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by George Crabbe and Sir Adolphus William Ward**

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Title: George Crabbe: Poems, Volume 2 (of 3)

Author: George Crabbe

Editor: Sir Adolphus William Ward

Release date: January 22, 2016 [EBook #51003]

Language: English

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2 (OF 3) \*\*\*

*CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH CLASSICS*

**Poems  
by  
George Crabbe**

In Three Volumes

GEORGE CRABBE

Born, 1754

Died, 1832

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**GEORGE CRABBE**

**POEMS**

EDITED BY

ADOLPHUS WILLIAM WARD

Litt.D., Hon. LL.D., F.B.A.

Master of Peterhouse



## Volume II

CAMBRIDGE:  
at the University Press  
1906

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE

C. F. CLAY, Manager.  
**London:**FETTER LANE, E.C.  
**Glasgow:** 50, WELLINGTON STREET.



**Leipzig:** F. A. BROCKHAUS.  
**New York:** THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.  
**Bombay and Calcutta:** MACMILLAN AND CO., Ltd.

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## PREFACE.

The poems contained in this volume, which comprise the whole of the *Tales* and the first eleven of the *Tales of the Hall*, are without exception printed from the edition of 1823, the last of Crabbe's works published in this country in his lifetime.

The *Variants* in the *Tales* are from the first edition (1812) and from the 'Original MS.' readings given as footnotes in the younger Crabbe's edition of his father's *Life and Poems* (1834). The *Variants* in the *Tales of the Hall* are from the first edition (1819); from the 'Original MS.' readings as above; from the Crabbe MSS. in the possession of the Cambridge University Press (which will be described in the Preface to Vol. III, where a much fuller use will be made of them), and from the MSS. in the valuable collection of Mrs Mackay of Trowbridge, most kindly lent by her for examination and use (to which the same remark applies). In the present volume will also be found certain *Addenda* to the *Variants* in Vol. I, from the 'Original MS.' readings printed by the younger Crabbe.

Among the *Errata* in this volume are included a considerable number of quotations from Shakespeare with wrong indications of acts or scenes, and occasionally even of the plays from which the passages are taken. A large proportion of the quotations are in themselves imperfect, or otherwise incorrect. Perhaps it is stretching a point to treat all these defects as oversights; sometimes Crabbe may have made intentional changes, and more frequently he may have been wilfully careless. No readings which he could have found in any current edition of Shakespeare have been altered.

In the preparation of the present volume, I have again enjoyed the advantage of the friendly aid and cooperation of Mr A. T. BARTHOLOMEW, to whom I am specially indebted for the compilation of the *Variants*. Our joint efforts have been occasionally defeated by the illegibility of passages in the Crabbe MSS. acquired by our University Press. It is hoped that the third and concluding volume of this edition, which will contain a considerable amount of previously unpublished verse, will appear in the course of the summer.

A. W. WARD.

PETERHOUSE LODGE, CAMBRIDGE.  
March 19th, 1906.

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# TALES.

TO  
HER GRACE ISABELLA  
DUCHESS DOWAGER OF RUTLAND.

MADAM,

The dedication of works of literature to persons of superior worth and eminence appears to have been a measure early adopted, and continued to the present time; so that, whatever objections have been made to the language of dedicators, such addresses must be considered as perfectly consistent with reason and propriety; in fact, superior rank and elevated situation in life naturally and justly claim such respect and it is the prerogative of greatness to give countenance and favour to all who appear to merit and to need them; it is likewise the prerogative of every kind of superiority and celebrity, of personal merit when peculiar or extraordinary, of dignity, elegance, wealth, and beauty, certainly of superior intellect and intellectual acquirements; every such kind of eminence has its privilege, and, being itself an object of distinguished approbation, it gains attention for whomsoever its possessor distinguishes and approves.

Yet the causes and motives for an address of this kind rest not entirely with the merit of the patron, the feelings of the author himself having their weight and consideration in the choice he makes; he may have gratitude for benefits received, or pride not illaudable in aspiring to the favour of those whose notice confers honour; or he may entertain a secret but strong desire of seeing a name in the entrance of his work which he is accustomed to utter with peculiar satisfaction, and to hear mentioned with veneration and delight.

Such, madam, are the various kinds of eminence for which an author on these occasions would probably seek, and they meet in your grace; such too are the feelings by which he would be actuated, and they centre in me: let me therefore entreat your grace to take this book into your favour and protection, and to receive it as an offering of the utmost respect and duty, from,

May it please Your Grace,

Your Grace's

Most obedient, humble,

And devoted servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

Muston, July 31, 1812.

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## PREFACE.

That the appearance of the present work before the public is occasioned by a favourable reception of the former two, I hesitate not to acknowledge; because, while the confession may be regarded as some proof of gratitude, or at least of attention from an author to his readers, it ought not to be considered as an indication of vanity. It is unquestionably very pleasant to be assured that our labours are well received; but, nevertheless, this must not be taken for a just and full criterion of their merit: publications of great intrinsic value have been met with so much coolness, that a writer who succeeds in obtaining some degree of notice should look upon himself rather as one favoured than meritorious, as gaining a prize from Fortune, and not a recompense for desert; and, on the contrary, as it is well known that books of very inferior kind have been at once pushed into the strong current of popularity, and are there kept buoyant by the force of the stream, the writer who acquires not this adventitious help may be reckoned rather as unfortunate than undeserving; and from these opposite considerations it follows, that a man may speak of his success without incurring justly the odium of conceit, and may likewise acknowledge a disappointment without an adequate cause for humiliation or self-reproach.

But were it true that something of the complacency of self-approbation would insinuate itself into an author's mind with the idea of success, the sensation would not be that of unalloyed pleasure; it would perhaps assist him to bear, but it would not enable him to escape, the mortification he must encounter from censures, which, though he may be unwilling to admit, yet he finds himself unable to confute; as well as from advice, which, at the same time that he cannot but approve, he is compelled to reject.

Reproof and advice, it is probable, every author will receive, if we except those who merit so much of the former, that the latter is contemptuously denied them; now of these, reproof, though it may cause more temporary uneasiness, will in many cases create less difficulty, since errors may be corrected when opportunity occurs; but advice, I repeat, may be of such nature, that it will be painful to reject, and yet impossible to follow it; and in this

predicament I conceive myself to be placed. There has been recommended to me, and from authority which neither inclination nor prudence leads me to resist, in any new work I might undertake, an unity of subject, and that arrangement of my materials which connects the whole and gives additional interest to every part; in fact, if not an Epic Poem, strictly so denominated, yet such composition as would possess a regular succession of events, and a catastrophe to which every incident should be subservient, and which every character, in a greater or less degree, should conspire to accomplish.

In a Poem of this nature, the principal and inferior characters in some degree resemble a general and his army, where no one pursues his peculiar objects and adventures, [but] pursues them in unison with the movements and grand purposes of the whole body; where there is a community of interests and a subordination of actors; and it was upon this view of the subject, and of the necessity for such distribution of persons and events, that I found myself obliged to relinquish an undertaking, for which the characters I could command, and the adventures I could describe, were altogether unfitted.

But if these characters which seemed to be at my disposal were not such as would coalesce into one body, nor were of a nature to be commanded by one mind, so neither on examination did they appear as an unconnected multitude, accidentally collected, to be suddenly dispersed; but rather beings of whom might be formed groups and smaller societies, the relations of whose adventures and pursuits might bear that kind of similitude to an Heroic Poem, which these minor associations of men (as pilgrims on the way to their saint, or parties in search of amusement, travellers excited by curiosity, or adventurers in pursuit of gain) have in points of connexion and importance with a regular and disciplined army.

Allowing this comparison, it is manifest that while much is lost for want of unity of subject and grandeur of design, something is gained by greater variety of incident and more minute display of character, by accuracy of description and diversity of scene: in these narratives we pass from gay to grave, from lively to severe, not only without impropriety, but with manifest advantage. In one continued and connected Poem, the reader is, in general, highly gratified or severely disappointed; by many independent narratives, he has the renovation of hope, although he has been dissatisfied, and a prospect of reiterated pleasure, should he find himself entertained.

I mean not, however, to compare these different modes of writing as if I were balancing their advantages and defects before I could give preference to either; with me the way I take is not a matter of choice, but of necessity; I present not my Tales to the reader as if I had chosen the best method of ensuring his approbation, but as using the only means I possessed of engaging his attention.

It may probably be remarked that Tales, however dissimilar, might have been connected by some associating circumstance to which the whole number might bear equal affinity, and that examples of such union are to be found in Chaucer, in Boccace, and other collectors and inventors of Tales, which, considered in themselves, are altogether independent; and to this idea I gave so much consideration as convinced me that I could not avail myself of the benefit of such artificial mode of affinity. To imitate the English poet, characters must be found adapted to their several relations, and this is a point of great difficulty and hazard; much allowance seems to be required even for Chaucer himself, since it is difficult to conceive that on any occasion the devout and delicate Prioress, the courtly and valiant Knight, and "the poure good Man the persone of a Townte," would be the voluntary companions of the drunken Miller, the licentious Sompnour, and "the Wanton Wife of Bath," and enter into that colloquial and travelling intimacy which, if a common pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas may be said to excuse, I know nothing beside (and certainly nothing in these times) that would produce such effect. Boccace, it is true, avoids all difficulty of this kind, by not assigning to the ten relators of his hundred Tales any marked or peculiar characters; nor, though there are male and female in company, can the sex of the narrator be distinguished in the narration. To have followed the method of Chaucer might have been of use, but could scarcely be adopted, from its difficulty; and to have taken that of the Italian writer would have been perfectly easy, but could be of no service: the attempt at union therefore has been relinquished, and these relations are submitted to the public, connected by no other circumstance than their being the productions of the same author, and devoted to the same purpose, the entertainment of his readers.

It has been already acknowledged, that these compositions have no pretensions to be estimated with the more lofty and heroic kind of poems, but I feel great reluctance in admitting that they have not a fair and legitimate claim to the poetic character. In vulgar estimation, indeed, all that is not prose passes for poetry, but I have not ambition of so humble a kind as to be satisfied with a concession which requires nothing in the poet, except his ability for counting syllables, and I trust something more of the poetic character will be allowed to the succeeding pages than what the heroes of the Dunciad might share with the author; nor was I aware that by describing, as faithfully as I could, men, manners, and things, I was forfeiting a just title to a name which has been freely granted to many whom to equal, and even to excel, is but very stinted commendation.

In this case it appears that the usual comparison between poetry and painting entirely fails: the artist who takes an accurate likeness of individuals, or a faithful representation of scenery, may not rank so high in the public estimation as one who paints an historical

event, or an heroic action; but he is nevertheless a painter, and his accuracy is so far from diminishing his reputation, that it procures for him in general both fame and emolument; nor is it perhaps with strict justice determined that the credit and reputation of those verses which strongly and faithfully delineate character and manners, should be lessened in the opinion of the public by the very accuracy which gives value and distinction to the productions of the pencil.

Nevertheless, it must be granted that the pretensions of any composition to be regarded as poetry will depend upon that definition of the poetic character which he who undertakes to determine the question has considered as decisive; and it is confessed also that one of great authority may be adopted, by which the verses now before the reader, and many others which have probably amused and delighted him, must be excluded: a definition like this will be found in the words which the greatest of poets, not divinely inspired, has given to the most noble and valiant Duke of Athens—

“The poet’s eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as Imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation, and a name<sup>[1]</sup>.”

Hence we observe the poet is one who, in the excursions of his fancy between heaven and earth, lights upon a kind of fairyland, in which he places a creation of his own, where he embodies shapes, and gives action and adventure to his ideal offspring; taking captive the imagination of his readers, he elevates them above the grossness of actual being, into the soothing and pleasant atmosphere of supra-mundane existence: there he obtains for his visionary inhabitants the interest that engages a reader’s attention without ruffling his feelings, and excites that moderate kind of sympathy which the realities of nature oftentimes fail to produce, either because they are so familiar and insignificant that they excite no determinate emotion, or are so harsh and powerful that the feelings excited are grating and distasteful.

Be it then granted that (as Duke Theseus observes) “such tricks hath strong Imagination,” and that such poets “are of imagination all compact;” let it be further conceded, that theirs is a higher and more dignified kind of composition, nay, the only kind that has pretensions to inspiration: still, that these poets should so entirely engross the title as to exclude those who address their productions to the plain sense and sober judgment of their readers, rather than to their fancy and imagination, I must repeat that I am unwilling to admit—because I conceive that, by granting such right of exclusion, a vast deal of what has been hitherto received as genuine poetry would no longer be entitled to that appellation.

