. Two of these are John Aiken's Athenaeum (1807-1809)\(^1\) and the Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature (1806 1837), "the mouthpiece of the Unitarians," and "a noteworthy medium of criticism" only after it was purchased by William Fox in 1831.\(^2\)

\(^1\) However, see "Omniana," in the Athenaeum, III (1808), 246, for an unusual classification of novels.

\(^2\) For specific information on this journal see Francis E. Vinsicka, The Dissidence of Dissent (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), especially pp. 118-127. Before 1832, only the review of The Epicurean in the Monthly Repository, I, (1827), 901-909, is of importance to the student of novel-criticism. Since it is largely concerned with religious implications, it need not be studied here.
Yet there are a few others deserving of at least a small amount of attention. The *Monthly Mirror* (1796-1810) is one of these. The writers for this journal took care to give "no shock to sensibility." They were very much interested in the propriety and in the moral value of the novels. Their terminology is that to be found in the average review of the time; it is conventional and largely inherited. In the reviews of Godwin's *St. Leon* and of the satire on it entitled *St. Godwin*, for instance, there appear such terms as *fancy* (uncontrolled imaging power), *moral*, *extravagance* and *absurdity*, *inflated diction*, and *affected phraseology.* Godwin is said to have "put his invention to the rack to produce a series of incidents which should entitle him to take the lead of ... Baron de Munchausen." In fact, these reviewers nearly always attack the lack of "probability" in novels and admire those that are natural, pleasing, and moral. In these preferences they merely mirror the general taste of the time.

There are two other magazines of this type that should receive some treatment. One is the *Scotts Magazine* (1739-1826), which in 1817 became the *Edinburgh Magazine and Literary Miscellany*, the primary object of which was to print Scotch works. The other is the *Universal Magazine*

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2 In the order named see *The Monthly Mirror*, IX, 85-90; "Fashionable Involvements," *op. cit.*, IX, 89; and "The Life of Bella," *op. cit.*, IX, 90.

3 W. Graham, *op. cit.*, pp. 164 and 168.
of Knowledge and Pleasure (1747-1803), known as the Universal Magazine until 1814 and then as the New Universal Magazine. This magazine is of literary value, however, mainly for its poetry and biography.

That leaves the older of the two, the Scots Magazine, as the only one of the entire group worthy of much study here. I shall, therefore, examine its terms briefly before noticing those in the Universal Magazine, in passing, so to speak.

Most of the terms in the Scots Magazine are inherited ones, as an examination of all those applied to the novelists and to the novels shows. Since most of the critics show little interest in the novelist as he reveals himself in his work, there are relatively few desiderata for artists mentioned. Fancy (a whimsical imaging power),\(^2\) genius (transcendent, innate creative ability),\(^2\) powers (usually both innate and trained talents),\(^2\) and knowledge of human nature or of the human heart (knowledge gained by observation and by understanding)\(^2\)-- these are the terms which appear in the few reviews in which the novelists' gifts are discussed. None of these have meanings not to be found in earlier criticism.

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1 Ibid., pp. 164 and 168.

2 See in the order named "Ireland's Rinaldo," the Scots Magazine, LXIV (1802), 474; "Queen-hoo Hall," LXX (1803), 752; "On Novels and Romances," LXIV (1802), 472; "Self Control," LXXXIII (1811), 205; "Clan Albin," LXVII (1815), 880. Since succeeding references will be to the Scots Magazine, I shall not repeat the title of the journal.
Neither does anything new appear in the great mass of material written about the various novels. The cause of this lack of novelty and originality is the prevailing attitude of the critics toward the novel, especially during the earlier years of the century. One writer (who signs his article E. N.) laments the loss of sleep, "the false estimate of human life and of human enjoyments," "the imbecility of mind," and the "too easily awakened" sensibility incurred by the habitual novel-readers. With such an opinion of the novel, naturally no critic would put forth his best efforts in reviewing specific novels.

Even this writer, however, is sufficiently interested in the novel to indicate what he thinks the ideal novel should be. Since most of the reviewers are in agreement with him, I shall note a few of the points which he makes. First in importance, as might be expected, he puts the moral, which should be "forcibly inculcated in a style where beauty and correctness" appear. He would find the novel to be "a pleasing tale, detailed with simplicity and chasteness," where the characters are "maintained with consistency and exhibited agreeably to nature." Moreover, "the various feelings and passions" of these characters

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1 "On Novels and Romances," LXIV (1802), 471-472. See also additional comments by this reviewer on page 546. In addition, see "On the General Character of English Novels," LXVII (1805), 840, where the "pleasure" of novel-reading is said to "take away all sensibility to higher beauties" and "all disposition . . . to severer studies."
would be "expressed in language suitable to each," and there would be "a judicious arrangement of incidents." Instead of this ideal, he says that he finds "incongruous fiction," in which everything is in "direct opposition to nature." Of course, he admits that the novels of Richardson and D'Arblay are among the lesser evils; but he adds ironically that even their writings do not contain "so many virtuous principles" or so much evidence of their great "knowledge of the human heart" that they should receive such extravagant praise as some critics give them.

An examination of the terms in this passage—

moral, beauty, correctness, pleasing, simplicity, chasteness, consistency, feelings, passions, suitable, judicious, nature (known principles of human behavior)—reveals them to be such as are to be found in Pope's or in Johnson's criticism.

So runs all of the criticism in this journal. The approved style is "pure, . . . easy, dignified, and elegant." The best characters are "natural." So the hero should not be "a god," not a creature of the novelist's "heated imagination" (imaging power uncontrolled by reason). All characters, whether major or minor, should have a

1 Ibid., 471-472.

2 "Character of the Most Eminent Scots Writers of the Present," LXVIII (1806), 817.

3 "Humorous strictures on Modern Fashionable Novels," LXIX (1807), 739. See also "Character of the Most Eminent Scotch Writers of the Present," LXVIII (1806), 913.
certain "truth" (fidelity to the universal, sometimes to the type or race), as does Dandie Dinmont. Moreover, the subject matter is not to be "the exploits and adventures of chivalrous knights" nor yet "events, often extraordinary and marvelous"; for these were more suitable only for the romance. But one reviewer does not like the so-called "pictures of life" presented in modern novels—"flat and insipid" representations of events either non-existent or common too long ago to seem real now. All critics prefer "simple and probable materials," natural "passions"--"life and manners" in general.

They believe that the plot—by which term they designate both structure and story—should satisfy certain requirements. It should have "unity" (of action).

1 See "Guy Mannering," LXXVII (1815), 609; "The Antiquary," LXXVIII (1816), 365; and "Tales of my Landlord," LXXVIII (1816), 928.

2 "On Novels and Romances," LXIV (1802), 470. Compare this review with the one on "Woodstock" in the Westminster Review, V (1826), 410 ff.


