

**Poe and the Southern literary messenger / by David K. Jackson
; with a foreword by J.H. Whitty.**

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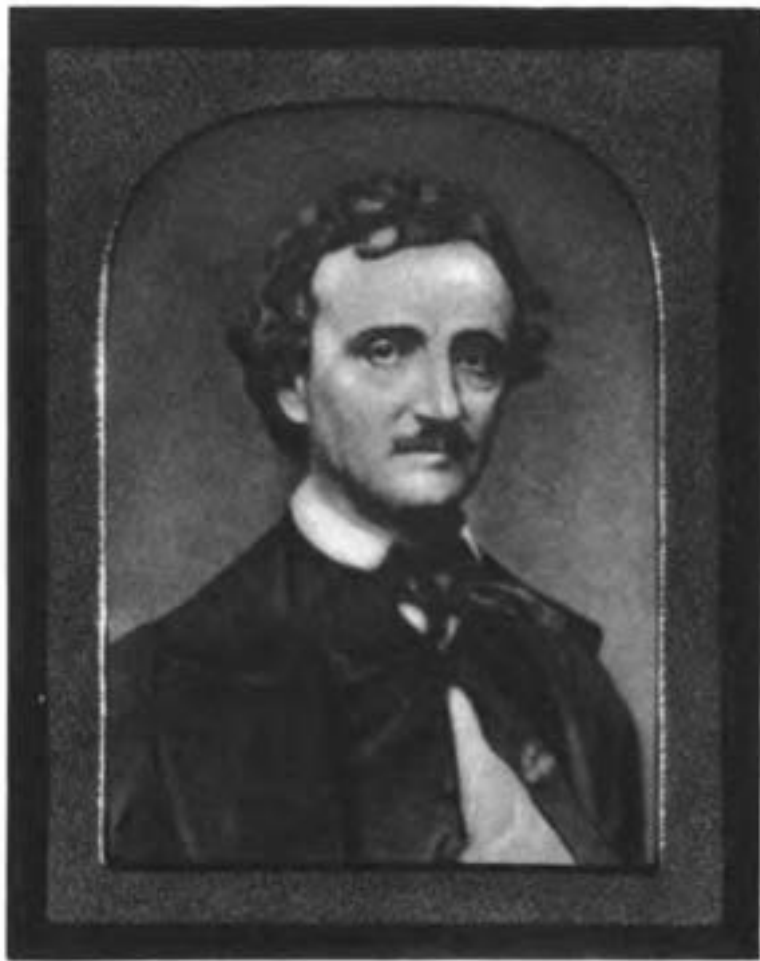
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David K. Jackson
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Edgar A Poe .

EDGAR ALLAN POE

*From an original photograph in the possession
of Mr. James H. Whitty,
Richmond, Va.*

THE SIGNATURE OF POE

*From an unpublished letter, through the courtesy
of Mr. and Mrs. George P. Coleman,
Tucker House, Williamsburg, Va.*

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POE
AND
The Southern Literary Messenger

BY
DAVID K. JACKSON

WITH A FOREWORD BY
J. H. WHITTY



RICHMOND, VA.:
PRESS OF THE DIETZ PRINTING CO.
Publishers
1934

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353

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TO THE
MEMORY OF MY FATHER

FOREWORD

Much of Edgar Allan Poe's picturesque personality, as well as his literary career, is inseparably associated with *The Southern Literary Messenger*. And without material from that magazine adequate treatment of the life and literature of the old South would seem almost impossible.

Poe's return to Richmond in the year 1835, and his connection with the *Messenger*, was a fortunate circumstance. To be with his old friends again, and among so many scenes of reminiscences connected with his boyhood, must have aroused within him those subtle influences which had become a part of him: that were bred in him when a child at Richmond.

Little wonder, then, to find him writing in the January, 1836, *Messenger*: "How fondly do we recur, in memory, to those enchanted days of our boyhood when we first learned to grow serious over Robinson Crusoe!—when we first found the spirit of wild adventure enkindling within us, as, by the dim firelight, we labored out, line by line, the marvellous import of those pages, and hung breathless and trembling with eagerness over their absorbing—over their enchaining interest! Alas! the days of desolate islands are no more!"

It was in a small room I have often wandered through, in the old Ellis and Allan general store building, originally standing alongside the *Messenger* office on Fifteenth Street that Poe showed early traits of his scholastic habit, and his unconscious education in the

critical line from the mere love of it. It was there, after his Robinson Crusoe readings, that was begun a part of his self-education, in the study and readings of popular periodicals, and songs of the day. In that room Poe wrote his earliest criticism on "The Burial of Sir John Moore," reading in part: "The poet—the Patriot and the man of feeling breathes thro' the whole, and a strain of originality gives zest to this little piece, which is seldom felt on the perusal of others of the same kind." This original manuscript with others was described by the present writer in the *New York Sun* of November 21, 1915.

Poe's genius had rapidly developed, and besides he was man-grown when he entered upon his active literary career with the *Messenger*. He had been much about the newspaper offices and had associated with literary men at Baltimore. His keen insight which led him to detect the great possibilities for success in the magazine field of literature had already taken root, and his first prospectus for a magazine of his own was written at Baltimore—briefly, but in form not unlike his later plans for his proposed *Penn* and *Stylus*.

At the start, on the *Messenger*, he proved a willing worker and an apt student. The practical working apparatus of a printing, publishing, and magazine establishment was somewhat new to him, but he vigorously and earnestly grasped the details—read proof, wrote the bulk of the correspondence, attended to the payroll, and did a large part of the mailing-room duties—working both in and out of season. A great deal of his editorial and other writing for the magazine

was done after regular hours at his boarding house. All in all, however, Poe undoubtedly gained an experience at this time with the magazine that served him well in after life.

The publication in this volume of the complete letters of T. W. White to Lucian Minor, as well as letters to Beverley Tucker from White, is an important addition to the "Poe-*Messenger*" record. They especially throw new light upon the unsatisfactory conditions under which Poe worked at that period. Both Poe and White apparently fenced awhile for a last word before the final parting, while White believed that he could, at least, hold Poe as a contributor; but failed. Besides the other difficulties on the magazine for ultimate success Poe must have seen, and felt the financial strain under which White had rather suddenly fallen. This financial embarrassment was shown in later letters from White to R. W. Griswold, but not hitherto generally believed to have existed during Poe's connection with the magazine. Another series of letters from T. W. White to Lucian Minor exist, but they make no mention of Poe.

A footnote to page 126 of J. M. Robertson's *New Essays towards a Critical Method*, New York and London, 1897, directs attention to an article, "The Recent Movement in Southern Literature," by Charles W. Coleman, Jr., in *Harper's Magazine* for May 1887, where reference is made to an existing series of letters from Poe's employer on the *Messenger*. This series of letters mentioned are those herein published from White to Tucker.

The bulk of the *Messenger* correspondence and papers under White's ownership passed into the hands of a son-in-law and seem to have been destroyed. Several direct descendants of the family of White with whom I have conversed and corresponded had no knowledge of the existence of any papers. The only papers known are those left in Poe's desk used at the *Messenger* office: letters from O. W. Holmes and R. H. Dana, correspondents' letters, some manuscripts, and Poe matters, all of which are still preserved at Richmond. I understood the late Mr. Charles M. Wallace of Richmond to tell me that the Lucian Minor letters from T. W. White, printed herein, came to him originally from Mr. Charles Barham Barney, who was an early Richmond collector of manuscripts, and who also had an acquaintance with Poe's early, and later fiancée, Mrs. Elmira Royster Shelton.

Complete files of the *Messenger* are comparatively few, especially outside of Richmond, while incomplete sets and scattering numbers do not appear uncommon. The Virginia State Library has two complete sets of the *Messenger*, originally bound up with covers. There are some half a dozen or more complete sets in Richmond with as many more scattered about the State of Virginia. A most interesting file of the magazine in Virginia is that once owned by John Esten Cooke, with copious annotations in his autograph. I have letters from his niece in Virginia who had preserved this file. A complete set, with covers, was made up and largely extra illustrated by the late Robert Lee Parrish of Virginia. This is now in the library of a well-known

Pittsburgh railway attorney, a native of Virginia, who has one of the largest collections of Virginia books in existence. The most interesting Poe association file of the magazine is in the Poe collection of a Western collector. This has practically all the earlier separate numbers with covers addressed in Poe's autograph.

Poe never seems to have kept a file of any magazine he edited. When he needed the *Messenger* to make some of the text for his tales of 1840, he borrowed four of the first volumes, while he lived in Philadelphia, from William Duane, a former Secretary of the Treasury, and who had previously written for the magazine.

While the first bound volume of the *Messenger* frequently shows up, for some unknown cause, in many instances, the first number for August 1834 is usually missing. The bound volume two is rarer. The Poe numbers are most sought after, and separate issues with covers are the most difficult to find. The volume thirteen for the year 1847 is the rarest, thought due to a small issue, while volumes for the years 1851-2 follow. These latter volumes contained Little's *History of Richmond*, clippings of which were cut out of the volumes for preservation. The Civil War numbers of the magazine are also scarce.

The present volume is the first and only extended separate attempt for a fuller study of Poe's connection with the *Messenger*. All devotees of Poe must extend to Mr. Jackson their deepest gratitude for so fair and admirable a presentation of all the facts.

J. H. WHITTY.

Richmond, Va., July 25, 1934.

PREFACE

This study of Poe, the magazinist, is concerned primarily with his editorship of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, the first really important periodical with which he was connected during his journalistic career. The first number of the *Messenger*, a monthly literary journal founded by the Richmond printer Thomas W. White, was issued in August, 1834, and in spite of many handicaps the magazine managed to survive until June, 1864. An examination of the numbers of the journal issued before Poe became editor throws light on his editorial policies, as well as on those of his predecessors, James Ewell Heath and Edward Vernon Sparhawk. In 1835 Poe, through the friendship of John Pendleton Kennedy, became a contributor to the *Messenger*; in August of the same year, an assistant to White; and in December, editor. On January 3, 1837, Poe resigned his position. In later years he was again connected with the *Messenger*, but only as a contributor.

No attempt has been made here to establish the authorship of all of Poe's contributions to the magazine, for such a problem, I feel, involves too many obstacles and uncertainties for the scope of this work. A consideration of the *Messenger* text of Poe's writings has also been omitted for obvious reasons.

To Professor Jay B. Hubbell of Duke University, who suggested the present study to me and who has given valuable assistance, I am especially grateful. I am also very much indebted to Mr. J. H. Whitty of

Richmond for valuable information, for his permission to use the eight letters of T. W. White to Lucian Minor, printed in part in his *The Complete Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, and for his kindly interest in the work. I am greatly obliged to Mr. Oliver R. Barrett of Chicago, Ill., for the use of letters of T. W. White to Lucian Minor in his collection; to Professor James Southall Wilson of the University of Virginia and Mr. George P. Coleman of Richmond and of Williamsburg for the use of letters in the former's article, "Unpublished Letters of Edgar Allan Poe," in *The Century Magazine* for March, 1924, from Mr. Coleman's collection and for other letters, hitherto unpublished, in Mr. Coleman's possession; to the Trustees of the Pierpont Morgan Library of New York City, through Miss Dorothy Tyng, for permission to publish the eight manuscript letters of T. W. White to Lucian Minor in their collection; to Professor Napier Wilt of the University of Chicago for permission to use material in his article, "Poe's Attitude Toward His Tales: A New Document," published in *Modern Philology* for August, 1927; to Miss Mary D. Gordon of Staunton, Virginia, for permission to reprint Poe's letter to John C. McCabe in the late Armistead C. Gordon's *Memories and Memorials of William Gordon McCabe*; to Mr. Louis H. Dielman, Executive Secretary and Librarian of the Peabody Institute of the City of Baltimore, for Poe's critical notices of the *Messenger*, which I plan to publish in a separate article; and to Mr. Aubrey H. Starke and Professor Lewis Chase, who are preparing for publication an

edition of Richard Henry Wilde's collected poems with a memoir, for much helpful assistance. I wish also to express my thanks to Professor Clarence Gohdes of Duke University, who read parts of the manuscript, for several suggestions.

D. K. J.

*Duke University,
Durham, North Carolina,
June, 1934.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
FOREWORD	v
PREFACE	xi
CHAPTER I, Edgar Allan Poe, October 12, 1833-January 3, 1837	1
CHAPTER II, The <i>Messenger</i> , August, 1834-July, 1835	16
CHAPTER III, Poe's Editorial Policy and Contributions to the <i>Messenger</i>	58
CHAPTER IV, Conclusion	82
APPENDIX A, A Selected List of Poe's Contributions to the <i>Messenger</i> in 1835, 1836, and 1837	91
APPENDIX B, Letters of T. W. White to Lucian Minor	93
APPENDIX C, Letters of T. W. White to Beverley Tucker and John M. Speed	108
BIBLIOGRAPHY	118

ILLUSTRATIONS

Edgar Allan Poe, from a Pratt daguerretype taken at Richmond, Va., <i>Frontispiece</i>	
<i>The Southern Literary Messenger</i> office and Ellis and Allan General Store Building, Fifteenth Street at Main, Richmond, Va.	88
Poe's Desk used at <i>The Southern Literary Messenger</i> office	88

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CHAPTER I

EDGAR ALLAN POE, October 12, 1833-January 3, 1837

On October 12, 1833, an announcement was made in *The Baltimore Saturday Visiter* that a prize of fifty dollars had been awarded to Edgar Allan Poe for his story, "MS. Found in a Bottle."¹ This announcement,² which antedates Poe's connection with *The Southern Literary Messenger*, was accompanied by the highly laudatory comment of the judges, who—representing the Baltimore weekly, then edited by Lambert A. Wilmer—were John Pendleton Kennedy, J. H. B. Latrobe, and James H. Miller. On the day following the announcement Charles F. Cloud, the publisher of *The Baltimore Saturday Visiter*, called on Kennedy, then a prominent lawyer and well-known novelist, and gave him such an account of Poe that his curiosity and sympathy were immediately aroused, and an introduction followed the next day—October 14, 1833.

Poe's meeting with Kennedy was a turning point in his career. His efforts to secure employment had all proved fruitless, although he now and then, perhaps, had done hack work for the Baltimore and Philadelphia newspapers. On earlier occasions he had sought employment from William Gwynn, the editor of *The Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, and from Nathan C. Brooks, who had opened a school at

¹Reprinted in *The Southern Literary Messenger*, II, 33-37 (Dec., 1835). Hereinafter *The Southern Literary Messenger* will be cited as *S. L. M.*

²Reprinted in part in *S. L. M.*, I, 716 (Aug., 1835).

Reisterstown, Maryland. The desperate state in which Poe found himself is shown in a passage from Kennedy's diary:

It is many years ago, I think perhaps as early as 1833 or '34, that I found him in Baltimore in a state of starvation. I gave him clothing, free access to my table and the use of a horse for exercise whenever he chose; in fact brought him up from the very verge of despair. I then got him employment with Mr. White, in one department of the editorship of the *Southern Literary Messenger* newspaper [sic] at Richmond. His talents made that periodical quite brilliant while he was connected with it. But he was irregular, eccentric, and querulous, and soon gave up his place for other employments of the same character in Philadelphia and New York.³

"The Visionary," one of the six tales offered by Poe for the *Saturday Visiter* prize, was published in *Godey's Lady's Book* for January, 1834, as a result of Kennedy's general advice and patronage. Further proof of Poe's friendship for, and great debt to, Kennedy is furnished by a letter of Poe's written years later, in which he wrote, "Mr. Kennedy has been at all times a true friend to me—he was the first true friend I ever had—I am indebted to him *for life itself*."⁴

During these troublesome years Poe was living with his father's widowed sister, Mrs. Maria Clemm, and her single surviving daughter Virginia at Number Three Amity Street. Also residing in Baltimore were the

³Henry T. Tuckerman, *The Life of John Pendleton Kennedy* (New York, 1871), pp. 376-377. For an extended account of Poe's relations with Kennedy, see J. P. Kennedy, *Swallow Barn*, ed. Jay B. Hubbell. American Authors Series (New York, 1929), pp. xvi-xxii.

⁴James A. Harrison (ed.), *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*. Va. Edition (New York, 1902), XVII, 94. Hereinafter this work will be cited as *Va. Poe*.

families of two cousins, Neilson Poe, who had married Mrs. Clemm's step-daughter, and Miss Herring, in whose album Poe wrote some verses.⁵ His attentions to both Virginia and Miss Herring were frowned upon and discouraged, perhaps on account of his drinking, by Neilson Poe and Mr. Herring.

In 1832 Poe had ventured on a visit to Richmond, in the hope of a reconciliation with John Allan, his foster-father, but nothing came of his visit. On March 27, 1834, John Allan died of the dropsy, and Poe was not named in his will. Allan's widow remained, as ever, unfriendly to him.

In Baltimore there were two literary clubs, and no doubt Poe was acquainted with most of the members of the two groups.⁶ To the "Tusculum" Club belonged Kennedy and Gwynn, and to the other set, T. S. Arthur, N. C. Brooks, Rufus Dawes, John H. Hewitt, and J. N. McJilton. Many of the latter group later became contributors to *The Southern Literary Messenger* during Poe's editorship.

In November, 1834, Poe failed in his efforts to induce Carey and Lea to publish a volume of his tales, and Kennedy was only able to send him a draft of fifteen dollars for one of the tales which had been sold to Miss Leslie for *The Souvenir*. Undaunted by this lack of success and sanguine in his plans for a new literary magazine, Poe sent a prospectus of the proposed journal to Lambert A. Wilmer, now superseded

⁵J. H. Whitty (ed.), *The Complete Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (Boston and New York, 1911 and 1917), p. xxxvi.

⁶Hervey Allen, *Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe*. 2 vols. (New York, 1927), I, 353-354.

by John H. Hewitt as editor of the *Saturday Visiter*.⁷ Wilmer, however, was penniless, and was forced to leave Baltimore. Thus Poe's first scheme for a magazine failed.

In March, 1835, Kennedy's invitation to a dinner brought forth the following reply from Poe:

Your kind invitation to dinner today has wounded me to the quick. I cannot come—and for reasons of the most humiliating nature—my personal appearance. You may conceive my deep mortification in making this disclosure to you—but it was necessary. If you will be my friend so far as to loan me \$20, I will call on you to-morrow—otherwise it will be impossible, and I must submit to my fate.⁸

Realizing Poe's desperate circumstances, Kennedy introduced Poe to Thomas Willis White, the publisher of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, a journal recently founded in Richmond. To White Poe happily sent some of his tales, and "Berenice," the first known tale to be accepted, appeared in the *Messenger* for March, 1835.⁹ Writing to White almost a month later, Kennedy stated:

Poe did right in referring to me. He is very clever with his pen—classical and scholar-like. He wants experience and direction, but I have no doubt he can be made very useful to you. And, poor fellow, he is *very* poor. I told him to write something for every number of your magazine, and that you might find it to your advantage to give him some permanent employ. . . . The young fellow is highly imaginative and a little *terrific*. He is at

⁷In the *Saturday Visiter* contest Hewitt had been the successful competitor for the prize poem.

⁸*Va. Poe*, XVII, 2.

⁹I, 333-336 (March, 1835).

work upon a tragedy [*Politian*], but I have turned him to drudging upon whatever may make money. . . .¹⁰

Poe graciously accepted Kennedy's advice by sending something each month to White for the *Messenger*.

In spite of a serious illness in May, 1835, Poe was busy with his pen. Not only was he a contributor to the *Messenger*, but he was also a friendly adviser. Without remuneration he published critiques of the issues of the *Messenger* in the Baltimore newspapers.¹¹ In reply to one of White's letters concerning a vacancy on the editorial staff of the *Messenger*, Poe answered that "nothing would give me greater pleasure. I have been desirous, for some time past, of paying a visit to Richmond, and would be glad of any reasonable excuse for so doing. Indeed I am anxious to settle myself in that city, and if, by any chance, you hear of a situation likely to suit me, I would gladly accept it, were the salary even the merest trifle."¹²

As a result of this correspondence with White, Poe appeared on the streets of Richmond, in the early days of August, 1835, leaving behind in Baltimore for the present Mrs. Clemm and Virginia. It was truly a home-coming for Poe, for here were his old friends Jack Mackenzie, Bob Cabell, Bob Stanard, the Galts, and "Aunt Nancy" Valentine, his foster-mother's sister. After probably a short stay with the Mackenzies, with

¹⁰Allen, *op. cit.*, I, 366.

¹¹See Killis Campbell, "Gleanings in the Bibliography of Poe," *Modern Language Notes*, XXXII, 269 (May, 1917), T. O. Mabbott, "A Few Notes on Poe," *ibid.*, XXXV, 374 (June, 1920), and the present writer's "Four of Poe's Critiques in the Baltimore Newspapers," to be published in *Modern Language Notes*.

¹²*Va. Poe*, XVII, 9.

whom his feeble-minded sister Rosalie was living, he took up lodgings with Mrs. Poore on Bank Street, Capitol Square.

His visit to Richmond was for only a month, and his dissipations did not recommend themselves to White. By September he had returned to Baltimore, where he received the following advice from White:

Would that it were in my power to unbosom myself to you, in language such as I could on the present occasion, wish myself master of. I cannot do it—and therefore must be content to speak to you in my plain way.

That you are sincere in all your promises, I firmly believe. But, Edgar, when you once again tread these streets, I have my fears that your resolves would fall through,—and that you would again sip the juice, even till it stole away your senses. Rely on your own strength, and you are gone! Look to your Maker for help, and you are safe!¹³

On September 22 he took out a license for his marriage with his cousin Virginia Clemm. Her mother has said that the ceremony was performed by the Reverend John Johns, at Old Christ Church; however, no complete legal proof of the marriage has yet been discovered.

At this time Poe wrote to White repentantly, and the owner of the *Messenger* with unusual kindness and sympathy warned Poe that “If you should come to Richmond again, and again should be an assistant in my office, it must be expressly understood by us that all engagements on my part would be dissolved, the moment you get drunk.”¹⁴ Before Poe’s leaving Rich-

¹³*Va. Poe*, XVII, 20.