All that kind of satire wherein character is skillfully delineated must (this criterion being allowed) no longer be esteemed as genuine poetry; and for the same reason many affecting narratives which are founded on real events, and borrow no aid whatever from the imagination of the writer, must likewise be rejected: a considerable part of the poems, as they have hitherto been denominated, of Chaucer, are of this naked and unveiled character; and there are in his Tales many pages of coarse, accurate, and minute, but very striking description. Many small poems in a subsequent age, of most impressive kind, are adapted and addressed to the common sense of the reader, and prevail by the strong language of truth and nature; they amused our ancestors, and they continue to engage our interest, and excite our feelings, by the same powerful appeals to the heart and affections. In times less remote, Dryden has given us much of this poetry, in which the force of expression and accuracy of description have neither needed nor obtained assistance from the fancy of the writer; the characters in his Absalom and Achitophel are instances of this, and more especially those of Doeg and Og in the second part: these, with all their grossness, and almost offensive accuracy, are found to possess that strength and spirit which has preserved from utter annihilation the dead bodies of Tate, to whom they were inhumanly bound, happily with a fate the reverse of that caused by the cruelty of Mezentius; for there the living perished in the putrefaction of the dead, and here the dead are preserved by the vitality of the living. And, to bring forward one other example, it will be found that Pope himself has no small portion of this actuality of relation, this nudity of description, and poetry without an atmosphere; the lines beginning, “In the worst inn’s worst room,” are an example, and many others may be seen in his Satires, Imitations, and above all in his Dunciad: the frequent absence of those “Sports of Fancy,” and “Tricks of strong Imagination,” have been so much observed, that some have ventured to question whether even this writer were a poet; and though, as Dr. Johnson has remarked, it would be difficult to form a definition of one in which Pope should not be admitted, yet they who doubted his claim, had, it is likely, provided for his exclusion by forming that kind of character for their poet, in which this elegant versifier, for so he must be then named, should not be comprehended.

These things considered, an author will find comfort in his expulsion from the rank and society of poets, by reflecting that men much his superiors were likewise shut out, and more especially when he finds also that men not much his superiors are entitled to admission.

But in whatever degree I may venture to differ from any others in my notions of the qualifications and character of the true poet, I most cordially assent to their opinion who assert that his principal exertions must be made to engage the attention of his readers; and further, I must allow that the effect of poetry should be to lift the mind from the painful realities of actual existence, from its every-day concerns, and its perpetually occurring vexations, and to give it repose by substituting objects in their place which it may contemplate with some degree of interest and satisfaction; but what is there in all this, which may not be effected by a fair representation of existing character? nay, by a faithful delineation of those painful realities, those every-day concerns, and those perpetually-occurring vexations themselves, provided they be not (which is hardly to be supposed) the very concerns and distresses of the reader? for, when it is admitted that they have no particular relation to him, but are the troubles and anxieties of other men, they excite and interest his feelings as the imaginary exploits, adventures, and perils of romance;—they soothe his mind, and keep his curiosity pleasantly awake; they appear to have enough of reality to engage his sympathy, but possess not interest sufficient to create painful sensations. Fiction itself, we know, and every work of fancy, must for a time have the effect of realities; nay, the very enchanters, spirits, and monsters of Ariosto and Spenser must be present in the mind of the reader while he is engaged by their operations, or they would be as the objects and incidents of a nursery tale to a rational understanding, altogether despised and neglected: in truth, I can but consider this pleasant effect upon the mind of a reader as depending neither upon the events related (whether they be actual or imaginary), nor upon the characters introduced (whether taken from life or fancy), but upon the manner in which the poem itself is conducted; let that be judiciously managed, and the occurrences actually copied from life will have the same happy effect as the inventions of a creative fancy;—while, on the other hand, the imaginary persons and incidents to which the poet has given “a local habitation, and a name,” will make upon the concurring feelings of the reader the same impressions with those taken from truth and nature, because they will appear to be derived from that source, and therefore of necessity will have a similar effect.

Having thus far presumed to claim for the ensuing pages the rank and title of poetry, I attempt no more, nor venture to class or compare them with any other kinds of poetical composition; their place will doubtless be found for them.

A principal view and wish of the poet must be to engage the mind of his readers, as, failing in that point, he will scarcely succeed in any other: I therefore willingly confess that much of my time and assiduity has been devoted to this purpose; but, to the ambition of pleasing, no other sacrifices have, I trust, been made, than of my own labour and care. Nothing will be found that militates against the rules of propriety and good manners, nothing that offends against the more important precepts of morality and religion; and with this negative kind of merit, I commit my book to the judgment and taste of the reader—not being willing to provoke his vigilance by professions of accuracy, nor to solicit his indulgence by apologies for mistakes.

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## TALE I.

### THE DUMB ORATORS;

OR,

### THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY.

[In] fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe...

Full of wise saws and modern instances.

*As you Like it*, Act II. Scene 7.

Deep shame hath struck me dumb.

*King John*, Act IV. Scene 2.

He gives the bastinado with his tongue,  
Our ears are cudgell'd.

*King John*, Act IV. Scene 1.

Let's kill all the lawyers;

Now show yourselves men: 'tis for liberty:

We will not leave one lord or gentleman.

*2 Henry VI*. Act IV. Scene 2.

And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.

*Twelfth Night*, Act V. Scene last.

## TALE I.

### THE DUMB ORATORS.

That all men would be cowards if they dare,  
Some men we know have courage to declare;  
And this the life of many an hero shows,  
That like the tide, man's courage ebbs and flows:  
With friends and gay companions round them, then  
Men boldly speak and have the hearts of men;  
Who, with opponents seated, miss the aid  
Of kind applauding looks, and grow afraid;  
Like timid trav'lers in the night, they fear  
Th' assault of foes, when not a friend is near.

10

In contest mighty and of conquest proud  
Was Justice Bolt, impetuous, warm, and loud;  
His fame, his prowess all the country knew,  
And disputants, with one so fierce, were few.  
He was a younger son, for law design'd,  
With dauntless look and persevering mind;  
While yet a clerk, for disputation famed,  
No efforts tired him, and no conflicts tamed.

Scarcely he bade his master's desk adieu,  
When both his brothers from the world withdrew.  
An ample fortune he from them possess'd,  
And was with saving care and prudence bless'd.  
Now would he go and to the country give  
Example how an English 'squire should live;  
How bounteous, yet how frugal man may be,  
By a well-order'd hospitality;  
He would the rights of all so well maintain,  
That none should idle be, and none complain.

20

All this and more he purposed—and what man  
Could do, he did to realize his plan;  
But time convinced him that we cannot keep  
A breed of reasoners like a flock of sheep;  
For they, so far from following as we lead,  
Make that a cause why they will not proceed.  
Man will not follow where a rule is shown,  
But loves to take a method of his own;  
Explain the way with all your care and skill,  
This will he quit, if but to prove he will.—  
Yet had our Justice honour—and the crowd,  
Awed by his presence, their respect avow'd.

30

In later years he found his heart incline,  
More than in youth, to gen'rous food and wine;  
But no indulgence check'd the powerful love  
He felt to teach, to argue, and reprove.

40

Meetings, or public calls, he never miss'd—  
To dictate often, always to assist.  
Oft he the clergy join'd, and not a cause  
Pertain'd to them but he could quote the laws;



He upon tithes and residence display'd  
 A fund of knowledge for the hearer's aid; 50  
 And could on glebe and farming, wool and grain,  
 A long discourse, without a pause, maintain.  
 To his experience and his native sense  
 He join'd a bold imperious eloquence;  
 The grave, stern look of men inform'd and wise, }  
 A full command of feature, heart, and eyes, }  
 An awe-compelling frown, and fear-inspiring size. }  
 When at the table, not a guest was seen  
 With appetite so ling'ring, or so keen;  
 But when the outer man no more required, 60  
 The inner waked, and he was man inspired.  
 His subjects then were those, a subject true  
 Presents in fairest form to public view;  
 Of Church and State, of Law, with mighty strength  
 Of words he spoke, in speech of mighty length;  
 And now, into the vale of years declined,  
 He hides too little of the monarch-mind;  
 He kindles anger by untimely jokes,  
 And opposition by contempt provokes; 70  
 Mirth he suppresses by his awful frown,  
 And humble spirits, by disdain, keeps down;  
 Blamed by the mild, approved by the severe,  
 The prudent fly him, and the valiant fear.  
 For overbearing is his proud discourse,  
 And overwhelming of his voice the force;  
 And overpowering is he when he shows  
 What floats upon a mind that always overflows.  
 This ready man at every meeting rose,  
 Something to hint, determine, or propose; 80  
 And grew so fond of teaching, that he taught  
 Those who instruction needed not or sought.  
 Happy our hero, when he could excite  
 Some thoughtless talker to the wordy fight:  
 Let him a subject at his pleasure choose,  
 Physic or Law, Religion or the Muse;  
 On all such themes he was prepared to shine,  
 Physician, poet, lawyer, and divine.  
 Hemm'd in by some tough argument, borne down  
 By press of language and the awful frown,  
 In vain for mercy shall the culprit plead; 90  
 His crime is past, and sentence must proceed:  
 Ah! suffering man, have patience, bear thy woes—  
 For lo! the clock—at ten the Justice goes.  
 This powerful man, on business or to please  
 A curious taste, or weary grown of ease,  
 On a long journey travell'd many a mile  
 Westward, and halted midway in our isle;  
 Content to view a city large and fair,  
 Though none had notice what a man was there!  
 Silent two days, he then began to long 100  
 Again to try a voice so loud and strong;  
 To give his favourite topics some new grace,  
 And gain some glory in such distant place;  
 To reap some present pleasure, and to sow  
 Seeds of fair fame, in after-time to grow:  
 Here will men say, "We heard, at such an hour,  
 The best of speakers—wonderful his power."  
 Inquiry made, he found that day would meet  
 A learned club, and in the very street: 110  
 Knowledge to gain and give, was the design;  
 To speak, to hearken, to debate, and dine:  
 This pleased our traveller, for he felt his force  
 In either way, to eat or to discourse.  
 Nothing more easy than to gain access  
 To men like these, with his polite address:  
 So he succeeded, and first look'd around,  
 To view his objects and to take his ground;  
 And therefore silent chose awhile to sit,  
 Then enter boldly by some lucky hit,  
 Some observation keen or stroke severe, 120  
 To cause some wonder or excite some fear.  
 Now, dinner past, no longer he suppress'd  
 His strong dislike to be a silent guest;

Subjects and words were now at his command—  
 When disappointment frown'd on all he plann'd;  
 For, hark!—he heard, amazed, on every side,  
 His church insulted and her priests belied;  
 The laws reviled, the ruling power abused,  
 The land derided, and its foes excused:—  
 He heard and ponder'd.—What, to men so vile, 130  
 Should be his language? For his threat'ning style  
 They were too many;—if his speech were meek,  
 They would despise such poor attempts to speak:  
 At other times with every word at will,  
 He now sat lost, perplex'd, astonish'd, still.  
 Here were Socinians, Deists, and indeed }  
 All who, as foes to England's church, agreed; }  
 But still with creeds unlike, and some without a creed: }  
 Here, too, fierce friends of liberty he saw, 140  
 Who own'd no prince and who obey no law;  
 There were Reformers of each different sort,  
 Foes to the laws, the priesthood, and the court;  
 Some on their favourite plans alone intent,  
 Some purely angry and malevolent:  
 The rash were proud to blame their country's laws;  
 The vain, to seem supporters of a cause;  
 One call'd for change that he would dread to see;  
 Another sigh'd for Gallic liberty!  
 And numbers joining with the forward crew,  
 For no one reason—but that numbers do. 150  
 "How," said the Justice, "can this trouble rise,  
 This shame and pain, from creatures I despise?"  
 And conscience answer'd—"The prevailing cause  
 Is thy delight in listening to applause;  
 Here, thou art seated with a tribe, who spurn  
 Thy favourite themes, and into laughter turn  
 Thy fears and wishes; silent and obscure,  
 Thyself, shalt thou the long harangue endure;  
 And learn, by feeling, what it is to force 160  
 On thy unwilling friends the long discourse.  
 What though thy thoughts be just, and these, it seems,  
 Are traitors' projects, idiots' empty schemes:  
 Yet minds like bodies cramm'd, reject their food,  
 Nor will be forced and tortured for their good!"  
 At length, a sharp, shrewd, sallow man arose,  
 And begg'd he briefly might his mind disclose;  
 "It was his duty, in these worst of times,  
 T' inform the govern'd of their rulers' crimes."  
 This pleasant subject to attend, they each 170  
 Prepared to listen, and forbore to teach.  
 Then, voluble and fierce, the wordy man  
 Through a long chain of favourite horrors ran:—  
 First, of the church, from whose enslaving power  
 He was deliver'd, and he bless'd the hour;  
 "Bishops and deans, and prebendaries all,"  
 He said, "were cattle fatt'ning in the stall;  
 Slothful and pursy, insolent and mean,  
 Were every bishop, prebendary, dean,  
 And wealthy rector; curates, poorly paid,  
 Were only dull;—he would not them upbraid." 180  
 From priests he turn'd to canons, creeds, and prayers,  
 Rubrics and rules, and all our church affairs;  
 Churches themselves, desk, pulpit, altar, all  
 The Justice revered—and pronounced their fall.  
 Then from religion Hammond turn'd his view,  
 To give our rulers the correction due;  
 Not one wise action had these triflers plann'd;  
 There was, it seem'd, no wisdom in the land;  
 Save in this patriot tribe, who meet at times  
 To show the statesman's errors and his crimes. 190  
 Now here was Justice Bolt compell'd to sit,  
 To hear the deist's scorn, the rebel's wit;  
 The fact mis-stated, the envenom'd lie,  
 And staring, spell-bound, made not one reply.  
 Then were our laws abused—and with the laws,  
 All who prepare, defend, or judge a cause:  
 "We have no lawyer whom a man can trust,"  
 Proceeded Hammond—"if the laws were just;

But they are evil; 'tis the savage state  
 Is only good, and ours sophisticate! 200  
 See! the free creatures in their woods and plains,  
 Where without laws each happy monarch reigns,  
 King of himself—while we a number dread,  
 By slaves commanded and by dunces led;  
 Oh, let the name with either state agree—  
 Savage our own we'll name, and civil theirs shall be."

