

(Title currently unknown)

Overview

The evidence for the Jedburgh Mutual Improvement Association and its magazine comes solely from an article in a local newspaper, *The Jedburgh Gazette*. A further investigation of the local press and archives may provide further information on this group.

According to the article, in January 1883, the Jedburgh Mutual Improvement Association held its first annual social meeting, which was apparently a big success, having such a large attendance that extra tables had to be assembled to accommodate all the guests. The newspaper report provides a list of important personages who attended, which included local politicians and prominent local business leaders. A deputation from the Crailing Literary Association was also present. (Craising is a small community located approximately four miles to the north of Jedburgh; although small, community members in the late nineteenth century apparently wished to have its own literary association.)

Following tea, the Chairman — the President of the association, Mr James Cree — gave a speech, and discussed the formation of the mutual improvement association. The group had been running for ‘one year and a few months’. He said that the group’s name was the most eloquent way of giving the association’s object and purpose. He goes on to elucidate their goals:

‘What we seek is to cultivate habits of research and study; the ability to justify and the courage to maintain in a rational way the opinions we form; the expression of thoughts in language that is clear and precise; and the respectful toleration of the honest convictions of others. This, you will see, is largely a work of self-improvement. It is not, however, a selfish work [...] the improvement of the individual is to the advantage of the community [...]’ (‘Jedburgh Mutual Improvement Association. Social Meeting’, *The Jedburgh Gazette*, 20 January 1883, p. 3).

According to Cree, at the weekly meetings, members engaged in debates, gave speeches, readings, and produced a manuscript magazine. Membership was apparently growing steadily, and was open to men of all ages. To extend their ‘usefulness’, lectures were opened to the public with an admission charge. No other details regarding the group’s magazine are given.

Name of Club, Society or Group That Produced the Magazine

Jedburgh Mutual Improvement Association

Date of Existence

1882-?

Date of Magazine

(1882-1883?)

Number of Issues

(currently unknown)

Manuscript/Published Magazine

Manuscript

Contents and Contributions

(currently unknown)

Repository

Heritage Hub, Hawick (*The Jedburgh Gazette*)

Reference

(N/A)