¹⁴*Va. Poe*, XVII, 21.

mond in September, White had written to Lucian Minor, whom he had often tried to employ as editor of the *Messenger*,¹⁵ that "Poe is now in my employ—not as Editor. He is unfortunately rather dissipated,—and therefore I can place very little reliance upon him. His disposition is quite amiable. He will be some assistance to me in proof-reading. . . ."¹⁶ A little later he had informed Minor that "Poe has flew the track already."¹⁷

In October Poe returned to Richmond with Mrs. Clemm and Virginia, and they boarded together at Mrs. James Yarrington's boarding house in the neighborhood of Mrs. Poore's. In a letter dated October 20, 1835, White wrote Lucian Minor that "Poe, who is with me again, read it [your address] over by copy with great care. He is very much pleased with it . . . and intends noticing it under the head of Reviews."¹⁸ Four days later White suggested that Minor send a modest paragraph noting the *Messenger* as under his (White's) own editorial management, assisted by several gentlemen of distinguished literary attainments, and introducing Poe's name as one engaged to contribute to its columns, "taking care not to say as editor."¹⁹ "This I am sure," he continued, "you can manage for me, if you can possibly spare the time, now that [Edward Vernon] Sparhawk has taken the field against me. I will speak

¹⁵Mary E. Phillips, *Edgar Allan Poe: The Man*. 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1926), I, 491. See also Appendix B, pp. 93-94.

¹⁶Appendix B, p. 98.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 104.

to you on this head when I next see you. . . . I am in no little trouble.—My wife²⁰ is very sick now, and has been for 10 days. . . .”²¹

On becoming once again a member of the editorial staff of the *Messenger*, Poe looked with hope into the future. White, no doubt, was also happy that Poe had returned, for he was constantly worried by his wife's illness and by the dwindling list of subscribers to his magazine. Poe was now very busy, for review copies of the latest books were piled high on his desk in the little office over Archer's shoe-shop on the corner of Main and Fifteenth Streets. As he walked up the staircase to the *Messenger* establishment, he perhaps thought of the pleasant days spent next door in the office of the firm of Ellis and Allan. At the stairhead he was greeted by White, “a stocky, good-natured man with a florid face,”²² and there also were the printers John W. Fergusson and William MacFarland.²³ To Poe perhaps fell the task of answering protests, for as early as June 22, 1835, one of the contributors to the magazine, James M. Garnett of Essex, Virginia, had complained to White that Poe “will rather injure than benefit your Paper.”²⁴ Poe probably smiled at the wincing of his puny literary critics and sharpened his weapons, for, as Hervey Allen writes:

It was in the pages of the *Messenger* that Poe first appeared

²⁰Margaret Ann White, who died in Richmond on Dec. 11, 1837.

²¹Appendix B, p. 104.

²²Allen, *op. cit.*, I, 378-379. A portrait of White, discovered by Mr. J. H. Whitty, may be found in the Poe Shrine, Richmond, Va.

²³B. B. Minor, *The Southern Literary Messenger, 1834-1864* (New York and Washington, 1905), p. 14.

²⁴*Va. Poe*, I, 125.

in the American arena as the greatest literary gladiator of his time. American critics up until that era had formerly conducted their mock combats with blunt or, at best, lead weapons. Poe now appeared in their midst with a bright sword that bit deep and drew blood. He began to be feared, hated, and admired.²⁵

In the spring of 1836 Poe conducted a delightful correspondence with Nathaniel Beverley Tucker of Williamsburg, Virginia, a writer himself and a man of sympathy and understanding.²⁶ In December Tucker had promised some "rude lines" for the *Messenger*,²⁷ and the following January he wrote to White:

Last night I received a letter from Mr. P. by which I learn that you may not feel as much confidence in his capacity for the duties of his station as is necessary for your mutual comfort. This doubt he attributes in part to what must have been a misconstruction by you on one of my letters. That I have not admired all Mr. P.'s productions, as much as some others, and that his writings are not so much to my taste as they would be were I (as would to God I were) as young as he, I do not deny.²⁸

In April Poe politely apologized for the omission of some of Tucker's verses in the April, 1836, number of the journal, stating that a lack of space prohibited the running of his two poems together in one issue,²⁹ and

²⁵Allen, *op. cit.*, I, 390.

²⁶James Southall Wilson, "Unpublished Letters of Edgar Allan Poe," *The Century Magazine*, CVII, 652-656 (March, 1924); Maude Howlett Woodfin, "Nathaniel Beverley Tucker: His Writings and Political Theories; With a Sketch of His Life," *Richmond College Historical Papers*, II, 9-42 (June, 1917).

²⁷*Va. Poe*, XVII, 24.

²⁸George E. Woodberry, *The Life of Edgar Allan Poe, Personal and Literary, with his Chief Correspondence with Men of Letters*. 2 vols. (Boston, 1909), I, 154.

²⁹Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 655.

he also stated his reason for the alterations in Tucker's article on slavery.³⁰

That Poe was not giving away to Southern convivialities in the latter part of 1835 is evident from a statement of White's to Lucian Minor: "All the Critical Notices are from the pen of Poe—who I rejoice to tell you, still keeps from the Bottle,"³¹ and by Poe's letter dated January 22, 1836, to Kennedy, in which he gave his pleasant prospects:

. . . without your timely aid I should have sunk under my trials. Mr. White is very liberal, and besides my salary of \$520 pays me liberally for extra work, so that I have nearly \$800. Next year . . . I am to get \$1000. . . . I receive, from publishers, nearly all new publications. My friends in Richmond have received me with open arms, and my reputation is extending—especially in the South.³²

Again, in February, Poe's reply to a letter of Kennedy's was:

I find no difficulty in keeping pace with the demands of the Magazine. In the February number, which is now in the binder's hands, are no less than 40 *pages* of Editorial—perhaps this is a little *de trop*. There was *no* November number issued—Mr. W. having got so far behind in regard to time, as to render it expedient to date the number which *should have* been the November number—December. I am rejoiced that you will attend to the matters I spoke of in my last. Mr W. has increased my salary, since I wrote, \$104., for the present year—This is being liberal beyond my expectations. He is exceedingly kind in every respect.³³

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 655-656.

³¹See Appendix B, p. 107.

³²*Va. Poe*, XVII, 27.

³³*Va. Poe*, XVII, 30-31.

On May 16, 1836, Thomas W. Cleland, a pressman and the son-in-law of Mrs. Poore, swore before the Deputy Clerk Charles Howard that "Virginia E. Clemm is of full age of twenty-one years, and a resident of said city,"³⁴ of Richmond, when she was actually only thirteen. Three days later, at Mrs. Yarrington's boarding house, the marriage ceremony of Virginia Clemm and Edgar Allan Poe was performed by the Reverend Amasa Converse, a Presbyterian minister and the editor of *The Southern Religious Telegraph*, a denominational journal published in Richmond. Those who were present for the wedding celebration included Mrs. Yarrington's boarders, the poet's friends, Mrs. Jane Stocking, Thomas W. White, his daughters Eliza and Mrs. Peter D. Bernard, and others.³⁵ After the wedding ceremony Edgar and Virginia left on their honeymoon, to visit friends in Petersburg, Virginia. The following note taken from *The Norfolk (Va.) Herald* appeared in the *Messenger* for July, 1836: "The critical notices are very good for the most part; but then we could hardly expect Mr. Poe to be sorer ere the honeymoon be past."³⁶ In Petersburg the bride and groom were guests at the home of Hiram G. Haines, the proprietor of *The Petersburg (Va.) Constellation*, and later at the home of Dr. W. M. Robinson, one of the contributors to the *Messenger*.³⁷

After Virginia and Edgar had returned home, Mrs. Clemm agreed to rent a house, for which White paid

³⁴Phillips, *op. cit.*, I, 529.

³⁵*Ibid.*, I, 531.

³⁶II, 524 (July, 1836).

³⁷Appendix B, p. 107.

\$10,000, and to board the White family and her own. The plan was agreeable to both White, whose wife was an invalid, and to Poe, who was left with scarcely any money after paying Mrs. Yarrington \$9 a week for his family's board.³⁸ When White looked at his house, he found it large enough for only one family. On June 7, 1836, Poe asked Kennedy for a loan of \$100 for six months, and to show his good faith, he stated that his salary was \$15 a week and that in the following November he expected to get \$20 a week.³⁹ Poe also solicited \$100 from William and Robert Poe and George, Mrs. Clemm's nephew. They complied with his request, but White's poor judgment in buying a house unseen proved the undoing of both him and Poe, and Edgar and Virginia with Mrs. Clemm moved to a cheap tenement on Seventh Street.⁴⁰

Beginning in September, White was experiencing difficulties with the *Messenger*, for his and Poe's illness delayed the publication of the September issue of the journal.⁴¹ In November a press of business caused the critical department of the magazine to be more brief than usual,⁴² and the December issue failed to appear.

³⁸*Va. Poe*, XVII, 25-26.

³⁹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 36.

⁴⁰Allen, *op. cit.*, I, 400.

⁴¹II, 668 (Sept., 1836). Poe's letter dated Oct. 20, 1837, to Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, belongs to this period, and is apparently misdated. He explained to Mrs. Hale that he had been ill, that he had one article in a crude and unfinished state, and that William Gilmore Simms was not the editor of the *Messenger*. See Killis Campbell, "Poe and the 'Southern Literary Messenger' in 1837," *The Nation*, LXXXIX, 9-10 (July 1, 1909) and Killis Campbell, *The Mind of Poe and Other Studies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), p. 219.

⁴²II, 788 (Nov., 1836).

On page seventy-two of the January, 1837, issue was printed the following notice:

Mr. Poe's attention being called in another direction, he will decline, with the present number, the Editorial duties of the *Messenger*. His Critical Notices for this month end with Professor Anthon's Cicero—what follows is from another hand. With the best wishes to the Magazine, and to its few foes as well as many friends, he is now desirous of bidding all parties a peaceable farewell.⁴³

There were probably many reasons for Poe's leaving the *Messenger*. In the first place, Poe was ambitious, and his writing and editorial work for the *Messenger* had increased his desire to edit a magazine of his own. "Before quitting the 'Messenger,'" he once wrote his friend Charles Anthon, "I saw . . . through a long and dim vista, the brilliant field for ambition which a Magazine of bold and noble aims presented to him who should successfully establish it in America."⁴⁴ Like the other editors of the journal, he had been hampered in its conduct by its very jealous owner Thomas W. White, who on December 27, 1836, in a letter marked "Private," had informed Judge Beverley Tucker of Poe's approaching dismissal.⁴⁵ White felt "cramped by him in the exercise of" his own judgment and at that time called on Tucker "to stand by the rudder."⁴⁶ In another letter White wrote:

⁴³III, 72 (Jan., 1837). See also White's notice, "To the Patrons of the Southern Literary Messenger," *S. L. M.*, III, 96 (Jan., 1837). The second instalment of Poe's "Arthur Gordon Pym" was published in the following February (*S. L. M.*, III, 109-116).

⁴⁴*Va. Poe*, XVII, 176.

⁴⁵Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 656. See also Appendix C, pp. 109-110.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 110.

He is continually after me for money. I am sick of his writings as I am of him, and I am inclined to send him up another dozen dollars and with them all his MS., most of which are denominated "stuff." For "A. Gordon Pym" he demanded three dollars a page.⁴⁷

Perhaps White was also disappointed that Poe had not kept from the bottle, for years later Poe in a letter to his friend Dr. J. E. Snodgrass admitted:

. . . I certainly did give way, at long intervals, to the temptation held out on all sides by the spirit of Southern conviviality. My sensitive temperament could not stand an excitement which was an every-day matter to my companions. In short, it sometimes happened that I was completely intoxicated. For some days after each excess I was invariably confined to bed.⁴⁸

Other explanations for Poe's resignation are perhaps less valid: a rumored flirtation with Eliza White,⁴⁹ to whom Poe had addressed his "Lines Written in an Album";⁵⁰ the Elmira Royster affair;⁵¹ and the enmity of the Allan family. None of these matters seems to have affected Poe at this time.

Poe probably willingly left the *Messenger*, for the large publishing centers—New York and Philadelphia—were in the North, where perhaps he could get his tales published. Then, too, he had received letters from Dr. Francis L. Hawks, who had suggested that an opening might be found for him on *The New York Review*. The future looked uncertain in Richmond; in

⁴⁷Phillips, *op. cit.*, I, 547.

⁴⁸*Va. Poe*, I, 160.

⁴⁹J. H. Whitty, in *op. cit.*, p. xxxix, discredits this rumor.

⁵⁰*S. L. M.*, I, 748 (Sept., 1835).

⁵¹See Whitty, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv and xxvii-xxviii.

New York there was perhaps an opportunity for which he had been looking. With the *Messenger* he was doing a great deal of ordinary work of various sorts; with the *Review* he might secure employment without the drudgery of correcting proof, mailing magazines, and answering the silly requests of correspondents.⁵²

With reluctance White parted with Poe, and it is more than possible that Poe often wished to be back on the editorial staff of *The Southern Literary Messenger*.⁵³ He was never quite able to realize his ambitions for a magazine of his own.

⁵²See Appendix B, p. 98.

⁵³After a lapse of several years Poe's name as a contributor reappeared in the *Messenger*. His most important contributions in later issues of the journal were: "The Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq., Late Editor of 'Goosetherumfoodle.' By Himself" (X, 719-727), a reprint of "The Raven" (XI, 186-188), a review entitled "Mrs. Lewis' Poems" (XIV, 569-571), "The Rationale of Verse" (XIV, 577-585 and 673-682), a review of Lowell's *A Fable for Critics* (XV, 189-191), "Marginalia" (XV, 217-222, 292-296, 336-338, 414-416, and 600-601), "Frances Sargent Osgood" (XV, 509-515), and "Poe on Headley and Channing" (XVI, 605-612).

CHAPTER II

The *Messenger*, August, 1834-January, 1836

When in May, 1834,¹ the enterprising printer Thomas Willis White² sent out his prospectus for a new Southern magazine to be printed every fortnight in Richmond, Virginia, that growing town was in a flourishing condition. It was not only an important commercial port with exports valued at nearly six million dollars in that one year but also a center of the tobacco business, the coal trade, the iron industry, and the commission trade. Its cosmopolitan population, including planters, bankers, manufacturers, lawyers, merchants, free negroes, and slaves, was around seventeen thousand. Richmond, the capital of the Old Dominion, was the home of the State Library and the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society. The two leading institutions of higher learning in the State were the College of William and Mary at Williamsburg and the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, where were men of leisure and culture.

In the prospectus White had announced that the first number of his periodical would be published on June 15, but for some unknown reason the trial issue was delayed until August. There were at that time no

¹A prospectus of *The Southern Literary Messenger* dated May 1, 1834, was printed in *The National Intelligencer* (Washington, D. C.), Thursday, May 15, 1834.

²Mr. J. H. Whitty, who possesses a White autograph, informs me that the correct spelling of White's middle name is *Willis*, not *Wyllis* (see the present writer's "Poe Notes: 'Pinakidia' and 'Some Ancient Greek Authors,'" *American Literature*, V, 259n (Nov., 1933)).

literary magazines in the South, only in the North and East, and so White had little fear of competition from that sector. Southerners, however, did not patronize their own magazines but, if any, those publications of the North and of England. Charleston, South Carolina, "the graveyard of magazines," had seen magazines come and go, all failing for lack of financial support in the way of subscriptions. Simms, Elliott, Richards, Whitaker, and others faced despair again and again.³ In Richmond there had been published periodicals whose fates were a little better than those of the Charleston publications: *The National Magazine; or, A Political, Historical, Biographical, and Literary Repository* (1799-1800), edited by James Lyon and mainly devoted to political interests, and *The Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine* (1818-1828),⁴ more evangelical than literary, edited by John Holt Rice.

Thomas Willis White, the founder and the first publisher of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, was born in Yorktown, Virginia, in 1788, and was "for the most part reared in the Ancient Dominion,"⁵ and resided for a short time in Boston, Massachusetts. James Ewell Heath, who knew the owner of the *Messenger*, once described White's early training and tastes:

³For an interesting and illuminating account of Southern periodicals, see Professor Jay B. Hubbell's chapter, "Southern Magazines," *Culture in the South*, ed. W. T. Couch (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1934), pp. 159-182.

⁴See A. J. Morrison, "The Virginia Literary and Evangelical Magazine, Richmond, 1818-1828," *The William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, XIX, 266-272 (April, 1911).

⁵See *S. L. M.*, I, 65 (Nov., 1834); James E. Heath, "Death of Thomas W. White," *ibid.*, IX, 65 (Feb., 1843); and "Death of Thomas W. White, Esq.," *The Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, Saturday, Jan. 21, 1843.

From his childhood he had to struggle with adversity; and, like Franklin, with no other but a self-taught education, he was thrown into the same calling, that of printer's apprentice, with that illustrious sage. With no pretensions to literature, as a classical or critical profession, he nevertheless possessed a singular tact and discernment which enabled him to distinguish the true and beautiful from what was false or deformed in taste, or vicious and defective in morals.⁶

By the time White had reached the age of thirty-six he had established himself as a printer in Richmond. The loss of a son on October 7, 1832, during a cholera epidemic in Richmond, was the occasion for "Lines in Recollection of Thomas H. White, Who Died at Richmond, Va., October 7, 1832, aged 19 years," by "Eliza of Saco, Maine" (Mrs. Eliza Gookin Thornton), in the May, 1835, issue of the *Messenger*,⁷ and "Lines in remembrance of Thos. H. White, Who died in Richmond, Va. Oct. 7, 1832, aged 19 years," by an unknown contributor.⁸ Of the tribute to White's son by Mrs. Thornton, Poe, then living in Baltimore, wrote White:

I cannot say with truth that I had any knowledge of your son. I read the Lines to his memory in No. 9, and was much struck with an air of tenderness and unaffected simplicity which pervades them. The verses ["To Spring"] immediately following, and from the same pen, give evidence of fine poetic feeling in the writer.⁹

On December 11, 1837, his wife Margaret Ann White, four years his senior, who for several years had been an

⁶James E. Heath, "Death of Thomas W. White," *S. L. M.*, IX, 65 (Feb., 1843).

⁷*I*, 491-492 (May, 1835).

⁸*I*, 698 (Aug., 1835). See Appendix B, p. 99.

⁹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 9.

invalid, died, and a notice of her death appeared in the *Messenger*.¹⁰ Two of White's daughters, Mrs. Peter D. Bernard and Eliza White, were acquaintances of Edgar and Virginia Poe. From 1836 until his death on January 19, 1843, White was ill, but he bravely carried on with his magazine.

For his own journal he wrote little and depended on his friends Beverley Tucker, James E. Heath, Lucian Minor, and others. His first editor was his friend James Ewell Heath (July 8, 1792-June 28, 1862),¹¹ a man with no journalistic experience for the position. He was the son of John Heath, the first president of the Phi Beta Kappa society. From 1814 to 1850 he held political offices, and in 1834 he became an auditor of the State of Virginia. He was the first recording secretary of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society, which was organized in 1834, and he was the author of *Edge-Hill; or, The Family of the Fitzroyals* (Richmond, Va.: T. W. White, 1828), a novel of plantation life in Virginia; and in 1839 he published also anonymously a play *Whigs and Democrats; or, Love of No Politics: A Comedy in Three Acts* (Richmond, Va.: T. W. White, 1839).¹²

Even though busy with his duties, political and social, Heath freely offered his services to White until

¹⁰IV., 672 (Oct., 1838). Observe the interesting fact that her case was decided hopeless by her physicians in Aug., 1835, at the same time that Poe became assistant to White.

¹¹See Armistead C. Gordon, Jr.'s biographical sketch of Heath in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, eds. Dumas Malone and Allen Johnson (New York, 1928—), VIII, 489. Hereinafter the *Dictionary of American Biography* will be cited as *D. A. B.*

¹²See a review of this play entitled "A Virginia Comedy," *S. L. M.*, V, 571-572 (Aug., 1839).

the May, 1835, issue had come from the press, and in the "Publisher's Notice" for that month the proprietor of the journal made the following acknowledgment:

It is due to the gentleman who acted as editor up to the present period, that the publisher should, in parting with him, express that deep feeling of gratitude which his disinterested friendship could not fail to inspire. At the commencement of the *Messenger*, when the prospect of its success was doubtful, and when many judicious friends augured unfavorably of the enterprise, the late editor volunteered his aid to pilot the frail bark if possible into safe anchorage—nor did he desert it until all doubt of success had ceased. The efforts of that gentleman are the more prized, because they were made at a considerable sacrifice of ease and leisure, in the midst too of avocations sufficiently arduous to occupy the entire attention of most men,—and because they were rendered without hope or expectation of reward. And the publisher embraces this occasion, to declare that the success of the *Messenger* has been greatly owing to the judicious management of the editorial department by that gentleman. For services of so much value, rendered with no other object than a desire to promote the establishment of a literary periodical in Virginia, the publisher is deeply indebted to him—and the readers of the work will, we doubt not, long remember his efforts in their behalf. To him belongs the merit of having given his disinterested aid in the season of its early feebleness. His successor [Edward Vernon Sparhawk] has but to follow in the path which has thus been marked out by a hardy and skilful literary pioneer.¹³

The first issue of the *Messenger*, with its subtitle, "Devoted to Every Department of Literature and the Fine Arts," was "sent forth by its Publisher, as a kind of pioneer, to spy out the land of literary promise, be-

¹³"Publisher's Notice," *S. L. M.*, I, 461 (May, 1835).

fore he resolves upon future action.”¹⁴ Under the title appeared the following motto and its translation, which Edward Ingle ascribed to Poe: “Au gré de nos desirs bien plus qu’au gré des vents: As *we* will, and not as the winds will.”¹⁵ For the first issue White appeared as printer and proprietor. This number contained thirty-two royal octavo pages, with each page divided by a line into two equal columns. The magazine was to cost \$5 a year and to be published twice a month, but in the following November the periodical was changed to a monthly, the expediency of which change White hoped would be agreeable to his patrons.¹⁶

On the first page of the new Southern periodical were printed excerpts from letters of Washington Irving, James Kirke Paulding, James Fenimore Cooper, John Pendleton Kennedy, John Quincy Adams, and Peter A. Browne, under the caption “Publisher’s Notice” which, said White, “ought to stimulate the pride and genius of the south, and awaken from its long slumber the literary exertion of this portion of our country,” at the same time soliciting unpaid contributions and promising to secure a competent editor. Declaring that White’s literary project had his “highest approbation and warmest good wishes,” Washington Irving observed that

Strongly disposed as I always have been in favor of “the south,” and especially attached to Virginia by early friendships and cherished recollections, I cannot but feel interested in the success

¹⁴I, 1 (Aug., 1834).

¹⁵Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon, *Électre*, Act II, Scene 1, Line 8.