4 "On the General Character of English Novels," LXVII (1805), 838-342. See also "Discipline," LXXVII (1815), 126; "The Antiquary," LXXVIII (1816), 372; "Guy Mannering," LXXVII (1815), 609; "Tales of my Landlord," LXXVIII (1816), 931. In all of these reviews, in connection with approved subject matter, the reviewers use such expressions as "truth of nature" or "copy of life."

of it should be "skilfully constructed." 1 There may be in it "pathos" 2 or "humor," 3 but not the kind of humor found in Don Quixote, which was satisfactory for eradicating the "prejudices" of its time, but which is not suited to eliminate the very different modern evils. 3 Whatever its elements, however, the plot must be probable (able to be considered possible by virtue of the natural order of its events, which are such as may be found in life). 4 Sometimes, therefore, as one reviewer puts it, even the good should "enjoy the smiles of fortune," 5 instead of suffering constantly to the very end. The end or dénouement—the reviewers use both terms—should be neither readily foreseen, nor yet "too completely surprising. " 5 Moreover, either at the end or before he reaches the end, the novelist should be sure to offer some "knowledge of the world," 6 some instruction in "virtue" or "morality." 6 After 1816, however, interestingly enough, the critics

3 "Humorous Strictures on Modern Fashionable Novels," LIX (1807), 738; see also "Tales of My Landlord," LXXXVIII (1816), 928.
5 See "Humorous Strictures on Modern Fashionable Novels," LIX (1807), 739.
frequently use such terms as *entertainment* and *amusement* in discussing the pleasure afforded the readers by Scott's works.\(^1\) Even in the case of such notable historical novels as his, however, now and then a critic feels that he must justify such fiction on a more substantial basis than that of enjoyment. Then he explains that such reading leads to the serious study of history.\(^1\)

Most of the criticism in the *Scotts Magazine* is, we conclude, highly traditional in that it emphasizes the utility of the novel. Moreover, most of it is biased, being in favor of Scotch writers. The terms are the old ones; the interpretations of these terms are the inherited ones; and there are no new theories. Dominating all the reviews are familiar words like *probability*, *truth*, *nature*, *virtue*, and *morality*, to which are added, with reference to style, such neo-classical terms as *elegant*, *correct*, and *easy*.

Although the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* (1747-1803) is not as close an imitator of the earlier magazines as is the *Scotts Magazine*, the former is equally traditional in its terminology. Accordingly, I shall limit my treatment of it to a discussion of a series of letters written from Hammersmith by "Bossu Junior." In this series, entitled "Critical Rules of

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\(^1\) See "The Antiquary," LXXVIII (1816), 368 and "Tales of my Landlord," LXXVIII (1816), 231. See also W. S., "Historical Romance," XCIII (1824), 447.
Novel Writing," there is a lengthy definition of the novel. In this definition the emphasis is upon "truth of nature" (universal verisimilitude) as opposed to "truth of fact," upon the limitation of number of characters in order to effect "full and distinct impressions upon the mind."

"Bossu Junior" stresses particularly such combinations of events (whether narrated in dramatic or epistolary form) as will "compose one whole" and will maintain suspense to the end of the novel.1

In successive articles he explains the need for a "suitable" (fitting or conventionally appropriate) fable, which expresses a "great moral truth" and preserves a "just medium between excessive complexity and extreme simplicity." It is to be a "natural series of events such as may be expected in real life" and such as are within "the bounds of probability;" that is, which can be conceived of as possible. And though "experience and genius" (practice and innate creative ability) are necessary for creating a truly ideal character, "Bossu Junior" believes the average novelist can be fairly successful in drawing the personages of his fable if he avoids the introduction of "episodical" characters and if he selects only those portraits which will "interest" his readers but will not

1 "On Critical Rules of Novel Writing," The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure, CX (1802), 199-201. See B. H. Gibson, op. cit., p. 75, for a brief discussion of these articles.
throw "charm on vice." He lists as additional requisites "natural" scenery (a realistic imitation of inanimate nature) that is also "consistent" with (appropriate to) the characters, morals that are good, and manners that are true to nature (the external aspects of human behavior).

Throughout this series—indeed, throughout all the articles in this journal— one notes the recurrence of these traditional terms: whole (unity of effect or action), moral, complexity and simplicity (referring mainly to structure), natural, real, probability, experience, knowledge, true, and genius.

In all of these magazines of the earlier type, there is scarcely any variation in terminology or in theory from that prevalent in the criticism of the epic and the drama of earlier times. But in Colburn's New Monthly Magazine (1814-1834) and in Fraser's Magazine, which began in 1830, there are some new interpretations of old terms, even some new terms and theories along with the old ones.

The New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register began its career as "a definitely political organ" and became important to literature only in 1820, when Thomas Campbell became the editor. He changed the title of the journal to the New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal.

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1 Ibid., pp. 277-279.
2 Ibid., pp. 431-432.
a title which it kept under the editorship of Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who succeeded Campbell in 1851, and under the succeeding editors until the end in 1884.

A thorough examination of its criticism of the novel, however, reveals a great mass of routine reviews and "Critical Notices," along with some unusual articles like those by Thomas Noon Talfourd and those by Hazlitt. Because most of Hazlitt's terms have been considered both in earlier chapters of this study and by J. W. Bray in his book and because many of the reviews contain little of critical importance that has not already been discussed in this study, I shall be somewhat brief in my treatment of the terminology of this journal.

Many of the reviewers in this periodical would agree with the editor, Thomas Campbell, who writes that prose fiction "adopts not only the matter of fact air, but the spirit, also, of biography and history." Moreover, it is his opinion that most novelists do not strive to present a "heightened or select image of life." They do not wish their representations to appear "more poetically ideal than the literal transcripts of real life" and sometimes descend to boring common-places to achieve this end. The average novel, therefore, differs completely from poetry in that the one aims at realism; the other, at the ideal.¹

¹ Thomas Campbell, "Lectures on Poetry," The New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register, series 2, 15. Since succeeding references will be to this publication, I shall not repeat the title of it.
His recognition of a difference between poetry and prose, similar to Shelley's theory, is noteworthy in that many of the reviewers of the time have been pointing out the similarities between the two or very aimlessly and thoughtlessly applying to fiction the terms and theories once belonging to poetry and the drama. His point that very few novelists even aim at the presentation of the ideal is certainly a valid one; so is his condemnation of the use of excessive numbers of ordinary details to secure a realistic effect.

Even in this journal edited by Campbell, however, one finds mainly traditional terms and theories; but one does discover some new interpretations of old terms and a few new words and theories.

To designate qualities or faculties desirable for novelists, these reviewers use power, genius, imagination, invention, originality, and sometimes knowledge (usually of human nature), skill (both innate and trained) in managing plots, and humor. Of course, for the sake of variety, we have Goethe described as having "a very stupendous, brooding mind," and as being "the artist--

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1 See "The Pirate," N.S. III (1822), 190.


3 "Asmodeus at Large," N. S. XXXV (1832), 27.
the great artist. In short, in his case, a transcendent, conscious intellect is emphasized. As for the other terms used, some have meanings different from their usual ones.

Power does usually refer to general ability to produce forceful composition, or it designates a specific talent. But as Hazlitt uses it, the term approximates Coleridge's exsemplastic imagination. He says that Scott has power beyond that "of any contemporary novelist" but he lacks the "creative impulse, this plastic power, this capacity for meeting on his own materials" and for making of them something new and different.

