

Editorial

In the *Jane Austen Companion* (MacMillan, 1986) edited by our own J. David [Jack] Grey, Brian Southan remarks that in 1900 the Earl of Iddesleigh wrote in *Nineteenth Century* that it would be “a very delightful thing if a magazine could be started which should be devoted entirely to Miss Austen. . . . We are never tired of talking about her; should we ever grow weary of reading or writing about her?”

A word of thanks to each successive President and Board in allowing me, throughout my editorship, a free hand and an open budget. My “child” has been raised without interference.

Reading Leonard Woolf’s autobiography earlier this year, I was struck by a statement. In the course of his life, he declared, he had made a point never to spend more than seven years at any one particular occupation.

It darted into my brain with the speed of an arrow that I had been editing *Persuasions* for eight years and that it was time to stop.

A brief history of the journal of the Jane Austen Society of North America might at this point be not inappropriate.

When Jack Grey and I, urged by my husband, were discussing the possibility of the founding of this society, Jack said to me, “Of course *you* must be the president.” “Oh no,” said I, “*you* be president, *I’ll* edit the newsletter.”

In the beginning, “newsletter” is exactly what this journal was: a handful of pages, not-very-well-printed, stapled together, that frankly (like Birmingham) didn’t seem to promise much.

The title, selected without due consideration, was *Persuasion*. And that didn’t sit right, either. Then, a year later, somebody accidentally referred to it as *Persuasions*. That did seem right, and so it was.

One learns. It has been some years now since *Persuasions* has been indexed by the Modern Languages Association, and has achieved the dignity of an International Standard Serial Number.

I believe it is now a worthy periodical to hand on to so distinguished an academic as Juliet McMaster. Of course I can’t help feeling a little like Mr. Austen must have done in sending Edward to the Knights, but on the whole, like Edward, *Persuasions* has learned its lessons and is ready to be received into most excellent hands.

Joan Austen-Leigh