

**THE BATTLE OF  
LONDON LIFE: OR, BOZ  
AND HIS SECRETARY**

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The Battle of London Life: Or, Boz and His Secretary by Thomas O'Keefe (Morna)

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**THOMAS O'KEEFE (MORNA)**

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*Boy in his Study*

THE  
BATTLE OF LONDON LIFE;

OR,

BOZ AND HIS SECRETARY.

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BY MORNA. *pseud.*

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*Thomas G. Keefe*

WITH SIX DESIGNS ON STONE BY GEORGE SALA.

LONDON:  
GEORGE PEIRCE, 310, STRAND.

1849.

LONDON:  
GEORGE FISCHER, 310, STRAND.

## TO JOHN BULL.

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IN this age of scribbling (for there never was a time in which men of *all degrees of ability*, of *every kind of education*, of *every profession*, hurried with such fearfully mad speed to *print!*) Writers, in their Dedications and Prefaces, use much eloquence to laud their patrons, and much seeming modesty to condemn themselves; or, at least, to apologise to the *literati* for the insufficiency of their productions. This is (*pardonnez le mot*) humbug, mere self-conceited arrogance and pride; and the more despicable, because, of all the various garbs *pride* puts on, that of crouching humility must ever appear, to honest John Bull, the most pitifully abject. Not to incur your dis-

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pleasure and censure, by such a sneaking dereliction of character and independence, we shall frankly tell you, that if you buy our book, we care not a rush whether you read it or not ; however, should curiosity induce you to do so, we advise you to make the most of a bad bargain with as much good humour as you can.

"Populus me sibi lat, at mihi plaudo."

(BORROWED.)

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*Vide* Notes to Pages 4, 7, 12, 61, and 77.

# THE BATTLE OF LONDON LIFE.

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## CHAPTER I.

"FAUST.—In introducing us, do you assume the character of Wizard, or of Devil ?

"MEPHISTOPHELES.—In truth, I generally go about in strict incognito."

GOETHE'S FAUST.

BOZ AND HIS SECRETARY—CORRESPONDENCE—  
SINGLE LIFE—THE BROWN GRENADIER—THE  
POLICE INSPECTOR—THE REPUBLICAN STRAN-  
GLERS—THE SECRETARY OF LEGATION—&c.,  
&c., &c.

THE illustrious Boz was lolling in his favourite crimson-cushioned library chair. His fixed gaze on the ceiling, and a certain pursed-up contraction of the nether lip, denoted that he was profoundly absorbed in thought ; or, in fact, busily engaged in a search after what Bulwer calls **THE IDEAL!**

The secluded, yet pleasant, situation of the apartment in which he sat (a sort of wing jutting out into, and communicating by French windows with, the lawn and gardens behind the house) rendered it admirably adapted for the *sanctum* of a man of letters; and though it was furnished with a little too much show and pretension to please a person of refined and correct taste, still the decorations were so evidently but a reflex, as it were, of the man's mind—the gorgeous oddities which met your view seemed to be in such perfect harmonization with certain well-known queer creations of his brain, that you felt there was, at all events, no affectation about the thing, and said to yourself, “What singularity! what eccentricity!” instead of, “What gaudiness! what gimcracks!” A noble collection of the best modern authors filled the tiers of bookshelves which were ranged from top to bottom of the walls on three sides of the apartment, and at a desk near the window, on the fourth side, a man was seated busily engaged in writing.

This man was our hero's amanuensis *PRO TEM.*, and as he is destined to play no inconsiderable part in our history, a *pen and ink* portrait of him, taken from life, may not be unacceptable.

His age seemed to range betwixt 45 and 50; probably nearer the latter than the former. A