The silent Justice still astonish'd sate,  
 And wonder'd much whom he was gazing at;  
 Twice he essay'd to speak—but in a cough  
 The faint, indignant, dying speech went off: 210  
 "But who is this?" thought he—"a dæmon vile,  
 With wicked meaning and a vulgar style:  
 Hammond they call him; they can give the name  
 Of man to devils.—Why am I so tame?  
 Why crush I not the viper?"—Fear replied,  
 "Watch him awhile, and let his strength be tried;  
 He will be foil'd, if man; but if his aid  
 Be from beneath, 'tis well to be afraid."

"We are call'd free!" said Hammond—"doleful times  
 When rulers add their insult to their crimes; 220  
 For, should our scorn expose each powerful vice,  
 It would be libel, and we pay the price."  
 Thus with licentious words the man went on,  
 Proving that liberty of speech was gone;  
 That all were slaves—nor had we better chance  
 For better times than as allies to France.

Loud groan'd the stranger—Why, he must relate,  
 And own'd, "In sorrow for his country's fate."  
 "Nay, she were safe," the ready man replied,  
 "Might patriots rule her, and could reasoners guide; 230  
 When all to vote, to speak, to teach, are free,  
 Whate'er their creeds or their opinions be;  
 When books of statutes are consumed in flames,  
 And courts and copyholds are empty names;  
 Then will be times of joy—but ere they come,  
 Havock, and war, and blood must be our doom."

The man here paused—then loudly for reform  
 He call'd, and hail'd the prospect of the storm;  
 The wholesome blast, the fertilizing flood—  
 Peace gain'd by tumult, plenty bought with blood: 240  
 Sharp means, he own'd; but when the land's disease  
 Asks cure complete, no med'cines are like these.

Our Justice now, more led by fear than rage,  
 Saw it in vain with madness to engage;  
 With imps of darkness no man seeks to fight,  
 Knaves to instruct, or set deceivers right.  
 Then, as the daring speech denounced these woes,  
 Sick at the soul, the grieving guest arose;  
 Quick on the board his ready cash he threw,  
 And from the dæmons to his closet flew. 250  
 There when secured, he pray'd with earnest zeal,  
 That all they wish'd these patriot-souls might feel;  
 "Let them to France, their darling country, haste,  
 And all the comforts of a Frenchman taste;  
 Let them his safety, freedom, pleasure know, }  
 Feel all their rulers on the land bestow; }  
 And be at length dismiss'd by one unerring blow; }  
 Not hack'd and hew'd by one afraid to strike,  
 But shorn by that which shears all men alike;  
 Nor, as in Britain, let them curse delay } 260  
 Of law, but borne without a form away—}  
 Suspected, tried, condemn'd, and carted in a day; }  
 Oh! let them taste what they so much approve,  
 These strong fierce freedoms of the land they love<sup>[2]</sup>."

Home came our hero, to forget no more  
 The fear he felt and ever most deplore:  
 For, though he quickly join'd his friends again,  
 And could with decent force his themes maintain,  
 Still it occur'd that, in a luckless time,  
 He fail'd to fight with heresy and crime; 270  
 It was observed his words were not so strong,  
 His tones so powerful, his harangues so long,  
 As in old times—for he would often drop

The lofty look, and of a sudden stop;  
When conscience whisper'd, that he once was still,  
And let the wicked triumph at their will;  
And therefore now, when not a foe was near,  
He had no right so valiant to appear.

Some years had pass'd, and he perceived his fears  
Yield to the spirit of his earlier years— 280

When at a meeting, with his friends beside,  
He saw an object that awaked his pride;  
His shame, wrath, vengeance, indignation—all  
Man's harsher feelings did that sight recall.

For lo! beneath him fix'd, our man of law  
That lawless man the foe of order saw—  
Once fear'd, now scorn'd; once dreaded, now abhorr'd;  
A wordy man, and evil every word.  
Again he gazed—"It is," said he, "the same;  
Caught and secure: his master owes him shame:" 290  
So thought our hero, who each instant found  
His courage rising, from the numbers round.

As when a felon has escaped and fled,  
So long, that law conceives the culprit dead;  
And back recall'd her myrmidons, intent  
On some new game, and with a stronger scent;  
Till she beholds him in a place, where none  
Could have conceived the culprit would have gone;  
There he sits upright in his seat, secure,  
As one whose conscience is correct and pure; 300

This rouses anger for the old offence,  
And scorn for all such seeming and pretence:  
So on this Hammond look'd our hero bold,  
Rememb'ring well that vile offence of old;  
And now he saw the rebel dared t' intrude }  
Among the pure, the loyal, and the good; }  
The crime provoked his wrath, the folly stirr'd his blood. }  
Nor wonder was it if so strange a sight  
Caused joy with vengeance, terror with delight;

Terror like this a tiger might create, } 310  
A joy like that to see his captive state, }  
At once to know his force and then decree his fate. }

Hammond, much praised by numerous friends, was come  
To read his lectures, so admired at home:  
Historic lectures, where he loved to mix  
His free plain hints on modern politics.  
Here, he had heard, that numbers had design,  
Their business finish'd, to sit down and dine;  
This gave him pleasure, for he judged it right  
To show by day, that he could speak at night. 320

Rash the design—for he perceived, too late,  
Not one approving friend beside him sate;  
The greater number, whom he traced around,  
Were men in black, and he conceived they frown'd.  
"I will not speak," he thought; "no pearls of mine  
Shall be presented to this herd of swine;"  
Not this avail'd him, when he cast his eye  
On Justice Bolt; he could not fight, nor fly.

He saw a man to whom he gave the pain,  
Which now he felt must be return'd again; 330  
His conscience told him with what keen delight  
He, at that time, enjoy'd a stranger's fright;  
That stranger now befriended—he alone,  
For all his insult, friendless, to atone;  
Now he could feel it cruel that a heart  
Should be distress'd, and none to take its part;  
"Though one by one," said Pride, "I would defy }  
Much greater men, yet meeting every eye, }

I do confess a fear—but he will pass me by." }  
Vain hope! the Justice saw the foe's distress, 340  
With exultation he could not suppress;  
He felt the fish was hook'd—and so forbore,  
In playful spite, to draw it to the shore.  
Hammond look'd round again; but none were near,  
With friendly smile, to still his growing fear;  
But all above him seem'd a solemn row  
Of priests and deacons, so they seem'd below;  
He wonder'd who his right-hand man might be—

Vicar of Holt cum Uppingham was he;  
 And who the man of that dark frown possess'd— 350  
 Rector of Bradley and of Barton-west;  
 "A pluralist," he growl'd—but check'd the word,  
 That warfare might not, by his zeal, be stirr'd.  
 But now began the man above to show  
 Fierce looks and threat'nings to the man below;  
 Who had some thoughts his peace by flight to seek—  
 But how then lecture, if he dared not speak!—  
 Now as the Justice for the war prepared,  
 He seem'd just then to question if he dared: 360  
 "He may resist, although his power be small,  
 And growing desperate may defy us all;  
 One dog attack, and he prepares for flight—  
 Resist another, and he strives to bite;  
 Nor can I say, if this rebellious cur  
 Will fly for safety, or will scorn to stir."  
 Alarm'd by this, he lash'd his soul to rage,  
 Burn'd with strong shame, and hurried to engage.  
 As a male turkey straggling on the green,  
 When by fierce harriers, terriers, mongrels seen,  
 He feels the insult of the noisy train, 370  
 And sculks aside, though moved by much disdain;  
 But when that turkey, at his own barn-door,  
 Sees one poor straying puppy and no more,  
 (A foolish puppy who had left the pack,  
 Thoughtless what foe was threat'ning at his back,)  
 He moves about, as ship prepared to sail,  
 He hoists his proud rotundity of tail,  
 The half-seal'd eyes and changeful neck he shows,  
 Where, in its quick'ning colours, vengeance glows;  
 From red to blue the pendant wattles turn, 380  
 Blue mix'd with red, as matches when they burn;  
 And thus th' intruding snarler to oppose,  
 Urged by enkindling wrath, he gobbling goes.  
 So look'd our hero in his wrath, his cheeks  
 Flush'd with fresh fires and glow'd in tingling streaks;  
 His breath by passion's force awhile restrain'd,  
 Like a stopp'd current, greater force regain'd;  
 So spoke, so look'd he, every eye and ear  
 Were fix'd to view him, or were turn'd to hear.  
 "My friends, you know me, you can witness all, 390  
 How, urged by passion, I restrain my gall;  
 And every motive to revenge withstand—  
 Save when I hear abused my native land.  
 "Is it not known, agreed, confirm'd, confess'd,  
 That of all people, we are govern'd best?  
 We have the force of monarchies; are free,  
 As the most proud republicans can be;  
 And have those prudent counsels that arise  
 In grave and cautious aristocracies;  
 And live there those, in such all-glorious state, 400  
 Traitors protected in the land they hate?  
 Rebels, still warring with the laws that give  
 To them subsistence?—Yes, such wretches live.  
 "Ours is a church reform'd, and now no more  
 Is aught for man to mend or to restore;  
 'Tis pure in doctrines, 'tis correct in creeds,  
 Has nought redundant, and it nothing needs;  
 No evil is therein—no wrinkle, spot,  
 Stain, blame, or blemish:—I affirm there's not.  
 "All this you know—now mark what once befell, 410  
 With grief I bore it, and with shame I tell;  
 I was entrapp'd—yes, so it came to pass,  
 'Mid heathen rebels, a tumultuous class;  
 Each to his country bore a hellish mind,  
 Each like his neighbour was of cursèd kind;  
 The land that nursed them they blasphemed; the laws,  
 Their sovereign's glory, and their country's cause;  
 And who their mouth, their master-fiend, and who  
 Rebellion's oracle?—You, caitiff, you!"  
 He spoke, and standing stretch'd his mighty arm, 420  
 And fix'd the man of words, as by a charm.  
 "How raved that railer! Sure some hellish power  
 Restrain'd my tongue in that delirious hour,

Or I had hurl'd the shame and vengeance due  
On him, the guide of that infuriate crew;  
But to mine eyes such dreadful looks appear'd,  
Such mingled yell of lying words I heard,  
That I conceived around were dæmons all,  
And till I fled the house, I fear'd its fall.

“Oh! could our country from our coasts expel  
Such foes! to nourish those who wish her well:  
This her mild laws forbid, but we may still  
From us eject them by our sovereign will;  
This let us do.”—He said, and then began  
A gentler feeling for the silent man;  
Ev'n in our hero's mighty soul arose  
A touch of pity for experienced woes;  
But this was transient, and with angry eye  
He sternly look'd, and paused for a reply.

'Twas then the man of many words would speak—  
But, in his trial, had them all to seek:  
To find a friend he look'd the circle round,  
But joy or scorn in every feature found;  
He sipp'd his wine, but in those times of dread  
Wine only adds confusion to the head;  
In doubt he reason'd with himself—“And how  
Harangue at night, if I be silent now?”

From pride and praise received he sought to draw  
Courage to speak, but still remain'd the awe;  
One moment rose he with a forced disdain,  
And then, abash'd, sunk sadly down again;  
While in our hero's glance he seem'd to read,  
“Slave and insurgent! what hast thou to plead?”—

By desperation urged, he now began:  
“I seek no favour—I—the Rights of Man!  
Claim; and I—nay!—but give me leave—and I  
Insist—a man—that is—and, in reply,  
I speak.”—Alas! each new attempt was vain:  
Confused he stood, he sate, he rose again;  
At length he growl'd defiance, sought the door,  
Cursed the whole synod, and was seen no more.

“Laud we,” said Justice Bolt, “the Powers above;  
Thus could our speech the sturdiest foe remove.”  
Exulting now he gain'd new strength of fame,  
And lost all feelings of defeat and shame.

“He dared not strive, you witness'd—dared not lift  
His voice, nor drive at his accursed drift:  
So all shall tremble, wretches who oppose  
Our church or state—thus be it to our foes.”

He spoke, and, seated with his former air,  
Look'd his full self, and fill'd his ample chair;  
Took one full bumper to each favourite cause, }  
And dwelt all night on politics and laws, }  
With high applauding voice, that gain'd him high applause. }

430

440

450

460

470

## TALE II.

### THE PARTING HOUR.

I did not take my leave of him, but had  
Most pretty things to say: ere I could tell him  
How I would think of him, at certain hours,  
Such thoughts and such [.....  
.....] or ere I could  
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set  
Betwixt two charming words—comes in my father—  
*Cymbeline, Act I. Scene 3.*

Grief hath changed me since you saw me last,  
And careful hours with Time's deformed hand  
Have written strange defeatures [in] my face.  
*Comedy of Errors, Act V. Scene 1.*

Oh! if thou be the same [Ægeon], speak,  
And speak unto the same [Æmilia].  
*Comedy of Errors, Act V. Scene 1.*

I ran it through, ev'n from my boyish days  
To the very moment that [he bade] me tell it,  
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,  
Of moving accidents, by flood, and field;  
Of being taken by [the] insolent foe  
And sold to slavery.  
*Othello, Act I. Scene 3.*

An old man, broken with the storms of [state],  
Is come to lay his weary bones among [ye];  
Give him a little earth for charity.  
*Henry VIII. Act IV. Scene 2.*

## TALE II.

### THE PARTING HOUR.

Minutely trace man's life; year after year,  
Through all his days let all his deeds appear,  
And then, though some may in that life be strange,  
Yet there appears no vast nor sudden change;  
The links that bind those various deeds are seen,  
And no mysterious void is left between.

