

A NEW MAGAZINE.

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BY

BALDWIN CRADOCK, AND JOY,

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OF

The London Magazine;

A Work, to be continued Monthly, which is intended to combine the Principles of sound Philosophy in Questions of Taste, Morals, and Politics, with the Entertainment and miscellaneous Information expected from a Public Journal.

WE have been induced to revive the Title of a once well-known but discontinued Magazine, and to appropriate it to our new undertaking, in consequence of its occurring to us as singular, that, while secondary towns of the Kingdom give name and distinction to popular Journals, the METROPOLIS should remain *unrepresented* in the now strenuous competition of Periodical Literature. This circumstance has induced us to enter the lists under the auspices of LONDON; and one of the principal objects of the LONDON MAGAZINE will be to convey the very "image, form, and pressure" of that "*mighty heart*" whose vast pulsations circulate life, strength, and spirits, throughout this great Empire.

On looking back to the labours of our predecessors, we are struck by the alteration in the Character of such Works which time has produced, and are made to feel the weight of the new duties that devolve on their conductors. The days are passed when *Vindex* could be suffered to dispute with *Eudocius*, through various successive Numbers, which is most eligible—a married or a single state? When an editor might announce, with self-congratulation, a series of Letters from *Silvanus* on affectation of manner, or expect *Amicus* to recruit his subscription list amongst respectable families, by recommending the Ladies to read Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse. Opinion now busies itself with more venturous themes than of yore: discussion must start fiercer and subtler game; excitements must be stronger;

the stakes of all sorts higher; the game, more complicated and hazardous.

The *spirit* of things generally, and, above all, of the present time, it will be our business, or at least our endeavour, to catch, condense, and delineate. For what is merely *intelligence* there are other channels and stores. The Newspapers, Annual Registers, and Monthly Reviews, supply the facts of contemporaneous history; while the nominally critical Journals, that leave the particulars of the Books under their hands, for the sake of discussing general principles, seem to encroach upon our province, and in some measure to leave their own. The Conductors of the LONDON MAGAZINE, assisted by its Contributors, hope, indeed, to render it one of the most active, as well as complete, Reporters of Literature; but they will seek to arrive at this end in the course of an examination of the various questions that arise out of the great distinctions of national character, age, public circumstances, and personal disposition. During the last twenty years, much has been doing in the world, affecting the principles and practice of Literature, of which the people of these kingdoms are but very imperfectly informed. A depth and intrepidity characterize the exercise and direction of intellectual exertion in certain quarters abroad, of which, we believe, most English Readers are unconscious, and which ought to be better known, for the sake of being more emulated, at home. New and remarkable doctrines, opening fresh views into the philosophy both of morals and of art, have lately been, and continue still to be, the subjects of zealous debate on the Continent; and the reputation of this Country, in that of her national Masters, and Institutions, is much concerned in the decision. We are not, on the whole, sorry, that our Authors have rather suggested systems than engaged in them; but the discussions which the independence and originality of their practice have chiefly occasioned, are well worth our attention, both as matters of curiosity, and from their being symptoms of that general development of independent sentiment, and that tendency to hardy inquiry, which now assume such a critical appearance in Europe, and which seem likely to lead to the most important effects in every thing that relates to Society. To Foreign Criticism, therefore, and Foreign Literature generally; as well as to the theories and progress of the Fine Arts in the various National Schools of Europe, we shall pay an attention which has not been hitherto given to them in any similar publication.

