

The Albion Literary Journal: A Quarterly Magazine of Instructive and Recreative Literature



The Albion Literary Journal: A Quarterly Magazine of Instructive and Recreative Literature, No. 2, April 1862 [title page] (©CSG CIC Glasgow Museums and Libraries Collection: The Mitchell Library, Special Collections, Mitchell (AL) 891260)Overview

Overview

A summary of the history of the Albion Mutual Improvement Union is available on our sister website, *Glasgow's Literary Bonds* (see 'Additional Notes' below).

There are three extant issues of this quarterly manuscript magazine which are bound individually. This is a relatively slim periodical: the second issue has 111 pages with 18 contributions; the third has 104 pages with 14 contributions; and the fourth has only 80 pages with 8 contributions. Of note is that there is no artwork in any of these

issues.

The first page of the April 1862 issue has an 'Order of Readers', which lists 21 names (the July issue only lists 17), presumably all men (some are listed with their first initial only). We know, however, that non-members also read the magazine: a letter to the Editor from a lady named Lizzie can be found in this issue, in which she reviews the previous number. It was not unusual for these magazines to be passed among family and friends outwith the 'official' list of readers.

Underneath this list, readers are told that they are allowed only two nights for perusing the magazine, and that they were to keep it 'as clean as possible'. In addition, 'No writing or scribbling [was] allowed within its pages on any consideration'. This suggests that readers of the previous issue engaged in this practice. Nonetheless, a child's (?) scribbles can indeed be found on pages 90 and 91, and a few corrections to the text in pencil are sparsely distributed throughout the issue.

According to the 'Prefatory', the members were not previously acquainted with the idea of a society magazine, but after reading the first issue, the project caught on. Indeed, the Editor ventured to say that he hoped it might be possible to have the magazine in print one day.

The contributors use pen-names to sign their pieces, but we are told that the Editors have taken the trouble to re-write them (there were reportedly at least two Editors). This was an uncommon practice in mutual improvement and literary groups. It was usually done to try to maintain the anonymity of the authors as their respective handwriting was presumably recognisable by other group members. This practice also helped to give a uniformity to the magazine, which, for some societies was of some import. In this case, the Editors might have taken it in turns to rewrite it, perhaps even changing Editors within one piece. For example, the handwriting at the start of several contributions begins in neat script, and when one turns the page, the characters are much larger and looser, and appear to be a different handwriting altogether.

Name of Club, Society or Group That Produced the Magazine

Albion Mutual Improvement Union (Glasgow)

Date of Existence

13 September 1860-1863?

Date of Magazine

No. 2 (April 1862); No. 3 (July 1862); No. 4 (June 1863)

Number of Issues

3 (extant)

Manuscript/Published Magazine

Manuscript

Contents and Contributions

Address; Annotations; Articles (non-fiction); Circulation Lists; Correspondence columns; Debates; Essays; Game (acrostic); Letters to Editor; Poems (original); Prefaces; Serial articles/stories; Tables of Contents

Repository

Mitchell Library Special Collections

Reference

Mitchell (AL) 891260

Additional Notes

See also entry for [Albion Mutual Improvement Union](#) on our sister website, [Glasgow's Literary Bonds](#).