

Newington Literary Magazine

Overview

The young men's association that founded this magazine met on Friday evenings in the 1860s at least. It is currently unknown if it was connected to the Newington United Presbyterian Church. The church was opened in 1848 and located on the corner of Grange Road and Causewayside in Newington, Edinburgh. (For a history of this church, see [Newington United Presbyterian Church: Jubilee memorial, 1848-1898](#) (1898), available on the [Archive.org](#) website. See also the article, 'Salisbury Church (Newington South Church)' on the [Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church](#) website.)

According to the Editor, the group had very modest aims for its new production, and he himself foresaw no great literary benefit to posterity. Rather, its purpose was to help society members improve their writing skills, as well as for the 'edification of its readers'. The group apparently desired only a limited reading community with 'merely a local circulation'. If its readership did extend beyond the group, it was hoped that their youthful, inexperienced productions would not be too harshly judged. The contributors were to include both current as well as former members as a means of keeping their ties to the association.

This miscellany has a total of 358 pages and includes 32 contributions. These consist mostly of essays and articles on a range of subjects with a few original poems, along with extracts of published poems in a couple of the essays, one example being a paper on 'Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Works'.

Interestingly, in a letter to the Editor from 'One who takes an interest in Young Men', the writer suggests that the magazine could be improved by the inclusion of blank pages in each issue so that readers might be able to criticise the contributions (in the sense of discussing the piece's positive *and* negative points). The writer refers to the practise in other magazines: 'I have heard of this being done in other magazines and I believe the plan had a salutary [sic] effect in helping keep down the conceit of the young men' (p. 274). The Editor's note after the letter indicates that he would leave the decision with the association. The practice of leaving blank pages in these society magazines was a trend that was just beginning in the 1860s, and would become one of the defining features of this genre of magazine.

Name of Club, Society or Group That Produced the Magazine

Newington Young Men's Association (Edinburgh)

(Note: currently unclear if this is the same association as the Young Men's Association in connection with Newington United Presbyterian Church)

Date of Existence

1869?-?

Date of Magazine

Vol. 1, 1869

Number of Issues

1

Manuscript/Published Magazine

Manuscript

Contents and Contributions

Art/Illustrations (original); Articles; Editorial; Essays; Letters to Editor; Poems (original); Poems (republished material); Table of Contents

Repository

Edinburgh Central Library

Reference

From the card catalogue in Central Library: Class No. YAS 122 N54; Book No. 81426
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