

**REMINISCENCES AND TABLE-
TALK OF SAMUEL ROGERS,
BANKER, POET, & PATRON
OF THE ARTS, 1763-1855**

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Reminiscences and Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers, Banker, Poet, & Patron of the Arts, 1763-1855
by Samuel Rogers & G. H. Powell

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SAMUEL ROGERS & G. H. POWELL

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TABLE-TALK OF
SAMUEL ROGERS



J. Rogers

REMINISCENCES AND TABLE-TALK OF
SAMUEL ROGERS

Banker, Poet, & Patron of the Arts

1763-1855

Collected from the Original Memoirs of
Dyce and Sharpe, with Intro-
duction and Index

BY
G. H. POWELL



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The portrait of the author which forms the frontispiece is taken from the engraving by Finden, after Sir Thomas Lawrence, prefixed to the *Italy*, ed. 1852.

INTRODUCTION

THE volume here offered to the public will, it is hoped, be regarded as a legitimate if not inevitable piece of Book-making.

Of the general human interest attaching to the intimate form of biography known as "Table-Talk," and in particular to that of Samuel Rogers, it is scarcely necessary to speak. The earliest original records of the Banker Poet, his friends, and their conversation—forming as they do an important contribution to the social history of the period, 1790–1850—are comprised in two different volumes, which may rank with such works as Spence's Anecdotes among the best "ana" of the English language. These are (a) the RECOLLECTIONS OF THE TABLE-TALK OF SAMUEL ROGERS (together with "Porsoniana"), published by Alexander Dyce in 1856; and (b) the RECOLLECTIONS, by Samuel Rogers himself, given to the world by William Sharpe in 1859.

The "Table-Talk" represents a selection from

the memoranda kept by Dyce, which may be best described in his own language: "From my first introduction to Mr. Rogers I was in the habit of writing down in all their minutiae the anecdotes with which his conversation abounds; and on my telling him that I did so, he expressed himself pleased." It is not unreasonable to presume from these words that Dyce's notes had the approval of Rogers as an authentic record.

The second work, the "Recollections," has attained perhaps greater literary fame, as a record kept by Rogers himself, in a form—as the editor assures us—obviously intended for publication. It consists of similar—in some cases identical—matter, preserved in a more fragmentary, and sometimes perhaps a more literal form.

Upon material points the two books may fairly be said to confirm one another, and in the more famous "dicta" they usually coincide verbatim. But, though of necessity covering much the same ground, they differ materially in their contents: the "Recollections," for example, containing the valuable notes on the Duke of Wellington [some thirty-five pages, here reprinted in their entirety], of which Dyce's work records but one or two; while the latter gives numerous anecdotes of Sheridan and other persons scarcely

mentioned in the "Recollections." With important exceptions, indeed, the principal memoranda seem to be presented more readably and more effectively in the pages of Dyce. Of the numerous detached anecdotes, observations, quotations, scraps of reflection, noted down by Rogers himself, while some supply just those vivid and familiar touches which are the life of a contemporary biography, a good many are almost too minute to have much significance for the modern reader.

For the form of the volume, therefore, I have followed the general easy and conversational arrangement of the "Table-Talk," inserting under their various heads all the kindred matter better given—or only given—in the "Reminiscences."* And though a certain order is preserved, the various notes are so mixed that it seemed scarcely worth while to reproduce the personal subject-headings given by Rogers (as "Fox," "Burke," "Gretton," "Horne Tooke," &c.) in his work. A better clue to the good things in the present volume will be found, it is hoped, in the Index appended, which refers to every important name and topic mentioned.

* The valuable footnotes appended by Dyce and Sharpe to their several works are here reprinted, with one or two small additions and corrections by the present Editor.