¹⁶I, 65 (Nov., 1834).

of a work which is calculated to concentrate the talent and illustrate the high and generous character which pervade that part of the Union.

Asserting that "It gives me great pleasure to find that you are about establishing a literary paper at Richmond," Paulding added:

You have abundance of talent among you; and the situation of so many well educated men, placed above the necessity of laboring either manually or professionally, affords ample leisure for the cultivation of literature. Hitherto your writings have been principally political; and in that class you have had few rivals. The same talent, directed to other pursuits in literature, will, unquestionably, produce similar results,—and Virginia, in addition to her other high claims to the consideration of the world, may then easily aspire to the same distinction in other branches that she has attained in politics.

* * *

If your young writers will consult their own taste and genius, and forget there ever were such writers as Scott, Byron, and Moore, I will be bound they produce something original; and a tolerable original is as much superior to a tolerable imitation, as a substance is to a shadow. Give us something new—something characteristic of yourselves, your country, and your native feelings, and I don't care what it is. I am somewhat tired of licentious love ditties, border legends, affected sorrows, and grumbling misanthropy. I want to see something wholesome, natural, and national. The best thing a young American writer can do, is to forget that any body ever wrote before him; and above all things, that there are such caterpillars as critics in this world.

"If some [Southern gentlemen], whom I could name," asserted James Fenimore Cooper, "were to arouse from their lethargy, you would not be driven to apply to any one on this side the Potomac for assis-

tance." John Quincy Adams's judgment was that "the periodical literature of the country seems to be rather superabundant than scanty. The desideratum is of quality rather than quantity." Both J. P. Kennedy and Peter A. Browne wished White success in his undertaking.

Editor Heath's first contribution to the *Messenger* was probably an essay entitled "Southern Literature," signed "H.," in which he declared:

Hundreds of similar publications [literary journals] thrive and prosper north of the Potomac, sustained as they are by the liberal hand of patronage. *Shall not one be supported in the whole south?* . . . Are we to be doomed forever to a kind of vassalage to our northern neighbors—a dependance for our literary food upon our brethren, whose superiority in all the great points of character,—in valor—eloquence and patriotism, we are no wise disposed to admit?¹⁷

He further stated his belief that "If we continue to be *consumers* of northern productions, we shall never ourselves become *producers*."¹⁸ In this same editorial essay Heath appealed to Southerners, particularly Virginians, for their support "towards the creation of a new era in the annals of this blessed Old Dominion."¹⁹

Among the original contributions to the August, 1834, issue were: a brief panegyric on "The Mother of Washington," by "L. H. S." (Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney of Hartford, Connecticut); "Extemporaneous Speaking," an essay on the art of the *improvisatore*, by "J. H." (probably James E. Heath); "Lines

¹⁷I, 1 (Aug., 1834).

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 3.

written in a *Young Lady's Album*," by "S." (Bransford Vawter); "Serenade," a poem "altered [by the editor] in some of its expressions . . . not to damp the aspirations of genius, but to prune its luxuriance," by "M'C." (John Collins McCabe); Mrs. Sigourney's "Columbus before the University of Salamanca" and "Intemperance"; "To my Infant Daughter" and "To my Children—On New-Year," both by Mrs. D. P. Brown, of Philadelphia; and "Musings," by the unknown author of *Vyvyan*.

"Nugator" (St. Leger Landon Carter), whose contributions were many for several years, contributed "Interesting Ruins on the Rappahannock," with the promise:

When I get hold of anything, however, I will send it to you, and if it be worth nothing, why just "martyr it by a pipe."²⁰

"By a curious coincidence, about the time he ["M."] was translating the subjoined story ["The Consoled"] from Voltaire, a correspondent of the *Richmond Compiler* furnished the Editor of that paper with another version, which was published," but this fact did not deter Heath, who somewhat proudly added:

. . . the reader of taste will find no difficulty in awarding the preference to the one which we insert in our columns.²¹

In this issue of the *Messenger* was reprinted Richard Henry Wilde's famous lyric, "My Life Is like the Summer Rose," and in an editorial note on the author-

²⁰I, 9 (Aug., 1834).

²¹I, 10 (Aug., 1834).

ship of the poem, which had been disputed in the newspaper press, Heath declared:

We do not know that Mr. W [ilde]. has ever confessed the authorship, but we think that they [the lines] would not discredit even their supposed origin. We have had the pleasure to read some of Mr. Wilde's brilliant speeches in Congress, and we are confident that they are the emanations of a mind deeply imbued with the spirit of poesy. . . . One of our present objects is to give what we conceive to be a correct version of these admired lines. . . . [Heath suggested *Tampa* for *Tempè*.]²²

Not only was Wilde valuable as a contributor to the *Messenger*, gratuitously publishing his verse in the magazine, but he rendered White and Heath important services by securing in his home State of Georgia nearly one hundred subscribers to the Virginia periodical.²³

In the "Original Literary Notices" six rather unimportant works were, on the whole, favorably reviewed. From four of them copious extracts were printed in this issue: Stephen Olin, *Inaugural Address* (1834); John P. Kennedy, *A Discourse on the Life and Character of William Wirt . . .* (1834); J. F. Cooper, *A Letter to His Countrymen* (1834); *Diary of an Ennuyee* [*sic*] (1833); James Sheridan Knowles, *The Magdalen and Other Tales* (1833); and Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, *Sketches* (1834), a copy of which in June, 1834, had been sent to White for his daughters by the author.²⁴

²²I, 13 (Aug., 1834). Messrs. Lewis Chase and Aubrey H. Starke are preparing for publication a complete study of the life and works of Richard Henry Wilde.

²³Aubrey H. Starke, "Richard Henry Wilde: Some Notes and a Check-List," *The American Book Collector*, IV, 230n (Nov., 1933).

²⁴MS. letter dated June 14, 1834, from Mrs. L. H. Sigourney to T. W. White, in the New York Historical Society Library. For a biographical study of Mrs. Sigourney, see Gordon S. Haight, *Mrs. Sigourney: The Sweet Singer of Hartford* (New Haven, 1930).

From Knowles's work was reprinted "Love and Authorship" and from Mrs. Sigourney's, "The Patriarch." Lamenting that "Mr. Cooper should have suffered himself to be seduced into the arena of party politics" and hoping for more romantic fictions from his pen, the reviewer of *A Letter to His Countrymen* indicated briefly one of the editorial policies of the *Messenger*:

MR. COOPER'S letter is partly private and controversial, and partly political, and therefore any thing like an extended notice or review of it does not fall within the range which has been prescribed for the "Southern Literary Messenger."²⁵

The August, 1834, number ended with an apologue, "Memory and Hope," by James Kirke Paulding, copied from *The New York Mirror*, and a short notice of *The Southern Magazine*, to be published in Charleston, South Carolina, and to be edited by James Haig—"and subscriptions to it will be cheerfully received at the office of the 'Southern Literary Messenger.' The South is awakening!"²⁶

"The favorable reception of the first number of the *Messenger*" was "a source of no small gratification"²⁷ to its publisher, who, in the second issue dated October 15, 1834, expressed his pleasure at the success of the first number, acknowledged all kindnesses, and promised to make the journal a source of innocent amusement and a vehicle of valuable information. In his note to the public he stated that already a sufficient

²⁵I, 18 (Aug., 1834).

²⁶I, 32 (Aug., 1834).

²⁷I, 33 (Oct. 15, 1834).

number had come forward as subscribers "to defray the necessary expense of publication; and contributions to the columns of the paper have been liberally offered from different quarters."²⁸ Variety, he further stated, would be a characteristic of the periodical, to "enable every reader to find something to his taste."²⁹ But he minced no words in asking for an increase of public patronage.

The leading article for the second issue of the *Messenger* was "Letter from Mr. [William] Wirt to a Law Student," with an introduction by "C.," followed by "Misfortune and Genius: A Tale Founded on Fact," by "H.," in which was described a raven-haired heroine with a knowledge of phrenology. In "Example Is Better than Precept," "M." (probably Lucian Minor) humorously pointed out fallacies in the old proverb which gave the title to his essay. Other original material in this issue included: two poems, "The Power of Faith" and "Death among the Trees," both by Mrs. Sigourney, the "sweet singer of Hartford"; "The Sweet Springs of Virginia, and the Valley which contains them," by the antiquarian and geologist, Dr. W. Byrd Powell; "Recollections of 'Chotank'," a brief descriptive account of plantation life in old Virginia, by "E. S. of Alexandria, Va." (probably Edgar Snowden); "Important Law Case in a Sister State, involving Questions of Science," by Peter A. Browne of Philadelphia; a sketch, by "Nugator" (St. Leger Landon Carter), entitled "Sally Singleton"; and a number of anonymous

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

contributions. Echoes of the Gothic romance that were preparing the way for Poe's "Ligeia" and "Morella" were particularly noticeable in "Extract from a Novel that Never Will Be Published," taken from *The Petersburg (Va.) Intelligencer*, for here was a heroine, with "hyacinthine curls," "ruby lips," and "gazelle eye," meeting an untimely death by falling over a precipice. A description of her corpse may have furnished Poe inspiration for some of his tales:

I entered the chamber where innocence and beauty had been wont to repose; around me were the trappings of the grave; the cold white curtains with their black crape knots, the shrouded mirror, the scattered herbs—and stretched upon the bed motionless, lay a form—the form of her whose living excellence was unsurpassed. My father came in; he took my hand, led me to the bed, and gently removed the sheet from the marble face. Oh, death, thou art indeed a conqueror!³⁰

Only two works were reviewed in this issue: Samuel F. B. Morse (ed.), *Amir Khan, and Other Poems: The Remains of Lucretia Maria Davidson* (1829), and Bulwer, *The Pilgrims of the Rhine* (1834). The reviewer of the former work digressed, to speak a kind word for Thomas F. Ritchie, the editor of *The Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, "for his efforts in behalf of domestic literature."³¹ In the review of this same work, Lucretia Maria Davidson's "Ruth's Answer to Naomi" was compared with a paraphrase of the Scripture by Richard Henry Wilde. Of Bulwer's novels the reviewer asserted: "We are among those who think that

³⁰I, 49 (Oct. 15, 1834).

³¹I, 51 (Oct. 15, 1834).

they will glide into that oblivious ocean, which is destined to receive a large proportion of the ever multiplying productions of this prolific age." On the other hand, the critic was struck by "The Maid of Malines," one of the stories, "as so finished an illustration of some of the noble qualities of woman kind" that it was reprinted for the readers of the *Messenger*.

A new department of the journal for October was "Editorial Remarks," in which contributors were introduced to the readers and contributions were either accepted or rejected. Commenting on a manuscript sent to his office, Editor Heath, remembering Paulding's advice, wrote:

We have read with pleasure, the love tale composed by an accomplished young lady in one of the upper counties; and, whilst we do not hesitate to render a just tribute to the delicacy of sentiment and glowing fancy which distinguish her pages, candor compels us to urge one objection, which we fear is unsurmountable. The story is wrought up with materials derived from English characters and manners; and, we have too many thousands of similar fictions issuing from the British press, to authorize the belief that another of the same class will be interesting to an American reader. We should like to see our own writers confine their efforts to native subjects—to throw aside the trammels of foreign reading, and to select their themes from the copious materials which every where abound in our own magnificent country.

For a similar reason, our friend from Caroline must excuse us for declining to insert his sketches. We have no "*dilapidated castles*," nor any "*last heirs of Ardendale*," in our plain republican land.³²

³²I, 64 (Oct. 15, 1834).

Heath also refused to accept "the slightest resemblance to a *fairy tale*."³³ To a correspondent from Prince Edward County, Virginia, who had written Heath a letter in June, 1834, he responded:

. . . we take this opportunity to say, that our columns shall be freely open to education. We conceive that the cause of literature is intimately connected with it; and we have it in contemplation to present ere long, to the public, some candid views, in regard to the policy heretofore pursued in the Councils of our State, on this interesting subject.³⁴

The November, 1834, issue of the magazine, which Poe considered "one of the very best issued," was "delayed in consequence of the change to a *monthly* instead of a semi-monthly publication,"³⁵ and the number of pages was increased from thirty-two to sixty-four. Urging his friends to secure subscribers to his journal, White expressed his ambition "not only to secure regular able contributions, but also to embellish some of his monthly numbers with handsome lithographic drawings and engravings," but none appeared in the first three volumes of the *Messenger*.

In this issue appeared the first instalment of "Sketches of the History and Present Condition of Tripoli, with some accounts of the other Barbary States," by Robert Greenhow (1800-1854), a distinguished native of Richmond, then living in Washington, D. C. Greenhow, whose father was once mayor

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵See the present writer's "Four of Poe's Critiques in the Baltimore Newspapers," to be published in *Modern Language Notes*.

of his native city, had in his youth barely escaped with his life in the Richmond Theater fire of 1811, in which his mother perished. Having traveled abroad and studied there, he was a man of the world when, in 1828, he became translator, librarian, and interpreter to the Department of State in Washington. His wife Rose O'Neil Greenhow later became celebrated as a Confederate spy. "The Sketches of Tripoli," which appeared serially in the *Messenger* from November, 1834, to October, 1836, displayed the author's patient and industrious study, even though he modestly described it as "the fruits of researches made for my amusement."³⁶ Besides Greenhow's history there were: a humorous sketch, "The Dyspeptic Man," by "Belinda," one of the several pen names of St. Leger Landon Carter; "Pinckney's Eloquence," by "Nugator" (St. Leger Landon Carter); "Washington and Napoleon: The Contrast," a poem of eleven stanzas, unsigned, also by Carter. In a fourth contribution entitled "Picture of Old Virginia" he introduced the *Messenger* as a means of improvement in the languishing Old Dominion. In 1844 many of Carter's contributions to the *Messenger* were collected by him in a small volume entitled *Nugæ, By Nugator; or, Pieces in Prose and Verse* and printed by Woods and Crane of Baltimore, Maryland.

Other contributors to this issue were: Peter A. Browne, Charles B. Shaw, Judge A. B. Meek of Alabama, D. Martin, George W. Munford, and Richard Henry Wilde. "Charles B. Shaw the author of the Alleghany Levels," Poe wrote White several months

³⁶I, 65 (Nov., 1834).

later, "is an old acquaintance, and a most estimable and talented man."³⁷ Another contributor and friendly adviser was Lucian Minor (1802-1858),³⁸ whose first instalment of "Letters from New England," was copied from *The Fredericksburg (Va.) Arena*. A native of Louisa County, Va., and a graduate of William and Mary College, Minor was commonwealth attorney for Louisa County from 1828 till 1852. Minor, a friendly adviser to White,³⁹ gave freely of his services to the *Messenger*. James Russell Lowell, who was favorably impressed with "Letters from New England," years later urged James T. Fields, then editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, to publish them in the New England magazine. Upon Field's acceptance of Lowell's proposal the work was published serially in four instalments in *The Atlantic*, from September, 1870, to June, 1871, under the title, "A Virginian in New England Thirty-Five Years Ago." Lowell, enthusiastically praising the letters, supplied an introduction to them in the August, 1870, issue of *The Atlantic*, perhaps not knowing that they had once appeared in the *Messenger*.

White and Heath were not unaware of Minor's ability, for when Heath three months later had already begun to find his unpaid-for services irksome and taking a great deal of his own time, White invited Minor to become editor of his journal:

I . . . earnestly again invite you to my editorial chair,—for

³⁷*Va. Poe*, XVII, 9. A second printing of the November issue was brought out in the spring of 1835. Poe advised White against notices of it in the newspapers.

³⁸*D. A. B.*, XIII, 27.

³⁹See Appendix B, pp. 93-94.

which services I will hand you a compensation of \$800 per annum. To be sure the salary is not an *enormous* one,—nor yet are the services which I should expect from you *enormous* . . . half a dozen hours per week would consume all I would have to pour in your ear.—And, I am equally sure, that 24 more hours in the week, would be amply sufficient for you to nourish my *Messenger*.⁴⁰

Minor refused the invitation, but he continued now and then to contribute something to the pages of the *Messenger*.

To a selected review of *Collections of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society* (Richmond: T. W. White, 1833) taken from *The Western Monthly Magazine* published in Cincinnati, Ohio, Heath prefixed the following question:

Why, in the name of every thing that is dear to us, do we not unite our efforts to establish something like a literary and scientific character for the Old Dominion. Is there not something, besides politics, worth living for?⁴¹

To *The Literary Journal*, a weekly magazine begun in November, 1834, by M. M. Robinson, the editor of *The Richmond (Va.) Compiler*, Heath extended a welcome “even if it were likely to conflict with the interests of the “*Messenger*,” but he hastened to write:

In truth however, the two periodicals ought to flourish together, and be mutually beneficial. Whilst the “*Journal*” will be filled

⁴⁰MS. letter in the possession of Mr. Oliver R. Barrett of Chicago, Ill., who has kindly given me permission to print the letter in full (see Appendix B, pp. 93-94). Quoted in part by Miss Phillips in *op. cit.*, I, 491.

⁴¹I, 123 (Nov., 1834).

exclusively with *selected* matter, the "Messenger" will *chiefly*, though not entirely, consist of *original* articles.⁴²

The former, he thought, would enrich the mind and develop the tastes of the reader, while the *Messenger* would furnish a means of exercising "the talents of *our own writers*."⁴³

In the "Editorial Department" Heath defended his position, taken in the October issue, concerning fairy tales, domestic productions, and the bestowal of praise on the contributions of friends:

We have been censured, and perhaps justly, for bestowing too much praise on the contributions of our friends. However great the error, it was at least honestly, if not prudently committed.

* * *

The "Messenger" is designed chiefly to encourage the practice of literary composition among our own writers of both sexes . . . why is it necessary or proper to slight the familiar materials which every where surround us, and resort to those hackneyed and frequently distorted pictures of transatlantic manners. . . .⁴⁴

"If we look to our own country, it is well understood," Heath suggested, "that Mr. Cooper owes his reputation as a writer of fiction principally to those fine romances, which are founded upon native character and scenery—and that, if that reputation has suffered at all, it is in consequence of his desertion of a field so wide and magnificent, for the beaten and monotonous track of European character and customs."⁴⁵ His objections to

⁴²I, 124 (Nov., 1834).

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴I, 125 (Nov., 1834).

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

fairy tales were insurmountable, and he hoped that one reader was wrong in criticizing him for allotting too much space in the journal to the productions of the Muse.

Two new departments in the *Messenger* for November were "Extracts from the Letters of Correspondents" and "Acknowledgments to Contributors, &c." Exulting in pride, one Virginian sent with his subscription a statement of his reason for subscribing:

. . . I am induced to support the *Messenger* nevertheless, from the great anxiety which I feel for the progress of literature in the South, and to show to the country that the soil of the Old Dominion, so fertile in the production of patriots and statesmen, can also support and rear to age the bright scions which adorn smoother and more ornamental fields . . . a solemn duty, which the youth of Virginia owe to their fathers. . . .⁴⁶

The following allusion to Philip Pendleton Cooke appeared in the department in which manuscripts were acknowledged and accepted or rejected:

We regret being obliged to decline the publication in the present number of the lines on "*The Creation of the Antelope*," being unable to decipher some of the words in the copy sent. Can we be favored by our correspondent "C" with another copy?⁴⁷

Although White always had hoped to bring out the issues of his magazine "regularly between the 20th and last day of each month," the December number was delayed on account of the holiday season. In this fourth issue appeared further instalments of Robert Green-

⁴⁶I, 128 (Nov., 1834).

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

how's "Sketches of Tripoli" and Lucian Minor's "Letters from New England"; the first instalment of Peter A. Browne's "Hints to Students of Geology"; a review of Governor Tazewell's "Report to the Legislature of Virginia on the Deaf and Dumb Asylum"; the preface, taken from Nathaniel Beverley Tucker's *A Lecture on the Study of Law*, which had been printed by White in book form the preceding month; James M. Garnett's "Valedictory in July, 1829"; Alexander Beaufort Meek's "To a Young Lady"; two sonnets by Richard Henry Wilde; D. Martin's "Byron's Last Words"; and the late Joseph Rodman Drake's lines addressed to the defenders of New Orleans. To this issue St. Leger Landon Carter contributed "Lines suggested on Viewing the Ruins at Jamestown," signed "Sylvanus"; "The Mechanician and Uncle Simon," signed "Nugator"; and "Parody on Bryant's Autumn," signed "Nugator." The selected material included extracts from *Lacon* for fillers.⁴⁸

"Eliza of Saco, Maine," who almost rivaled Mrs. Sigourney in her output of sentimental verses, and who became a frequent contributor to the *Messenger*, was Mrs. Eliza Gookin Thornton (1795-1854). A lineal descendant of the Gookins, Cottons, Winthrops, and Dudleys of the Massachusetts Colony, she was educated by her father. In January, 1817, she was married to James B. Thornton. In the midst of a life devoted to a family of eleven children, it was a remarkable feat that

⁴⁸For information about the fillers in the first two volumes of the *Messenger*, some of which were undoubtedly Poe's, see the present writer's "Poe Notes: 'Pinakidia' and 'Some Ancient Greek Authors,'" *American Literature*, V, 258-267 (Nov., 1933).

she composed as much as she did, even though most of her verses were tinged with the sweetness and sentiment of the age. Her contribution to the December issue was "The Peasant-Women of the Canaries."

Under "Original Literary Notices" Heath described Beckford's *Vathek* as an "impure, disgusting, and execrable production. . . . Obscene and blasphemous in the highest degree . . . the production of a sensualist and an infidel." From *Leisure Hours* (1835), which was favorably reviewed, he extracted "My Two Aunts." Under "Editorial Remarks" he again solicited subscribers to the periodical, insisting that Southerners should desire to emulate Northerners in behalf of American literature, and singling out Wilde's two sonnets for praise.

To the editor and publisher an unknown literary gentleman, residing in Louisiana, wrote that the *Messenger* gave "signs of vigorous and healthy vitality." Another reader praised the *Messenger*, ending his remarks with, "The monotonous sound of politics cannot but be disgusting." Edmund Ruffin, then editor of *The Farmer's Register* and later a hot-headed secessionist, and Sumner Lincoln Fairfield, the editor of *The North American Magazine*, called Heath's attention to the fact that Peter A. Browne's "Mineral Wealth of Virginia," published in the November issue of the *Messenger*, had already been printed in their journals.

