

# **The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction. eBook**

## **The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction.**

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# Page 1

## PREFACE

The present sheet completes the *twelfth volume of the mirror*. This circumstance alone is *typical* of the substantial patronage which has attended our exertions from their commencement; and may be, we hope, anticipatory of continued success.

Our career of six years has been subdivided into twelve volumes or *sessions*; we have had no *recess*, but uniformly “*a house*;” and, as members of the republic of letters, we hope to be re-elected by our numerous constituents. To speak heroically, and as Puff says in the Critic, to “keep it up,” their approbation is

the air we breathe,  
If we have it not, we die.

Although we do not presume to account for our own success, or to trace its maintenance through all the fluctuations of six years—yet we are prone to believe that the economy of the plan, coupled with the spirit of curiosity which it is our aim to encourage,—have been the prime movers of our fortunes, as they have been the pivots upon which we have performed our half-yearly revolutions. In these we have allowed neither autumn nor winter to impair our exertions; and, however time may have worn otherwise with us, we still feel all the youth and freshness of spring-tide, warmed by the genial ray of public favour.

The spirit of curiosity to which we here allude, is thus admirably described by Sterne:—“The love of variety, or curiosity of seeing new things, which is the same, or at least a sister passion to it,—seems wove into the frame of every son and daughter of Adam; we usually speak of it as one of nature’s levities, though planted within us for the solid purposes of carrying forwards the mind to fresh enquiry and knowledge: strip us of it, the mind (I fear) would doze for ever over the present page; and we should all of us rest at ease with such objects as present themselves in the parish or province where we first drew our breath.”

Such has been our feeling from the first; and in pursuing this principle, we have been greatly encouraged by the several contributors, whose signatures abound in every Number of *the mirror*. To these friends we beg thus briefly to return our sincere thanks.

The arrangement of the present Volume, generally, accords with those of its successful predecessors. Fact and fancy; sentiment, poetry, and popular science; anecdote and art; love of nature and knowledge of the world—alternate in its columns. In these several departments popular reading has been our study. With this view, we have paid especial attention to the domestic history—the customs, amusements, and peculiarities—of our own country; and to such a portion of foreign novelties as bear upon the welfare and interests of the present generation. Economy of time, which is also

economy of money or cost, has been the ruling principle of our little literary exchequer; while our *ways and means* for the future are equally abundant.

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The illustrative portion, also, contains many striking novelties, which, as identified with contemporary curiosity, or as performances of art, will, we are persuaded, be duly appreciated.

We abstain from further enumeration of the contents or of their respective claims to the reader's notice. In every Number it has been our endeavour to cater for his "amusement and instruction," so as to combine interest and novelty—or, in a homely phrase, to make each sheet like "*the punch of conversation*." Thus, we have spirit, volatile and fiery in our leading articles; lemon in our pungent Notes; sugar in our "Gatherer;" and water *quant. suff.*—mixed in a form, which, like old bowls or drinking-glasses, is variegated with figures and scenes of the current fashion—as in our Engravings.

But we are getting too figurative, and our Christmas fare, unlike ourselves, is growing cold. So, indulgent reader, we promise to drink your health and return thanks for the same in your absence; though we had rather you were present to witness and share our exceeding great joy; and then to commence our Thirteenth Volume. Pardon this exuberance of the season: we reason with Falstaff:—"If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff: him keep with; the rest banish."

*Christmas Day, 1828.*

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Portrait of Thomas Moore, Esq.*]

## MEMOIR OF THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

Thomas Moore, Esq. the only son of Mr. Garret Moore, formerly a merchant in Dublin, was born May 28, 1780. He received the rudiments of an excellent education from Mr. Samuel Whyte, of Dublin, a man of taste and talent, known and respected as the early tutor of Sheridan; after which, at the age of fourteen, Mr. Moore was entered a student of Trinity College, Dublin. While at the University, he was greatly distinguished by his enthusiastic attachment to the liberty and independence of his country, which he more than once publicly asserted with uncommon energy and eloquence. His classical studies being completed, in 1799, he entered himself of the Temple, with a view to make the law his profession, and was called to the bar. In these moments, when he was not occupied with the dry technicalities and quibbles of legal writers, he amused himself with translating the Odes of Anacreon, which he published with copious notes, in 1800. Such was Mr. Moore's youthful appearance at this time, that being at a large dinner party, and getting up to escort the ladies to the drawing-room, a French gentleman observed, "*Ah, le petit bon homme, qu'il s'en va.*" Mr. Moore's subsequent brilliant

conversation, however, soon proved him to be, though little of stature, yet, like Pope, “in wit, a man.”