But let these binding links be all destroy'd,  
All that through years he suffer'd or enjoy'd;  
Let that vast gap be made, and then behold—  
This was the youth, and he is thus when old;  
Then we at once the work of Time survey,  
And in an instant see a life's decay:  
Pain[s] mix'd with pity in our bosoms rise,  
And sorrow takes new sadness from surprise.

Beneath yon tree, observe an ancient pair— }  
A sleeping man; a woman in her chair, }  
Watching his looks with kind and pensive air; }  
No wife, nor sister she, nor is the name  
Nor kindred of this friendly pair the same;  
Yet so allied are they, that few can feel  
Her constant, warm, unwearied, anxious zeal,  
Their years and woes, although they long have loved,  
Keep their good name and conduct unreprieved;  
Thus life's small comforts they together share,  
And while life lingers for the grave prepare.

No other subjects on their spirits press,  
Nor gain such int'rest as the past distress;  
Grievous events that from the mem'ry drive  
Life's common cares, and those alone survive,  
Mix with each thought, in every action share,  
Darken each dream, and blend with every prayer.

To David Booth, his fourth and last-born boy,  
Allen his name, was more than common joy;  
And as the child grew up, there seem'd in him  
A more than common life in every limb;

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A strong and handsome stripling he became,  
 And the gay spirit answer'd to the frame;  
 A lighter, happier lad was never seen,  
 For ever easy, cheerful, or serene;  
 His early love he fix'd upon a fair 40  
 And gentle maid—they were a handsome pair.  
 They at an infant-school together play'd,  
 Where the foundation of their love was laid;  
 The boyish champion would his choice attend  
 In every sport, in every fray defend.  
 As prospects open'd and as life advanced,  
 They walk'd together, they together danced;  
 On all occasions, from their early years,  
 They mix'd their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears;  
 Each heart was anxious, till it could impart 50  
 Its daily feelings to its kindred heart;  
 As years increased, unnumber'd petty wars  
 Broke out between them; jealousies and jars;  
 Causeless indeed, and follow'd by a peace,  
 That gave to love—growth, vigour, and increase.  
 Whilst yet a boy, when other minds are void,  
 Domestic thoughts young Allen's hours employ'd;  
 Judith in gaining hearts had no concern,  
 Rather intent the matron's part to learn;  
 Thus early prudent and sedate they grew, 60  
 While lovers, thoughtful—and, though children, true.  
 To either parents not a day appear'd,  
 When with this love they might have interfered:  
 Childish at first, they cared not to restrain;  
 And strong at last, they saw restriction vain;  
 Nor knew they when that passion to reprove—  
 Now idle fondness, now resistless love.  
 So, while the waters rise, the children tread  
 On the broad estuary's sandy bed;  
 But soon the channel fills, from side to side 70  
 Comes danger rolling with the deep'ning tide;  
 Yet none who saw the rapid current flow  
 Could the first instant of that danger know.  
 The lovers waited till the time should come  
 When they together could possess a home:  
 In either house were men and maids unwed,  
 Hopes to be soothed, and tempers to be led.  
 Then Allen's mother of his favourite maid  
 Spoke from the feelings of a mind afraid:  
 "Dress and amusements were her sole employ," 80  
 She said—"entangling her deluded boy;"  
 And yet, in truth, a mother's jealous love  
 Had much imagined and could little prove;  
 Judith had beauty—and, if vain, was kind,  
 Discreet, and mild, and had a serious mind.  
 Dull was their prospect—when the lovers met,  
 They said, we must not—dare not venture yet:  
 "Oh! could I labour for thee," Allen cried,  
 "Why should our friends be thus dissatisfied?  
 On my own arm I could depend, but they 90  
 Still urge obedience—must I yet obey?" }  
 Poor Judith felt the grief, but grieving begg'd delay. }

At length a prospect came that seem'd to smile,  
 And faintly woo them, from a Western Isle.  
 A kinsman there a widow's hand had gain'd,  
 "Was old, was rich, and childless yet remain'd;  
 Would some young Booth to his affairs attend,  
 And wait awhile, he might expect a friend."  
 The elder brothers, who were not in love,  
 Fear'd the false seas, unwilling to remove; 100  
 But the young Allen, an enamour'd boy,  
 Eager an independence to enjoy,  
 Would through all perils seek it—by the sea—  
 Through labour, danger, pain, or slavery.  
 The faithful Judith his design approved;  
 For both were sanguine, they were young and loved.  
 The mother's slow consent was then obtain'd;  
 The time arrived, to part alone remain'd.  
 All things prepared, on the expected day  
 Was seen the vessel anchor'd in the bay. 110



From her would seamen in the evening come,  
 To take th' advent'rous Allen from his home;  
 With his own friends the final day he pass'd,  
 And every painful hour, except the last.  
 The grieving father urged the cheerful glass,  
 To make the moments with less sorrow pass;  
 Intent the mother look'd upon her son,  
 And wish'd th' assent withdrawn, the deed undone;  
 The younger sister, as he took his way,  
 Hung on his coat, and begg'd for more delay: 120  
 But his own Judith call'd him to the shore,  
 Whom he must meet, for they might meet no more;—  
 And there he found her—faithful, mournful, true,  
 Weeping and waiting for a last adieu!  
 The ebbing tide had left the sand, and there  
 Moved with slow steps the melancholy pair:  
 Sweet were the painful moments—but how sweet,  
 And without pain, when they again should meet!  
 Now either spoke, as hope and fear impress'd  
 Each their alternate triumph in the breast. 130  
 Distance alarm'd the maid—she cried, "'Tis far!"  
 And danger too—"it is a time of war.  
 Then, in those countries are diseases strange,  
 And women gay, and men are prone to change;  
 What, then, may happen in a year, when things  
 Of vast importance every moment brings!  
 But hark! an oar!" she cried, yet none appear'd—  
 'Twas love's mistake, who fancied what it fear'd;  
 And she continued—"Do, my Allen, keep  
 Thy heart from evil, let thy passions sleep; 140  
 Believe it good, nay glorious, to prevail,  
 And stand in safety where so many fail;  
 And do not, Allen, or for shame, or pride,  
 Thy faith abjure, or thy profession hide;  
 Can I believe *his* love will lasting prove,  
 Who has no rev'rence for the God I love?  
 I know thee well! how good thou art and kind;  
 But strong the passions that invade thy mind.—  
 Now, what to me hath Allen to commend?"—  
 "Upon my mother," said the youth, "attend; 150  
 Forget her spleen, and in my place appear;  
 Her love to me will make my Judith dear:  
 Oft I shall think (such comfort lovers seek),  
 Who speaks of me, and fancy what they speak;  
 Then write on all occasions, always dwell  
 On hope's fair prospects, and be kind and well,  
 And ever choose the fondest, tenderest style."  
 She answer'd, "No," but answer'd with a smile.  
 "And now, my Judith, at so sad a time,  
 Forgive my fear, and call it not my crime; 160  
 When with our youthful neighbours 'tis thy chance  
 To meet in walks, the visit or the dance,  
 When every lad would on my lass attend,  
 Choose not a smooth designer for a friend;  
 That fawning Philip!—nay, be not severe,  
 A rival's hope must cause a lover's fear."  
 Displeas'd she felt, and might in her reply  
 Have mix'd some anger, but the boat was nigh,  
 Now truly heard!—it soon was full in sight;—  
 Now the sad farewell, and the long good-night; 170  
 For, see!—his friends come hast'ning to the beach,  
 And now the gunwale is within the reach;  
 "Adieu!—farewell!—remember!"—and what more  
 Affection taught, was utter'd from the shore!  
 But Judith left them with a heavy heart,  
 Took a last view, and went to weep apart!  
 And now his friends went slowly from the place,  
 Where she stood still, the dashing oar to trace,  
 Till all were silent!—for the youth she pray'd,  
 And softly then return'd the weeping maid. 180  
 They parted, thus by hope and fortune led,  
 And Judith's hours in pensive pleasure fled.  
 But when return'd the youth?—the youth no more  
 Return'd exulting to his native shore.  
 But forty years were past, and then there came }

A worn-out man with wither'd limbs and lame, }  
 His mind oppress'd with woes, and bent with age his frame: }  
 Yes! old and grieved, and trembling with decay, }  
 Was Allen landing in his native bay, }  
 Willing his breathless form should blend with kindred clay. }  
 In an autumnal eve he left the beach, 191  
 In such an eve he chanced the port to reach.  
 He was alone; he press'd the very place  
 Of the sad parting, of the last embrace:  
 There stood his parents, there retired the maid,  
 So fond, so tender, and so much afraid;  
 And on that spot, through many a year, his mind  
 Turn'd mournful back, half sinking, half resign'd.  
 No one was present; of its crew bereft,  
 A single boat was in the billows left; 200  
 Sent from some anchor'd vessel in the bay,  
 At the returning tide to sail away.  
 O'er the black stern the moonlight softly play'd,  
 The loosen'd foresail flapping in the shade;  
 All silent else on shore; but from the town  
 A drowsy peal of distant bells came down;  
 From the tall houses here and there, a light  
 Served some confused remembrance to excite:  
 "There," he observed, and new emotions felt,  
 "Was my first home—and yonder Judith dwelt; 210  
 Dead! dead are all! I long—I fear to know,"  
 He said, and walk'd impatient, and yet slow.  
 Sudden there broke upon his grief a noise  
 Of merry tumult and of vulgar joys:  
 Seamen returning to their ship, were come,  
 With idle numbers straying from their home;  
 Allen among them mix'd, and in the old  
 Strove some familiar features to behold;  
 While fancy aided memory;—"Man! what cheer?"  
 A sailor cried; "Art thou at anchor here?" 220  
 Faintly he answer'd, and then tried to trace  
 Some youthful features in some aged face;  
 A swarthy matron he beheld, and thought  
 She might unfold the very truths he sought;  
 Confused and trembling, he the dame address'd:  
 "The Booths! yet live they?" pausing and oppress'd;  
 Then spake again:—"Is there no ancient man,  
 David his name?—assist me, if you can.—  
 Flemmings there were—and Judith, doth she live?"  
 The woman gazed, nor could an answer give; 230  
 Yet wond'ring stood, and all were silent by,  
 Feeling a strange and solemn sympathy.  
 The woman musing said—"She knew full well  
 Where the old people came at last to dwell;  
 They had a married daughter and a son,  
 But they were dead, and now remain'd not one."  
 "Yes," said an elder, who had paused intent  
 On days long past, "there was a sad event;—  
 One of these Booths—it was my mother's tale—  
 Here left his lass, I know not where to sail; 240  
 She saw their parting, and observed the pain;  
 But never came th' unhappy man again."  
 "The ship was captured"—Allen meekly said,  
 "And what became of the forsaken maid?"  
 The woman answer'd: "I remember now,  
 She used to tell the lasses of her vow,  
 And of her lover's loss, and I have seen  
 The gayest hearts grow sad where she has been;  
 Yet in her grief she married, and was made  
 Slave to a wretch, whom meekly she obey'd 250  
 And early buried—but I know no more.  
 And hark! our friends are hast'ning to the shore."  
 Allen soon found a lodging in the town,  
 And walk'd, a man unnoticed, up and down.  
 This house, and this, he knew, and thought a face  
 He sometimes could among a number trace;  
 Of names remember'd there remain'd a few,  
 But of no favourites, and the rest were new;  
 A merchant's wealth, when Allen went to sea,  
 Was reckon'd boundless.—Could he living be? 260

