

contributed a paper,—such as his critique on the Poems of Rogers, which, in this department, fully sustained the general character of the periodical,—Jeffrey to all intents and purposes was the “Edinburgh Review.” And in this his peculiar province he took his place, we have no hesitation in saying, as the first British critic of the age. He had his prejudices and his deficiencies, and occasionally,—put out in his reckoning by what the poet beautifully describes as “glorious faults, which critics dare not mend,”—he committed, as in the case of Wordsworth, grave mistakes ; but, take him all in all, where, we ask, is the critic of the present century who is to be placed in the scale against Francis Jeffrey ? His peculiar fitness for his task resulted mainly from the exquisiteness of his taste, his fearless honesty, and the integrity of his judgment. His few mistakes arose chiefly from certain partial defects in faculty. These, however, were important enough to prevent him, if not from taking his place as the first of contemporary critics, from at least entering those highest walks of British criticism in which a very few of the master minds of the past were qualified to expatiate, and but these few exclusively. There are snatches of criticism in the prefaces and dedications of Dryden, in Burke’s “Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful,” and even in Johnson’s “British Poets,” (though there were important faculties which Johnson also lacked), which Jeffrey has not equalled. But that man rises high in an intellectual department who, though not equal to some of the more illustrious dead, is first among his compeers. We know not at once a better illustration of what Jeffrey could do, and of what he failed in doing, than that furnished by his article on the sense of the Beautiful. There is scarce a finer piece of writing in the language ; and yet it embodies, as part of its very essence, the great sophism that, apart from the influence of the associative faculty, there is no beauty in colour. We know of