We go to Hazlitt's article also to find invention used where we would normally expect imagination. There the critic writes that Scott has "neither the faculty nor the will to impregnate his subject by an effort of pure invention." He relies upon his "memory," not upon his "reason" or his "invention."

Like the preceding term, imagination ordinarily has its Longinian and Addisonian meaning— the faculty for producing vivid images. Nevertheless, it is sometimes

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1 "The Castilian," N. S., XXV (1829), 119. See also "On British Novels and Romances," XIII (1820), 205; "Fortunes of Nigel," N. S. IV (1822), 78; "The Tor Hill," N. S., XVII (1826), 201; "The Pilot," N. S. XII (1824), 123.

2 William Hazlitt, "The Spirit of the Age," N. S., X (1824), 293-299.

3 See "Highways and Byways, Second Series," N. S., XIII (1823), 13, where "catholic of imagination" appears. See also "The Pirate," N. S., III (1822), 190.
associated with feeling and with the passions. In one article where the emphasis is upon the need for authors to feel deeply in order to write moving scenes, the passions are said to be "compacted of imagination," which is "sometimes truer than reality." In short, from this very vaguely stated theory, one infers that the imagination is to some extent the causative agent of the deepest feelings, which, in their turn, produce the best writings of all. Without such imagining power, connected with intuitive sympathetic feeling and with recollections of experienced feelings, even novelists like Sterne and Scott have written nothing worthwhile. By this sympathetic imagination, the "truth of all original conceptions" may be weighed.

Genius, too, has its usual and its unusual interpretations. Mainly it refers to great innate creative ability or to the man possessed of such ability. Scott, for example, is "the fertile and mighty genius" and "the most commanding genius of modern times." He is the "intuitive genius," who has "elicited the redeeming qualities in our nature by his divining rod." Lamb defines genius

1 Ibid.
2 See "Novelty and Familiarity," N. S., XIII (1823), 132.
3 "Panegyric," N. S., XXIV (1832), 300-304; "Septimus Durward," VIII (1823), 84; "The Spirit of the Age," X (1824), 300. See similar uses of the term in "The Castilian," XIV (1829), 160; and "Asmodeus at Large," N. S., XXXIV (1832), 27.
however, as with "which manifests itself in the admirable
balance of all faculties" and which always includes an
active creative imagination, involving "shaping and con-
sistency."1 Here, genius is to some extent the "esaemplastic
imagination" of Coleridge's. Then there is the passage
in the review of The Contrast, where we have the author's
"genius contented to hover" over the surface, beneath which
lie "the genuine springs of emotion."2 Here the figure
is that of an almost animate spirit; and for this meaning
we must delve deep into classical literature.

In most cases then these terms applied to the
novelists have traditional meanings, but in the later
criticism there are some new interpretations of old terms.

There is not much that is different, however,
with regard to terms and theories of character treatment.
The gist of all the discussions on the subject is that
the good character is "spirited, distinct, and natural."3
Of course, the reviewers use various other similar terms
and expressions to convey this same concept. We have, for
instance, "vraisemblance," "Defoish accuracy" (both referring
to a sort of specious reality achieved through the use of
details)4 "air of truth" and "generally individualized,"5

1 "Sanity of True Genius," N. S., XVII (1826), 400.
2 N. S., XXXIV (1832), 414.
3 "The Pilot," N. S., VII (1822), 190.
4 "Reginald Dalton," N. S., VIII (1823), 459.
5 "Souben Apley," N. S., XX (1827), 164.
"fearful reality,"¹ and "individual as well as general."² Only very late in this criticism are there characters described as personifications of "certain trains of mind."³ In fact, psychological and intuitive analyses appear mainly toward the end of the romantic period. Even then there is not much that is new. True, there is Hazlitt's "Why the Heroes of Romance Are Insipid," the thesis of which is that heroes can not be made interesting when the reader knows that they will succeed in the end. Hazlitt calls these heroes "faultless monsters." Of especial interest are his impressions of the heroes and heroines of the leading novelists, impressions too well known to need discussion here. Grandison "ugly and all over with affectation"; Mrs. Radcliffe's characters, about whom "nobody knows anything"; Mrs. Inchbald's, each of which is "an essence of sentiment"--all of these are discussed. Then there is Maria Edgeworth, who "has no heroes" because "her trenchant pen leaves nothing but common sense, prudence, and propriety." There are also Scott's heroes, who "follow the general law of their being" and often receive their governing impulse from accident." Goethe's are "one violent and startling paradox from beginning to end."⁴ In this criticism we miss

¹ "The Castilian," N. S., XXIV (1829), 171.
² "Aristocratic Novels," N. S., XXIII (1829), 362.
³ "Asmodeus at Large," XXXV (1832), 27.
the old terminology, though here and there a term suggests
the past—propriety, common sense, accident, affectation.
But this criticism is the exception. Most of the terms
applied to characters in the New Monthly Magazine are
traditional ones.

Of slight importance here are those applicable to
style and language. There are such words as eloquent,
fluent,¹ vulgarity,² effervescent, racy, sparkling³—
mainly inherited ones.

Next we turn to the fables or plots. In subject
matter the preference goes to "matters of real life,"
though "high wrought and enthusiastic romance" is sometimes
acceptable.⁴ Scott has proved that "facts are better than
fiction," that what men do in "striking and singular
situations" is of more interest than "fine-spun cobwebs of
the brain."⁵ Fact, fiction, and real are familiar terms.
However, the supernatural may be used if it can be made to
"blend harmoniously with the freshest hues of life."⁶

Numerous expressions applied to plot structure

1 "The New Era," N. S., XII (1819), 198.
2 "Redgauntlet," N. S., XI (1824), 93.
3 "Aristocratic Novels," N. S., XXII (1829), 261.
4 "The Usurer's Daughter," N. S., XXXVI (1832), 21.
5 W. Hazlitt, "The Spirit of the Age," N. S., X
(1824), 300.
6 T. W. Talfourd, "The Author of Waverley," XIII
(1820), 547-548.
should also be mentioned. The plot should be a "complete and well-digested whole," having at least a "semblance of beginning, middle and end." It may begin "in medias res" agreeably to the Roman precept. It should have "unity of design and general consistency of execution." Because it is difficult for all of their parts to be "harmoniously blended" into one whole, "complicated and artificial plots" are to be avoided. All of these terms and the theories which they express are traceable to classical or neo-classical criticism; most of them, directly or indirectly, to Horace.