In the meantime White had doubtless been active in the work of his printing establishment and in the interests of his magazine. On December 4, 1834, he offered the Virginia Historical and Philosophical So-

ciety space in the *Messenger* without charge for a certain number of papers that organization might wish to print. His offer was accepted. Since James E. Heath was both editor of the *Messenger* and the recording secretary and librarian of the society, it is not strange that the magazine became an unofficial organ of the group.⁴⁹ Years afterwards the magazine and its editors were closely identified with the Virginia Historical Society.

The January issue of the *Messenger*, which appeared some time in February, 1835, contained both original and selected material: Greenhow's "Sketches of Tripoli"; a defense of phrenology, "Phrenological Examinations," from *The Cincinnati (Ohio) Mirror*; Minor's "Letters from New England"; and R. H. Wilde's "Napoleon's Grave."

"Note to Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. I, Page 423," a defense of slavery as a moral and political benefit, marked the reappearance of Nathaniel Beverley Tucker in the *Messenger*. A native Virginian of distinguished ancestry and a graduate of the College of William and Mary, Tucker (1784-1851) began the practice of law in Charlotte County, Virginia, the home of his half-brother John Randolph of Roanoke. His two best known works, both novels, are *The Partisan Leader* (1836-1837), in which he foretold the strife between the North and the South, and *George Balcombe*, which was praised by Poe in the January, 1837, issue

⁴⁹See "History of the Virginia Historical Society" (Formerly the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society)," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXIX, 299 ff. (Oct., 1931).

of the *Messenger*. Commenting on Tucker's note on Blackstone, Heath agreed with Tucker that "slavery as a political or social institution is a matter exclusively of our own," but he viewed slavery as a great evil, sooner or later to be removed or to be mitigated by an enlightened Christian morality.

To the January issue Philip Pendleton Cooke, the older brother of John Esten Cooke and a poet himself, contributed "The Creation of the Antelope," signed "E. D.," and "A Song of the Seasons," signed "Zarry Zyle." As will be remembered, Cooke had submitted his manuscript of "The Creation of the Antelope" to Heath in November, but Heath had been unable to read Cooke's poor handwriting and had asked for a more legible copy. Heath had also mistaken "Larry Lyle," Cooke's pen name, for "Zarry Zyle." Of a late maturing genius, however, Cooke was invaluable as a contributor to the *Messenger*, whose editors instantly recognized his worth and gave him an honored place in the journal. To the *Messenger* he was indebted for his development as a poet and as a prose writer.

An unknown contributor whose pen name was "Alpha" contributed "The Passage of the Beresina," a descriptive poem of the horrors aboard the ship *Beresina*, inspired by a reading of Scott's *Napoleon*, and "Memory—An Allegory," which was probably an inspiration for Poe's "Silence—A Fable." In the preceding number "Alpha" had already published "The Battle of Breed's Hill."

From the manuscripts of the late Mrs. Jean Wood, Heath selected the following verses: "Retrospection,"

"The Captive Bird," "The Belle du Jour, or Convolutus Minor," "Eventide," and "Smiling Autumn" for this issue. In October Heath had made a request for an article on the impediments of American literature, and in the following January was reprinted from *The Western Monthly Magazine* an article, "American Literature—Its Impediments," by "H. J. G." (H. J. Groesbeck), in which the author enumerated the following obstacles to a native American literature: an absorbing interest in politics, the lack of a patronizing influence, and the political character of the press.

Other contributions were: "Study of the Latin and Greek Classics," probably written by Lucian Minor, and the instalment of "Letters from a Sister," the journal of an American woman abroad, signed "Leontine." "The Doom," a short story by "Benedict," a Baltimorean,⁵⁰ appeared in January, with its possible allusion to Edgar Poe's swimming the James River:

. . . I splashed about with great vigor, thinking about Leander's remarkable feat in crossing the Hellespont, until I felt a great desire to try whether I might not aspire to equal him, or at least E— P—, who swam from Mayo's Bridge to Warwick wharf some years ago.⁵¹

On June 22, 1835, Poe wrote a letter to White, asking, "Who is the author of *The Doom*?"⁵² In the May issue had appeared the following editorial note entitled "Swimming":

Some of our readers will doubtless remember an allusion in the tale of "The Doom" to an individual who performed the

⁵⁰Mr. J. H. Whitty informs me that "Benedict" was a writer of Baltimore.
⁵¹*I*, 235 (Jan., 1835). Quoted by Whitty, *op. cit.*, pp. xxviii-xxix.
⁵²*Va. Poe*, XVII, 10

feat of swimming across the James, at the falls above this city. A valuable correspondent, who was the bold swimmer alluded to, writes us as follows:

"I noticed the allusion in the *Doom*. The writer seems to compare my swim with that of Lord Byron, whereas there can be no comparison between them. Any swimmer 'in the falls' in my days, would have swum the Hellespont, and thought nothing of the matter. I swam from Ludlam's wharf to Warwick, (six miles,) in a hot June sun, against one of the strongest tides ever known in the river. It would have been a feat comparatively easy to swim twenty miles in still water. I would not think much of attempting to swim the British Channel from Dover to Calais."⁵³

In "Editorial Remarks" Heath stated that he had entertained some doubt about the admission of "The *Doom*" on account of its "revolting character," describing it as "a wild and incredible fiction," in which he had suppressed "certain profane and unchaste allusions." The *Messenger*, he wrote, "shall not be the vehicle of sentiments at war with the interests of virtue and sound morals—the only true and solid foundation of human happiness."⁵⁴

From *The Augusta (Ga.) Sentinel* for January 15, 1835, was copied Richard Henry Wilde's letter with his avowal of the authorship of "My Life Is like the Summer Rose," which Heath thought "one of the most exquisite poems which the genius of our country has produced." "Dandyism," a savage attack on dandies, by "Oliver Oldschool" (James Mercer Garnett) prepared the way for Poe's "Lionizing," which later ap-

⁵³I, 468 (May, 1835).

⁵⁴I, 255 (Jan., 1835).

peared in the *Messenger*. In "Extracts from the Letters of Correspondents", "X. Y." pointed out the need of a professional literary class in America and acknowledged the authorship of "Beauty without Loveliness," published in the January issue. A North Carolinian sent the name of a new subscriber, admonishing White: "'Go ahead,' as David Crockett says, 'since you are right'." The following lines appeared in January:

IMPROMPTU,

On seeing that the Publisher of the *Messenger*
had changed the color of its covers.

So you're changing your colors, I see, master White,
But say now d'ye think it is perfectly right?
Yet I own, on reflection, it is not so wrong,
And the reason, I think, is sufficiently strong:
Give it up? Then I'll tell you at once to your shame,
You're a man of all colors yourself—by your name;
For all the seven colors, you know, must unite
To make the commixture that people call *white*.

P. Q.⁵⁵

The February number of the *Messenger*, like preceding issues, was filled with various original and selected articles. A detailed account of the proceedings of the anniversary meeting of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society, of which John Marshall was president and James Heath librarian, was presented with a hope that the society would "retrieve the character of our state from the charge of long indifference to the vast resources it contains. . . ." "We should

⁵⁵I, 198 (Jan., 1835).

sincerely lament," wrote the author of the account (probably Heath), "if so noble an effort to diffuse throughout the country a taste for science and elegant literature, should fail for want of encouragement, but we think we perceive a growing conviction of its importance, and an increasing disposition to promote its objects."⁵⁶

"A Virginian," in a lengthy letter to White, strongly answered Tucker's defense of domestic slavery, labeling it a "novel position," and bringing forth annotations by Tucker's father on passages in Blackstone in support of his argument. Another reply to Tucker was submitted to the editor, but it was not published.

Other contributors were Alexander Lacey Beard, Robert Greenhow, Lucian Minor, Peter A. Browne, "Leontine," Mrs. Eliza Gookin Thornton, and Richard Henry Wilde. A new contributor was Edward T. Tayloe, with "Extracts from my Mexican Journal," a faithful description of his and Joel R. Poinsett's arrival in Mexico in 1825. James M. Garnett (1770-1843), whose essays on education appeared frequently in the *Messenger*, contributed "An Address on the subject of Literary Associations to Promote Education." Such deadly material as essays on education and on kindred subjects, as well as commencement addresses, doubtless injured the journal, and later efforts were made to exclude addresses from the magazine.

In "Original Literary Notices" Poe probably appeared with the review of *Calavar: or The Knight of the Conquest: a Romance of Mexico* (Philadelphia,

⁵⁶I, 257 (Feb., 1835).

1834), which, declared the critic, was "certainly the very best American novel, excepting perhaps one or two of Mr. Cooper's, which we have ever read," although he was not blind to its faults.⁵⁷

Comments on the *Messenger* were generally favorable. Subscribing to the magazine, Joseph Hopkinson of Philadelphia, author of "Hail, Columbia," wrote that he was highly pleased with "Letters from New England," saying that such an article would remove prejudices between the North and the South and promote a national character. At the University of North Carolina the *Messenger* was read "with universal applause." A reader in western Virginia sent a list of five new subscribers, and a Georgian boasted that the *Messenger* would not have to depend on the Old Dominion alone for encouragement. A lady of Washington, D. C., told a friend "that it contained better original poetry than any other periodical she had ever seen." But not all the readers and contributors to the *Messenger* were pleased.

In the department "To Correspondents, Contributors, &c." Heath acknowledged the receipt of a second reply to Tucker's notes on Blackstone and the contributions of "Fra Diavolo," which he found offensive in the name of decency. "We have, in fact," he wrote, "no sort of taste for German '*diablerie*,' which, in our judgment, sins against good taste, as well as against good morals." In answer to a correspondent of Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, Virginia [now West Virginia], who supposed a contributor should be known

⁵⁷*I*, 315 (Feb., 1835).

personally to White or his assistants, to obtain admission into the columns of the *Messenger*, Heath disclosed the purpose of his editorial policy:

The great design of the *Messenger*, from its commencement to the present moment, has been much misconceived, if such an inference has been deemed in the slightest degree warrantable. Its principal aim has been, to foster and encourage native genius—no matter how obscure or humble, and without inquiring whether the writer be a friend and acquaintance, or a stranger.⁵⁸

Praising several poems in the *Messenger*—"Beauty without Loveliness," "Ianthe," and some lines by "Fergus"—the Shepherdstown correspondent launched an attack on Philip Pendleton Cooke for the obscurity and quaintness of his "Song of the Seasons" and on "Alpha" for the dullness and inconsistencies of his "The Passage of the Beresina," warning White that he would withdraw his subscription, if the *Messenger* continued to contain such "middling poetry."

To the March issue Poe contributed "Berenice—A Tale," which Heath described in his "Editorial Remarks" in the following terms:

"*Berenice*," a tale, by Mr. Edgar A. Poe, will be read with interest, especially by the patrons of the *Messenger* in this city, of which Mr. P. is a native [*sic*], and where he resided until he reached manhood. Whilst we confess there is too much German horror in his subject, there can be but one opinion as to the force and elegance of his style. He discovers a superior capacity and a highly cultivated taste in composition.⁵⁹

Disregarding the criticism of the Shepherdstown

⁵⁸I, 321 (Feb., 1835).

⁵⁹I, 387 (March, 1835). In the *Messenger* "Berenice" is the first identified story by Poe.

correspondent, Heath published Cooke's "Young Rosalie Lee," signed "L. L., Winchester, Va.," in this issue, of which the editor said:

We read "*Young Rosalie Lee*" more than once, before we could fully perceive the exquisite beauty and delicacy of the mind which produced it,—and we venture the prediction, that unless the author is divorced from the society of the sacred *nine* by paramount duties, he is destined to no ordinary celebrity. We dare say that for the expression of this opinion, we ourselves shall not be spared, for we confess there is a quaintness in the style which will be repulsive to most readers.⁶⁰

In defense of his "Song of the Seasons," which, it will be remembered, had been criticized by the Shepherds-town correspondent, Cooke explained in a letter to White that quaintness was aimed at in the poem on account of the subject. "One part of my object," he wrote, "was to depict the minute relations existing between the human heart and earth itself."⁶¹

In a brief note Nathaniel Beverley Tucker replied to his critic, "A Virginian," and in the following letter "Fra Diavolo" answered somewhat warmly Heath's objections to his contributions:

Mr. White,—*I have just seen your sixth number of the Southern Literary Messenger, and shall decline having my contribution published on condition of any improvement of the poetry by your most chaste and wise editor. The admission of such balderdash as the "Doom" and "The Passage of the Beresina," is quite enough evidence of his literary morality and good taste. I require no further token of it; least of all in my own case, where I am to be martyred at the shrine of such critical*

⁶⁰I, 387 (March, 1835).

⁶¹I, 388 (March, 1835).

*acumen—God save the mark! Put the manuscript into the fire,
and oblige yours,*

FRA DIAVOLO.

March 25, 1835.⁶²

In the March issue Mrs. Sigourney appeared with her "On seeing the Junction of the Susquehanna and Lackawanna Rivers" and "The Death of the Motherless." Alexander Lacey Beard of Aldie, Va., contributed "The Wanderer"; Greenhow, his historical sketches; and Helen Maria Williams, "Lines on Barlow's Monument." The following note was obviously addressed to Thomas Holley Chivers, a Georgia poet, and indicated plainly that Heath was not an admirer of Chivers's poetical productions:

There is a great deal of feeling in many of the communications sent to the publisher by T. H. C., M. D.; but to our poor taste, there is not much *poetry*. We question whether the Doctor will not find the lancet and pill box of more profit in that warm region to which he has emigrated, than the offerings of his prolific muse. The poetical manufacture depends more upon the *quality* than the *quantity* of its fabrics, for success.⁶³

The April, 1835, issue of *The Southern Literary Messenger* contained interesting and valuable contributions by distinguished Southern writers: Philip Pendleton Cooke, Chapter I of "English Poetry" and "The Last Indian"; George Tucker, "A Discourse on the Progress of Philosophy"; Lucian Minor, "Letters from New England"; Edward T. Tayloe, "Extracts from my

⁶²I, 388 (March, 1835).

⁶³I, 387 (March, 1835). It is unlikely that Poe wrote this note, as S. Foster Damon would have one believe in his *Thomas Holley Chivers: Friend of Poe*. . . (New York and London, 1930), pp. 85-86.

Mexican Journal"; Edgar Allan Poe, "Morella—A Tale"; and St. Leger Landon Carter, "Etymology." Other contributors were James M. Garnett, Mrs. Eliza Gookin Thornton, Alexander Lacey Beard, and Mrs. Eliza Sloan Buckler. A new contributor, "Pertinax Placid" (Edward Vernon Sparhawk) wrote a humorous "Tale of a Nose," which Poe considered "exceedingly ludicrous" and "well told,"⁶⁴ and composed the original poem, "Content's Mishap: A Veritable History." There were several original tales depicting scenes and life in the West, indicating Heath's interest in the advancing American frontier.

With the utmost confidence Heath recommended the contents of the April issue to his friends and patrons, remarking in his editorial column that "English Poetry" evinced accurate and profound investigation and that Tucker's discourse possessed the freshness of originality. He lamented that Poe had drunk "deep at some enchanted fountain," but, on the other hand, he doubted if anything in the same style could be cited, which contained more terrific beauty than "Morella." He called "The Last Indian" "a magnificent description of a somewhat extravagant dream," and he welcomed Carter again to his column, informing his readers that Carter was "convalescent from a severe illness which has kept his pen idle for some time."⁶⁵

At the end of April James Heath relinquished his

⁶⁴See the present writer's "Four of Poe's Critiques in the Baltimore Newspapers," to be published in a forthcoming issue of *Modern Language Notes*.

⁶⁵I, 460 (April, 1835).

editorial duties, which had been performed without pecuniary reward and with a sacrifice of ease and leisure in the midst of arduous avocations. As "a hardy and skilful literary pioneer" in the field of Southern journalism, he deserved all the praise that White heaped upon him. Heath, even though he was an untrained magazinist, displayed some ability and originality, for the *Messenger* was not like the heavy British quarterlies and *The North American Review*. Although long essays and addresses appeared in the journal now and then, the *Messenger*, as a rule, contained brief articles on a variety of subjects. The defects in Heath's make-up were the result of a strain of Victorianism, which found its way into the *Messenger*, and the lack of high critical standards. Heath conscientiously, but not always judiciously, edited the *Messenger*, until a successful foundation was assured. His successors were to build upon this foundation.

In the May issue White announced that he had made "an arrangement with a gentleman of approved literary taste and attainments, to whose especial management the editorial department of the 'Messenger' has been confided"—"his abstractions from other pursuits will enable him to devote his exclusive attention to the work."⁶⁶ The gentleman was Edward Vernon Sparhawk (born in 1798), the son of Thomas Stearns and Mary Kinsman Sparhawk of Bucksport, Maine.⁶⁷ At the age of twenty-two he was the author of a volume

⁶⁶"Publisher's Notice," *S. L. M.*, I, 461 (May, 1835).

⁶⁷I am indebted to Mr. J. H. Whitty for information concerning Sparhawk and for a description of his volume of verse, the only known copy of which is in Mr. Whitty's possession.

of poems, *Hours of Childhood, and Other Poems* (Montreal, Canada: A. Bowman, 1820). Seven years later Poe probably became acquainted with Sparhawk in Boston, Mass. From 1827 to 1829 he was a reporter for *The New York American*, covering the trial based on John Jacob Astor's claim to lands in Putnam County, New York, and the trial of R. Johnson for the murder of Mrs. U. Newman.⁶⁸ Journeying South, Sparhawk took up his residence near Gamble's Hill, Richmond, and for three months he edited the *Messenger*, doing most of his work at his home, where his wife Julia B. Sparhawk lay dying of consumption. Some time after the death of his wife on May 31, 1836, he was married to a widow who, with three children, survived him.⁶⁹ After leaving the *Messenger*, Sparhawk became the editor of *The Petersburg (Va.) Intelligencer*. The following notice of his sudden death on January 6, 1838, taken from *The Richmond (Va.) Whig* for January 8, 1838, appeared in the *Virginia Free Press*:

We have the painful task of recording the sudden death, in this city [Richmond, Va.] on Saturday afternoon [January 6], of EDWARD V. SPARHAWK, Esq. the Editor of the Petersburg Intelligencer. Mr. S. had been for the last week attending the sittings of the House of Delegates, as Reporter for his own paper, and Clerk of the Committee of Agriculture and Manufactures. On the day of his death he did not take notes, but seemed in his usual health, and mixed freely and cheerfully with

⁶⁸S. Austin Allibone, *A Critical Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors Living and Deceased from the Earliest Accounts to the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century*. 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1891), II, 2190.

⁶⁹*The Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, Friday, June 10, 1836.

the members and visitors [*sic*] in the lobby. Soon after the adjournment, as he was passing through the Capitol Square, on his return to his Boarding House, he was taken suddenly ill, and called upon Judge Nicholas, who was near him, to assist him, as he was quite faint. The Judge immediately extended his aid, and called to several gentlemen in sight, one of whom caught Mr. S. as he was falling. A hemorrhage of the lungs had taken place, which produced suffocation and instant prostration. He was conveyed to the Powhatan House, and died in a few minutes.

Mr. Sparhawk was a gentleman of fine talents and extensive acquirements, and a most useful member of society. He was deservedly popular with the members of the Legislature, of the proceedings of which he had been for seven years a faithful Reporter—and he had many warm friends both here and in Petersburg. He was about 35 years of age, and his health had long been delicate and precarious. He has left a devoted wife and three children—towards whom a feeling of universal sympathy prevails. An event so sudden and appalling, has created a general gloom throughout the city, and among the members.⁷⁰

The May issue of the *Messenger*, under the editorship of Sparhawk, was made up entirely of original articles. By now Robert Greenhow, "Leontine," Mrs. Eliza Gookin Thornton, and "Pertinax Placid" (Sparhawk) had become frequent contributors to the magazine. Another regular contributor was Poe, whose "Lion-izing—A Tale" and reviews appeared in the May number. "Democritus, Jr." contributed "A Prodigious Nose," which Poe perhaps saw in manuscript before his writing "Lionizing." "'Lion-izing,' by Mr. Poe," remarked Sparhawk, "is an inimitable piece of wit and satire: and the man must be far gone

⁷⁰*Virginia Free Press* (Charlestown, Jefferson County, Va. [now W. Va.]), Thursday, Jan. 18, 1838.

in a melancholic humor, whose risibility is not moved by this tale."⁷¹ Alluding to Mrs. Butler's *Journal*, a review of which appeared in this issue, he further asserted:

Although the scene of the story is laid in the foreign city of "*Fum Fudge*," the disposition which it satirizes is often displayed in the cities of this country—even in our own community; and will probably still continue to exist, unless Mrs. Butler's *Journal* should have disgusted the fashionable world with *Lions*.⁷²

The first instalment of "Visit to the Virginia Springs during the Summer of 1834," unsigned; "Dissertation on the Characteristic Differences between the Sexes and on the Position and Influence of Woman in Society," signed "Z. X. W." (Thomas R. Dew); "Letters on the United States of America," by "a young Scotchman now no more" (George W. Waterston); and "Lionel Granby," signed "Theta," were printed in May. Both Sparhawk and Poe agreed that Thomas R. Dew's work was the most perfect essay on the subject in the whole range of literature, and the former described as its striking features: "The comprehensive views taken by the writer, of the whole subject; the copiousness of his illustrations, and the happy manner in which they are brought to sustain his various positions. . . ."⁷³ With the opinions of the author of "Recent American Novels" Sparhawk disagreed, expressing his belief that

⁷¹I, 531 (May, 1835). "Lion-izing" was copied in *The Richmond* (Va.) *Enquirer*, Friday, June 12, 1835.

⁷²I, 531 (May, 1835).

⁷³I, 531 (May, 1835).