At home we find Poetry, at least (whatever may be the case in other classes of Literature), enjoying a degree of popularity, and exercising her powers with an activity, perfectly unprecedented. Her living votaries offer specimens differing much from

each other in style and character, and some of them prefer pretensions which are quite as novel as ambitious. In the course of our labours it will be our duty to analyze the properties, and weigh the merits of these: we shall be called upon to inquire whether what is most specious, striking, and adventurous in manner, is at the same time the truest and most durable in quality. Where questions of taste connect themselves with those of philosophical morality, and it becomes necessary to examine how far the privileges of talent can secure impunity for the sallies of the imagination when they trespass beyond the regular fences of society, we certainly shall not shrink from the investigation; though we shall endeavour to conduct it fairly towards authors, as well as faithfully towards the public, bearing in view the latitude, varying in degree at various times, which has always been allowed to Genius in this respect, and endeavouring to mark the point where privilege is exceeded and outrage commences. Should affectation, egotism, or vain impatience, endeavour to introduce conceits and vulgarities into the style of poetry, calling them indications of truth and nature, we may perhaps be tempted to expose the imposition somewhat roughly:—but, on the other hand, should we think any considerable body of readers unjust or uninformed, misled or uncandid, respecting honourable examples of the primitive and essential beauties of poetical composition, we shall not hesitate to probe the error to the quick, nor to trace it to its true source in the natural poverty of low conceptions, debauched by worldly commerce, and establishing themselves into a temper of pert scorn and heartless levity.

The Drama, with reference both to Plays and Performances, will be statedly noticed in our Magazine.

We are inclined to connect together in this announcement, the two momentous topics of Public Manners and Politics: they are in their nature intimately connected, and circumstances peculiar to the present moment render it almost impossible to regard them separately. The remarkable features of the national character have hitherto been, patriotism, thoughtfulness, independence, cheerful subordination, and tolerant but deep religious feeling. The combination of these has produced a noble and steady enthusiasm, which has rendered the national will resistless, given majesty to the public proceedings of the Country, and reconciled, in a wonderful degree, the strong, and even sometimes boisterous action of liberty, with the solid establishment of order, and the perfect preservation of due degree in the state. Every thing conspires to intimate that the kingdom is now arrived at a crisis in its history, which will decide whether this national character, so distinguished, is to be totally metamorphosed, or to remain such as it has been heretofore. We speak

not here of the safety or the danger of particular Institutions: this is a secondary question involved in the greater. The English Constitution, in all its essential excellencies, is the fruit of the English character; and, if the latter can be prevented from degenerating, the former is safe enough. It is now evident that the heat of the conflict has commenced, and it does not seem likely that it will subside before the matter is finally settled. Let us hope that there are yet enough of sound heads and hearts left in the country to bring her triumphantly out of the struggle; but, at all events, our task commences at a most important moment, and our feelings, as well as our duty, will lead us to take an active part in the pending trial.

Means have been taken to secure good information for our work, relative to the state of the institutions, manners, local interests, &c., of those numerous and important shoots from the English stem, which, in various hemispheres, diffuse and perpetuate the English language, habits, and character; and which, whether Colonies or independent States, are to be considered as belonging to our national family. It would not be prudent, perhaps, to promise any thing very positively relative to this department, which will necessarily be out of the more immediate controul of the Conductors; but the intention will doubtless be approved of, and we have reason to believe that its satisfactory execution will be found practicable.

We purposely abstain from entering into a more detailed and specific enumeration of the features and divisions of the New Magazine. We do not covet singularity of arrangement, or other peculiarity of this nature. Our object is to offer to the Public a periodical work of the miscellaneous kind, entertaining by the variety of its contents, and conspicuous for its alertness in noticing matters of immediate interest; while at the same time it shall treat the important questions of social philosophy with a care and attention indicating an ambition to take a respectable rank in Literature. Essays and Criticisms on all the popular topics, amusements, events, and publications of the day will be found in our pages; and Scientific, Literary, and Political Notices will be gleaned for them from every part of Europe. We have established a Correspondence with several of the most distinguished Foreign Literary characters: and neither expense nor industry has been spared in obtaining an extensive and respectable co-operation with the Conductors at home. Such Lists and Tables as are usually found in Magazines, will be given in ours; but we refer to our Early Numbers for the particulars of our PLAN, which we have here only traced generally in allusions to PRINCIPLES.