Although the reviewer of Reginald Dalton remarks that nowadays the story "goes for little or nothing" in the novel, the reviewers consider it carefully. They like it to have "simplicity, pathos," and even "something ludicrous," as well as some "sentiment" which will "awaken pulses of sympathy." However, they

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1 "Feveril of the Peak," N. S., VII (1823), 273.
2 "The Castilian," N. S., XXV (1829), 171.
3 "The Tor Hill," N. S., XVII (1826), 406.
4 "Tales of the Crusaders," N. S., XIV (1825), 27.
5 "Tremaine," N. S., XIII (1825), 329.
6 N. S., VI (1823), 459.
7 "Sayings and Doings," N. S., XI (1824), 388.
8 Thomas Noon Talfourd, "On the Living Novelists: Mackenzie," XIII (1820), 333-335. See also "Reuben Apsley, N. S., XX (1827), 161.
9 "Highways and Byways, second series," N. S., XIII (1825), 12.
do not like "sickly sensibility" or "worn-out sentimentality." They request probability (consistency or a natural sequence of events) and almost demand some truth. Instead of the word truth, they sometimes employ vraisemblance or vraisemblable or "air of truth." Occasionally a critic may specify "adherence to the higher Truth of universal nature." However, truth is often very loosely used. It may designate a sort of specious air of reality or verisimilitude created by realistic details or historical facts. This term occurs considerably more frequently in the reviews than either probability or reality. The latter (usually denoting known facts) appears but seldom. Nearly all of these terms and the concepts they imply are discoverable in neo-classical criticism; and some, like the theory of the universal, are traceable to Aristotle.

2 "Feveril of the Peak," N. S., VII (1823), 278; and "The New Era," XIII (1819), 193.
3 See "Sayings and Doings," N. S., X (1824), 388 and "Tremaine," N. S., XIII (1825), 328.
4 "Highways and Byways, Second Series," N. S., XIII (1825), 12.
5 "Reuben Apsley," N. S., XX (1827), 161. See also "Tremaine," N. S., XIII (1825), 327.
6 "Aristocratic Novels," XXII (1826), 360; "Hajji Baba," XIII (1824), 284. Volumes are in the new series.
7 "Quentin Durward," N. S., VI (1823), 25.
8 See "Hajji Baba," N. S., XII (1824), 284.
The terms used to indicate the endings of the plots are also those that were once applied to the drama and the epic—catastrophe, ending, and dénouement. All are used synonymously.

With respect to the terms and theories concerning the function of the novel, one may make almost the same assertion. Perhaps slightly more emphasis is placed upon the novel's "interesting the heart and exciting the imagination"; however, with such phrases nearly always appears such an expression as "practical good sense." So one realizes that enthusiasm has not swept away the critic's judgment.

Nevertheless, Talfourd's criticism is somewhat exceptional in this respect, for he does not employ such terms as good sense or judgment. He defends the novels against charges of improbability and unreality, moreover, saying that they should represent men and events as better than they actually are, as they would be if they were in harmony with their "universal truth." Only by such representations may the novels perform their major function, namely, to arouse man's sympathy for his fellow man, "to teach man to feel ... deeply." Continuing in a

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1 See "Quentin Durward," N. S., VIII (1823), 84; "Peveril of the Peak," N. S., VII (1823), 278; and "The Castilian," N. S., XXV (1829), 171.

Wordsworthian vein, Talfourd paints the joys of childhood, the intuitive perception of good, which man loses with the years of his youth. To restore this perception, to satisfy man's yearning for the ideal, the novelist should tell stories of human experience, beautiful beyond our imaginings, but based on the universal truth of human nature, so that some day such ideals may be realized. There is, in his criticism, ethical concern and even a hint of the modern theory of the "escapist" value of the novel, especially of novels like Mrs. Radcliffe's.¹ The tone of this criticism is similar to that of Wordsworth and Shelley. There may conceivably be a hint of the neo-platonic adaptation of the original theory of the ideal; there is some note of the universal—but this time based on Rousseau's theories of man's innate and all-pervading goodness of heart. The influence of Schiller and Schlegel is suggested. Such terminology, however, does not prevail in this periodical—certainly not in discussions of the function of the novel.

Generally terms like moral and amusement go hand in hand in true Horatian tradition,² and few critics will allow a novel merely to move or to please. Even in his "Panegyric" on Scott, Bulwer-Lytton does not feel that he can say merely


² See "The Tor Hill," N. S., XVII (1826), 409; "Tales of my Landlord," XII (1819), 73; and "Trennae," N. S., XIII (1825), 327.
that Scott's work entertains. He explains that "the delight it occasions is proof of the moral it inspires," though it teaches no specific lesson.¹ Even so, his statement represents an advance over the thinking prevalent during the earlier part of the century with regard to the novel and its function.

In retrospect, I realize that there is a good deal that is new here in this journal. There are new terms, new interpretations of old terms, possibly the terms of new theories. There is certainly a growing awareness of the novel and of its special needs. Nevertheless, the terminology is mainly traditional. A study of it reveals, however, many shifts in emphasis. For instance, the critics have a greater interest than before in the emotional effect of the novel on the reader. Some are deeply interested in the quality of the author's genius; some, in the psychological analysis of the characters. Consequently, terms appropriate to these questions appear more frequently than in the past. Yet the reviewers continue to use the old terms, sometimes with meanings changed. In fact, these words are visible even in the newest of the magazines which I shall consider, Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country.

Since William Wapinn and Hugh Fraser did not begin Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country until 1850, the literary output of only three years of its existence comes

¹ N. S., XXXV (1832), 302.
within the scope of this study. However, because the volumes published during those years contain a great deal of criticism and because, according to Miriam E. Thrall, this periodical "met the demand of the time for bold thought and bolder expression,"¹ I shall consider its terminology briefly.

One of the first points of interest is the great amount of attention paid by the critics to the particular gifts possessed by the authors. Here is the sort of terminology for which one often looked in vain in the periodicals published earlier. There is obvious the leavening action of new ideas, the association of innate gifts with philosophy, even with religion.

Here one finds Carlyle describing Tieck as "a born poet," or "a true maker, to whom the actual ... is but the excitement for ideal creations." A "living energy of the soul" is said to pervade and possess all "his feeling or knowledge."² The transcendental and Sidney-like, neo-platonic tone of the passage obscures from view for a moment the fact that we have feeling, knowledge, actual, and ideal as key words here. This, then, is no unthinking-genius concept.


² Thomas Carlyle, "Tales from Tieck," Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country, IV (1651), 447. Since succeeding references will be to this journal, I shall not repeat the name of it.
Basically, the theory is nature plus art in its purest form.

Another unusual theory turns on the adjective poetical; Scott's mind is said to be poetical; that is, it "exercises, by turns or together, the faculties both of fancy and imagination." Mr. Godwin, however, "exerts only imagination." He "images out an idea,... But the idea is never realized," for he never exercises his fancy "in aggregating poetical forms, in giving order to the manifold exhibition of the ideal creation." This somewhat obscurely stated concept appears related to Coleridge's theory of imagination and fancy, with the two reversed.

Coleridge again, as well as A. W. Schlegel, comes to one's mind when he reads this: "Genius is a rule to itself, and being nature will act according to the laws of nature." To these laws, "inherent in the heart and spontaneous in the art of genius," Bulwer, the subject of the criticism, is insensible. Yet he recognizes "the mechanical rules of art." This "organic" theory of genius as evolving its own laws is an attempt on the part of the critics to reconcile the original-genius concept with the demand for principles of composition.