. . . Mr. Kennedy and Dr. Bird will prove themselves worthy successors to Cooper and Irving (so far as the latter may be considered a novel writer,) when the mantles shall fall from their shoulders—nor will Mr. Sims [*sic*], the author of *Guy Rivers* and the *Yemassie* [*sic*], (either of which, we apprehend, are superior to the *Insurgents*,) be far behind.⁷⁴

In his “*Letters on the United States of America*” Watterston presented information concerning the sciences and literature of the United States. He found that progress in science, for so young and growing a nation had been as steady and rapid as could reasonably be expected, and although he was not impressed with the scientific journals, and particularly the various societies, he named Bigelow, Nutall, Barton, Eaton, Elliott, Wilson, Bonaparte, Audubon, Cleveland, and Say as scientists who would not be ranked below the best in Europe. Dr. Samuel Latham Mitchill, he wrote, was “One of the most extensively informed scientific men this country has produced. . . .”⁷⁵ He was not greatly impressed with the literature of America:

Literature does not receive that encouragement and patronage under this Republic, which are calculated to give it a vigorous growth or a permanent and healthy existence. There is not much individual wealth, and few can afford . . . to purchase the productions of native authors. There is . . . another cause which operates to the disadvantage of American literature . . . it is the cheapness and facility with which the productions of the British press can be republished in this country. . . . Few [writers] can afford to write for mere fame, and no great inducement is offered to write for any thing else. . . . For a long time . . . the people of

⁷⁴I, 531 (May, 1835). For a brief study of Watterston, see Julia E. Kennedy, *George Watterston: Novelist, “Metropolitan Author,” and Critic*. A Doctoral Dissertation (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1933).
⁷⁵I, 482 (May, 1835).

this country were disposed to underrate their own literary powers, and many believed that none but the works of the British press were worthy of perusal or patronage. This prejudice is, however, now beginning to wear away, especially since the critics of our country have been forced to acknowledge the genius and literary excellence of some of the native writers of America.⁷⁶

In his second instalment, in the July issue Watterston informed his readers that

Novel reading has been legitimized by Sir Walter Scott, and though his productions furnish an admirable standard, nothing in the nature of romance now goes amiss. . . .⁷⁷

The Federalist he praised, and he stated that Charles Brockden Brown's novels were rapidly sinking into oblivion as a result of the rise of Cooper's and Scott's romances.

Complaining that contributors were careless in their manuscripts, Sparhawk urged them to revise their works before sending them to the *Messenger*. He insisted that:

The duty we have assumed, is to foster the productions of native writers—to awaken, especially in the south, a literary spirit, an ambition to excel in the cultivation of polite learning—and to give our humble aid in stimulating the ambition of our youth, by offering a fit repository for the offspring of taste and genius
. . . articles are not seldom inserted in the *Messenger*, which exhibit defects of conception and style, which it is no part of our duty to mend, but which we believe to be counterbalanced by beauties or merits indicating that their authors are capable of better things.⁷⁸

⁷⁶I, 482-483 (May, 1835).

⁷⁷I, 602 (July, 1835).

⁷⁸I, 532 (May, 1835).

A brief note, "Deferred Articles," at the end of the May issue, plainly indicated that the publisher and editor were now having little difficulty in securing material for the magazine, but whether it was printable or not was a different matter.

In previous issues the column "Editorial Remarks," with comments on the contents of the magazine, had been printed on the last page of each issue; but in June, 1835, the title of the department was changed to "Editorial Introduction" and printed on the first page. The editor particularly recommended "Letters from a Sister," by "Leontine"; "Conversational Parties, Soirees and Squeezes," by "Oliver Oldschool" (James Mercer Garnett); "The Sandfords," by "A."; "English Poetry," by P. P. Cooke; "The Sale" and "The Old Parish Church," by St. Leger L. Carter; "A Scene from 'Arnold and Andre'," by George Herbert Calvert; "Lafayette," by Mrs. Emma Willard; and Edgar A. Poe's "Hans Phaall—A Tale." "It is with great pleasure," the editor informed his readers, "we announce the writer [George Herbert Calvert] of this admirable scene, as one from whom future contributions to the Messenger may be anticipated."⁷⁹ He also explained that the lines, "Estelle," composed in the Gothic manner, were printed with "Fra Diavolo's" permission. Many stanzas printed in the journal were the subjects of the deaths of beautiful women—a subject which fascinated Poe.

Sparhawk's editorial duties were completed with the July, 1835, issue, which contained the following

⁷⁹I, 533 (June, 1835).

articles: Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, "Valedictory Address"; "Grayson Griffith," unsigned (William Swan Plumer, White's pastor); "Where Shall the Student Rest?" unsigned, and "The Age of Reptiles," unsigned (both by Judge John W. Wilde, brother of Richard Henry Wilde, Augusta, Ga.); "Visit to the Virginia Springs during the Summer of 1834," unsigned; "My First Night in a Watchhouse," by "Pertinax Placid" (Edward Vernon Sparhawk); "Dissertation on the Characteristic Differences between the Sexes," by Thomas R. Dew; "Lionel Granby," unsigned; "On the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Girl of the Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut," by Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney; "My Native Home," by George Watterston; "To Mary" and "The Visionary," both by Poe; and several reviews by Sparhawk.

In his note to correspondents Sparhawk asserted:

The quantity of rhyme poured in upon us, is indeed a matter of admiration. The effusions which we consign to outer darkness monthly, are past enumeration. Such, for instance, as one containing the following lines, and which purports to be "copied from a young ladies Album"—

Miss E— we have oftimes met before
And—we may—meet no more
What shall I say at parting
Many years have run their race
Since first I saw your face
Around this gay and giddy place
Sweet smiles and blushes darting.⁸⁰

Thus ended Sparhawk's régime. As a pilot of the

⁸⁰I, 652 (July, 1835).

Messenger, he had proved himself a man of journalistic ability. The magazine had been characterized by variety, originality, and the expansion of the department of "Literary Notices" under his editorial management. His reasons for leaving White were never satisfactorily explained in the columns of the magazine.⁸¹ Perhaps he and White had clashed over the editorial policies of the journal. One fact was certain: White was extremely jealous of his literary project, and the identity of his assistants and editors would not be made public without his consent.

⁸¹See Appendix B, p. 98.

CHAPTER III

POE'S EDITORIAL POLICY AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MESSENGER

After Sparhawk's "taking the field against White," three issues of the *Messenger* (August, September, and December) came out during the remainder of the year 1835. For the August issue Poe supplied all the critical notices, and the *Messenger* for September was made up from the owner's "wits." The November number of the magazine came from the press late, and was dated December, 1835, and numbered one of volume two. By December Poe was virtually editor, although White continued to receive the assistance of such friends as Lucian Minor, Beverley Tucker, and James E. Heath.

With his journal now safely launched upon its long period of activity in the interests of Southern literature, T. W. White began the second volume with the following notice written by Lucian Minor:

The gentleman, referred to in the ninth number of the *Messenger*, as filling its editorial chair, retired thence with the eleventh number; and the intellectual department of the paper is now under the conduct of the Proprietor, assisted by a gentleman of distinguished literary talents. Thus seconded, he is sanguine in the hope of rendering the second volume which the present number commences, *at least* as deserving of support as the former was: nay, if he reads aright the tokens which are given him of the future, it teems with even richer banquets for his readers, than they have hitherto enjoyed at his board.¹

¹II, 1 (Dec., 1835).

This announcement continued with commendatory remarks on Edgar A. Poe by name, "not with design to make any invidious distinction, but because such a mention of him finds numberless precedents in the journals on every side, which have rung the praises of his uniquely original vein of imagination, and of humorous, delicate satire."²

Immediately following this statement of the editorial changes and this praise of Poe, appeared the information that all original articles would be inserted as editorial with the omission of the words "For the Southern Literary Messenger." A necessity or an especial occasion would be the only exceptions to this general rule.

For the second volume White bought a new font of type with which to print his magazine, and he began the practice of printing the titles of articles in lighter-faced type. In a letter dated June 22, 1835, Poe had written White:

I have heard it suggested that a lighter-faced type in the headings of your various articles would improve the appearance of the Messenger. Do you not think so likewise?³

Doubtless Poe had suggested all these changes to White, who had been slow in adopting them.

The contents of the December issue included the ninth instalment of Greenhow's "Sketches of the History and Present Condition of Tripoli, with Some Accounts of the Other Barbary States"; "October," by

²*Ibid.*

³*Va. Poe*, XVII, 10.

Eliza of Saco, Maine” (Mrs. Thornton); “Mother and Child,” by “Imogene”; “Lines Written on One of the Blank leaves of a Book Sent to a Friend in England,” also by “Imogene,” with its phrase, “the perfum’d air,” a little suggestive of Poe’s “To Helen”; “The Broken Heart,” a first attempt at blank verse by “Eliza of Richmond” (Eliza White), depicting the fading of a girl on finding her lover untrue; “Halley’s Comet—1760,” a satire modeled after Byron’s and Shelley’s political satires, by Miss E. Draper; Edward T. Tayloe’s “Extracts from my Mexican Journal”; Poe’s “Scenes from an Unpublished Drama” [*Politician*]; “An Address on Education,” by Lucian Minor; “The Wissahicon”; Chapter VI of “Lionel Granby”; “MS. Found in a Bottle”; and twenty-eight pages of book reviews, including Poe’s famous review of Theodore S. Fay’s *Norman Leslie*.

From now on the critical notices became the greatest attraction of the magazine. Poe, who wrote most of the critiques, had now found himself. White’s pet now became a nationally read magazine. In January a supplement was issued, preceded by a publisher’s notice:

We are proud in being able to afford our friends so many and so great evidences of the Messenger’s popularity, as are contained in the following Notices.* From all quarters we have received encouragement—in the approval of our past labors, and in prophecies of our future success. We desire to call the attention of all who are interested in the advancement of Southern

*“The Notices here appended, are very far from *all* we have received. Many are omitted for want of room. All those left out, are unexceptionally flattering to ourselves” (II, 133, Jan., 1836).

Literature, to the matter, the manner, and the *source*, especially of the Extracts subjoined. We hazard little in saying, that *never before in America has any Journal called forth so unanimously, testimonials so unequivocally flattering, as the First Number of the Second Volume of our "Southern Literary Messenger."*⁴

An excerpt from the press comments of *The Richmond (Va.) Whig* is a typical example of the many favorable remarks which the magazine received:

Mr. White's *Literary Messenger* is either the most transcendently able periodical in the United States, or its proprietor has been most particularly successful in eliciting the puff—for it attracts more of the notice of the Press, and is more uniformly admired and praised upon the appearance of its successive numbers, than all the *Literary Periodicals* in the United States put together. The *North American*, [*sic*] *Quarterly*, &c. are comparatively lost sight of. It is universally noticed—not only in the newspaper press of the great towns and cities, but in the obscurest village sheet throughout the land. As Virginians and Southrons, solicitous for the honor of Southern Literature, we are proud to believe that this extensive favor bestowed upon the *Messenger*, flows from its deserts, an opinion confirmed by our personal knowledge of its enterprising, esteemed and modest proprietor.⁵

The delay in the publication of the March number, according to *The Charlottesville (Va.) Advocate*, was occasioned "by the desire of Mr. White to insert Prof. Dew's Address."⁶ No further delays in the magazine occurred until September.

During his editorship of the *Messenger*—a period

⁴II, 133 (Jan., 1836).

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶II, 341 (April, 1836).

little over a year—Poe contributed no radical changes in the conduct, and in the general make-up and contents, of the magazine, except a brilliant department of critical notices. The periodical, as under the guidance of Heath and Sparhawk, continued, under Poe's leadership with White's personal surveillance, as a vehicle of sentimental, moral short stories, long and tedious essays, and mediocre verse. But the fact that there were no changes did not mean that Poe had no plans for the magazine. Like Sparhawk and Heath, Poe had no great influence in respect to the acceptance and rejection of contributions to the *Messenger*. To the editors were left the critical notices, the proof-reading, and the correspondence. White relied not always upon himself and his editorial assistants in matters respecting the journal, but sometimes upon friends who were interested in his literary enterprise, especially from a patriotic point of view, like Judge Tucker and Lucian Minor and others at the College of William and Mary. Even after James Heath had retired as editor, White continued to solicit the aid of this public-spirited Virginian.

Of Poe's rejection and acceptance of contributions to *The Southern Literary Messenger* little evidence has remained. Under Heath's régime the editor occasionally mentioned in his "Notices to Contributors" the grounds upon which certain contributions were either accepted or rejected. As soon as Sparhawk became editor, however, the department of "Notices to Contributors" was discontinued. Poe wisely enough omitted such matters in the numbers which he edited. On

March 3, 1836, he wrote the following letter to John Collins McCabe, one of the contributors to the journal:

A press of other engagements has prevented me, hitherto, from replying to your letter of 24th ult., but I have not the less borne it in mind.

I need not speak to you of the difficulties I have to encounter daily in selecting from the mass of MSS. handed in for the *Messenger*. Personal applications from personal friends of course embarrass me greatly. It is indeed almost impossible to refuse an article offered in this manner without giving mortal offence to the friend who offers it. This offence, however, is most frequently taken by those who have the fewest pretensions of merit. In the present instance I feel perfectly sure that I shall neither wound your feelings nor cause you to think less of me as an acquaintance by returning your poem—which I now enclose.

My reasons for declining it relate as much to yourself, individually, as to the Magazine. I feel exceedingly desirous that you should be even more favorably known to the public than you are at present, and that this object should be accomplished through the medium of the *Messenger*. I have frequently seen pieces from your pen which I would have been happy to insert—one long poem especially, whose title I cannot recall to mind—and some lines lately printed in the Baltimore *Athenaeum*—that great bowl of Editorial skimmed milk and water.

I think you will agree with me that “the Consumptive Girl” is not by any means a fair specimen of your talents. Like all I have seen of your composition, it breathes the true spirit of poetic sentiment and feeling—it has fine and original images—and it has the proper material of the Muse, but it is deficient in the outward habiliments. The versification, in especial, is not what you can make it. The lines in most instances are rough, owing to your frequent choice of words abounding in consonants. Thus in the beginning:

“One burning spot blushed on her smooth fair cheek.”

In some instances the verses are more seriously defective, and cannot be scanned—or even read. For example:

“To the heart—Hope’s death, love’s blight, faded joys,”
and again:

“Long hair unbound fell o’er her swan like neck, wildly.”

I know you will reply, and with some appearance of justice, that much worse verses have appeared in the *Messenger* since my Editorship, and are still appearing; but these are poems which have been long on hand, and to the publication of which Mr. W. had bound himself by promise to their respective authors, before my time. Such difficulties shall not occur again.

Suppose you were to try a series of brief poems—say sonnets—one to appear regularly in each number of the Magazine, embodying multum in parvo, laboured out with scrupulous care in their native metre—and signed with your initials. This will not fail, (if done as well as I know you can do them), to gain you a high and permanent position.

Your sincere well wisher,

EDGAR A. POE.⁷

Further evidence that Poe was not wholly liable for the contents of the *Messenger* is a statement of his to Mrs. Weiss:

You must not judge me by what you find me saying in the magazines. Such expressions of opinion are necessarily modified by a thousand circumstances—the wishes of editors, personal friendships, etc.⁸

And in a footnote to an essay, sometimes attributed to

⁷Armistead Churchill Gordon, *Memories and Memorials of William Gordon McCabe*. 2 vols. (Richmond, 1925), I, 16-17. This letter is reprinted by permission of Miss Mary D. Gordon of Staunton, Virginia.

⁸Quoted by J. W. Krutch, *Edgar Allan Poe: A Study in Genius* (New York, 1926), p. 221.

Poe,⁹ entitled "Genius," Poe hastened to add the documentation:

Of course no Editor is responsible for the opinions of his contributors—but in the present instance we feel called upon in self-defence to disclaim any belief in the doctrines advanced—and, moreover, to enter a solemn protest against them. The Essay on Genius is well written and we therefore admitted it. While many of its assumptions are indisputable—some we think are not to be sustained—and the influences, generally, lag far behind the spirit of the age. Our correspondent is evidently no phrenologist.¹⁰

In the prospectus (1840) of *The Penn Magazine* Poe recalled T. W. White's influence:

I will be pardoned for speaking more directly of *The Messenger*. Having in it no proprietary rights, my objects, too being at variance in many respects with those of its very worthy owner, I found difficulty in stamping upon its pages that *individuality* which I believe essential to the full success of all similar publications. In regard to their permanent influences, it appears to me that a continuous, definite character, and a marked certainty of purpose are desiderata of vital importance, and (I cannot help believing that these requisites are) only attainable when one mind alone has the general direction of the undertaking.¹¹

The change in the type of the *Messenger* attracted the favorable comment of *The Alexandria (Va.) Gazette*:

No Magazine in this country or elsewhere now excels it in

⁹See Professor Killis Campbell's comments on this essay in his *The Mind of Poe and Other Studies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), pp. 216-217.

¹⁰II, 300 (April, 1836). For an excellent account of the influence of phrenology on Poe and of Poe's interest in the science, see Edward Hungerford's "Poe and Phrenology," *American Literature*, IV, 209-231 (Nov., 1930).

¹¹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 58-59.

the beauty of its *typography*.—It is printed in the neatest manner, with the handsomest type, on the best paper.¹²

Not only *The Alexandria Gazette* but the press in general was loud in praise of the December, 1835, issue, which doubtless Poe and White had circulated widely, so that in January, 1836, Poe published an eight-page supplement filled with extracts of praise from newspapers in every part of the Union, commenting on the typography as well as the contents of the magazine, especially the editorial department. A few newspapers, however, dissented from the favorable majority, and their remarks were also published. Two other supplements, both of eight pages, were published in the following April and July numbers. In April the editor of *The Norfolk (Va.) Herald* wrote:

To use the words of a Northern contemporary "it has done more within the last six months to refine the literary standard in this country than has been accomplished before in the space of ten years."¹³

The editor of *The Pennsylvanian*, on the other hand, found fault with the contents of this Southern magazine:

It is comparatively heavy, a fault which should be carefully avoided in a magazine intended for all sorts of readers.¹⁴

To Poe's brilliant editorial department undoubtedly belonged all the fame and high excellence which the *Messenger* attained in the first three years of its exis-

¹²"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 135 (Jan., 1836).

¹³"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 343 (April, 1836).

¹⁴"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 347 (April, 1836).

tence. His caustic criticism caused the attention of the American reading public to be focused on the *Messenger*. Immediately the press took pleasure in noticing the *Messenger*, and certain schools of writers became bitter enemies of the hitherto little known editor of the magazine, Edgar Allan Poe. The observations of the editor of *The Cincinnati (Ohio) Mirror* were that

Its [the *Messenger's*] correspondents are numerous and able, and its editor wields the gray goose quill like one who knows what he is about, and who has a right to. Commend us to the literary notices of this Magazine for genius, spice and spirit. Those which are commendatory, are supported by the real merit of the books themselves; but woe seize on the luckless wights who feel the savage skill with which the editor uses his tomahawk and scalping knife. The fact is, the *Messenger* is not given to the mincing of matter—what it has to say is said fearlessly.¹⁵

With Poe's criticism of *Norman Leslie*, a novel by Theodore S. Fay, a member of the Knickerbocker group, the storm broke. Some writers approved; others disapproved. The review was followed by bitter attacks on two other books, *Paul Ulric* and *Ups and Downs*. On September 2, 1836, in a letter to the editor of *The Richmond (Va.) Courier and Daily Compiler*, Poe replied to his critics in an effort to defend himself and guard the reputation of the journal:

Since the commencement of my editorship, in December last, 94 books have been reviewed. In 79 of these cases, the commendation has so largely predominated over the few sentences of censure that every reader would pronounce the notices highly laudatory. In seven instances, viz.: in those of "The Hawks of

¹⁵"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 343 (April, 1836).

Hawk Hollow;" "The Old World and the New;" "Spain Revisited;" the poems of Mrs. Sigourney, of Miss Gould, of Mrs. Ellet and of Halleck praise slightly prevails. In five, viz.: in those of Clinton Bradshaw, "The Partisan," "Elkswatawa," "Lafitte," and the Po-Drake [*sic*], censure is greatly predominant; while the only reviews decidedly and harshly condemnatory are those of "Norman Leslie," "Paul Ulric" and "Ups and Downs."¹⁶

Poe's critical notices were not the only attractions that caused the public eye to be cast upon the *Messenger*, for Poe, a clever magazinist, resorted to different methods to catch the attention of the reading public and to increase the circulation of the magazine. In the February and August issues appeared the articles on "Autography" with the facsimile signatures of prominent men and women reproduced. "The Chapter on Autography" elicited the following comment from *The Georgetown (D. C.) Metropolitan*:

The most extraordinary article in the book [the *Messenger*] and the one which will excite most attention, is its tail piece, in which an American edition of Frazer's celebrated Miller hoax has been played off on the American Literati with great success—and better than all, an accurate fac simile of each autography given along with it.

The article is extremely amusing, and will excite more attention than probably any thing of the kind yet published in an American periodical. It is quite new in this part of the world.¹⁷

Not satisfied with these journalistic innovations of "a somewhat overdone causticity in its department of

¹⁶Minor, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54. Professor Killis Campbell well points out that the first statement in this paragraph "does not fully warrant the inference that he had written all these reviews" (Campbell, *The Mind of Poe*, pp. 230-231).

¹⁷"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 347 (April, 1836).

Critical Notices of new books” and with the amazing articles on autography, Poe published “Maelzel’s Chess-Player,” which, with the review of the poems of Drake and Halleck, brought forth the following commendations from the editor of *The Norfolk (Va.) Herald*:

We wished especially to have called public attention to the Editorial *critique* on the poems of Drake and Halleck, and the article (also editorial) on the “Automaton of Maelzel.” Both these pieces are unanswerable—and perhaps the two best articles of any kind which have ever appeared in an American Periodical. The essay on the Automaton *cannot be answered*, and we have heard the Editor challenges a reply from Maelzel himself, or from any source whatever. The piece has excited great attention.¹⁸

The Georgetown (D. C.) Metropolitan observed that among the attractive features of the *Messenger* was its early appearance:

Many improvements have been made, in this favorite magazine which will greatly enhance its value for the future. Among these, not the least will be the advantage to its subscribers of an early issue: the present number [December, 1835] reached us in the latter days of November,—and Maine will be served in future almost as soon as Richmond, a matter of no small consequence to a magazine, and, a great merit in the *Messenger*, as contrasted with its dilatory cotemporaries.¹⁹

Such attention as was showered upon *The Southern Literary Messenger* must have increased its circulation. John Pendleton Kennedy recorded in his diary that Poe’s talents made the periodical quite brilliant and that during his editorship the circulation increased

¹⁸“Supplement,” *S. L. M.*, II, 519 (July, 1836).

¹⁹“Supplement,” *S. L. M.*, II, 137 (Jan., 1836).

from seven hundred to nearly five thousand. Several years after his leaving the *Messenger* Poe wrote Charles Anthon, a professor in Columbia College, that he had increased the circulation in fifteen months from 700 to 5,500 subscribers paying an annual profit of \$10,000;²⁰ and to Patterson, from less than 1,000 to 5,000 subscribers.²¹ At least the circulation increased under Poe's editorship.