Or lived his son? for one he had, the heir  
 To a vast business, and a fortune fair.  
 No! but that heir's poor widow, from her shed,  
 With crutches went to take her dole of bread.  
 There was a friend whom he had left a boy,  
 With hope to sail the master of a hoy;  
 Him, after many a stormy day, he found  
 With his great wish, his life's whole purpose, crown'd.  
 This hoy's proud captain look'd in Allen's face;—  
 "Yours is, my friend," said he, "a woful case; 270  
 We cannot all succeed; I now command  
 The Betsy sloop, and am not much at land;  
 But when we meet, you shall your story tell  
 Of foreign parts—I bid you now farewell!"  
 Allen so long had left his native shore,  
 He saw but few whom he had seen before;  
 The older people, as they met him, cast  
 A pitying look, oft speaking as they pass'd:—  
 "The man is Allen Booth, and it appears 280  
 He dwelt among us in his early years;  
 We see the name engraved upon the stones,  
 Where this poor wanderer means to lay his bones."  
 Thus where he lived and loved—unhappy change!—  
 He seems a stranger, and finds all are strange.  
 But now a widow, in a village near,  
 Chanced of the melancholy man to hear;  
 Old as she was, to Judith's bosom came  
 Some strong emotions at the well-known name;  
 He was her much-loved Allen, she had stay'd  
 Ten troubled years, a sad afflicted maid; 290  
 Then was she wedded, of his death assured,  
 And much of mis'ry in her lot endured;  
 Her husband died; her children sought their bread  
 In various places, and to her were dead.  
 The once fond lovers met; not grief nor age,  
 Sickness or pain, their hearts could disengage:  
 Each had immediate confidence; a friend  
 Both now beheld, on whom they might depend:  
 "Now is there one to whom I can express  
 My nature's weakness and my soul's distress." 300  
 Allen look'd up, and with impatient heart:—  
 "Let me not lose thee—never let us part;  
 So Heaven this comfort to my sufferings give,  
 It is not all distress to think and live."  
 Thus Allen spoke—for time had not removed  
 The charms attach'd to one so fondly loved;  
 Who with more health, the mistress of their cot,  
 Labours to soothe the evils of his lot.  
 To her, to her alone, his various fate,  
 At various times, 'tis comfort to relate; 310  
 And yet his sorrow she too loves to hear  
 What wrings her bosom, and compels the tear.  
 First he related how he left the shore,  
 Alarm'd with fears that they should meet no more;  
 Then, ere the ship had reach'd her purposed course,  
 They met and yielded to the Spanish force;  
 Then 'cross th' Atlantic seas they bore their prey,  
 Who grieving landed from their sultry bay;  
 And, marching many a burning league, he found  
 Himself a slave upon a miner's ground: 320  
 There a good priest his native language spoke,  
 And gave some ease to his tormenting yoke;  
 Kindly advanced him in his master's grace,  
 And he was station'd in an easier place.  
 There, hopeless ever to escape the land,  
 He to a Spanish maiden gave his hand;  
 In cottage shelter'd from the blaze of day  
 He saw his happy infants round him play;  
 Where summer shadows, made by lofty trees,  
 Waved o'er his seat, and soothed his reveries; 330  
 E'en then he thought of England, nor could sigh,  
 But his fond Isabel demanded, "Why?"  
 Grieved by the story, she the sigh repaid,  
 And wept in pity for the English maid:  
 Thus twenty years were pass'd, and pass'd his views

Of further bliss, for he had wealth to lose.  
 His friend now dead, some foe had dared to paint  
 "His faith as tainted: he his spouse would taint;  
 Make all his children infidels, and found  
 An English heresy on Christian ground." 340  
 "Whilst I was poor," said Allen, "none would care  
 What my poor notions of religion were;  
 None ask'd me whom I worshipp'd, how I pray'd,  
 If due obedience to the laws were paid:  
 My good adviser taught me to be still,  
 Nor to make converts had I power or will.  
 I preached no foreign doctrine to my wife,  
 And never mention'd Luther in my life;  
 I, all they said, say what they would, allow'd,  
 And when the fathers bade me bow, I bow'd; 350  
 Their forms I follow'd, whether well or sick,  
 And was a most obedient Catholic.  
 But I had money, and these pastors found  
 My notions vague, heretical, unsound:  
 A wicked book they seized; the very Turk  
 Could not have read a more pernicious work;  
 To me pernicious, who if it were good  
 Or evil question'd not, nor understood:  
 Oh! had I little but the book possess'd,  
 I might have read it, and enjoy'd my rest." 360  
 Alas! poor Allen, through his wealth was seen  
 Crimes that by poverty conceal'd had been:  
 Faults that in dusty pictures rest unknown  
 Are in an instant through the varnish shown.  
 He told their cruel mercy: how at last,  
 In Christian kindness for the merits past,  
 They spared his forfeit life, but bade him fly,  
 Or for his crime and contumacy die;  
 Fly from all scenes, all objects of delight; }  
 His wife, his children, weeping in his sight, } 370  
 All urging him to flee, he fled, and cursed his flight. }  
 He next related how he found a way,  
 Guideless and grieving, to Campeachy Bay:  
 There in the woods he wrought, and there, among  
 Some lab'ring seamen, heard his native tongue.  
 The sound, one moment, broke upon his pain  
 With joyful force; he long'd to hear again;  
 Again he heard; he seized an offer'd hand,  
 "And when beheld you last our native land?"  
 He cry'd, "and in what county? quickly say!"— 380  
 The seamen answer'd, strangers all were they;  
 One only at his native port had been;  
 He, landing once, the quay and church had seen,  
 For that esteem'd; but nothing more he knew.  
 Still more to know, would Allen join the crew,  
 Sail where they sail'd; and, many a peril past,  
 They at his kinsman's isle their anchor cast;  
 But him they found not, nor could one relate  
 Aught of his will, his wish, or his estate. 390  
 This grieved not Allen; then again he sail'd  
 For England's coast, again his fate prevail'd:  
 War raged, and he, an active man and strong,  
 Was soon impress'd, and served his country long.  
 By various shores he pass'd, on various seas,  
 Never so happy as when void of ease.—  
 And then he told how, in a calm distress'd,  
 Day after day his soul was sick of rest;  
 When as a log upon the deep they stood,  
 Then roved his spirit to the inland wood;  
 Till, while awake, he dream'd, that on the seas 400  
 Were his loved home, the hill, the stream, the trees.  
 He gazed, he pointed to the scenes:—"There stand  
 My wife, my children, 'tis my lovely land;  
 See! there my dwelling—oh! delicious scene  
 Of my best life—unhand me—are ye men?"  
 And thus the frenzy ruled him, till the wind  
 Brush'd the fond pictures from the stagnant mind.  
 He told of bloody fights, and how at length  
 The rage of battle gave his spirits strength.  
 'Twas in the Indian seas his limb he lost, 410

And he was left half-dead upon the coast;  
 But living gain'd, 'mid rich aspiring men,  
 A fair subsistence by his ready pen.  
 "Thus," he continued, "pass'd unvaried years,  
 Without events producing hopes or fears."  
 Augmented pay procured him decent wealth,  
 But years advancing undermined his health;  
 Then oft-times in delightful dream he flew  
 To England's shore, and scenes his childhood knew:

420

He saw his parents, saw his fav'rite maid,  
 No feature wrinkled, not a charm decay'd;  
 And, thus excited, in his bosom rose  
 A wish so strong, it baffled his repose;  
 Anxious he felt on English earth to lie;  
 To view his native soil, and there to die.  
 He then described the gloom, the dread he found,  
 When first he landed on the chosen ground,  
 Where undefined was all he hoped and fear'd,  
 And how confused and troubled all appear'd;  
 His thoughts in past and present scenes employ'd,

430

All views in future blighted and destroy'd:  
 His were a medley of bewild'ring themes,  
 Sad as realities, and wild as dreams.  
 Here his relation closes, but his mind  
 Flies back again, some resting-place to find;  
 Thus silent, musing through the day, he sees  
 His children sporting by those lofty trees,  
 Their mother singing in the shady scene,  
 Where the fresh springs burst o'er the lively green;—

440

So strong his eager fancy, he affrights  
 The faithful widow by its powerful flights;  
 For what disturbs him he aloud will tell,  
 And cry—" 'Tis she, my wife! my Isabel!  
 Where are my children?"—Judith grieves to hear  
 How the soul works in sorrows so severe;  
 Assiduous all his wishes to attend,  
 Deprived of much, he yet may boast a friend;  
 Watch'd by her care, in sleep, his spirit takes  
 Its flight, and watchful finds her when he wakes.

450

'Tis now her office; her attention see!  
 While her friend sleeps beneath that shading tree,  
 Careful she guards him from the glowing heat,  
 And pensive muses at her Allen's feet.  
 And where is he? Ah! doubtless in those scenes  
 Of his best days, amid the vivid greens,  
 Fresh with unnumber'd rills, where ev'ry gale  
 Breathes the rich fragrance of the neighb'ring vale;  
 Smiles not his wife, and listens as there comes  
 The night-bird's music from the thickening glooms?  
 And as he sits with all these treasures nigh,

460

Blaze not with fairy light the phosphor-fly, }  
 When like a sparkling gem it wheels illumined by? }  
 This is the joy that now so plainly speaks  
 In the warm transient flushing of his cheeks;  
 For he is list'ning to the fancied noise  
 Of his own children, eager in their joys:  
 All this he feels, a dream's delusive bliss  
 Gives the expression, and the glow like this.  
 And now his Judith lays her knitting by,  
 These strong emotions in her friend to spy;

470

For she can fully of their nature deem— }  
 But see! he breaks the long-protracted theme, }  
 And wakes and cries—"My God! 'twas but a dream." }

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### TALE III.

#### THE GENTLEMAN FARMER.

Pause [there...]

And weigh thy value with an even hand;  
If thou beest rated by thy estimation,  
Thou dost deserve enough.

*Merchant of Venice*, Act II. Scene 7.

Because I will not do them wrong to mistrust any, I will  
do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is (for which  
I may go the finer), I will live a bachelor.

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act I. Scene 1.

Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.

*Macbeth*, Act V. Scene 3.

His promises are, as he then was, mighty;  
And his performance, as he now is, nothing.

*Henry VIII*. Act IV. Scene 2.

### TALE III.

#### THE GENTLEMAN FARMER.

Gwyn was a farmer, whom the farmers all,  
Who dwelt around, the Gentleman would call;  
Whether in pure humility or pride,  
They only knew, and they would not decide.

Far diff'rent he from that dull plodding tribe,  
Whom it was his amusement to describe;  
Creatures no more enliven'd than a clod,  
But treading still as their dull fathers trod;  
Who lived in times when not a man had seen  
Corn sown by drill, or thresh'd by a machine: 10  
He was of those whose skill assigns the prize  
For creatures fed in pens, and stalls, and sties;  
And who, in places where improvers meet,  
To fill the land with fatness, had a seat;  
Who in large mansions live like petty kings,  
And speak of farms but as amusing things;  
Who plans encourage, and who journals keep,  
And talk with lords about a breed of sheep.

Two are the species in this genus known;  
One, who is rich in his profession grown, 20  
Who yearly finds his ample stores increase,  
From fortune's favours and a favouring lease;  
Who rides his hunter, who his house adorns;  
Who drinks his wine, and his disbursements scorns,  
Who freely lives, and loves to show he can—  
This is the farmer, made the gentleman.

The second species from the world is sent,  
Tired with its strife, or with his wealth content;  
In books and men beyond the former read,  
To farming solely by a passion led, 30  
Or by a fashion; curious in his land;  
Now planning much, now changing what he plann'd;  
Pleased by each trial, not by failures vex'd,  
And ever certain to succeed the next;  
Quick to resolve, and easy to persuade—  
This is the gentleman, a farmer made.

Gwyn was of these; he from the world withdrew  
Early in life, his reasons known to few;  
Some disappointment said, some pure good sense,  
The love of land, the press of indolence; 40  
His fortune known, and coming to retire,  
If not a farmer, men had call'd him 'squire.

Forty and five his years, no child or wife  
Cross'd the still tenour of his chosen life;  
Much land he purchased, planted far around,  
And let some portions of superfluous ground  
To farmers near him, not displeas'd to say,  
"My tenants," nor, "our worthy landlord," they.

Fix'd in his farm, he soon display'd his skill  
 In small-boned lambs, the horse-hoe, and the drill; 50  
 From these he rose to themes of nobler kind,  
 And show'd the riches of a fertile mind;  
 To all around their visits he repaid,  
 And thus his mansion and himself display'd.  
 His rooms were stately, rather fine than neat,  
 And guests politely call'd his house a seat;  
 At much expense was each apartment graced,  
 His taste was gorgeous, but it still was taste;  
 In full festoons the crimson curtains fell,  
 The sofas rose in bold elastic swell; 60  
 Mirrors in gilded frames display'd the tints  
 Of glowing carpets and of colour'd prints;  
 The weary eye saw every object shine,  
 And all was costly, fanciful, and fine.  
 As with his friends he pass'd the social hours,  
 His generous spirit scorn'd to hide its powers;  
 Powers unexpected, for his eye and air  
 Gave no sure signs that eloquence was there;  
 Oft he began with sudden fire and force,  
 As loth to lose occasion for discourse; 70  
 Some, 'tis observed, who feel a wish to speak,  
 Will a due place for introduction seek;  
 On to their purpose step by step they steal,  
 And all their way, by certain signals, feel;  
 Others plunge in at once, and never heed  
 Whose turn they take, whose purpose they impede;  
 Resolved to shine, they hasten to begin,  
 Of ending thoughtless—and of these was Gwyn.  
 And thus he spake:  
     —“It grieves me to the soul  
 To see how man submits to man's control; 80  
 How overpower'd and shackled minds are led  
 In vulgar tracks, and to submission bred;  
 The coward never on himself relies,  
 But to an equal for assistance flies;  
 Man yields to custom as he bows to fate,  
 In all things ruled—mind, body, and estate;  
 In pain, in sickness, we for cure apply  
 To them we know not, and we know not why;  
 But that the creature has some jargon read,  
 And got some Scotchman's system in his head; 90  
 Some grave impostor, who will health insure,  
 Long as your patience or your wealth endure;  
 But mark them well, the pale and sickly crew,  
 They have not health, and can they give it you?  
 These solemn cheats their various methods choose;  
 A system fires them, as a bard his muse:  
 Hence wordy wars arise; the learn'd divide,  
 And groaning patients curse each erring guide.  
 “Next, our affairs are govern'd, buy or sell,  
 Upon the deed the law must fix its spell; 100  
 Whether we hire or let, we must have still  
 The dubious aid of an attorney's skill;  
 They take a part in every man's affairs,  
 And in all business some concern is theirs;  
 Because mankind in ways prescribed are found,  
 Like flocks that follow on a beaten ground,  
 Each abject nature in the way proceeds,  
 That now to shearing, now to slaughter leads.  
 “Should you offend, though meaning no offence,  
 You have no safety in your innocence; 110  
 The statute broken then is placed in view,  
 And men must pay for crimes they never knew.  
 Who would by law regain his plunder'd store,  
 Would pick up fallen merc'ry from the floor;  
 If he pursue it, here and there it slides;  
 He would collect it, but it more divides;  
 This part and this he stops, but still in vain,  
 It slips aside, and breaks in parts again;  
 Till, after time and pains, and care and cost,  
 He finds his labour and his object lost. 120  
 “But most it grieves me, (friends alone are round,)  
 To see a man in priestly fetters bound;