In another review, this time on the Autobiography of Edward Lytton Bulwer, the critic ironically quotes Bulwer's own statement that his "genius has taken service with reality,"

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1 "Mr. Godwin's Novels," II (1830), 384-385.

2 "Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer's Novels and Remarks on Novel Writing," I (1830), 514.
which Bulwer describes as "the executive power of genius."

In this passage genius is almost an embodied spirit concerned not so much with inspiring as with directing man's choice of the realities to be presented in his work.

But most reviewers do not think of genius as an intellectual, almost scientific director. There is, for instance, a decided transcendental influence in the description of "true genius" as being "like Christianity" in that it "exalts . . . the meanest of objects, by imparting to them its own greatness and interpenetrating them with those harmonies of universal being, and power, and truth; . . . "

Here obviously genius is a pure part of the world-soul, dwelling within the artist.

In this journal one finds numerous other passages in which the terms have the conventional meanings. For example, in the review of Boswell's Biography of Johnson, genius refers to transcendent perceptive and expressive ability; and in another article there appears the vague expression of Bulwer's "the broad arrow of genius," referring presumably to great creative ability.

In general, the stress is laid upon natural ability and upon terms expressive of it. There is regret that in

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1 III (1831), 713.
2 "Miss Edgeworth's Tales and Novels," VI (1832), 547.
3 V (1832), 256.
4 "Mr. Bulwer's Opinion of 'Seeds and Flowers,' 'The Rebel,' and his First Prose Work, 'Falkland,'" III (1831), 713.
this are most writers are "educated novelists--not born."¹
There is delight at the realization that novels "may be
written by men of high talent and true power."² There are
inherited terms with traditional meanings, old terms with
never connotations— those associated with the romantic
school and with the Victorian theories. There are even
a few new terms.

This mixture is obvious in the criticism of all
phases of the novel, as well as in that of the novelists.
Language may be "higgledy-piggledy,"³ or it may be "elegant."⁴
The style may be "snappy,"⁵ or it may have "grace and ease."⁶
The character treatment may be conventional and its terms
the traditional ones like actual, truth, and verisimilitude.
Or there may be an analysis of the author's method. For
example, Godwin's characters are "beings of the mind."
These he analyzes. But "Scott proceeds synthetically; that
is, by an accumulation of particulars, in which the character
is presented at once in its integrity to the reader."⁷

¹ "Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer's Novels," I (1830), 510.
² "The Novels of the Season, Batch the Second,"
IV (1831), 9.
³ "Paris and London," II (1830), 20.
⁴ "Laurie Todd," I (1830), 239.
⁵ "Chartley," IV (1831), 15.
⁶ "Tales from Tieck," IV (1831), 446.
⁷ See "Miss Edgeworth's Tales and Novels," VII
(1832), 554.
⁸ "Mr. Godwin's Novels," II (1830), 387-393.
In the discussions of the plot proper, one notes again the older terms and theories with a few newer ones. But there is a tendency to use both with care, to explain meanings. Vraisemblance, for instance, is said to involve stories with such a natural air "that we would fain believe them real." Moreover, one critic upbraids the author for maintaining that the "improbable" parts of his story are true; for, says the critic, "le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable, and the vraisemblable is the province of the romance writer." Of course, accurate probability, and consistency appear frequently; and there is always to be found some emphasis on the necessity for the novels to arouse in the readers that "momentary credence." In addition, the reviewers show an understanding of, and an endorsement of, the old catharsis; but they warn the novelists that "pity and terror, . . . may purify the human heart; but the sublime may soon be transferred into the ridiculous-- pity may drivel-- . . ." In brief,

1 "The Dominie's Legacy," I (1830), 355.
2 "Chartley," IV (1831), 15. See also "Miss Edgeworth's Tales and Novels," VI (1832), 546; "Lawrie Todd," I (1830), 239.
3 "Maritime Romances and Parliamentary Novels," IV (1832), 666.
4 "Biography," V (1832), 256; "The Novels of the Season, Batch the Second," IV (1830), 17.
5 "Historical Romances," V (1832), 207.
6 "Biography," V (1832), 256.
7 "A Good Tale Badly Told," V (1832), 12.
Care and moderation are needful.

In addition to the terms already discussed, poetical justice\(^1\) is sometimes mentioned, usually with approval. Yet, with regard to the true function of the novel, there are employed, as might be expected, such terms as moral,\(^2\) delightful, and instructive.\(^3\) The emphasis, however, remains on the moral and instructive function.

To summarize then, there is here in Fraser's Magazine a synthesis of old and new terms. There are a few general comments worthy of noting, too. For example, the theory that the "novel or romance ought to differ from the drama" gains support here. There is also voiced here the impression that historical drama deals "mainly with historical persons," whereas the novel "suspends the interest on curiosity and the mystery of the narrative on the fictitious, using the historical only to give ... probability to the plot."\(^4\) These and similar expressions indicate the critics' growing interest in the peculiar requisites of the novel. Some basic terms applied to the older genres fit this new type; some must be changed; and a few new ones must be invented.

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\(^1\) "Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer's Novels and Remarks on Novel Writing," I (1830), 530.


\(^3\) "Laurie Todd," I (1830), 241; "The Dominie's Legacy," I (1830), 324; "Pelham," I (1830), 322.

\(^4\) "Historical Romances," V (1832), 207.
This fact, the reviewers in the comparatively modern Fraser's realized.

With this magazine, the most nearly modern in tone and in terminology of the group considered, I shall conclude my study of the nineteenth-century imitators of Cave's magazine. I have not, it is true, discussed all of them. I have omitted the Monthly Magazine, which I found to be very conventional in its terminology and considerably less susceptible to newer influences and generally of less critical importance than Colburn's New Monthly Magazine. Like the latter magazine, however, it prints pages of critical notices and brief reviews of new books, in which reviews such inherited terms (usually with unchanged meanings) appear as talent, powers, fancy, genius, discrimination (of characters), correct, natural, probable, truth, moral, useful, instructive, and amusement. The series of articles on "Contemporary Authors" is, however, more analytical and careful than the average review. The article on Godwin, for example, presents the thought that Godwin's major flaw is a lack of truth, "the descriptive sense of the natural or probable." Yet he has "acute perception of abstract truth," as well as a cultivated mind. But he knows only about the "pure intelligence" of man and

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leaves out of account the "passions and appetites" of people.\(^1\) The articles entitled "The Philosophy of Contemporary Criticism," in which the criticism of the various journals is discussed, are also interesting, if somewhat biased.\(^2\) In all of these articles and reviews the terms are largely borrowed ones. Therefore, I believe that the magazines discussed in detail offer a cross-section view of the terms (and of the theories implicit in those terms) utilized by the reviewers of the time.

V Other Publications

There are numbers of other journals of various types which I have examined thoroughly but have not discussed. None are as modern in tone as *Fraser’s Magazine*, and none are sufficiently different from the ones treated to need more than a passing notice.