New contributors to the magazine during Poe's editorial connection with the magazine numbered about twenty, among whom the most prominent were: Nathan Covington Brooks, Mrs. Elizabeth Fries Ellet, Timothy Flint, Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, John C. McCabe, and William Gilmore Simms. Brooks's contribution was "Moses Smiting the Rock," in the January, 1837, issue. Mrs. Ellet, the wife of a professor in South Carolina College, Columbia, South Carolina, contributed articles more frequently to the *Messenger* than did Brooks, and no less than five contributions represented her in the magazine from August, 1835, to January, 1837. Timothy Flint's one contribution was a poem, "Living Alone," in the February, 1836, number. Mrs. Hale, later editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*,²² submitted "A Profession for Ladies" to the August, 1836, issue of the *Messenger*. Both McCabe and Simms continued to contribute to the magazine long after Poe's resignation. Other new contributors were: George Herbert Calvert, J. Doggett, Jr., E. Burke

²⁰*Va. Poe*, XVII, 177-178.

²¹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 350.

²²See Ruth E. Finley, *The Lady of Godey's: Sarah Josepha Hale* (Philadelphia and London, 1931).

Fisher, Horatio King, Francis Lieber, William Maxwell, Robert Montgomery Bird, Henry St. George Tucker, and Lambert A. Wilmer. Regular contributors included Philip Pendleton Cooke, James M. Garnett, Robert G. Greenhow, Edwin Saunders, Judge Joseph Hopkinson, J. N. McJilton, James Kirke Paulding, Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, Robert Walsh, and E. F. Stanton.

In May, 1836, J. N. McJilton appeared with the short story, "The Hall of Incholese," which was censured by the editor of *The Richmond (Va.) Compiler*:

"The Hall of Incholese" by J. N. McJilton should not have been admitted into the columns of the Messenger. It is an imitation of the Editor's tale of Bon-Bon, and like most other imitations, utterly unworthy of being mentioned in comparison with its original.²³

In the Index of Volume II, which Poe probably compiled, appeared only three articles under the caption, "Selected Articles": "The Fountain of Oblivion," a poem suggestive of Poe's "Annabel Lee," by a Virginian (William M. Robinson); "MS. Found in a Bottle," by Poe; and "Specimen of Ancient Loveletters [*sic*]," by John Fenn. This fact indicated that White and his editor had closely adhered to the policy of publishing only original articles. Another feature was the printing of excerpts from novels or books about to be published, examples of which were George H. Calvert's "A Scene from 'Arnold and Andre'" and A. Slidell's "Scenes in Campillo."

As has been stated before, Poe did not have abso-

²³"Supplement," *S. L. M.*, II, 518 (July, 1836).

lute control of the editorial management of the periodical, for an extract from one of Thomas White's letters to Judge N. Beverley Tucker makes sufficiently clear this fact:

Added to all this, I am cramped by him in the exercise of my own judgment, as to what articles I shall or shall not admit into my work. It is true that I neither have his sagacity, nor his learning—but I do believe I know a handspike from a saw.²⁴

In the same letter White showed his dependence on Tucker's literary judgment and taste. In a letter dated June, 1844, to Professor Anthon, Poe wrote that he managed to increase the circulation of the *Messenger*, "in despite of the wretched taste of its proprietor, which hampered and controlled me at all points. . . ."²⁵ Writing to William Poe, in August, 1840, Poe explained that

I believe you know that my connexion with the *Sou. Messenger* was merely that of Editor. I had no proprietary interest in it, and my movements were therefore much impeded. The situation was disagreeable to me in every respect. The drudgery was excessive, the salary was contemptible. In fact, I soon found that whatever reputation I might personally gain, this reputation would be all. I stood no chance of bettering my pecuniary condition, while my best energies were wasted in the service of an illiterate and vulgar, although well meaning man, who had neither the capacity to appreciate my labors, nor the will to reward them.²⁶

In the April, 1836, number of the magazine Poe omitted Beverley Tucker's two poems, both entitled

²⁴Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 256. See also Appendix C, p. 110.

²⁵*Va. Poe*, XVII, 177-178.

²⁶*Va. Poe*, XVII, 55.

“To a Coquette,” for which space permitted only one. For this procedure he was taken to task by White, and the following letter of explanation was the result:

Richmond
May 2, 1836.

Dear Sir,

At Mr. White's request I write to apologize for the omission of your verses “To a Coquette” in the present number of the *Messenger*. Upon making up the *form* containing them it was found impossible to get both the pieces in, and their connection one with the other rendered it desirable not to separate them—they were therefore left for the May number.

I must also myself beg your pardon for making a few immaterial alterations in your article on Slavery, with a view of so condensing it as to get it in the space remaining at the end of the number. One very excellent passage in relation to the experience of a sick bed has been, necessarily, omitted altogether.

It would give me great pleasure to hear your opinion of the *February*, and of the *April* number of the *Messenger*—I mean of the Editorial articles. It is needless for me to say that I value your good opinion, and wish to profit by your counsel.

Please present my best wishes to Professor Dew.

With the highest esteem

Yr. Ob. s^t.

Edgar A. Poe.

Will you ask Mr. Saunders what has become of the article he promised us?²⁷

Poe obviously appreciated the magazine values: condensation and appropriateness.

²⁷Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 655-656. This letter and parts of others quoted from Professor James Southall Wilson's article, “Unpublished Letters of Edgar Allan Poe,” are printed with the permission of Professor Wilson and Mr. George P. Coleman of Williamsburg, Virginia, a grandson of Nathaniel Beverley Tucker.

In his numerous letters to friends Poe expressed himself in respect to the position of magazines in the literature of America and the editorial management of a periodical. To own and edit a magazine of his own was Poe's lifelong ambition, of which he wrote Professor Anthon in June, 1844:

Before quitting the "Messenger" I saw, or fancied I saw, through a long and dim vista, the brilliant field for ambition which a Magazine of bold and noble aims presented to him who should successfully establish it in America. I perceived that the country, from its very constitution, could not fail of affording in a few years a larger proportionate amount of readers than any upon the earth. I perceived that the whole energetic, busy spirit of the age tended wholly to Magazine literature—to the curt, the terse, the well-timed, and the readily diffused, in preference to the old forms of the verbose and ponderous and the inaccessible. I knew from personal experience that lying *perdu* among the innumerable plantations in our vast Southern and Western countries were a host of well-educated men peculiarly devoid of prejudice, who would gladly lend their influence to a really vigorous journal, provided the right means were taken of bringing it fairly within the very limited scope of their observation.²⁸

In August, 1840, Poe wrote a letter to his cousin William, soliciting his aid, and sending him a prospectus of the proposed *Penn Magazine*, expressing his desire "to produce some lasting effect upon the growing literature of the country."²⁹ He explained that during his connection with *The New York Review* and *The Gentleman's Magazine* he had only been waiting for the opportune time to establish a magazine of his own.

²⁸*Va. Poe*, XVII, 176.

²⁹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 56.

He further stated that he would rely upon the South in his undertaking and asked William Poe, who had represented the *Messenger* in Georgia, to be his agent for the *Penn Magazine* in Augusta.

In a rather long letter to Washington Irving, dated June 21, 1841, Poe dwelt upon the magazine projects and journalistic ideas which he had formed after his editorship of the *Messenger*. He proposed with George R. Graham to establish a five-dollar monthly magazine of octavo page, single column, and clear, bold type, wherein only the finest minds of the United States would express themselves:

I need not call your attention to the signs of the times in respect to magazine literature. You will admit the tendency of the age in this direction. The brief, the terse, the condensed and the easily circulated will take place of the difficult, the ponderous and the inaccessible. Even our reviews are found too massive for the taste of the day—I do not mean for the taste of the merely uneducated, but also for that of the few. In the meantime the finest minds of Europe are beginning to lend their spirit to magazines.³⁰

In speaking of the proposed *Penn Magazine*, Poe further wrote: "Its aim shall be *to please*, and this through means of versatility, originality and pungency."³¹

To his friend Philip Pendleton Cooke, Poe wrote in 1839: "As soon as Fate allows I will have a Magazine of my own—and will endeavor to kick up a dust."³² But it was not necessary for him to possess a magazine

³⁰*The New York Times*, Sunday, Jan. 12, 1930.

³¹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 60.

³²*Va. Poe*, XVII, 53.

of his own in order "to kick up a dust," for the critical notices in the *Messenger* caused dust to fly in the eyes of many. The already mentioned reviews of *Norman Leslie*, *Paul Ulric*, and *Ups and Downs* caused many people to notice the magazine, and the battle between Poe and Fay, the author of *Norman Leslie*, became personal. In April, 1836, Poe addressed the following note to Fay in the columns of the magazine:

Mr. Fay wishes us to believe that the sale of a book is the proper test of its merit. To save time and trouble we *will* believe it, and are prepared to acknowledge, as a consequence of the theory, that the novel of Norman Leslie is not at all comparable to the *Memoirs of Davy Crockett*, or the popular lyric of Jim Crow.³³

To attacks on Poe's critical notices and supplements by the editors of *The New York Mirror* and *The Southern Literary Journal* Poe answered:

We are sorry to perceive that our friends of the "*Southern Literary Journal*" are disposed to unite with the "*Knickerbocker*" and the "*New York Mirror*" in covert, and therefore unmanly, thrusts at the "*Messenger*." It is natural that these two Journals (who refused to exchange with us from the first) should feel themselves aggrieved at our success, and we own that, bearing them no very good will, we care little what injury they do themselves in the public estimation by suffering their mortification to become apparent. But we are embarked in the cause of *Southern Literature*, and (with perfect amity to all sections) wish to claim especially as a friend and co-operator, every *Southern Journal*. We repeat, therefore, that we are grieved to see a disposition of hostility, entirely unprovoked, manifested on the part of Mr. Whittaker [*sic*]. He should reflect, that while we

³³II, 340 (April, 1836).

ourselves cannot for a moment believe him otherwise than perfectly upright and sincere in his animadversions upon our Magazine, still there is hardly one individual in ninety-nine who will not attribute every ill word he says of us to the instigations of jealousy.³⁴

In his many critiques Poe dealt with all kinds of people and subjects: slavery, the North versus the South, education, America versus England and Europe, the characteristics of Americans, the American frontier, literature, metempsychosis, phrenology, politics, and religion.³⁵ In respect to slavery, Poe pled for the *status quo*,³⁶ remarking that most of the descriptions of slavery had been drawn "in red ochre."³⁷ On one occasion he wrote:

We hope the day has gone by when we are to be judged by the testimony of false, interested, and malignant accusers alone. We repeat that we are thankful to Mr. Paulding for having stepped forward in our defence. Our assailants are numerous, and it is indispensable that we should meet the assault with vigor and activity. Nothing is wanting but manly discussion to convince our own people at least, that in continuing to command the services of their slaves, they violate no law divine or human, and that in the faithful discharge of their reciprocal obligations lies their true duty . . . we believe (with our esteemed correspondent Professor Dew) that society in the South will derive much

³⁴II, 460 (June, 1836). Professor Lewis Chase has called to my attention the criticisms of Poe and the *Messenger* in *The Southern Literary Journal*, ed. Daniel K. Whitaker, II, 312 (June, 1836) and II, 393, 397, and 402-403 (July, 1836).

³⁵See also Professor Killis Campbell's essay, "The Backgrounds of Poe," in his *The Mind of Poe*, pp. 99-125, Ernest Marchand's "Poe As Social Critic," *American Literature*, VI, 28-43 (March, 1934). For Poe's method of writing the review of *Astoria*, see Killis Campbell, "Three Notes on Poe," *American Literature*, IV, 385-388 (Jan., 1933).

³⁶II, 336-339 (April, 1836).

³⁷II, 122 (Jan., 1836).

more of good than of evil from this much abused partially-considered institution.³⁸

Poe also declared that the pages of the magazine were, and had been, open "to the discussion of all general questions in Political Law, or Economy—never to questions of mere party."³⁹

In other notices he deplored the antipathy that existed between the North and the South, especially New England and the South.⁴⁰ In his comments on Lucian Minor's "Address on Education," which White had issued in pamphlet form, Poe pointed out that the South lagged far behind New England in its system of public schools:

We sincerely wish—nay, we even confidently hope, that words so full of warning, and at the same time so pregnant with truth, may succeed in stirring up something akin to action in the legislative halls of the land. Indeed there is no time to squander in speculation. The most lukewarm friend of the State must perceive—if he perceives anything—that the glory of the Ancient Dominion is in a fainting—is in a dying condition. Her once great name is becoming, in the North, a bye-word for imbecility—all over the South, a type for "the things that *have been*." And tamely to ponder upon times gone by is not to meet the exigencies of the times present or to come. Memory will not help us. The recollection of our former high estate will not benefit us. Let us act. While we have a resource let us make it of avail. Let us proceed, at once, to the establishment throughout the country, of *district schools*, upon a plan or organization similar to that of our New England friends.⁴¹

³⁸II, 339 (April, 1836).

³⁹II, 445 (June, 1836).

⁴⁰II, 122-123 (Jan., 1836).

⁴¹II, 66-67 (Dec., 1835).

In the review of *Notices of the War of 1812* he lamented that there existed "a piquancy and freedom of expression, in regard to the unhappy sources of animosity between America and the parent land, which can neither to-day nor hereafter answer any possible good end, and may prove an individual grain in a future mountain of mischief."⁴² "Bullheaded" and "prejudiced" were the adjectives which Poe used in describing the American people.⁴³ In respect to magazine writing he wrote, "the English as far excel us as Hyperion a Satyr."⁴⁴ Poe felt that Fanny Kemble had failed to appreciate the Americans for their real worth,⁴⁵ and was pleased that Charles Joseph Latrobe viewed the Americans "with the comprehensive glance of a citizen of the world."⁴⁶ He was particularly desirous that the United States should build up a name for nautical discovery commensurate with her moral, political, and commercial position among the nations of the world, calling the Pacific Ocean "the gymnasium of our national navy."⁴⁷ W. D. Gallagher's *Erato* awakened bright hopes in Poe for the literature of the West. In the notice of Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes*, with which Poe was unusually well pleased, he reproached Southerners for their failure to recognize their heroes, by even a couplet epitaph, and in the same review he added: "Thanks to the long indulged literary supineness of the South, her presses are not as apt

⁴²II, 450 (June, 1836).

⁴³II, 721 (Oct., 1836).

⁴⁴II, 458 (June, 1836).

⁴⁵I, 524-531 (May, 1835).

⁴⁶II, 121 (Jan., 1836).

⁴⁷II, 587 (Aug., 1836).

in putting forth a *saleable* book as her sons are in concocting a wise one."⁴⁸

Poe's interest in other contemporary affairs and matters is shown in the contents of his essays and tales. The plot of *Politian* is based on a tragedy of Kentucky.⁴⁹ In his tales he shows a familiar knowledge of all of the current topics in the American newspapers of his time: pestilence, mystification, mesmerism, premature burials, ballooning, and nautical discoveries.

In reply to White's criticism of "Berenice," Poe answered in a letter dated April 30, 1835, that White's opinions of it were valid and that the "tale originated in a bet that I could produce nothing effective on a subject so singular, provided that I treated it seriously."⁵⁰ He continued:

The history of all magazines shows plainly that those which obtained celebrity were indebted for it to articles similar in nature to Berenice, although, I grant you, far superior in execution. You ask me in what does the nature consist. In the ludicrous heightened into the grotesque; the fearful colored into the horrible; the witty exaggerated into the burlesque; and the singular heightened into the strange and mystical.⁵¹

In further reply to White he added:

But whether the articles of which I speak are in bad taste is of

⁴⁸II, 287 (March, 1836). For more elaborate accounts of Poe's social criticism, see Killis Campbell, *The Mind of Poe*, pp. 99-125, and Ernest Marchand, "Poe as Social Critic," *American Literature*, 28-43 (March, 1934). The above discussion of Poe's criticism was written several years before the appearance of Mr. Marchand's article.

⁴⁹See Thomas Ollive Mabbott, *Politian: An Unfinished Tragedy*. . . (Richmond, 1923).

⁵⁰Napier Wilt, "Poe's Attitude Toward His Tales: A New Document," *Modern Philology*, XXV, 102 (Aug., 1927).

⁵¹Wilt, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

little purpose. To be appreciated you must *be read* and these things are sought after with avidity.⁵²

Poe concluded his letter with the hope of furnishing White with a "tale a month, no two alike in matter or manner," saying that "the effect—if any—will be estimated better by the circulation of the magazine than by any comments on its contents."⁵³ Obviously Poe intended to appeal to the readers of periodical literature by offering them what was already conventionally popular.⁵⁴

⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 104. The italics are Poe's.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵⁴See Professor Wilt's conclusions, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

With the *Messenger* Poe's hands had become indelibly stained with printers' ink. He had found himself after an aimless wandering from one uncertain occupation to another. The writing of verse and tales was to become an avocation. Literary journalism was to be his vocation and forte.

Poe's association with White and his friends on the editorial staff of *The Southern Literary Messenger* had an important influence on his later career, and the magazine, in turn, owed a great deal to Poe. Although he had not been given free play with the editing of the Southern periodical, he had brought national attention to it by his brilliant critical notices. He had thus increased the circulation of the journal so that White could have some financial stability and security in his crusade for Southern letters. The *Messenger* would become the chief vehicle for Southern writers. The names of William Gilmore Simms, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Henry Timrod, Philip Pendleton Cooke, John Esten Cooke, James Barron Hope, John R. Thompson, James Russell Lowell, Henry T. Tuckerman, and Donald Grant Mitchell, and others, were to adorn its pages. White would have probably given up the project, had it not been for Poe's timely appearance. Magazines had sprung up in the desert air of the South, only to die within a year or two for want of proper

nourishment in the way of a sufficient number of paying subscribers. In the face of almost countless magazine failures in the South and despite the discouragement of his closest Virginian friends, White had begun his pet project. To Heath, to Beverley Tucker, and to Lucian Minor, all men of literary ability, but not primarily magazinists, White's debt was great. His second editorial assistant, Edward Vernon Sparhawk, exhibited signs of a journalist with his critiques in the manner of Poe and with his selection of original material for the magazine, but after a short term of three months he had left White for the more profitable business of running a newspaper in Petersburg, Virginia. Poe was White's hope and main reliance in the almost hopeless task of publishing a truly Southern magazine.

Before filling the position as editor, Poe displayed signs of having studied the English journals. In his letters written in the spring of 1835 his advice to White was sound. He knew what types of stories and what literary forms appealed to the ever growing mass of readers of periodical literature. He had the gifts of a journalist and he realized the necessity for the terse and the well condensed. His supplements to the *Messenger* were high-powered advertisements, and the articles on autography and "Maelzel's Chess-Player" were clever feature stories. He was one of the few who saw in his day the possibilities of magazine literature in America, and so it was with such a broad-visioned journalist as Poe that White published *The Southern Literary Messenger: Devoted to Every Department of Literature and the Fine Arts*.

Having been in desperate circumstances, Poe was only too glad to contribute to the *Messenger* and later to assist its owner in the editorial management. Both Kennedy, who introduced Poe to White, and White and the *Messenger* were Godsend. Not only was Poe poor financially, but also his health was beginning to break down, and he was cut off from any bequest from his foster-father, John Allan.

The magazine gave Poe employment, financial reward of a sort, and an opportunity to establish himself with a journal, a desire which he had in Baltimore. Southern conviviality, family matters such as the care of Mrs. Clemm and Virginia, White's nervous temperament, the influence of friends and enemies whom he made by his contributions to the *Messenger*, the failure of Mrs. Clemm and White to operate a boarding house, perhaps all of these contributed to his erratic disposition and to the length of his service and probably determined the quantity and quality of his literary work.

The editorship of the *Messenger* was both an experiment and an experience for Poe, even though White cautiously guarded the policies of his editors. In this editorial position Poe possessed an opportunity to test and to find out what the reading public wanted and in doing so he gained invaluable experience. In the prospectus of *The Penn Magazine* he stated the aims of the proposed magazine, ideas which he had formulated under White:

. . . I found difficulty in stamping upon its [the *Messenger's*] pages that *individuality* which I believe essential to the full suc-

cess of all similar publications. In regard to their permanent influences, it appears to me that a continuous, definite character, and a marked certainty of purpose are desiderata of vital importance, and (I cannot help believing that these requisites are) only attainable when one mind alone has the general direction of the undertaking. . . . It shall be the first and chief purpose of the Magazine now proposed to become known as one where may be found at all times, and upon all subjects, an honest and a fearless opinion. It shall be a leading object to assert in precept, and to maintain in practice the rights, while in effect it demonstrates the advantages, of an absolutely independent criticism—a criticism self-sustained; guiding itself only by the purest rules of Art, analyzing and urging these rules as it applies them; holding itself aloof from all personal bias; acknowledging no fear save that of outraging the right; yielding no point either to the vanity of the author, or to the assumptions of antique prejudice, or to the involute and anonymous cant of the Quarterlies, or to the arrogance of those organized *cliques* which, hanging like nightmares upon American literature, manufacture, at the nod of our principal booksellers, a pseudo-public-opinion by wholesale.¹

As editor of the *Messenger*, Poe gave particular attention to the state of American criticism. He lamented the fact that public opinion, like a pendulum, swung from one extreme to another and that what he called "censorship of the press" first cringed to foreign opinion and later assumed with hauteur a literary freedom:

Deeply lamenting this unjustified state of public feeling, it has been our constant endeavor, since assuming the Editorial duties of this Journal, to stem, with what little abilities we possess, a current so disastrously undermining the health and

¹*Va. Poe*, XVII, 58-60. In this same prospectus Poe appealed to his many Southern friends, who had sustained him in the *Messenger*, where he had "but a very partial opportunity of completing my own plans."

prosperity of our literature. We have seen our efforts applauded by men whose applauses we value.²

A minute and exhaustive study of the contents of the *Messenger* before Poe became editor will perhaps reveal imitations and sources of his work. Mention has already been made of "Extract from a Novel that Never Will Be Published," "A Tale of a Nose," "The Passage of the Beresina," "The Fountain of Oblivion," and "Estelle." There are many other parallels, for Poe was writing what was already popular.

In another way the editorship of the magazine with its numerous tasks may have proved a hindrance to him in the output of his creative work. The poems which he first published in the *Messenger* were: "Scenes from an Unpublished Drama" (*Politian*), "Hymn" ("Catholic Hymn") in "Morella," "To Mary" ("To F—" or "To One Departed"), "Lines Written in an Album" ("To F—"), "The Valley Nis" ("The Valley of Unrest"), "The Bridal Ballad," and "Sonnet to Zante." Poems which had already appeared in print, but which were republished in forms more or less revised, were: "The Coliseum," "A Pæan" ("Leonore"), "To Helen" ("Helen, thy beauty is to me"), "Sonnet—To Silence," "Irene" ("The Sleeper"), "Israfel," and "The City of Sin" ("The City in the Sea"). His lack of leisure, while he was editing the *Messenger*, may be partly the reason for the paucity of his productions. Eight of his tales were printed in the *Messenger* for the first time: "Berenice," "Morella,"

²I, 326-327 (April, 1836).