Assuming the appropriate name of *Little*, our author published in 1801, a volume of poems, chiefly amatory, which, though they established his *poetical* reputation, were severely censured for their warmth and licentiousness. Their success, however, was very considerable, fifteen or sixteen editions being sold within a short time. In the same year he advertised a work entitled “Philosophy of Pleasure;” but this was never published.

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Towards the autumn of 1803, Mr. Moore embarked for Bermuda, where he had obtained the appointment of Registrar to the Admiralty. This was a patent place, and of a description so unsuited to his temper of mind, that he fulfilled the duties of it by deputy, but the profits ultimately proved unworthy of Mr. Moore's serious attention; and we believe Mr. Moore has suffered by the villany of this substitute, to an important amount. He likewise visited the United States, and upon his return home, in 1806, he published his remarks on the American character, in a work entitled "Epistles, Odes, and other Poems." The preface to this little work sufficiently established the talent of Mr. Moore, as a prose writer. His opinion of the Americans is also there pretty freely expressed, and some of the poems, like those ascribed to Little, were objectionable in a moral point of view. The work was accordingly attacked with much severity, by Mr. Jeffrey, the editor of the Edinburgh Review: the irritated poet challenged his critic, but the duel was prevented, and the pistols being found loaded with paper pellets, the whole affair ended pleasantly enough.

The fate of Addison, with his Countess Dowager, holding out no encouragement for the ambitious love of Mr. Moore, he wisely and happily allowed his good taste to regulate his choice in a wife, and some years ago married Miss Dyke, a lady of great personal attractions, and accomplished manners, in whose congenial society he passes much of his time in the retirement of an elegant cottage, in Wiltshire, devoting himself chiefly to literary pursuits.

In 1808, Mr. Moore sent to the press "Corruption and Intolerance;" two poems, with notes: addressed to an Englishman, by an Irishman; and in 1809, "The Sceptic," a philosophical satire. These works, of which the first is pungently satirical, are little known; but they are worthy of their author. They were succeeded in 1810, by "A Letter to the Roman Catholics of Dublin." His next production, "Intercepted Letters, or the Two-penny Post Bag, by Thomas Brown, the younger," 1812, was eagerly perused, and fourteen editions of it were printed. Its severities on an elevated personage and the court, will perhaps never be forgotten by the parties. In sparkling wit, keen sarcasm, and humorous pleasantry, it is rivalled only by another volume, entitled "The Fudge Family in Paris," published in 1818, the hero of which is a distinguished poet, and a zealous supporter of the present administration. To this class of Mr. Moore's works belong his "Fables for the Holy Alliance," and "Rhymes on the Road," which deserve, in some respect, a higher reputation than the former volumes.

Mr. Moore appears equally to have cultivated a taste for music as well as for poesy; and the late Dr. Burney was perfectly astonished at his talent which he emphatically called "peculiarly his own." In 1813, Mr. Moore's fame was materially increased by the appearance of his exquisite songs to Sir John Stevenson's selection of Irish Melodies. Some of these songs are among the finest specimens of poetry in our language, and the morality of the whole of them is unexceptionable. They have since been collected into one volume. In 1816, he published "A Series of Sacred Songs, Duets, and Trios," the music to which was composed and selected by himself and Sir John Stevenson.



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In 1817, came forth his great work, on which he was known to have been long engaged, and which if it had been his only production, would have carried his name down to posterity as one of the first bards of his time. "Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," would not be an inapplicable motto for this oriental romance, which unites the purest and softest tenderness with the loftiest dignity, and glows in every page with all the fervour of poetry. For the copyright of this poem he is said to have received the sum of 3,000 guineas, and it must have proved a source of immense profit to the publishers.

In 1818, Mr. Moore visited his native city, Dublin, on which occasion our poet was invited to a public dinner, which was graced by a large assemblage of the most distinguished literary and political characters. The Earl of Charlemont took the chair; Mr. Moore sat on his right hand, Mr. Moore, sen. a venerable old gentleman, the father of the poet, was on the left.

On Lord Charlemont proposing "The living Poets of Great Britain," Mr. Moore said—