\(^1\) "Contemporary Authors, VI: Mr. Godwin," *The Monthly Magazine*, XLV (1819), 301-302. See "The Philosophy of Contemporary Criticism," *The Monthly Magazine*, XLIX (1820), 106; where the criticism of the *Eclectic Review* is discussed. The writer of the article disagrees with the statement made by the critic in the latter journal that "all books should be devoted to instruction." Some, like Scott’s *Tales of my Landlord*, may be "for amusement" only. His is the "relief-for-the-tired-business-man" concept. Several of the articles like the one just considered are on the *Quarterly Review* and on the *Edinburgh Review*. The criticism in the former is nearly always attacked.

\(^2\) See "The Philosophy of Contemporary Criticism," L (1820), 429, where the writer remarks that he never reads the criticism in the *quarterly* "with the smallest hope of instruction."
There is the British Review and London Critical Journal (1811-1822), an evangelical periodical of little literary importance. In it, the novel is a "suspect" type, the existence of which can be justified only if it is sufficiently faithful to the times to teach effectively.\(^1\) One reviewer does believe that it might furnish "elevated thoughts, natural and lively portraits of character, as great boldness of invention as a tragic or epic poem."\(^1\) Moreover, in describing the ideal novel, he uses such terms as striking, moral, and probable and admits that a man of "genius and virtue" might "conceal descend"\(^2\) to write such a work. But note that he must "conceal descend."

Almost the same attitude marks the criticism in the leading religious periodical of the day, the Christian Observer, where a long controversy was waged over the evils of novel reading. This disputation is of interest chiefly because it involved Macaulay, who, in a letter signed "Candidus," defends the novel. He classifies novels in four groups according to the service which each type may render, beginning with Scott's, which harmlessly entertain.

\(^1\) "Harrington and Ormond," The British Review and London Critical Journal, XI (1818), 51; See also "Errant," XIV (1819), 241.

\(^2\) T. Macaulay, "Observations on Novel Reading," Christian Observer, XV (1818), 785-786. See also the various attacks on the novel, in which even imagination (divorced from reality) is attacked: XIV (1815), 517; XV (1816), 804-817; XVI (1817), 227-229; 298-301; and 371-375; XXIII (1823), 643. In "The Pirate," XXII (1822), 157ff. and 237ff., there is a concession made in the case of Scott's works.
Then come novels like Fielding's, which can not be defended well but which contain characters that move the reader; moral novels like Miss Edgeworth's, which can be "read to advantage"; and those like Mrs. More's, in which there is genius joined to real Christian piety. The last named should be read. Most of his terms—indeed, most of the terms in the journal—are the conventional ones.

The influence of the Christian Observer and of other evangelical periodicals was great, and it spread even to America. Although a discussion of the terminology of the American journals is not within the scope of this study, it does seem appropriate for one to note briefly the close resemblance between the terms and theories in the American and those in the English publications. Leading American journals like the North American Review and the Fort Folio frequently imitated the English ones and sometimes reprinted whole articles written by the English critics. In the Fort Folio, for instance, there is reprinted from the Christian Observer one of the articles on the evils of novel reading. The terms here are largely the inherited

1 Ibid.

2 The North American Review often contains reviews in which the terminology is reminiscent of that in the average English review. There are also some that are rather philosophical like R. Channing's review of Rob Roy, VII (1818), 149. For a fairly conventional use of such terms as propriety, vulgarity, art, power, genius, talent, taste, and moral see I (1815), 403; V (1817), 257; XX (1825), 245; XXI (1825), 78; XXIII (1826), 150; XXV (1827), 193; and XXVII (1828), 189.

3 See the Fort Folio, XVI (1823), 461.
ones. One finds expressions like "variety of incident and character," "reality and universality," "an alliance of fact and fiction" (which may lead to a serious study of history, incidentally), and "flashes of genius." The words useful, instructive, moral, and edifying often appear; for these reviewers are still not sure that novel-reading is harmless. Thus they praise Maria Edgeworth's edifying novels, but they are not enthusiastic about Cooper's or Mrs. Radcliffe's.

As a whole, the terms and the theories in the three periodicals just discussed closely resemble those to be found in the Monthly Review.

Conclusion

Writing a conclusion to such a chapter as this one would be tantamount to writing the conclusion to the entire study, since all of the elements in the work are

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1 In the Port Folio see in the order named: "Guy Mannering, fifth series," II (1816), 159; "The Abbot," I (1820), 370; "Kenilworth," XI (1821), 161; and "Red-gauntlet," XVIII (1824), 197.

2 See "Guy Mannering, fifth series," the Port Folio. II (1816), 159. See also X (1820), 221 and 509.

3 See "The Spy," the Port Folio, XIII (1822), 90.

4 See the Port Folio, XVI (1823), 137.

5 See the bibliography for other journals not here discussed. Especially interesting is one article in The Artist: a Collection of Essays, relative to Painting, Poetry, Sculpture, Architecture, the Drama, Discoveries of Science and Various Other Subjects, ed. Prince Hoare. Elizabeth Inchbald writes "On the Abuse and Use of Novel Writers" (June 13, 1807), and mentions the "taboos" for novelists.
here represented. There are the followers of the earlier type of review, which largely duplicate the terminology of eighteenth-century criticism; the followers of the original quarterly publication, which select the books to be reviewed and which employ some neo-classical terms and theories in a loose fashion. Finally, there are the magazines, in which the terms and the theories implicit in them may be those borrowed from earlier criticism of drama and poetry and applied, with or without changes in meaning, to the novel. They may be those invented by the romanticists or by others for use specifically in the criticism of the novel.

Since all of the points that might be made in the conclusion to this chapter, therefore, would have to be made again in the general conclusion, it seems appropriate now for me to turn to a conclusion of the entire study.

She uses such terms as imitation (of authors) catastrophe (ending), invention (imagination), virtue, vice, and instruction. See B. H. Gibson, op. cit., p. 73.