Guides to the soul, these friends of Heaven contrive,  
 Long as man lives, to keep his fears alive;  
 Soon as an infant breathes, their rites begin;  
 Who knows not sinning, must be freed from sin;  
 Who needs no bond must yet engage in vows;  
 Who has no judgment, must a creed espouse:  
 Advanced in life, our boys are bound by rules, }  
 Are catechised in churches, cloisters, schools, } 130  
 And train'd in thralldom to be fit for tools; }  
 The youth grown up, he now a partner needs,  
 And lo! a priest, as soon as he succeeds.  
 What man of sense can marriage-rites approve?  
 What man of spirit can be bound to love?  
 Forced to be kind! compell'd to be sincere!  
 Do chains and fetters make companions dear?  
 Pris'ners indeed we bind; but though the bond  
 May keep them safe, it does not make them fond:  
 The ring, the vow, the witness, licence, prayers, 140  
 All parties known! made public all affairs!  
 Such forms men suffer, and from these they date  
 A deed of love begun with all they hate.  
 Absurd, that none the beaten road should shun,  
 But love to do what other dupes have done!  
 "Well, now your priest has made you one of twain,  
 Look you for rest? Alas! you look in vain.  
 If sick, he comes; you cannot die in peace,  
 Till he attends to witness your release;  
 To vex your soul, and urge you to confess 150  
 The sins you feel, remember, or can guess;  
 Nay, when departed, to your grave he goes,  
 But there indeed he hurts not your repose.  
 "Such are our burthens; part we must sustain,  
 But need not link new grievance to the chain.  
 Yet men like idiots will their frames surround  
 With these vile shackles, nor confess they're bound;  
 In all that most confines them they confide,  
 Their slavery boast, and make their bonds their pride;  
 E'en as the pressure galls them, they declare, 160  
 (Good souls!) how happy and how free they are!  
 As madmen, pointing round their wretched cells,  
 Cry, 'Lo! the palace where our honour dwells.'  
 "Such is our state: but I resolve to live  
 By rules my reason and my feelings give;  
 No legal guards shall keep enthral'd my mind,  
 No slaves command me, and no teachers blind.  
 "Tempted by sins, let me their strength defy,  
 But have no second in a surplice by  
 No bottle-holder, with officious aid, 170  
 To comfort conscience, weaken'd and afraid:  
 Then if I yield, my frailty is not known;  
 And, if I stand, the glory is my own.  
 "When Truth and Reason are our friends, we seem  
 Alive! awake!—the superstitious dream.  
 "Oh! then, fair Truth, for thee alone I seek,  
 Friend to the wise, supporter of the weak;  
 From thee we learn whate'er is right and just;  
 Forms to despise, professions to distrust;  
 Creeds to reject, pretensions to deride, 180  
 And, following thee, to follow none beside."  
 Such was the speech; it struck upon the ear  
 Like sudden thunder, none expect to hear.  
 He saw men's wonder with a manly pride,  
 And gravely smiled at guest electrified;  
 "A farmer this!" they said, "Oh! let him seek  
 That place where he may for his country speak;  
 On some great question to harangue for hours,  
 While speakers hearing, envy nobler powers!"  
 Wisdom like this, as all things rich and rare, 190  
 Must be acquired with pains, and kept with care;  
 In books he sought it, which his friends might view,  
 When their kind host the guarding curtain drew.  
 There were historic works for graver hours,  
 And lighter verse, to spur the languid powers;  
 There metaphysics, logic there had place;  
 But of devotion not a single trace—



Save what is taught in Gibbon's florid page,  
 And other guides of this inquiring age;  
 There Hume appear'd, and, near, a splendid book 200  
 Composed by Gay's good Lord of Bolingbroke:  
 With these were mix'd the light, the free, the vain,  
 And from a corner peep'd the sage Tom Paine:  
 Here four neat volumes 'Chesterfield' were named,  
 For manners much and easy morals famed;  
 With chaste Memoirs of Females, to be read  
 When deeper studies had confused the head.  
 Such his resources, treasures where he sought  
 For daily knowledge till his mind was fraught:  
 Then, when his friends were present, for their use 210  
 He would the riches he had stored produce;  
 He found his lamp burn clearer, when each day  
 He drew for all he purposed to display.  
 For these occasions, forth his knowledge sprung,  
 As mustard quickens on a bed of dung;  
 All was prepared, and guests allow'd the praise,  
 For what they saw he could so quickly raise.  
 Such this new friend; and, when the year came round,  
 The same impressive, reasoning sage was found:  
 Then, too, was seen the pleasant mansion graced 220  
 With a fair damsel—his no vulgar taste:  
 The neat Rebecca—sly, observant, still;  
 Watching his eye, and waiting on his will;  
 Simple yet smart her dress, her manners meek,  
 Her smiles spoke for her, she would seldom speak;  
 But watch'd each look, each meaning to detect,  
 And (pleas'd with notice) felt for all neglect.  
 With her lived Gwyn a sweet harmonious life,  
 Who, forms excepted, was a charming wife.  
 The wives indeed, so made by vulgar law, 230  
 Affected scorn, and censured what they saw;  
 And what they saw not, fancied; said 'twas sin,  
 And took no notice of the wife of Gwyn.  
 But he despised their rudeness, and would prove  
 Theirs was compulsion and distrust, not love;  
 "Fools as they were! could they conceive that rings  
 And parsons' blessings were substantial things?"  
 They answer'd "Yes;" while he contemptuous spoke  
 Of the low notions held by simple folk;  
 Yet, strange that anger in a man so wise } 240  
 Should from the notions of these fools arise; }  
 Can they so vex us, whom we so despise? }  
 Brave as he was, our hero felt a dread  
 Lest those who saw him kind should think him led;  
 If to his bosom fear a visit paid,  
 It was, lest he should be supposed afraid.  
 Hence sprang his orders; not that he desired  
 The things when done: obedience he required;  
 And thus, to prove his absolute command,  
 Ruled every heart, and moved each subject hand; 250  
 Assent he ask'd for every word and whim,  
 To prove that *he alone was king of him*.  
 The still Rebecca, who her station knew,  
 With ease resign'd the honours not her due;  
 Well pleased, she saw that men her board would grace,  
 And wish'd not there to see a female face;  
 When by her lover she his spouse was styled,  
 Polite she thought it, and demurely smiled;  
 But when he wanted wives and maidens round  
 So to regard her, she grew grave, and frown'd; 260  
 And sometimes whisper'd—"Why should you respect  
 These people's notions, yet their forms reject?"  
 Gwyn, though from marriage bond and fetter free,  
 Still felt abridgment in his liberty;  
 Something of hesitation he betray'd,  
 And in her presence thought of what he said.  
 Thus fair Rebecca, though she walk'd astray,  
 His creed rejecting, judged it right to pray;  
 To be at church, to sit with serious looks,  
 To read her Bible and her Sunday-books. 270  
 She hated all those new and daring themes,  
 And call'd his free conjectures "devil's dreams;"

She honour'd still the priesthood in her fall,  
 And claim'd respect and reverence for them all;  
 Call'd them "of sin's destructive power the foes,  
 And not such blockheads as he might suppose."  
 Gwyn to his friends would smile, and sometimes say,  
 "'Tis a kind fool, why vex her in her way?"  
 Her way she took, and still had more in view,  
 For she contrived that he should take it too. 280  
 The daring freedom of his soul, 'twas plain,  
 In part was lost in a divided reign:  
 A king and queen, who yet in prudence sway'd  
 Their peaceful state, and were in turn obey'd.  
 Yet such our fate that, when we plan the best,  
 Something arises to disturb our rest:  
 For, though in spirits high, in body strong,  
 Gwyn something felt—he knew not what—was wrong;  
 He wish'd to know, for he believed the thing,  
 If unremoved, would other evil bring: 290  
 She must perceive, of late he could not eat,  
 And when he walk'd, he trembled on his feet;  
 He had forebodings, and he seem'd as one  
 Stopp'd on the road, or threatened by a dun;  
 He could not live, and yet, should he apply  
 To those physicians—he must sooner die."  
 The mild Rebecca heard with some disdain,  
 And some distress, her friend and lord complain:  
 His death she fear'd not, but had painful doubt  
 What his distemper'd nerves might bring about; 300  
 With power like hers she dreaded an ally,  
 And yet there was a person in her eye;—  
 She thought, debated, fix'd—"Alas!" she said,  
 A case like yours must be no more delay'd.  
 You hate these doctors; well! but were a friend  
 And doctor one, your fears would have an end.  
 My cousin Mollet—Scotland holds him now—  
 Is above all men skilful, all allow:  
 Of late a doctor, and within a while  
 He means to settle in this favour'd isle; 310  
 Should he attend you, with his skill profound,  
 You must be safe, and shortly would be sound."  
 When men in health against physicians rail,  
 They should consider that their nerves may fail;  
 Who calls a lawyer rogue, may find, too late,  
 On one of these depends his whole estate;  
 Nay, when the world can nothing more produce,  
 The priest, th' insulted priest, may have his use.  
 Ease, health, and comfort, lift a man so high,  
 These powers are dwarfs that he can scarcely spy; 320  
 Pain, sickness, languor, keep a man so low,  
 That these neglected dwarfs to giants grow.  
 Happy is he who through the medium sees  
 Of clear good sense—but Gwyn was not of these.  
 He heard and he rejoiced: "Ah! let him come,  
 And, till he fixes, make my house his home."  
 Home came the doctor—he was much admired;  
 He told the patient what his case required;  
 His hours for sleep, his time to eat and drink;  
 When he should ride, read, rest, compose, or think. 330  
 Thus join'd peculiar skill and art profound,  
 To make the fancy-sick no more than fancy-sound.  
 With such attention, who could long be ill?  
 Returning health proclaim'd the doctor's skill.  
 Presents and praises from a grateful heart  
 Were freely offer'd on the patient's part;  
 In high repute the doctor seem'd to stand,  
 But still had got no footing in the land;  
 And, as he saw the seat was rich and fair,  
 He felt disposed to fix his station there. 340  
 To gain his purpose, he perform'd the part  
 Of a good actor, and prepared to start—  
 Not like a traveller in a day serene,  
 When the sun shone and when the roads were clean;  
 Not like the pilgrim, when the morning gray,  
 The ruddy eve succeeding, sends his way;  
 But in a season when the sharp east wind

Had all its influence on a nervous mind.  
When past the parlour's front it fiercely blew, }  
And Gwyn sat pitying every bird that flew, } 350  
This strange physician said—"Adieu! adieu! }  
Farewell!—Heaven bless you!—if you should—but no,  
You need not fear—farewell! 'tis time to go."

The doctor spoke; and as the patient heard,  
His old disorders (dreadful train!) appear'd;  
He felt the tingling tremor, and the stress  
Upon his nerves that he could not express;  
Should his good friend forsake him, he perhaps  
Might meet his death, and surely a relapse."

So, as the doctor seem'd intent to part, 360  
He cried in terror—"Oh! be where thou art:  
Come, thou art young, and unengaged; oh! come,  
Make me thy friend, give comfort to mine home;  
I have now symptoms that require thine aid,  
Do, doctor, stay"—th' obliging doctor stay'd.

Thus Gwyn was happy; he had now a friend,  
And a meek spouse on whom he could depend.  
But now, possess'd of male and female guide,  
Divided power he thus must subdivide:  
In earlier days he rode, or sat at ease 370  
Reclined, and having but himself to please;  
Now, if he would a fav'rite nag bestride,  
He sought permission—"Doctor, may I ride?"—  
(Rebecca's eye her sovereign pleasure told,)—  
"I think you may; but, guarded from the cold,  
Ride forty minutes."—Free and happy soul!  
He scorn'd submission, and a man's control;  
But where such friends in every care unite  
All for his good, obedience is delight.

Now Gwyn, a sultan, bade affairs adieu, 380  
Led and assisted by the faithful two;  
The favourite fair, Rebecca, near him sat,  
And whisper'd whom to love, assist, or hate;  
While the chief vizier eased his lord of cares,  
And bore himself the burden of affairs.  
No dangers could from such alliance flow,  
But from that law that changes all below.

When wint'ry winds with leaves bestrew'd the ground,  
And men were coughing all the village round;  
When public papers of invasion told, 390  
Diseases, famines, perils new and old;  
When philosophic writers fail'd to clear  
The mind of gloom, and lighter works to cheer;  
Then came fresh terrors on our hero's mind—  
Fears unforeseen, and feelings undefined.

"In outward ills," he cried, "I rest assured  
Of my friend's aid; they will in time be cured:  
But can his art subdue, resist, control  
These inward griefs and troubles of the soul?  
Oh! my Rebecca! my disorder'd mind 400  
No help in study, none in thought can find;  
What must I do, Rebecca?" She proposed  
The parish-guide; but what could be disclosed  
To a proud priest?—"No! him have I defied,  
Insulted, slighted—shall he be my guide?  
But one there is, and if report be just,  
A wise good man, whom I may safely trust;  
Who goes from house to house, from ear to ear, }  
To make his truths, his Gospel truths, appear; }  
True if indeed they be, 'tis time that I should hear. } 410  
Send for that man; and if report be just,  
I, like Cornelius, will the teacher trust;  
But, if deceiver, I the vile deceit  
Shall soon discover, and discharge the cheat."