"Gentlemen, notwithstanding the witty song which you have just heard, and the flattering elevation which the author has assigned me, I cannot allow such a mark of respect to be paid to the illustrious names that adorn the literature of the present day, without calling your attention awhile to the singular constellation of genius, and asking you to dwell a little on the brightness of each "particular star" that forms it. Can I name to you a Byron, without recalling to your hearts recollections of all that his mighty genius has awakened there, his energy, his burning words, his intense passion, that disposition of fine fancy to wander only among the ruins of the heart, to dwell in places which the fire of feeling has desolated, and like the chestnut-tree, that grows best in volcanic soils, to luxuriate most where conflagration of passion has left its mark? Need I mention to you a Scott, that fertile and fascinating writer, the vegetation of whose mind is as rapid as that of a northern summer, and as rich as the most golden harvests of the south, whose beautiful creations succeed each other like fruits in Armida's enchanted garden, "one scarce is gathered ere another grows?" Shall I recall to you a Rogers, (to me endeared by friendship as well as genius,) who has hung up his own name on the shrine of memory among the most imperishable tablets there. A Southey, *not the laureate*, but the author of 'Don Roderick,' one of the noblest and most eloquent poems in any language. A Campbell, the polished and spirited Campbell, whose song of 'Innisfail' is the very tears of our own Irish muse, crystallized by the touch of genius, and made eternal. A Wordsworth, a poet, even in his puerilities, whose capacious mind, like the great pool of Norway, draws into its vortex not only the mighty things of the deep, but its minute weeds and refuse. A Crabbe, who has shown what the more than galvanic power of

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talent can effect, by giving not only motion, but life and soul to subjects that seemed incapable of it. I could enumerate, gentlemen, still more, and from thence would pass with delight to dwell upon the living poets of our own land. The dramatic powers of a Maturin and a Shiel, the former consecrated by the applause of a Scott and a Byron, and the latter by the tears of some of the brightest eyes in the empire. The rich imagination of a Philips, who has courted more than one Muse. The versatile genius of a Morgan, who was the first that mated our sweet Irish strains with poetry worthy of their pathos and their force. But I feel I have already trespassed too long upon your patience and your time. I do not regret, however, that you have deigned to listen with patience to this humble tribute to the living masters of the English lyre, which I, 'the meanest of the throng,' thus feebly, but heartily, have paid them."

Towards the close of 1822, Mr. Moore published "The Loves of the Angels," a poem of exquisite tenderness and beauty. The object of the poet is, by an allegorical medium, to shadow out the fall of the soul from its original purity—the loss of light and happiness which it suffers, in the pursuit of this world's perishable pleasures—and the punishments from conscience and Divine justice.

Soon after the death of Lord Byron, in 1824, Mr. Moore became involved in a dispute which involved many private feelings. The facts may be thus briefly stated:—It appears that about two years previous to his death, Lord Byron wrote his own Memoirs, which, according to Captain Medwin, were given "to Moore, or Moore's little boy, at Venice," with the observation of "Here's 2,000\_l\_ for you, my young friend;" and that they were not to be published till after his lordship's death. On the completion of the Memoirs, Lord Byron wrote to his lady, proposing to send them for her inspection; but she rejected the offer, desiring that they might never appear, and finishing with a threat. Lord Byron concluded his reply by saying, that "she might depend on their being published;" and his lordship further says, "It was not till after this correspondence that I made Moore the depositary of the MS." Mr. Moore subsequently disposed of the MS. to Mr. Murray, the bookseller, for the sum of 2,000 guineas; but, at the anxious wish of some of Lord Byron's relatives, the purchase-money was returned to Mr. Murray, and the MS. was burnt. The circumstances being so recent, we do not think it requisite to enlarge upon them. Mr. Moore has since entered into an agreement with his publishers for a Life of Lord Byron, and a few weeks since the first portion of the copy was sent to the printer.

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Almost simultaneous with the above affair was the publication of Mr. Moore's "Memoirs of Captain Rock, the celebrated Irish Chieftain,"—a work of political, humorous, and satirical character, turning upon the wrongs and riots of Ireland, with which, as our readers will allow, we have here little to do. It contains great historical research, and had its day; but the gratification in the perusal is of a very mixed character. Its success, however, was sufficient to induce the publication of an imitative work entitled "Captain Rock's Letters to the King," which was "certainly not written by Mr. Moore, to whom, while the publication was suspended, they were so positively ascribed."

In the following year, Mr. Moore published the "Memoirs of the Right Hon. R.B. Sheridan," having previously edited an edition of his works. In these Memoirs, Mr. Moore has done justice to the character of Sheridan, neither concealing his follies and vices, nor magnifying his good qualities. We quote a paragraph from this work for the purpose of introducing a portion of some very beautiful lines by Mr. Moore, which first appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, immediately after Sheridan's death.

"There appeared some verses at the time, which, however intemperate in their satire and careless in their style, came, evidently, warm from the heart of the writer, and contained sentiments to which, even in his cooler moments he needs not hesitate to subscribe:—

"Oh it sickens the heart to see bosoms so hollow,  
And friendships so false in the great and high-born;—  
To think what a long line of titles may follow  
The relics of him who died, friendless and lorn!

"How proud they can press to the funeral array  
Of him whom they shunn'd, in his sickness and sorrow—  
How bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,  
Whose pall shall be held up by Nobles to-morrow!"