1 Interesting also are some articles in The Literary Panorama, entitled "Morality of the English Novel and Romance, Illustrated by Selections of Sentiment, Character and Description." By Mr. Pratt. The major concern here is morality and the terms are poetic justice, morality, virtue, vice, useful and the like. See Literary Panorama, XI, 97-101, 411, 257-260, 1025-1030, XIII, 81-83; XIV, 525-632, 977-984. See B. H. Gibson, op. cit., p. 77 ff., for quotations from this series.
Gazing with some bewilderment upon the great welter of terms in the largely anonymous criticism of the novel in the periodicals (1800-1832), one finally perceives faint waves of separate developments, each of which flows into the other. But underneath all these ripples rests a great unifying body of terms, direct or indirect descendants of classical forebears. These unifying terms appear early and late, little changed in the great reviews and their imitators but often considerably altered in the magazines and the weeklies. Applicable to the author are imagination, fancy, genius, wit, humor, sense, knowledge, originality, judgment, invention, power, talent, taste, and inspiration. Most are used just as in the works of Dryden, Addison, and Johnson. There is, of course, ingenuity, a newer synonym for wit. Then there are polished, simplicity, natural, forceful, vivid, fluent, simple, clear, graceful, elegant—all in earlier criticism. To these terms related to style and language, there should be added for characterizations these: consistency, accurate, real, universal, propriety, natural, discriminated, and probable; for descriptions and for plots or fables: unity (of action or design), nature, simple, probable, complex, verisimilitude, sentimental, beauty, humor, episodic, picturesque, truth, pathos, sensibility, minute, masterly.
artful, faithful, sentiment, real or reality, passion, sublime, grandeur, terror, pity, moral, rules or laws, poetic justice, useful, entertaining, pleasant, ending, catastrophe, and denouement—all to be found in the poetic criticism by Longinus, Sidney, Dryden, Addison, and Johnson. Of the English critics of the past, Johnson is the one most frequently mentioned by the reviewers. But, of course, his name appears seldom in comparison with the frequency with which Aristotle and Horace are cited. There are some direct references to Longinus; a few to Bacon and Sidney and Milton; some to Dryden, Addison, and Reynolds; and very rarely references to Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Lamb, and De Quincey; but many to Hazlitt and Scott. Among foreign critics, the names of Voltaire, Rousseau, Corneille, Madame de Staël, Boileau, Schlegel, Schiller, and Goethe appear—none, however, often. So most of the critical terminology is especially similar to that of Dryden, Addison, and Johnson, who owe their terms indirectly to Horace and Aristotle.

There are, however, stages of development worthy of special attention.

From 1800 to 1815, before Hazlitt's review of the Wanderer appeared in the Edinburgh Review and Scott's review of Emma, in the Quarterly Review, there is scarcely an unusual interpretation of a term. The reviewers tend to repeat the terms and theories discoverable from 1780 to 1800 in English criticism of the epic and the drama and, of course, in that relatively small amount of early criticism upon prose
fiction, which was based in its turn upon that of earlier literary genres. Sense, moral, invention, knowledge, and probable predominate. Genius peeps forth occasionally, usually chaperoned by taste, judgment, or learning. Imagination, inspiration, and fancy are conspicuous because of their infrequent appearances. At times there are even reflections of the habit of the critics of the late eighteenth century of contrasting such terms as ideal and real, nature and art, genius and training, wit and humor. The inherited terms and their meanings seem quite adequate for the expression of the reviewers' opinions upon the novels of the day. After all, real, moral, sentiments, common sense, useful, pleasing, and probability very suitably describe novels by Maria Edgeworth and Susan Ferrier. Moreover, Gifford's review of Maria Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life in the Quarterly Review for 1809 is a fairly typical review with respect to terms. In this review and in others like it, the critics' selection and use of terms mirror their disgust at the excessive sentimentality of some novels and at the crude sensationalism of the "horror producing" romances. The terms also indicate the critics' reluctance to charge their opinion of the novel as a lesser sort of epic, to which the traditional terms of epic criticism actually should be applied. Furthermore, the terminology reveals that the reviewers' major interests continue to be those of earlier writers of fiction, namely, probability and verisimilitude to produce credibility and to enforce moral and useful lessons.
But gradually as the novel came to exchange its hiding place in sister's bureau drawer for a very respectable position in father's library, the reviewers made certain modifications in their critical terminology. Whether this change in terms is traceable to the appearance of Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and to his criticism is a debatable point. Scott's early terminology, except for a few figurative expressions, is traditional. Of course, *Waverley* and subsequent novels by Scott, as Dr. Gibson points out, "lifted the novel from a long season of notorious decadence"\(^1\) and attracted to it authors and critics who might otherwise have continued to ignore it. These critics were often both poets and critics of poetry and drama, who introduced new terms and new interpretations of old terms into their poetic criticism. So Scott is perhaps indirectly influential. There is also to be considered the fact that the combination of dramatic and epic qualities discoverable in his novels demanded even of the most conservative critics slight modifications in terms, new terms, or a wider selection of terms of ultimate classical vintage. His are the first novels that have an especial affinity with the Greek dramas and epics. The expanse of scene, the epic quality of some of his characters, the stormy violence and the fatalistic element in some of his plots lend themselves, not merely to romantic innovations, but also to the use of pure Aristotelian theories. His "lower" characters and pictures of common life, moreover,

\(^1\) B. H. Gibson, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
suggest Wordsworthian terms and theories. But Scott's showier novels should not block our view of the perfection of Miss Austen's plot structure and of her very real characters from ordinary life. Her novels perhaps also required some modification of the critics' terminology. Finally, scarcely to be overlooked is the publication of Dunlop's *History of Fiction*, the first really comprehensive history of prose fiction. A casual examination of Dunlop's extensive terminology, however, reveals that he, like the other early nineteenth-century critics of fiction, tends to repeat late eighteenth-century terms, especially Johnsonian ones. His organization of material under the headings of "Subject," "Disposition" (arrangement of episodes), and "Ornaments" (style, characters, sentiments, description) does seem to have influenced the reviewers slightly.  

The most probable explanation is that the slight evolution of terminology—and it is slight—is an outgrowth of that earlier one in poetical criticism. Altered meanings and new coinages appear most frequently in the magazines, the *Monthly Review*, the *Quarterly*, the *Edinburgh*, and their respective imitators remaining largely faithful to Johnsonian and Addisonian terminology. Even the liberal Scott and Hazlitt, who wrote for the great "twin" Reviews,  

introduce few new terms into the conservative pages of these dignified journals. Scott employs a few figurative expressions and emphasized genius. Hazlitt indicates the "esemplastic" theory of imagination and the transcendental theory of genius. Both insist upon proper emotional and artistic effect. But actually the terminology of both is fairly neo-classical. Thus it is in the magazines and in the weekly publications that the majority of newer terms appear. Throughout the period the Gentleman's magazine employs neo-classical terms almost altogether but very often, after 1815, does not retain the traditional meanings of the words. The vagueness of expression throughout the last publication, however, renders an absolute decision difficult.

In most magazines, weeklies, and reviews, some faint traces of change appear from 1816 to 1819. In Hunt's Examiner, for instance, there is the Wordsworthian consideration of language as a sort of emanation of the author's personality. There is a kind of impressionistic treatment of character (divorced from action), by means of which the reader is led to love or hate the fictional personages. Thus one finds such terms as love, cold, indifferent, sweet, pity, and hate. Moreover, the reaction of the characters in the novel upon one another and the response of the reader to the various characters begin to concern the critics. Such figurative expressions appear as this one: tears up the ocean of the mind. Then in various publications there is expressed Scott's interest in the
effect of belief in the supernatural upon characters—an interest leading to an increased use of neo-Longinian terms like spectral, horror, terror, shudder, and fear, along with the customary nature, truth, probability, and laws. There is also the insistence that the characters move the reader; there are references to a sort of suprasensible invention, to a transcendental genius, to a Rousseauistic nature involving the primal instincts; and, in Blackwood's, there is an excellent restatement of the Aristotelian theory of catharsis, with such terms as pity, terror, and harmonize being used.