To Doctor Mollet was the grief confess'd,  
While Gwyn the freedom of his mind express'd;  
Yet own'd it was to ills and errors prone,  
And he for guilt and frailty must atone.  
"My books, perhaps," the wav'ring mortal cried,  
"Like men deceive—I would be satisfied;  
And to my soul the pious man may bring 420  
Comfort and light—do let me try the thing."

The cousins met; what pass'd with Gwyn was told;  
 "Alas!" the doctor said; "how hard to hold  
 These easy minds, where all impressions made  
 At first sink deeply, and then quickly fade;  
 For while so strong these new-born fancies reign,  
 We must divert them, to oppose is vain.  
 You see him valiant now, he scorns to heed  
 The bigot's threat'nings or the zealot's creed; 430  
 Shook by a dream, he next for truth receives  
 What frenzy teaches, and what fear believes;  
 And this will place him in the power of one  
 Whom we must seek, because we cannot shun."

Wisp had been ostler at a busy inn,  
 Where he beheld and grew in dread of sin;  
 Then to a Baptists' meeting found his way,  
 Became a convert, and was taught to pray;  
 Then preach'd; and, being earnest and sincere,  
 Brought other sinners to religious fear. 440  
 Together grew his influence and his fame,  
 Till our dejected hero heard his name;  
 His little failings were a grain of pride,  
 Raised by the numbers he presumed to guide:

A love of presents, and of lofty praise  
 For his meek spirit and his humble ways;  
 But though this spirit would on flattery feed,  
 No praise could blind him and no arts mislead.  
 To him the doctor made the wishes known  
 Of his good patron, but concealed his own; 450  
 He of all teachers had distrust and doubt,  
 And was reserved in what he came about;  
 Though on a plain and simple message sent,  
 He had a secret and a bold intent.

Their minds at first were deeply veil'd; disguise  
 Form'd the slow speech, and op'd the eager eyes;  
 Till by degrees sufficient light was thrown  
 On every view, and all the business shown.  
 Wisp, as a skilful guide who led the blind, }  
 Had powers to rule and awe the vapourish mind, }  
 But not the changeful will, the wavering fear to bind; } 460  
 And, should his conscience give him leave to dwell  
 With Gwyn, and every rival power expel,  
 (A dubious point,) yet he, with every care,  
 Might soon the lot of the rejected share,  
 And other Wisps be found like him to reign,  
 And then be thrown upon the world again.

He thought it prudent, then, and felt it just,  
 The present guides of his new friend to trust;  
 True, he conceived, to touch the harder heart 470  
 Of the cool doctor, was beyond his art;  
 But mild Rebecca he could surely sway,  
 While Gwyn would follow where she led the way:  
 So, to do good, (and why a duty shun,  
 Because rewarded for the good when done?)  
 He with his friends would join in all they plann'd,  
 Save when his faith or feelings should withstand;  
 There he must rest, sole judge of his affairs,  
 While they might rule exclusively in theirs. 480

When Gwyn his message to the teacher sent,  
 He fear'd his friends would show their discontent;  
 And prudent seem'd it to th' attendant pair,  
 Not all at once to show an aspect fair.  
 On Wisp they seem'd to look with jealous eye,  
 And fair Rebecca was demure and shy;  
 But by degrees the teacher's worth they knew,  
 And were so kind, they seem'd converted too.

Wisp took occasion to the nymph to say,  
 "You must be married: will you name the day?"  
 She smiled,—"'Tis well; but, should he not comply, 490  
 Is it quite safe th' experiment to try?"—  
 "My child," the teacher said, "who feels remorse,  
 (And feels not he?) must wish relief of course;  
 And can he find it, while he fears the crime?—  
 You must be married; will you name the time?"

Glad was the patron as a man could be, }  
 Yet marvell'd too, to find his guides agree; }

"But what the cause?" he cried; "'tis genuine love for me." }

Each found his part, and let one act describe  
The powers and honours of th' accordant tribe:—  
A man for favour to the mansion speeds,  
And cons his threefold task as he proceeds;  
To teacher Wisp he bows with humble air,  
And begs his interest for a barn's repair;  
Then for the doctor he inquires, who loves  
To hear applause for what his skill improves,  
And gives, for praise, assent,—and to the fair  
He brings of pullets a delicious pair;  
Thus sees a peasant, with discernment nice,  
A love of power, conceit, and avarice.

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Lo! now the change complete: the convert Gwyn  
Has sold his books, and has renounced his sin;  
Mollet his body orders, Wisp his soul,  
And o'er his purse the lady takes control;  
No friends beside he needs, and none attend—  
Soul, body, and estate, has each a friend;  
And fair Rebecca leads a virtuous life—  
She rules a mistress, and she reigns a wife.

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## TALE IV.

### PROCRASTINATION.

Heaven witness  
I have been to you [a true and humble wife.]  
*Henry VIII.* Act II. Scene 4.

Gentle lady,  
When first I did impart my love to you,  
I freely told you all the wealth I had.  
*Merchant of Venice,* Act III. Scene 2.

[The leisure and the fearful time]  
Cuts off [the ceremonious] vows of love,  
And ample interchange of sweet discourse,  
Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell upon.  
*Richard III.* Act V. Scene 3.

I know thee not, old man; fall to thy prayers.  
*2 Henry IV.* Act V. Scene 5.

Farewell,  
Thou pure impiety [and] impious purity;  
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love.  
*Much Ado about Nothing,* Act IV. Scene 1.

## TALE IV.

### PROCRASTINATION.

Love will expire; the gay, the happy dream  
Will turn to scorn, indiff'rence, or esteem.  
Some favour'd pairs, in this exchange, are bless'd,  
Nor sigh for raptures in a state of rest;  
Others, ill match'd, with minds unpair'd, repent  
At once the deed, and know no more content;  
From joy to anguish they, in haste, decline,  
And with their fondness, their esteem resign.  
More luckless still their fate, who are the prey  
Of long-protracted hope and dull delay; 10  
'Mid plans of bliss the heavy hours pass on,  
Till love is wither'd, and till joy is gone.  
This gentle flame two youthful hearts possess'd,  
The sweet disturber of unenvied rest:  
The prudent Dinah was the maid beloved,  
And the kind Rupert was the swain approved.  
A wealthy aunt her gentle niece sustain'd,  
He, with a father, at his desk remain'd;  
The youthful couple, to their vows sincere, }  
Thus loved expectant; year succeeding year, } 20  
With pleasant views and hopes, but not a prospect near. }  
Rupert some comfort in his station saw,  
But the poor virgin lived in dread and awe;  
Upon her anxious looks the widow smiled,  
And bade her wait, "for she was yet a child."  
She for her neighbour had a due respect,  
Nor would his son encourage or reject;  
And thus the pair, with expectations vain,  
Beheld the seasons change and change again.  
Meantime the nymph her tender tales perused, 30  
Where cruel aunts impatient girls refused;  
While hers, though teasing, boasted to be kind,  
And she, resenting, to be all resign'd.  
The dame was sick, and, when the youth applied  
For her consent, she groan'd, and cough'd, and cried;  
Talk'd of departing, and again her breath  
Drew hard, and cough'd, and talk'd again of death:  
"Here you may live, my Dinah! here the boy  
And you together my estate enjoy."  
Thus to the lovers was her mind express'd, 40  
Till they forbore to urge the fond request.  
Servant, and nurse, and comforter, and friend,  
Dinah had still some duty to attend;

But yet their walk, when Rupert's evening call  
Obtain'd an hour, made sweet amends for all;  
So long they now each other's thoughts had known,  
That nothing seem'd exclusively their own;  
But with the common wish, the mutual fear,  
They now had travell'd to their thirtieth year.

At length a prospect open'd—but, alas!

Long time must yet before the union pass;  
Rupert was call'd in other clime, t'increase  
Another's wealth, and toil for future peace;  
Loth were the lovers; but the aunt declared  
'Twas fortune's call, and they must be prepared:

"You now are young, and for this brief delay,  
And Dinah's care, what I bequeath will pay;  
All will be yours; nay, love, suppress that sigh;  
The kind must suffer, and the best must die."  
Then came the cough, and strong the signs it gave  
Of holding long contention with the grave.

The lovers parted with a gloomy view,  
And little comfort but that both were true;  
He for uncertain duties doom'd to steer,  
While hers remained too certain and severe.

Letters arrived, and Rupert fairly told  
"His cares were many, and his hopes were cold;  
The view more clouded, that was never fair,  
And love alone preserved him from despair."  
In other letters brighter hopes he drew,  
"His friends were kind, and he believed them true."

When the sage widow Dinah's grief descried,  
She wonder'd much why one so happy sigh'd;  
Then bade her see how her poor aunt sustain'd  
The ills of life, nor murmur'd nor complain'd.  
To vary pleasures, from the lady's chest  
Were drawn the pearly string and tabby vest;  
Beads, jewels, laces, all their value shown,  
With the kind notice—"They will be your own."

This hope, these comforts cherish'd day by day,  
To Dinah's bosom made a gradual way;  
Till love of treasure had as large a part  
As love of Rupert in the virgin's heart.  
Whether it be that tender passions fail  
From their own nature, while the strong prevail;

Or whether av'rice, like the poison-tree<sup>[3]</sup>,  
Kills all beside it, and alone will be:  
Whatever cause prevail'd, the pleasure grew  
In Dinah's soul—she loved the hoards to view;  
With lively joy those comforts she survey'd,  
And love grew languid in the careful maid.

Now the grave niece partook the widow's cares;  
Look'd to the great and ruled the small affairs;  
Saw clean'd the plate, arranged the china show,  
And felt her passion for a shilling grow.  
Th' indulgent aunt increased the maid's delight,  
By placing tokens of her wealth in sight;  
She loved the value of her bonds to tell,  
And spake of stocks, and how they rose and fell.

This passion grew, and gain'd at length such sway,  
That other passions shrank to make it way;  
Romantic notions now the heart forsook,  
She read but seldom, and she changed her book;  
And for the verses she was wont to send,  
Short was her prose, and she was Rupert's friend.  
Seldom she wrote, and then the widow's cough,  
And constant call, excused her breaking off;  
Who now, oppress'd, no longer took the air,  
But sate and dozed upon an easy chair.

The cautious doctor saw the case was clear,  
But judg'd it best to have companions near;  
They came, they reason'd, they prescribed—at last,  
Like honest men, they said their hopes were past;  
Then came a priest—'tis comfort to reflect,  
When all is over, there was no neglect;  
And all was over—by her husband's bones,  
The widow rests beneath the sculptured stones,

That yet record their fondness and their fame,  
 While all they left the virgin's care became: 120  
 Stock, bonds, and buildings;—it disturb'd her rest,  
 To think what load of troubles she possess'd.  
 Yet, if a trouble, she resolved to take  
 Th' important duty, for the donor's sake;  
 She too was heiress to the widow's taste,  
 Her love of hoarding, and her dread of waste.

Sometimes the past would on her mind intrude,  
 And then a conflict full of care ensued;  
 The thoughts of Rupert on her mind would press,  
 His worth she knew, but doubted his success; 130  
 Of old she saw him heedless; what the boy  
 Forbore to save, the man would not enjoy;  
 Oft had he lost the chance that care would seize,  
 Willing to live, but more to live at ease;  
 Yet could she not a broken vow defend,  
 And Heav'n, perhaps, might yet enrich her friend.

Month after month was pass'd, and all were spent  
 In quiet comfort and in rich content:  
 Miseries there were, and woes the world around,  
 But these had not her pleasant dwelling found; 140  
 She knew that mothers grieved, and widows wept,  
 And she was sorry, said her prayers, and slept.  
 Thus pass'd the seasons, and to Dinah's board  
 Gave what the seasons to the rich afford;  
 For she indulged, nor was her heart so small,  
 That one strong passion should engross it all.

A love of splendour now with av'rice strove,  
 And oft appear'd to be the stronger love;  
 A secret pleasure fill'd the widow's breast,  
 When she reflected on the hoards possess'd; 150  
 But livelier joy inspired th' ambitious maid,  
 When she the purchase of those hoards display'd.  
 In small but splendid room she loved to see  
 That all was placed in view and harmony;  
 There, as with eager glance she look'd around,  
 She much delight in every object found;  
 While books devout were near her—to destroy,  
 Should it arise, an overflow of joy.

Within that fair apartment, guests might see  
 The comforts cull'd for wealth by vanity. 160  
 Around the room an Indian paper blazed,  
 With lively tint and figures boldly raised;  
 Silky and soft upon the floor below,  
 Th' elastic carpet rose with crimson glow;  
 All things around implied both cost and care;  
 What met the eye was elegant or rare.  
 Some curious trifles round the room were laid,  
 By hope presented to the wealthy maid:  
 Within a costly case of varnish'd wood,  
 In level rows, her polish'd volumes stood; 170  
 Shown as a favour to a chosen few,  
 To prove what beauty for a book could do;  
 A silver urn with curious work was fraught;  
 A silver lamp from Grecian pattern wrought;  
 Above her head, all gorgeous to behold,  
 A time-piece stood on feet of burnish'd gold;  
 A stag's-head crest adorn'd the pictured case,  
 Through the pure crystal shone th' enamell'd face;  
 And, while on brilliants moved the hands of steel,  
 It click'd from pray'r to pray'r, from meal to meal.

