

POEMS

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Poems by Clement C. Moore

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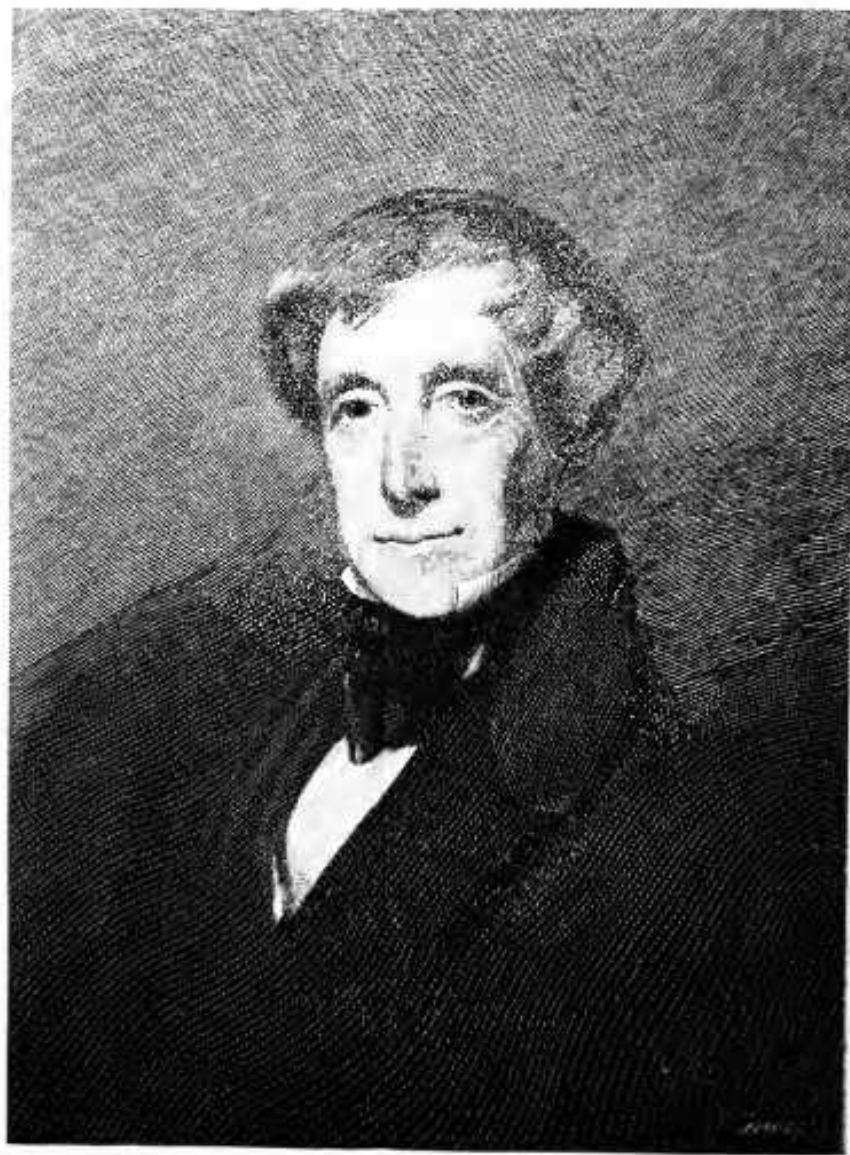
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CLEMENT C. MOORE

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P O E M S.



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BY

CLEMENT C. MOORE, LL. D.

Et sermone opus est modo tristi, saepe jocos.—HOR.

NEW YORK:
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—
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P R E F A C E.

MY DEAR CHILDREN :

In compliance with your wishes, I here present you with a volume of verses, written by me at different periods of my life.

You may perceive that the pieces contained in it are not arranged in the order of the times at which they were composed ; for, not only would it be impossible for me now to make such an arrangement with precision, but it was thought best that the serious should be intermingled with the gay, and the shorter with the longer compositions.

I have not made a selection from among my verses of such as are of any peculiar cast; but have given you the melancholy and the lively, the serious, the sportive, and even the trifling; such as relate solely to our own domestic circle, and those of which the subjects take a wider range. For, as you once persuaded me to sit for my portrait, which was the occasion of one of the pieces in this collection; so, I flatter myself that you will be pleased to have as true a picture as possible of your father's mind, upon which you and your children may look when I shall be removed from this world. Were I to offer you nothing but what is gay and lively, you well know that the deepest and keenest feelings of your father's heart would not be portrayed. If, on the other hand, nothing but what is serious or sad had been presented to your view, an equally imperfect character of his mind would have been exhibited. For you are all aware that he is far from following the school of Chesterfield with regard to harmless mirth and merriment; and that, in spite of all the cares and sorrows of this life, he thinks we are so constituted that a good honest hearty laugh, which conceals no malice, and is

excited by nothing corrupt, however ungenteel it may be, is healthful both to body and mind. And it is one of the benevolent ordinances of Providence, that we are thus capable of these alternations of sorrow and trouble with mirth and gladness. Another reason why the mere trifles in this volume have not been withheld, is, that such things have been often found by me to afford greater pleasure than what was by myself esteemed of more worth.

I do not pay my readers so ill a compliment as to offer the contents of this volume to their view as the mere amusements of my idle hours; effusions thrown off without care or meditation, as though the refuse of my thoughts were good enough for them. On the contrary, some of the pieces have cost me much time and thought; and I have composed them all as carefully and correctly as I could.

I wish you to bear in mind that nothing which may appear severe or sarcastic in this collection, is pointed at any individual. Where vice or absurdity is held up