From 1820-1821, two major trends appear in all periodicals. One is toward a pure Aristotelian classicism, requiring a more liberal interpretation of classical terms in their application to the new genre. Nassau Senior and John Scott exemplify this trend in the Quarterly Review and in the London Magazine respectively. The second trend shows Wordsworthian influence—and indirectly the influence of Schiller and Schlegel. In Talfourd's articles for Colburn's New Monthly Magazine, this trend (which is really very slight) appears. The critic expresses the theory of man's natural goodness when he is in harmony with universal truth. Although these major trends are toward a closer identification of the novel with the older literary forms, there is to be noted Campbell's statement, made also in the New Monthly, that poetry, aiming at the presentation of the ideal, and prose fiction, aiming at an imitation of real life including its imperfections, are completely and essentially different forms.
Thus, one finds in this magazine the terms harmony, nature, universal, truth, real, and ideal—all old terms expressing newer concepts, or perhaps only denoting old Platonic and Aristotelian theories molded to fit the novel. Then there is even in the very conventional periodicals, evidence of Young's theory of the inexplicable originating genius; and there are traces of a sort of transcendental genius, of a fancy, and of an imagination similar to Coleridge's.

From 1822 to 1825, the newer interpretations of terms continue to be observable; but the bulk of the terminology is still similar to that applied earlier to other forms of literature. Among the newer terms and tendencies one notes the increased use of terms like necessary and purpose applied to characters, descriptions, and incidents. To these terms indicative of functional relevance, one may add such diverse expressions as plastic power, worn-out sentimentality, genius reacting creatively on its own materials, harmoniously blended, illusion, and these eighteenth-century pre-romantic terms: terror, raging, grandeur, shudder, and roaring. All suggest the new-old theories of such different critics as Aristotle, Longinus, Addison, Burke, Reynolds, Coleridge, and Schiller.

Throughout the 1825-1828 period, the emphasis is upon organic unity or unity of impression. There is continued the use of terms like harmoniously blended, blended into one whole, and harmonious whole—all perhaps indicating the growing influence of Coleridge. There is considerable evidence of the effect of Coleridge's elastic imagination.
and of his fancy. Variations and inversions of his theories appear. Prevalent also are such expressions as dreary tone, grand sweeping effect, climate effect upon genius, varieties of character, and common sympathies of men. Even these fairly unusual expressions contain terms used during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Variations come in descriptive or limiting terms used with the major ones, save perhaps in the last rather Wordsworthian expression. Moreover, it is always necessary to remember that these variations are departures, not the norm.

Especially from 1828 to 1832, the tone becomes more modern. The terms are more frequently than before connected with techniques; with analysis of the means whereby artistic, unified effects or special emotional effects may be achieved. This method of criticism leads to particularization to a study of details; also indirectly to references to representations of all phases of current life, to all sorts of characters. There is, then, considerable evidence in terms of the growing "democratization" of the novel. There are, moreover, expressions like character development by dialogue, plots following denouements, artistic effect, total unity, development of mind, details as a means, one whole, art grouping. One notes, however, that the major terms in most of these expressions were once applied extensively to drama and to the epic. So the reviewers are using descriptive words with inherited major terms to express "new-old" or revived theories. The second method of criticism detectable during these years,
one may call the romantic comprehending or all-embracing one. It involves use of universal feeling, transcendent genius, universal soul, eternal feeling, enveloping spirit of nature. There are, of course, other terms—some merely impressionistic, some harbingers of coming careful analysis of fictitious characters, a few examples of poetic animation of the abstract and specific associations with current life.

One finds a spirit and feeling of the scene, a spirit that broods, olive groves made sad, a fancy that feeds upon decay, inner and outer life, aggregating fancy, executive genius, a genius that hovers, snappy style, and genius (involving exceptional mental, sensory and emotional powers).

During the 1828-1832 period, especially in Blackwood's and in Fraser's, there are terms traceable to Schiller, Schlegel, and Wordsworth; more, to Coleridge; but the great majority of terms in those and in other periodicals remain quite like Johnson's. Specifically indicating, in the case of a few reviewers, the dawning realization that the novel is a separate genre are a few of the terms—especially those showing the advantages of the novel in presenting breadth of scene and in offering greater opportunity for portrayal of the reactions of characters upon one another and their responses to environmental factors. Mainly toward the close of the period, one finds, too, terms emphasizing the critics' interest in the reader's reaction and disclosing the reviewers' efforts to connect the criticism of the novel with every day life. Wilson in Blackwood's, for instance, represents the
reader as a jaunty lad, hurrying along on horseback through Scott's superlatively interesting but poorly constructed Chronicles of Canongate. His "tie on rules" attitude is somewhat typical of that of reviewers in the later magazines as opposed to that of writers for the Quarterly Review and the Edinburgh Review. His phraseology is often colorful, but sometimes his criticism is scarcely sound. He and many other critics at times seem reluctant to admit that to prose fiction also should be applied some basic standard.

In nearly all of the periodicals, however, one notes the great paucity of new coinages. These reviewers, even the liberal ones who plead that the novel must not be tried by "epic rules," have no desire to evolve a separate theory of criticism and a new set of terms for a new genre. One must look to later critics for that. These are content to modify existing poetic and dramatic terminology and to re-introduce terms of classical origin that have not for a time been in use. They often broaden applications. For instance, as the period closes, there is less stress upon morals, more upon a moral tendency. Critics often assign great importance to terms that were relatively unimportant during the time of Pope and of Johnson. In general, then, the change in the terminology of the criticism of the novel follows that of poetry and drama. Sometimes it lags far behind like a child who loiters behind his mother to admire the scenery and who then must run to overtake his parent. In 1832, however, Elizabeth Landon wrote:
Who that reflects at all can deny that the novel is the literary Aaron's rod that is rapidly swallowing all the rest? It has supplied the place of the drama—it has usurped in its pages pamphlets, essays, and satires... Poetry has survived somewhat longer, but is rapidly following the fate of its fellows.¹

In a like manner has the criticism of the novel "swallowed" earlier terminology. To the very end of the romantic period, the critics have turned mainly to preceding criticism of the epic and the drama for their terms. Their acquisitions, they have sometimes refurbished, sometimes ornamented by newer descriptive terms. Yet across their gains continues to fall the lengthening shadow of Aristotle.

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Miscellaneous


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Pauline Smith Currie was born in Meridian, Mississippi. She attended the public schools of that city until she was graduated in 1929. Then she entered Mississippi State College for Women, in Columbus, Mississippi. Here she was granted the degree of Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, in June, 1933. During the two following years she taught in a small high school near Meridian, Mississippi, and attended summer school at Duke University. She became an assistant in Latin at the University of Mississippi in 1935 and received there the degree of Master of Arts. From 1936 to 1938 she worked toward the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English at Louisiana State University. There followed several years of teaching in Monroe, Louisiana, and of research done at the University of Texas, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina. In 1946 she returned to Louisiana State University as an assistant in English. She is now a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English at that university.
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Major Field:  English

Title of Thesis:  The Evolution of Terminology in English Periodical Criticism of Prose Fiction, 1800-1832

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

M. R. Watson

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Date of Examination:

May 12, 1949