The anonymous writer thus characterises the talents of Sheridan:—

"Was this then the fate of that high-gifted man,  
The pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall—  
The orator, dramatist, minstrel,—who ran  
Through each mode of the lyre, and was master of all?

"Whose mind was an essence, compounded, with art.  
From the finest and best of all other men's powers;  
Who rul'd, like a wizard, the world of the heart,  
And could call up its sunshine, or draw down its showers;



"Whose humour, as gay as the fire-fly's light,  
Play'd round every subject, and shone as it play'd;  
Whose wit, in the combat as gentle as bright,  
Ne'er carried a heart-stain away on its blade,—

"Whose eloquence, brightening whatever it tried,  
Whether reason or fancy, the gay or the grave,  
Was as rapid as deep, and as brilliant a tide,  
As ever bore Freedom aloft on its wave!"[1]

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In 1827, appeared "The Epicurean," a tale of extreme grace and feeling, and conveying the sublime lessons of Epicurus, in one of the most attractive of poetico-prosaic forms. In picturesque knowledge, splendid descriptions, startling and mysterious incidents, and intellectual riches, this work is almost unparalleled in our language; and, observes an elegant critic, "the narrative sweeps along, like a mild and glassy river winding through banks of the most brilliant verdure, sometimes sparkling and bubbling to the sunshine of fancy, and at intervals solemnly gliding on with a deep under-current of philosophy."

The contributions of Mr. Moore to one of the most powerful of the London journals are too well recognised by the public to require further than a passing notice of their being recently published in an elegant little volume, entitled "Odes upon Cash, Corn, Catholics, and other Matters;" and we believe them to be entitled by their raciness and humour to a niche in the library, beyond the destructible form of a newspaper.

In this brief Memoir, we have little more than glanced at Mr. Moore's several works, and the periods of their publication; although we could crowd our pages with the highest testimonials of their poetical and literary merits. Much as we admire "his wit, his festive merriment, and inimitable satires, and the ingenious imagery, and the elaborate melody and finish of every period of his prose"—we are disposed to think him pre-eminently successful in delineating the plaintive and pensive woes of deep and settled melancholy: thus—

As a beam o'er the face of the waters may glow,  
While the tide runs in darkness and coldness below;  
So the cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile,  
Though the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while.

We have already noticed the taste of Mr. Moore for music. "Nor has he neglected those more solid attainments which should ever distinguish the well-bred gentleman, for he is an excellent general scholar, and particularly well-read in the literature of the middle ages. His conversational powers are great, and his modest and unassuming manners have placed him in the highest rank of cultivated society." Although his reputation is so well established, he speaks of himself with his wonted modesty. "Whatever fame he might have acquired he attributed principally to the verses which he had adapted to the delicious strains of Irish melody. His verses, in themselves, could boast of but little merit; but like flies preserved in amber, they were esteemed in consequence of the precious material by which they were surrounded."

Sheridan, in speaking of the subject of this memoir, said "That there was no man who put so much of his heart into his fancy as Tom Moore; that his soul seemed as if it were a particle of fire separated from the sun; and was always fluttering to get back to that source of light and heat." Lord Byron, too, distinguished Moore as "a name consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents."

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[1] Moore's Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 463.

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## LIST OF ENGRAVINGS IN VOL. XII.

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*PORTRAIT OF THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.*

## ENGRAVED ON STEEL.

1. Eaton Hall, Cheshire. 2. Clarence Terrace, Regent's Park. 3. Colombia College, New York. 4. Field's Filtering Apparatus. 5. Kingston New Bridge. 6. All-Souls' Church, Langham Place. 7. Regent Bridge, Edinburgh. 8. Paper Marks. 9. Rosamond's Well. 10. Ancient Plan of Oxford Castle. 11. Cromleh in Anglesea. 12. Staines' New Church.



13. Dillon's Safety Lamp. 14. Gardens of the Zoological Society. 15. Bear Pit. 16. Gothic House for Lamas. 17. House for Monkey.

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18. Charlecote Hall. 19. Anne Hathaway's Cottage. 20. Shakspeare's Courting Chair. 21. Fire Towers. 22. United Service Club House. 23. Lavenham Church. 24. Villanova Mill. 25. Richmond Palace. 26. Pagoda in Kew Gardens. 27. Cheese Wring. 28. Nelson's Monument, Liverpool. 29. Kynaston's Cave. 30. Great Milton. 31. Chingford Church. 32. Vicenza. 33. Druidical Temple at Abury. 34. Council Office, Whitehall. 35. Admiralty Office, Whitehall. 36. Ehrenbreitstein on the Rhine. 37. Arch of Constantine at Rome. 38. Old Covent Garden. 39. Naples. 40. Duke of Marlborough's Column at Blenheim. 41. Barber's Barn at Hackney. 42. Stanging.