“Lion-izing,” “Hans Phaall,” “King Pest,” “Shadow—A Parable,” “Epimanes,” and “Arthur Gordon Pym.” “The Assignation,” “Bon-Bon,” “Loss of Breath,” “MS. Found in a Bottle,” “Metzengerstein,” “Duc De L’Omelette,” and “A Tale of Jerusalem” were reprinted from the Baltimore and Philadelphia periodicals.

On the pages of *The Southern Literary Messenger* Poe loomed upon the literary horizon of the early nineteenth century in America as the magazinist with but few, if any, equals. To the pages of the Southern periodical one must turn to find Poe, the young magazinist and a pioneer in literary criticism in America.



Edgar Allan Poe's Desk, now in possession of Mr. James H. Whitty of Richmond.

The old building on the corner of Fifteenth and Main Streets, Richmond, Virginia.



- *Poe's Room in the Messenger Building.
- **Ellis and Allan Building, where Poe was employed after leaving college.

© J. H. WHITTY

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

A SELECTED LIST OF POE'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO *The Southern Literary Messenger* IN 1835, 1836, AND 1837*

- "Berenice—A Tale," I, 333-336 (March, 1835).
"Morella—A Tale," I, 448-450 (April, 1835).
"Lion-izing. A Tale," I, 515-516 (May, 1835).
"Hans Phaall—A Tale," I, 565-580 (June, 1835).
"To Mary," I, 636 (July, 1835).
"The Visionary—A Tale," I, 637-640 (July, 1835).
"Bon-Bon—A Tale," I, 693-698 (Aug., 1835).
"The Coliseum. A Prize Poem," I, 706 (Aug., 1835).
"Loss of Breath. A Tale a la Blackwood," I, 735-740 (Sept., 1835).
"Lines Written in an Album," I, 748 (Sept., 1835).
"King Pest the First. A Tale Containing an Allegory," I, 757-761 (Sept., 1835).
"Shadow. A Fable," I, 762-763 (Sept., 1835).
"Scenes from an Unpublished Drama," II, 13-16 (Dec., 1835) and II, 106-108 (Jan., 1836).
"MS. Found in a Bottle," II, 33-37 (Dec., 1835).
"The Duc De L'Omelette," II, 150-151 (Feb., 1836).
"The Valley Nis," II, 154 (Feb., 1836).
"Autography," II, 205-212 (Feb., 1836) and II, 601-604 (Aug., 1836).
"Epimanes," II, 235-238 (March, 1836).
"To Helen," II, 238 (March, 1836).
"Some Ancient Greek Authors. Chronologically Arranged," II, 301-302 (April, 1836).
"A Tale of Jerusalem," II, 313-314 (April, 1836).

*I have not included in this list any of Poe's numerous reviews. For a fairly accurate bibliography of his contributions to the *Messenger*, see *Va. Poe*, XVI, 356 ff.

- "Maelzel's Chess-Player," II, 318-326 (April, 1836).
"Sonnet," II, 366 (May, 1836).
"Irene," II, 387-388 (May, 1836).
"Letter to B—," II, 501-503 (July, 1836).
"Israfil," II, 539 (Aug., 1836).
"The City of Sin," II, 552 (Aug., 1836).
"Pinakidia," II, 573-582 (Aug., 1836).
"Ballad," III, 5 (Jan., 1837).
"Arthur Gordon Pym," III, 13-16 (Jan., 1837) and III, 109-116
(Feb., 1837).
"Sonnet. To Zante," III, 32 (Jan., 1837).

APPENDIX B

LETTERS OF T. W. WHITE TO LUCIAN MINOR

I am very grateful to Mr. Oliver R. Barrett of Chicago, Illinois, for his permission to print the letters numbered here [1] and [2], the manuscripts of which are in his possession. For the letters numbered [3] to [10] I am very much indebted to the Trustees of the Pierpont Morgan Library of New York City, who have allowed me to print the manuscript letters in their possession. I am also grateful to Mr. J. H. Whitty of Richmond, Va., for his permission to use letters numbered [3] to [10], parts of which were printed by him in his *The Complete Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (Boston and New York, 1911 and 1917), Appendix IV, pp. 183-185. Parts of these eight letters were quoted by Miss Mary E. Phillips in her work *Edgar Allan Poe: The Man* (Philadelphia, 1926), I, 500, 506, 512, 518-519, and 523.

[1]

Richmond, Feb. 17, 1835.¹

Lucian Minor, Esq.
My Dear Sir,

Most anxiously have I looked for a letter from you ever since you left Virginia,—and I am at last gratified with one announcing your safe arrival at your present residence,—a residence however which I must again invite you to change for one among us.

My devoted friend Heath cannot find the leisure to do me half that service which he wishes; and continually importunes me to procure the assistance of a competent editor,—and no other name always

¹Received by Minor on February 20, 1835.

assails me than yours—"Get Lucian Minor,"—"Get Lucian Minor"—"he is the man for you, and for your Messenger,"—always accompanying his recommendation with a highly colored panegyrick.

Nor is Mr. H. the only individual who points you out as the very individual I ought to have. Professor Rogers (your warm friend) who was on a visit here last week, is equally zealous that I should have you for my editor as is my totally-uninterested and disinterested friend Heath. Nor am I less anxious than either H. or R. I therefore earnestly again invite you to my editorial chair,—for which services I will hand you a compensation of \$800 per annum. To be sure the salary is not an *enormous* one,—nor yet are the services which I should expect from you *enormous*. I cannot believe that what you would be called upon to contribute to my paper, would at all interfere [*sic*] with your professional duties. True, I should have occasionally to consult and advise with you,—but half a dozen hours per week would consume all I would have to pour in your ear.—And, I am equally sure, that 24 more hours in the week, would be amply sufficient for you to nourish my Messenger.

Touching practice in Richmond, I am satisfied you can get as much of that as you would care for.—You have many strong and discriminating friends in this quarter. Heath himself is a host,—and I know he would leave no stone unturned to serve you.

Admitting I was totally disinterested, I would still say to you—"Come to Richmond by all means."—Your "*stipend*" from me is as certain as if it were promised by Chief Justice Marshall.—I leave no stone unturned in my profession,—and as I do nothing without giving God all the thanks [from my heart—speak I cannot]² so I firmly believe he will not suffer me to fall thro' in the vocation to which I have been brought up and to which I am almost enthusiastically devoted.

I was pleased to hear that you presented my few introductory lines to Dr. Shattuck.³—He is indeed a gentleman—and a scholar. I know of no man who is more justly entitled to praise—he is scrupulously honest—and as humane as he is honest. I wish he would send

²The square brackets are White's.

³See letter 5.

his subscription—I would then show him the Virginia character, the re-remittance should be made. When I knew him in Boston, I was indeed a child of nature. Poor—but happy.

I am not taken by surprise in the treatment my Messenger received from Buckingham.⁴ He is, it is true, a man of great talents—I might almost say of wonderful talents. There is one thing [he]⁵ lacks however—Charity. And, I fear I might add to the catalogue a long list of sins equally reprehensible. He belongs to the Walpole school, in the full meaning of the price he set upon the mass of the corrupt.

So soon as I can spare the time I will make out and forward to you a list of names of contributors to No^s. 4 & 5.

Yours truly,

Thomas W. White.

⁴Probably Joseph T. Buckingham (1779-1861), a New England journalist.

⁵The square brackets are mine.

[2]

Lucian Minor, Esq.

Richmond, April 18, 1835.

My Dear Sir,—

You cannot feel half the mortification which I do that your No. 5 does not grace my 7th No.—It will however lose none of its interest by its postponement till No. 8. Come when it will it will be sure to meet with a most favorable reception from the entire reading public.

I am in hopes you will find leisure to give me a continuation of these interesting letters, notwithstanding all your fears to the contrary.

The Tale from Florian¹ pleases the Chief Justice. He spoke to me of its excellence,—and pointed out a real Democratic truth in it—namely, beginning, if I remember correctly, about 4 lines from top of first col. of page 379 and going down 7 or 8 or more lines.

I have called E. V. Sparhawk's attention to that part of your letter touching his notice of New-England Letter No. 4. He promises to look to it.

¹I, 377-380 (March, 1835).

You will receive by the same mail which conveys this letter to you, a proof-sheet of No. 5 Letter. Be good enough to read it over with great care; and, *if possible*, return it to me by *return* mail.

I will give you the names of all the writers for the present No. of the Messenger at least all I know,—and all I feel free to disclose to you.

Reminiscences of a Western Traveller,—by Judge Beverley Tucker.² Marrying Well—Charles Brown, Merchant, Philadelphia.³ Sketch of Virginia Scenery—Miss DuPré, of Powhatan.⁴ Shipwreck,—(poor affair)—by a gentleman of Alexandria;—facts however.⁵ I dare say he likes it vastly well. Thoughts on Affection, by John H. Bernard, of Caroline.⁶—This article is really a miserable affair—I say to you a complete failure. Fine Arts—George Cooke,—Artist.⁷ Scene in Paris,—from the Pen of Professor Saunders.⁸—Read it and tell me if he has not carried you to the spot.—If I am not an enthusiast, you will agree with me that Saunders is a transcendently chaste and most beautiful writer.—Added to all he is a gentleman.

Rosalie Lee—by P. P. Cooke, of Winchester.⁹—Stray leaves,—unknown.¹⁰—To Miss C.—unknown.¹¹—Lines for Miss Tyler's Album,—Mrs. Semple, of Williamsburg.¹²—To one who will understand me,—unknown.¹³ To Hope—do.¹⁴ To the Bible—by a gentleman who married St. Leger Carter's sister—now no more.¹⁵ Hopes & Sorrows—Rogers.¹⁶ True Riches & Glory—Rogers.¹⁷

²I, 336-340 (March, 1835).

³I, 345-348 (March, 1835).

⁴I, 348-349 (March, 1835).

⁵I, 351-352 (March, 1835).

⁶I, 365-366 (March, 1835).

⁷I, 376-377 (March, 1835).

⁸I, 381-385 (March, 1835).

⁹I, 332 (March, 1835).

¹⁰I, 332 (March, 1835).

¹¹I, 369 (March, 1835).

¹²I, 369 (March, 1835).

¹³I, 369-370 (March, 1835).

¹⁴I, 370 (March, 1835).

¹⁵I, 371 (March, 1835).

¹⁶I, 371 (March, 1835).

¹⁷I, 372 (March, 1835).

I am so nervous today (Monday the 20th) that I am really unable to write.

Believe me to be
Your Constant Friend,
T. W. White.¹⁸

Confidential—Tear this off.

Jonathan Bull & Mary Bull. is by James Madison.¹⁹ I am placed under an injunction of secrecy.—so you will not in any event betray me.

¹⁸Minor received the letter on April 28, 1835.

¹⁹I, 342-345 (March, 1835).

[3]¹

My Friend,—Richmond, Aug. 18, 1835.

I must crave your indulgence and pardon for being so remiss in discharging my duty—I will however now proceed to give you the names of the contributors to No. 11.²

Letters of a Scotchman, I believe to be from the pen of Geo. Watterston, of Washington City.³

Grayson Griffith—*in cog*.⁴

Visit to the Springs, by I forget who.⁵

Grayson Griffith—Rev. Mr. Plumer—(confidential.)⁶

Peter's Mountain—unknown.⁷

The Duel—Dr. Egan.⁸

The Lawyer—unknown.⁹

Reviews, all by Sparhawk.¹⁰

¹Received by Minor on Aug. 20, 1835.

²July, 1835, issue.

³I, 482-483 (May, 1835) and I, 602-604 (July, 1835). George Watterston (1783-1854), the first librarian of Congress.

⁴I, 605-611 (July, 1835).

⁵I, 613-616 (July, 1835).

⁶I, 605-611 (July, 1835). William Swan Plumer (1802-1880), White's pastor.

⁷I, 641 (July, 1835).

⁸I, 641-644 (July, 1835). Dr. Egan of Henry County.

⁹I, 645-646 (July, 1835).

¹⁰I, 646-651 (July, 1835).

The Dial—Paraphrase—Lines in Album,—Answer to Willis—
all by Judge Wilde, of Geo.¹¹

I have, my dear Sir, been compelled to part with Mr. Sparhawk,
as regular editor—I have run too fast. He will however continue to
assist me.

Mr. Poe is here also.—He tarries one month—and will aid me
all that lies in his power.

I stand in need of your pen just now.

Your Friend,
T. W. White.

¹¹I, 604, 611, and 612 (July, 1835). Judge John W. Wilde, brother of
Richard Henry Wilde.

[4]¹

My Dear Friend—Richmond, Sept. 8, 1835.

I did not receive your kind favor of the 31st ult. till a few
minutes before the hour allotted for closing the mail to Louisa—*on*
Saturday. This will, I trust, be ample atonement for not accompany-
ing the proof-sheet with a letter—a letter of gratitude,—for I am
a great debtor to you in that line.

I am now as it were my own editor—No. 12 is made out of my
wits.² When we meet, I will tell you why I was obliged to part
with Sparhawk. Poe is now in my employ—not as Editor. He is
unfortunately rather dissipated,—and therefore I can place very little
reliance upon him. His disposition is quite amiable. He will be
some assistance to me in proof-reading—at least I hope so.

I will now tell you, so far as I can, who are the writers for
my No. 12.

The Reclaimed,—Miss DuPré, of Smithville, Powhatan, (Va.)³
—All the Critical & Literary Notices, by Mr. Poe.⁴ Death of young
Carter, Mrs. John G. Mosby.⁵ Richmond Theatre, by widow of

¹Received by Lucian Minor on Sept. 9, 1835.

²Aug., 1835, issue.

³I, 668-671 (Aug., 1835). Miss (Paulina?) Dupré, Smithville, Virginia.

⁴I, 714-716 (Aug., 1835).

⁵I, 660 (Aug., 1835). Mrs. John G. Mosby (1791-1844).

Gov. Page.⁶ Lines in remembrance of my son, Mr. Sands.⁷ Maniac, Miss Melford, I believe.⁸ Horace Translations, Dr. Robertson [*sic*], Petersburg, Va.⁹

Tell me when I may expect to see you in Richmond, and whether you will not be able to manage it so, as to stay here (and at my house too) several days.

My contributors are growing lukewarm.—Suppose you write, *for me*, an editorial for next No. (to come first thing) trying to rouse them up again.¹⁰

I am in treaty for a beautiful fount of type for 2d Vol.—If the founders can get it ready in time, the Messenger shall be the handsomest work in the Country.¹¹

Believe me

Your devoted friend,

Thomas W. White.

Lucian Minor, Esq.

⁶I, 666-667 (Aug., 1835). Mrs. M. L. Page.

⁷I, 698 (Aug., 1835).

⁸I, 698-699 (Aug., 1835).

⁹I, 712-714 (Aug., 1835). Dr. W. M. Robinson, Petersburg, Va., Poe's friend.

¹⁰I, 717 (Sept., 1835).

¹¹White succeeded in getting the type.

[5]¹

Richmond, Sept. 21, 1835.

Lucian Minor, Esq.

My Dear Sir,—

I ought long since to have returned you my sincere and hearty thanks for the Index you have been pleased to make out for the 1st Vol. of my Messenger. When I was so importunate for it, I expected to have been prepared for it forthwith. Circumstances entirely beyond my control, have prevented me from putting it in hand

¹Received by Minor on Sept. 27, 1835.

²Sept., 1835, issue.

up to the present time,—and I fear I shall not be able to do so for a week to come. So soon as I get the pages of No. 13 up,² I will do my best towards finishing the Index—tho' I am afraid *I shall murder* it. If possible, I must have the same hand to finish it,—and shall accordingly, endeavor to arrange matters so as to send it to you.

The article respecting General Warren is admirably written.³—It is in truth, worth a score of the *Work* it professes to Review.⁴ I purpose sending a copy of the No. in which it will appear not only to Dr. John C. Warren,—but to all of his relatives whose names and residences I can hear of? [*sic*] Can you furnish me with any such information.

I send you a copy of an old Boston Magazine. You will find in it a Memoir of Mrs. Eleanor Davis,⁵ the mother of Mrs. Dr. Shattuck. I have often wished for an opportunity to introduce a sketch of this uncommon lady in the *Messenger*. I knew her well—she was all and more than her Biographer has said of her. If you could pen an article on the Female character, and could introduce her as an example to bear you out in any eulogiums you might chuse to pass on the sex, I would like to have you do so. You cannot, I assure you, say too much in praising Mrs. Davis. It would at the same time be a good occasion to speak of Dr. Shattuck, in terms such as he deserves.—He is a great and good man.

Poe has flew the track already. His habits were not good.—He is in addition the victim of melancholy. I should not be at all astonished to hear that he had been guilty of suicide.

I am now alone.

Your Real Friend,

Thomas W. White.

³I, 749-755 (Sept., 1835).

⁴*Stories about General Warren*. By a Lady of Boston. 1835. pp. 112. 12mo.

⁵Eleanor Cheever Davis (—), mother of Elisa Cheever, the first wife of George Cheyne Shattuck (1783-1854). I have been unable to discover such an article as White wanted Minor to write, in the *Messenger*.

Richmond, Oct. 1, 1835.

Lucian Minor, Esq.

My Dear Sir,

I send you a proof-sheet of the Index, so far as you have made it out—accepting [*sic*] the Barbary Sketches—those Mr. Greenhow prefers making out to suit his ideas.

I also send you sheets of 7ⁿ forms of the Messenger. These will enable you to make out the list for me up to page 780. "Autography" No. 1, I shall not insert. Well penned and witty, as I think it is, I think it unnecessarily severe on Cooper? Read it—and candidly tell me what you think on the subject.—After you have read it, cut it out, and destroy it.²

Keep the sheets if you please,—and if you have time it would not be amiss for you to be preparing a critique of No. 13,³ for the Enquirer.—Its appearance, about the time of the appearance of the Messenger, might save me from many discontinuances.—I am sure it would have a good effect.

Dr. Maupin has been directed by the Institute of Hampden Sidney College to apply to me to have your recent Address delivered before that Institution, inserted in the Messenger. I told him I would give place to it with great pleasure. I hope you will have it ready so that I can have it by the 10th Oct.⁴

Since scribbling (for I cannot write nor think) the foregoing, I went to dinner—and, on my return, had the satisfaction to descry—or espy—in my box, a letter. It proved to be from yourself—and acceptable indeed it was.

I will give the notice, as properly and modestly, suggested.

¹Mr. J. H. Whitty, in *op. cit.*, p. 185, calls attention to the fact that Poe addressed the letter wrongly to Lucian Minor, Orange Court House, and then correctly to him, Louisa Court-House. Minor received the letter on Oct. 6, 1835.

²Cooper's and Irving's names in Poe's "Autography" did appear in the *Messenger*, II, 207 and 209 (Feb., 1836).

³Sept., 1835, issue.

⁴Dr. Maupin's request was complied with in the *Messenger*, II, 17-24 (Dec., 1835).

I am glad to learn that you think favorably of Stanton's effort.⁵ I had feared that it was a failure.

I really wish you could *twist* an article out of Mrs. Davis's memoir. Hold her up as an example (to mothers) worthy of imitation—speak how well Dr. S. must have realized all her fondest and most sanguine anticipations. Manage as it would a knotty law case.

Do not, my friend, desert me now. I require your assistance more than I have ever done at any time since I issued the Messenger.—Stick by me, or I may perish.

I have just seen Mr. Heath. He thinks he can manage the Autography for me. He proposes striking out Cooper's and Irving's names.⁶ I will not put the article in till I hear from you. Give me your candid opinion of it. Poe is its author.

I should not like to shoot so sarcastic an arrow at poor Cooper—however much he deserves it.

If you cannot send me the proof-sheets back by return mail, be sure and let me know about the autograph article.

I am your Friend,

T. W. White.

N. B.—I am very nervous to-day—I hope you may be able to guess at what I wished to have said.

T. W. W.

⁵Probably E. F. Stanton's "Manual Labor Schools," *S. L. M.*, II, 244-252 (March, 1836).

⁶See above, footnote 2.

[7]¹

Richmond, Oct. 20, 1835.

Lucian Minor, Esq.

My Dear Sir,

I was barely able, before the hour for closing the mail had arrived on Saturday, to send you a proof-sheet of your Address.² It has not yet been read by me. Mr. Poe, who is with me again, read it over by copy with great care. He is very much pleased with it—

¹Received by Minor on Oct. 21, 1835.

²"An Address on Education, as Connected with the Permanence of Our Republican Institutions," *S. L. M.*, II, 17-24 (Dec., 1835).

in fact he passes great encomiums on it to me, and intends noticing it under the head of Reviews.³

If you still wish me to separate it from the *Messenger*, and print you 200 or more copies, please say what words I ought to place on it.—And whether you design to have a preface to it.

Cupid's Sport—Munford.⁴ My Tongs—by I know not who.—Excellent.⁵ King Pest—Poe.⁶ Early Adventures—Unknown to me.⁷ Shadow—Poe.⁸ Door Latch—Mrs. Storer⁹—No. 1. Spring article, J. E. Heath.¹⁰ Critical Notices, all by Poe.¹¹

Victim of Disappointment—by—.¹² E. A. S. is Mrs. Semple, of Williamsburg.¹³ Lines in Album, Poe.¹⁴ Curse, &c. by H. Bedinger, of Harper's Ferry.¹⁵ Pirate's Wife, Mrs. Thornton.¹⁶ To Claudia, by A. H. Pemberton, Aug. Georgia.¹⁷

Your true friend,

T. W. White.

³Poe's review appeared in the *Messenger*, II, 66-67 (Dec., 1835).

⁴I, 741-746 (Sept., 1835).

⁵I, 746-748 (Sept., 1835).

⁶I, 757-761 (Sept., 1835).

⁷I, 761-762 (Sept., 1835).

⁸I, 762-763 (Sept., 1835).

⁹I, 770-771 (Sept., 1835). Probably Mrs. Harriet G. Storer.

¹⁰"Another Visit to the Virginia Springs or the Adventures of Harry Humbug, Esq.," *S. L. M.*, I, 772-775 (Sept., 1835).

¹¹I, 776-780 (Sept., 1835).

¹²I, 724 (Sept., 1835).

¹³Mrs. E. A. Semple of Williamsburg, Va.

¹⁴I, 748 (Sept., 1835).

¹⁵I, 763-764 (Sept., 1835). Henry Bedinger (1810-1858), later minister to Denmark.

¹⁶I, 771 (Sept., 1835).

¹⁷I, 776 (Sept., 1835).

[8]

My Dear Sir,

Richmond, Oct. 24, 1835.

I thank you most sincerely for the notice you have been pleased to prepare of C. R.'s new book.¹ It shall certainly appear in my

¹Conway Robinson (1808-1884), *The Practice in Courts of Law and Equity in Virginia*. Vol. II (Richmond, Va.: Printed by Samuel Shepherd, 1835). The review appeared in the *Messenger*, II, 50-51 (Dec., 1835).

next—as shall also the article you refer to,² if it reaches me by the 1st Monday in Nov.

I very much fear that I shall not be able to issue the 1st No. of my 2d Vol. till about the 25th Nov.

Suppose you send me a modest paragraph—mentioning that the gentleman [Edward Vernon Sparhawk] announced as my assistant in the 9th No.³ of the Messenger retired from its editorship with the 11th No.⁴—that the paper is now under my own editorial management, assisted by several gentlemen of distinguished literary attainments.—⁵

You may introduce Mr. Poe's name as amongst those engaged to contribute for its columns—taking care not to say as editor. All this I wish you to manage with great care for me. Let it come in a separate letter to me—directed to “T. W. White.”

I also want a powerful appeal to the public (particularly to the people of the South) to sustain me by contributions, &c.—This I am sure you can manage for me if you can possibly spare the time,—and I hope you will spare the time, now that Sparhawk has taken the field against me. I will speak to you on this head when I next see you—which I hope will be soon.

I do not like the idea at all, of printing the extra copies of your Address in Messenger form, or on Brevier. I prefer your extending it *to any length you may see fit*,—and I will issue a handsome B or L edition of it—on my own account,—or on yours (if you say so—at a cheap rate to you—securing the copy right). It shall succeed—if I may count on your exertions to make it sell.

I am in no little trouble.—My wife is very sick now, and has been for 10 days—though I think her much better to day.⁶

Your true friend,

T. W. White.

On New Long [illegible]

Octavo page

²Unidentified.

³I, 461 (May, 1835).

⁴July, 1835, issue.

⁵The announcement appeared in the *Messenger*, II, 1 (Dec., 1835).

⁶Margaret Ann White (1784-1837).

Richmond, Nov. 23, '35.

My Dear Sir,

This evening's mail brought me yours of the 20th. It affords me much pleasure to understand that you really like the dress I have given to your solid and yet beautifully penned Address.

Hard-run as I manage perpetually to keep myself in my money-matters, still I cannot for the life of me be Shylock enough to receive pay from any one knowingly *twice*—much less from one who has done me so much service as I feel and believe you have. However, the day may arrive when I shall have to call on you for professional aid—and then I will *accept* of your services—as I ask you now to *accept* of mine.

I am really sorry that I made *light* of so palpable a *slight*. It is done, and past recalling.

You are altogether right about the Leslie critique.²—Poe has evidently shown himself *no lawyer*—whatever else he may be. The Editor of the Metropolitan has fallen into the same error.—Well that blunder cannot be repaired.—It will pass undetected, I hope.

Yes, I was really ashamed that you should any longer purchase paper to write on, for the Messenger, for me—when you would accept of no recompense for the *labor*. I therefore felt it my bounden duty to supply you at least with the *raw* material. I must also ask you to try a bottle of Yankee ink and a few Yankee goose quills. Thus equipped, I hope you will go to battle for me in good earnest.

Unless you feel yourself bound to review [illegible] Life of [illegible], I shall like to have you abandon the idea altogether. The work is now getting old; and it has in addition been noticed (and puffed too, from Maine to Georgia.) If, however, you prefer encountering the Herculean task, be it so,—and I will give currency to it through the Messenger.

I shall send you a sheet of the Covers—and the 2d form,—and if Greenhow's last proof-sheet gets here in the morning, I shall send

¹Received by Minor on Dec. 2, 1835.

²Poe's review of Theodore S. Fay's *Norman Leslie*, *S. L. M.*, II, 54-57 (Dec., 1835).

you a sheet of his also. You will then have (or I rather will have sent you) the whole matter of No. 1 of the Mesesnger—and if it be possible for you to do so, I should like to get the favor of to pen for the Enquirer which will come out on Friday week, sending it to Ritchie so that he may receive it on Monday night,—a candid and impartial notice of No. 1 of Vol 2 (don't mention the law blunder). You must be sure to urge Ritchie to get it in on that day. If you choose to do so, you might write a private letter to him, and ask him to let [it] assume the editorial garb. It will carry with it, thus decorated, much more weight than as a communication. Let me know if you accede [*sic*].

I must beg you to read the "Broken-Heart" with more than ordinary attention.³ And if you really see talent in it, I hope you will point it out. My daughter Eliza wrote it,—and it is her first attempt at blank verse. If it merits a lashing, do not spare the rod.

Your Friend,

T. W. White.

³II, 9 (Dec., 1835). Eliza White (1812-1888).

[10]¹

My Dear Sir,—

Richmond, Dec. 25, 1835.

I believe I omitted, in my letter of last night, telling you the names of such writers for the present No. as I know,²—or am [at] liberty to tell.

Charlot Tayon—Judge B. Tucker.³

Lin. & Wilson—Rev. T. B. Balch, Prince-William.⁴

Love & Poetry—my daughter Eliza.⁵

A Fairy Tale—By a sister of C. F. Mercer's (I believe, but am not certain.)⁶

Wagoner—St. Leger Carter.⁷

¹Received by Minor on Dec. 27, 1835.

²Jan., 1836, issue.

³II, 71-74 (Jan., 1836).

⁴II, 74-76 (Jan., 1836).

⁵II, 76 (Jan., 1836).

⁶II, 77-78 (Jan., 1836). Charles Fenton Mercer (1778-1858). His sister mentioned here is probably Margaret Mercer (1792-1846).

⁷II, 78 (Jan., 1836).

Melody—Anonymous.⁸
 Sensibility—Mrs. Storer, Maine.⁹
 To—Judge B. Tucker. Nos' Cole's daughter *the subject*.¹⁰
 Popular Education.—Totally unknown, even by conjecture.¹¹
 Translation—Judge B. Tucker.¹²
 Verses—Unknown—from Alexandria.¹³
 Lionel Granby—*in cog.* The poorest chapter, in my opinion,
 which has emanated from his pen.¹⁴
 Fountain of Oblivion—Wm. M. Robinson.¹⁵
 English Poetry—P. P. Cooke.¹⁶
 Virginia—The author's name has escaped me.¹⁷
 Lady Leonore—P. P. Cooke.¹⁸
 English Language—Professor James W. Alexander, Princeton
 College—Desires me not to make his name public.¹⁹
 Woodnymphs—by Lanier, of Danville.²⁰
 All the Critical Notices are from the pen of Poe²¹—who I
 rejoice to tell you, still keeps from the Bottle.

My own belief is, that I have not issued a better No. take it
 throughout than the present.

I must of course request that you will not let these sheets be
 seen by any one except yourself,—and as you, unfortunately for me,
 happen not to be in this No. I think you are fairly entitled to a
 leaving in one of your Journal papers.

The No. will be out on the 1st January, 1836.

Truly your Friend,

T. W. White.

⁸II, 78 (Jan., 1836).
⁹II, 79-87 (Jan., 1836). Mrs. Harriet G. Storer.
¹⁰II, 87-88 (Jan., 1836).
¹¹II, 88-93 (Jan., 1836).
¹²II, 93 (Jan., 1836).
¹³II, 93-94 (Jan., 1836).
¹⁴II, 94-96 (Jan., 1836).
¹⁵II, 100-101 (Jan., 1836).
¹⁶II, 101-106 (Jan., 1836). P. P. Cooke (1816-1850).
¹⁷II, 108-109 (Jan., 1836).
¹⁸II, 109-110 (Jan., 1836).
¹⁹II, 110-111 (Jan., 1836). James Waddell Alexander (1804-1859), a
 professor in Princeton College, and perhaps a friend of P. P. Cooke.
²⁰II, 111-112 (Jan., 1836).
²¹II, 112-128 (Jan., 1836).

APPENDIX C
LETTERS OF T. W. WHITE TO BEVERLEY TUCKER
AND JOHN M. SPEED

The following letters in the collection of Mr. George P. Coleman of Williamsburg, Virginia, a grandson of Beverley Tucker, are here printed by kind permission of Mr. Coleman and Professor James Southall Wilson of the University of Virginia, who had planned to publish them in an article. One letter dated Dec. 27, 1836, has already been published by Professor Wilson in his article, "Unpublished Letters of Edgar Allan Poe," in *The Century Magazine* for March, 1924.

These letters (eight from T. W. White to Nathaniel Beverley Tucker and one from T. W. White to John M. Speed) throw new light on Poe's connection with the *Messenger*, especially during the last month of his editorship, and emphasize the fact that White did not appreciate Poe's talents. Furthermore they reveal that the proprietor of the journal, who was not an educated man, leaned heavily on his friends Minor and Tucker for advice after Poe's leaving the magazine. The letter dated January 19, 1837, indicates that Poe did not immediately leave Richmond for New York after his dismissal. The letters, without editorial apparatus, are here printed exactly from the manuscript copies.

[1]

My Dear Friend—

Richmond, Nov. 5, 1835.

I forgot your Spectacles. I have however now procured them,—Charge 50 Cents, which I shall hand to Mr. Mitchell in the course of to-day or to-morrow morning.

I have this day printed an edition of Eaton Stannard Barrett's Heroine,—and I send yourself, Mr. Dew and Mr. Saunders a copy of the same,—well assured that it must please each of you.

It will be read, and re-read, and admired so long as man inhabits the face of the earth.

I am your friend,

T. W. White.

[2]

My Dear Sir,

Richmond, Nov. 5, 1835.

I find myself so much in want of a few copies of No. 5's of the Messenger, that I must ask the favor of you to send me up five copies by mail. Be so obliging as to pack them up *very carefully*—and say on the directions "20 sheets So. Lit. Mess." The postage will only cost 20 cts.

I should like to know whether the bound copy of the Messenger reached you, and if so, how you like my binding.

I really wish the spirit would move your goose-quill just about this time.

My next Messenger will be out next Saturday,—and I am sure it will be served up to your liking—*I am sure of that fact.*

Your true friend,

T. W. White.

[3]

(Private.)

Richmond,

My Dear Friend,

Dec. 27, 1836.

Highly as I really think of Mr. Poe's talents, I shall be forced to give him notice, in a week or so at farthest, that I can no longer

recognize him as editor of my Messenger. Three months ago I felt it my duty to give him a similar notice,—and was afterwards over-persuaded to restore him to his situation on certain conditions—which conditions he has again forfeited.

Added to all this, I am cramped by him in the exercise of my own judgment, as to what articles I shall or shall not admit into my work. It is true that I neither have his sagacity, nor his learning—but I do believe I know a handspike from a saw. Be that as it may, however,—and let me even be a jackass, as I dare say I am in his estimation, I will again throw myself on my own resources—and trust my little bark to the care of those friends who stood by me in my earlier, if not darker days.

You, my friend, are my helmsman. And I again beg you to stand by the rudder. You [*sic*] review of Bancroft has very recently been spoken of in terms of the very highest praise to me—and that too by a judge, B. W. Leigh.

The first thing I must beg the favor of you to do for me is to review in your happiest style, Bulwer's Valliere, a copy of which I forward you by this day's mail.

I should also like to get from you a review of the annotated volumes of Spahr's [*sic*] Washington,—making it as lengthy as possible, but without extracts.

If it were worth while, I would again assure you that any thing from your pen will be gratefully received by me.

May I further beg you to urge Professors Dew, Millington and Saunders to come to my aid,—without however saying that I mean to dispense with Mr. Poe as my editor: This fact I wish to rest with yourself, until you see my announcement of the fact either in the Messenger or some of the papers.

If he chooses to write as a contributor, I will pay him well.

In my next No., which will again be retarded till the 22d Jan. he will have quite a lengthy review of George Balcomb [*sic*—and quite a favorable one too. He guesses you to be its author,—and possibly he guesses right.

I am your friend,

B. Tucker, Esq.

T. W. White.

My Dear Sir:

Richmond, Jan. 19, 1837.

I am tonight in receipt of your truly acceptable letter of the 17th inst.

Your Review of Bulwer will follow Judge Upshaw's [*sic*] of the Partisan. For myself, individually, I am in rapture with the drubbing you have given Mr. B.—The only fault I find with it, that you have handled him half so severely as he merited. "*Save when it loved it*"—is unquestionably a typographical error—Bulwer could never have written the last *it*.

I really am delighted to learn that you design reviewing Blackwood. Professor Anthon, when I saw him in N. York last Oct. called my particular attention to the subject of Reviewing Reviews of our country,—which he thought wretchedly conducted—as he also said of the Knickerbocker, and American Monthly. I found Mr. Anthon, as I thought, not only a man of great acquirements—but he really made a most favorable impression on me that he was a gentleman. With Paulding I was still more pleased—he is not a great man, but he is unquestionably a man of the strictest morality. He holds all fops and all libertines, in utter contempt. He will hold no commerce with such people if he can possibly avoid them.

I am very sorry to hear that Reynolds is suspected even of being what he ought not be. I formed an acquaintance with him in this city about 10 years ago, and absolutely became almost devotedly attached to the fellow. He is a most fascinating dog,—and I think has a great share of good common sense.—To me he owes the favor he has received in the Messenger—but if he is a corrupt man, I have done with him. Tell me privately what you know of him.

Tell my friend Speed that I have heard of his address delivered before the Franklin Society. I hope you will prevail on him to furnish you with a copy of it—and send it to me for the Messenger.

I send you by mail several periodicals—which you can do with as you see best. I shall also send you a bundle of manuscripts which I have lately received—and get the favor of you to pass sentence on them, when you may have leisure to look over them.

I am glad to hear you say that you will stick to me in this my trying hour. I thank God that I have found such a friend in you.

Minor will be here some time in Feb. when I shall hear what he says—But my dear Sir, I am so overwhelmed in debt that I scarcely dare think of such an editor as I know I ought to have. If it is possible for me to wade through this volume by myself, I verily believe I should then be in such a situation as to pay a man of talents such a price as I really think first rate talents are justly entitled to. I do not believe there is another man in the country who could have prosecuted the Messenger, as I have prosecuted it, during the two volumes which I have pulled it thro, but what would have sunk 5000 in the two years instead of \$1800.—But, my dear Sir, the \$1800 is the least of my concerns—I unfortunately owe a great—great deal more than that—and not a dollar of debt created either unnecessarily, or by extravagance. But I am tiring you out with private griefs and private sufferings.

I am your friend,

T. W. White.

Poe feels his situation at last—I see but little of him—but I hear a great deal about him and from him. I am tired out with hard work. Last night I was to be up till very late—and now it is 10 o'clock.

Your friend,

T. W. W.

[5]

My Dear Friend,

Richmond, Jan. 24, 37.

I am in receipt of your no less friendly than frank letter of the 21st. I properly appreciate it—and will endeavor to reply to it in the same spirit of kindness with which I am sure you penned it. But I will first say what I intended to say before I broke its seal.

I expect to be able to get one or two copies of the Messenger out of the Binder's hands in time enough to put up in a bundle and send down to you by tomorrow morning's stage. In the same parcel, I will enclose you a few pieces of manuscript, which I must get the

favor of you to read over and let me know whether you think I ought to admit them or not.

But, to my Jan. No.—The “Visit” was written expressly for me by Mr. Paulding—and I have a promise from him of further help.

Angel Visits & Lines on Wolfe, are by W. Maxwell—who is again at work for me on trifles.

A Literary Man with the Biography, is by the author of “Rombert”—who not only assures me that he will finish that,—but who also promises me further assistance.

I am not certain whether it is the father or the son who writes the Letters from Paris—They are both called Ro. Walsh, Jr.—The son presented it to me when I was in Philadelphia, and he is now writing for me at \$3 per page—the subject “Elocution.” He is a young gentleman of fair talents.

The “Indian Captive” is no great thing—but it is free—and the writer is a gentleman.

Study of the Law, is by a respectable member of the New York Bar.—I think it good.

Jefferson’s Letters are from the former Secretary of the Treasury.

Phil. of Antiquity, by a young lawyer here—a son of Robinson’s, cashier of Bank of Va.—So is Old Provençal.

Verbal Criticisms, &c by W. Duane Jr. of Philadelphia.

Rights of Authors, by an Englishman of New York.

“Our Portion”—good—by a lawyer of Parkersburg,—author of a Birth-Day Tribute.

The Lapse of Years—poor—by an Englishman.

Lines—The Portrait—and Withered Leaf by one who will always stick to me, I hope, now Poe is not my editor.—Auld Lang Syne will also be long remembered by you.

The names of the other contributors are all known to you.

Except Walsh, Rights of Authors and Poe’s articles, no one would accept of cash for their articles,—and it was with some delicacy that they even accepted of volumes of my work for their compliments.

To be sure the bare item of postage to and fro all over the Union costs something considerable in the course of a year—I cannot

tell how much mine has been, but I feel it has been heavy—But had it been as much again as it has been I feel that I have been amply compensated for every cent I have paid out,—and as a proof of my sincerity I would that I had it to do over again.

I feel proud of the Messenger. I feel proud to believe that I have been the humble instrument of rearing up a publication which shall be a credit to my native State and Country.

I am your friend,

T. W. White.

[6]

Richmond, April 26, 1837.

My Dear Sir:

You favor post-marked April 24, came to hand last night. I am really glad to learn that you are entirely satisfied about the agency I had in saying that I thought you were the author of the "Partisan Leader." I have taken care to apprise two prominent individuals (T. Ritchie and I. L. Bull, of Columbia, S. C.) that I now had reason to believe I was in an error. At any rate, that I disclaimed again having any authority for saying that you wrote the P. L.—that, in the first instance, it was, as I told them, only an opinion of my own. There is one other individual with whom I conversed on this subject, and when I have disposed of him, I will have ridded my mind of one trouble and perhaps of one sin. Look before you leap. Think before you speak. Bridle the unruly member. A still tongue, &c.

I do not exactly understand you about the "two visits." You do not say whether you would or would not insert it. Tell me, if you please, exactly what you would do with it, if you were in my shoes. If you chose to expunge or mend any part of it do so. I think with you that the author is a lady—and I think too that that lady is a most intimate friend of yours. Here again, I am half tempted to advance an opinion of my own—But, lest I might again be in error, I will not write it. This time I go by hand-writing. In the case of the P. L. I went or took the style. My feelings are all in favor of the individual, who I think wrote the article. I therefore feel truly

solicitous that you should dress it up for my sake—if not for hers,—and her credit.

You also leave me in the dark about the “Hypochondriac” piece. You tell me that on the whole is [*sic*] is good, but that it wants point and distinctness. Its merits, it strikes me, would be greater than all its good qualities. Here again I must ask the favor of you to do with it and the other, exactly as you would if you were myself.

Every thing that does not pass muster with you, you will please endorse condemned, *in pencil mark*.

I am very sure that you will give a just criticism of Paulding. It was with the knowledge of this fact, that I placed the volumes in your hand. He is too much of a gentleman, and has in addition too much good sense, to get angry at just criticism. Indeed, I am sure he will not. I am very sure that he would feel proud to have a good word from the Messenger. If he would have been proud of praise from Poe, it would have been because he really admired the fellow’s talents.—Like myself he was completely gulled. The truth is, Poe seldom or ever done what he knew was just to any book. He read few through—unless it were some trashy novels,—and his only object in reading even these, was to ridicule their authors. Read his eulogistic review of Balcombe—which he penned only because he believed you were its author. He has scarcely selected a passage out of the two volumes which warrants the praise he has lavished on it. But enough of this—this mortifying subject.

I will not purchase the additional volumes but will wait their coming. I am glad to hear you say that you will read and review D’Israeli’s novel. I hope you may be able to do so in 14 days from this date for me.

Do not, if you please, send your large parcels to me—except by private hands.

Truly

Your friend,

T. W. White.

tell how much mine has been, but I feel it has been heavy—But had it been as much again as it has been I feel that I have been amply compensated for every cent I have paid out,—and as a proof of my sincerity I would that I had it to do over again.

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I will not purchase the additional volumes but will wait their coming. I am glad to hear you say that you will read and review D’Israeli’s novel. I hope you may be able to do so in 14 days from this date for me.

Do not, if you please, send your large parcels to me—except by private hands.

Truly

Your friend,

T. W. White.

[7]

My Dear Sir:

Richmond, June 24, 1837.

I enclose you a proof-sheet of the Notice of Mrs. Butler's Journal, with Seaton's letter to me, and Mr. Wild's to Mr. S.

Do me the favor, if you please, to read the article over, and furnish me again with such introductory remarks as the occasion, in your opinion, calls for. It is all important that I should receive your reply, along with the proof-slip on Tuesday afternoon—either by mail or boat.

You will see in the Alexandria Gazette a 2nd communication.

I believe all three (Intelligences included) to come from the same pen.

The Expositor of Vicksburg does your writings justice—and no more than justice.

Tell me what I ought to do with "Nuts"?

Truly

Your friend,

T. W. White.

[8]

Richmond, Va.

March 31, 1838.

My Dear Friend,

Do me the favor, if you please, at your leisure, to examine the enclosed MSS. As the press cuts at pretty much all of my Poetry, let me beg of you to be quite particular also.

I miss your writings very much. But I neither mean to grumble, and less to upraid [*sic*]. You have done me much service—and I am as grateful for all you have done for me, as it is possible for any man to be.

I hope you will be able to find time in all next week to get your Review of Washington's Letters ready.

My April No. has been out of press more than a week. The Binder promises me a supply of copies by Tuesday next.

Truly your friend,

T. W. White.

116

April 9, 1838.

Dear Speed:

Let me get the favor of you to remit me the amount of my bill against Franklin Society. It is desirable that the amount should reach me by Thursday night.

Try and get the Judge to review Mr. Cutler's Oration for the Messenger.—It deserves a tribute, and the Judge I am sure will do it, if you will but make the application.

Your Friend,

T. W. White.

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