Here as the lady sate, a friendly pair 180  
 Stept in t' admire the view, and took their chair.  
 They then related how the young and gay  
 Were thoughtless wandering in the broad highway;  
 How tender damsels sail'd in tilted boats,  
 And laugh'd with wicked men in scarlet coats;  
 And how we live in such degen'rate times  
 That men conceal their wants, and show their crimes;  
 While vicious deeds are screen'd by fashion's name,  
 And what was once our pride is now our shame.

Dinah was musing, as her friends discoursed, 190  
 When these last words a sudden entrance forced  
 Upon her mind, and what was once her pride



And now her shame, some painful views supplied;  
Thoughts of the past within her bosom press'd,  
And there a change was felt, and was confess'd.  
While thus the virgin strove with secret pain,  
Her mind was wandering o'er the troubled main;  
Still she was silent, nothing seem'd to see,  
But sate and sigh'd in pensive reverie.

The friends prepared new subjects to begin, 200  
When tall Susannah, maiden starch, stalk'd in;  
Not in her ancient mode, sedate and slow,  
As when she came, the mind she knew to know;  
Nor as, when list'ning half an hour before,  
She twice or thrice tapp'd gently at the door;  
But, all decorum cast in wrath aside,

"I think the devil's in the man!" she cried;  
"A huge tall sailor, with his tawny cheek,  
And pitted face, will with my lady speak;  
He grinn'd an ugly smile, and said he knew, 210  
Please you, my lady, 'twould be joy to you;  
What must I answer?"—Trembling and distress'd  
Sank the pale Dinah, by her fears oppress'd;  
When thus alarm'd, and brooking no delay,  
Swift to her room the stranger made his way.

"Revive, my love!" said he, "I've done thee harm,  
Give me thy pardon," and he look'd alarm;  
Meantime the prudent Dinah had contrived  
Her soul to question, and she then revived.

"See! my good friend," and then she raised her head, } 220  
"The bloom of life, the strength of youth is fled; }  
Living we die; to us the world is dead. }

We parted bless'd with health, and I am now  
Age-struck and feeble, so I find art thou;  
Thine eye is sunken, furrow'd is thy face,  
And downward look'st thou—so we run our race;  
And happier they, whose race is nearly run,  
Their troubles over, and their duties done."—

"True, lady, true, we are not girl and boy;  
But time has left us something to enjoy."— 230

"What! thou hast learn'd my fortune?—yes, I live  
To feel how poor the comforts wealth can give;  
Thou too perhaps art wealthy; but our fate  
Still mocks our wishes, wealth is come too late."—

"To me nor late nor early; I am come  
Poor as I left thee to my native home:  
Nor yet," said Rupert, "will I grieve; 'tis mine  
To share thy comforts, and the glory thine;  
For thou wilt gladly take that generous part  
That both exalts and gratifies the heart; 240  
While mine rejoices."—"Heavens!" return'd the maid,  
"This talk to one so wither'd and decayed?  
No! all my care is now to fit my mind  
For other spousal, and to die resign'd.  
As friend and neighbour, I shall hope to see  
These noble views, this pious love in thee;  
That we together may the change await,  
Guides and spectators in each other's fate;  
When fellow-pilgrims, we shall daily crave  
The mutual prayer that arms us for the grave." 250

Half angry, half in doubt, the lover gazed  
On the meek maiden, by her speech amazed.  
"Dinah," said he, "dost thou respect thy vows?  
What spousal mean'st thou?—thou art Rupert's spouse;  
The chance is mine to take, and thine to give;  
But trifling this, if we together live.  
Can I believe, that, after all the past,  
Our vows, our loves, thou wilt be false at last?  
Something thou hast—I know not what—in view;  
I find thee pious—let me find thee true."— 260

"Ah! cruel this; but do, my friend, depart;  
And to its feelings leave my wounded heart."—  
"Nay, speak at once; and, Dinah, let me know,  
Mean'st thou to take me, now I'm wreck'd, in tow?  
Be fair; nor longer keep me in the dark;  
Am I forsaken for a trimmer spark?  
Heav'n's spouse thou art not; nor can I believe

That God accepts her who will man deceive.  
 True, I am shatter'd; I have service seen,  
 And service done, and have in trouble been; 270  
 My cheek (it shames me not) has lost its red,  
 And the brown buff is o'er my features spread;  
 Perchance my speech is rude; for I among  
 Th' untamed have been, in temper and in tongue;  
 Have been trepann'd, have lived in toil and care,  
 And wrought for wealth I was not doom'd to share;  
 It touch'd me deeply, for I felt a pride  
 In gaining riches for my destined bride.  
 Speak, then, my fate; for these my sorrows past,  
 Time lost, youth fled, hope wearied, and at last 280  
 This doubt of thee—a childish thing to tell,  
 But certain truth—my very throat they swell;  
 They stop the breath, and but for shame could I  
 Give way to weakness, and with passion cry;  
 These are unmanly struggles, but I feel  
 This hour must end them, and perhaps will heal."—  
 Here Dinah sigh'd as if afraid to speak—  
 And then repeated—"They were frail and weak;  
 His soul she loved, and hoped he had the grace  
 To fix his thoughts upon a better place." 290  
 She ceased;—with steady glance, as if to see  
 The very root of this hypocrisy,  
 He her small fingers moulded in his hard  
 And bronzed broad hand; then told her, his regard,  
 His best respect were gone, but love had still  
 Hold in his heart, and govern'd yet the will—  
 Or he would curse her;—saying this, he threw }  
 The hand in scorn away, and bade adieu }  
 To every lingering hope, with every care in view. }  
 Proud and indignant, suffering, sick, and poor, 300  
 He grieved unseen, and spoke of love no more—  
 Till all he felt in indignation died,  
 As hers had sunk in avarice and pride.  
 In health declining, as in mind distress'd,  
 To some in power his troubles he confess'd,  
 And shares a parish-gift;—at prayers he sees  
 The pious Dinah dropp'd upon her knees;  
 Thence as she walks the street with stately air,  
 As chance directs, oft meet the parted pair.  
 When he, with thickset coat of badge-man's blue, 310  
 Moves near her shaded silk of changeful hue;  
 When his thin locks of grey approach her braid,  
 A costly purchase made in beauty's aid;  
 When his frank air, and his unstudied pace, }  
 Are seen with her soft manner, air, and grace. }  
 And his plain artless look with her sharp meaning face: }  
 It might some wonder in a stranger move,  
 How these together could have talk'd of love.  
 Behold them now!—see, there a tradesman stands,  
 And humbly hearkens to some fresh commands; 320  
 He moves to speak, she interrupts him—"Stay,"  
 Her air expresses—"Hark to what I say!"  
 Ten paces off, poor Rupert on a seat  
 Has taken refuge from the noon-day heat,  
 His eyes on her intent, as if to find  
 What were the movements of that subtle mind;  
 How still! how earnest is he!—it appears  
 His thoughts are wand'ring through his earlier years;  
 Through years of fruitless labour, to the day  
 When all his earthly prospects died away. 330  
 "Had I," he thinks, "been wealthier of the two, }  
 Would she have found me so unkind, untrue? }  
 Or knows not man, when poor, what man when rich will do? }  
 Yes, yes! I feel that I had faithful proved,  
 And should have soothed and raised her, bless'd and loved."  
 But Dinah moves—she had observed before  
 The pensive Rupert at an humble door.  
 Some thoughts of pity raised by his distress,  
 Some feeling touch of ancient tenderness;  
 Religion, duty, urged the maid to speak 340  
 In terms of kindness to a man so weak;  
 But pride forbad, and to return would prove

She felt the shame of his neglected love;  
Nor wrapp'd in silence could she pass, afraid  
Each eye should see her, and each heart upbraid.  
One way remain'd—the way the Levite took,  
Who without mercy could on misery look,  
(A way perceived by craft, approved by pride):  
She cross'd, and pass'd him on the other side.

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## TALE V.

### THE PATRON.

It were all one,  
That I should love a bright [particular] star,  
And think to wed it; [he] is so much above me:  
In [his] bright radiance and collateral heat  
Must I be comforted, not in [his] sphere.  
*All's Well that Ends Well*, Act I. Scene 1.

Poor wretches, that depend  
On greatness' favours, dream as I have done,—  
Wake, and find nothing.  
*Cymbeline*, Act V. Scene 4.

And since...  
Th' affliction of my mind amends, with which  
I fear a madness held me.  
[*The*] *Tempest*, Act V.

## TALE V.

### THE PATRON.

A borough-bailiff, who to law was train'd,  
A wife and sons in decent state maintain'd;  
He had his way in life's rough ocean steer'd,  
And many a rock and coast of danger clear'd;  
He saw where others fail'd, and care had he  
Others in him should not such failings see;  
His sons in various busy states were placed,  
And all began the sweets of gain to taste,  
Save John, the younger; who, of sprightly parts,  
Felt not a love for money-making arts. 10  
In childhood feeble, he, for country air,  
Had long resided with a rustic pair;  
All round whose room were doleful ballads, songs,  
Of lovers' sufferings and of ladies' wrongs;  
Of peevish ghosts who came at dark midnight,  
For breach of promise guilty men to fright;  
Love, marriage, murder, were the themes, with these,  
All that on idle, ardent spirits seize;  
Robbers at land and pirates on the main,  
Enchanters foil'd, spells broken, giants slain; 20  
Legends of love, with tales of halls and bowers, }  
Choice of rare songs, and garlands of choice flowers, }  
And all the hungry mind without a choice devours. }  
From village-children kept apart by pride,  
With such enjoyments, and without a guide,  
Inspired by feelings all such works infused,  
John snatch'd a pen, and wrote as he perused:  
With the like fancy he could make his knight  
Slay half an host and put the rest to flight;  
With the like knowledge, he could make him ride 30  
From isle to isle at Parthenissa's side;  
And with a heart yet free, no busy brain }  
Form'd wilder notions of delight and pain, }  
The raptures smiles create, the anguish of disdain. }  
Such were the fruits of John's poetic toil—  
Weeds, but still proofs of vigour in the soil.  
He nothing purpos'd but with vast delight,  
Let Fancy loose, and wonder'd at her flight;  
His notions of poetic worth were high,  
And of his own still-hoarded poetry.— 40  
These to his father's house he bore with pride,  
A miser's treasure, in his room to hide;  
Till, spurr'd by glory, to a reading friend  
He kindly show'd the sonnets he had penn'd.  
With erring judgment, though with heart sincere,  
That friend exclaim'd, "These beauties must appear."  
In Magazines they claim'd their share of fame,  
Though undistinguish'd by their author's name;  
And with delight the young enthusiast found

The muse of 'Marcus' with applauses crown'd. 50  
 This heard the father, and with some alarm;  
 "The boy," said he, "will neither trade nor farm;  
 He for both law and physic is unfit;  
 Wit he may have, but cannot live on wit:  
 Let him his talents then to learning give,  
 Where verse is honour'd, and where poets live."  
 John kept his terms at college unreprieved,  
 Took his degree, and left the life he loved;  
 Not yet ordain'd, his leisure he employ'd 60  
 In the light labours he so much enjoy'd;  
 His favourite notions and his daring views  
 Were cherish'd still, and he adored the Muse.  
 "A little time, and he should burst to light,  
 And admiration of the world excite;  
 And every friend, now cool and apt to blame  
 His fond pursuit, would wonder at his fame."  
 When led by fancy, and from view retired,  
 He call'd before him all his heart desired;  
 "Fame shall be mine, then wealth shall I possess,  
 And beauty next an ardent lover bless; 70  
 For me the maid shall leave her nobler state,  
 Happy to raise and share her poet's fate."  
 He saw each day his father's frugal board  
 With simple fare by cautious prudence stored;  
 Where each indulgence was foreweigh'd with care,  
 And the grand maxims were to save and spare.  
 Yet in his walks, his closet, and his bed,  
 All frugal cares and prudent counsels fled;  
 And bounteous Fancy for his glowing mind  
 Wrought various scenes, and all of glorious kind; 80  
 Slaves of the *ring* and *lamp*! what need of you,  
 When Fancy's self such magic deeds can do?  
 Though rapt in visions of no vulgar kind,  
 To common subjects stoop'd our poet's mind;  
 And oft, when wearied with more ardent flight,  
 He felt a spur satiric song to write;  
 A rival burgess his bold muse attack'd,  
 And whipp'd severely for a well-known fact;  
 For, while he seem'd to all demure and shy,  
 Our poet gazed at what was passing by; 90  
 And ev'n his father smiled when playful wit,  
 From his young bard, some haughty object hit.  
 From ancient times the borough where they dwelt  
 Had mighty contest at elections felt.  
 Sir Godfrey Ball, 'tis true, had held in pay  
 Electors many for the trying day;  
 But in such golden chains to bind them all  
 Required too much for e'en Sir Godfrey Ball.  
 A member died, and, to supply his place,  
 Two heroes enter'd for th' important race; 100  
 Sir Godfrey's friend and Earl Fitzdonnel's son,  
 Lord Frederick Damer, both prepared to run;  
 And partial numbers saw with vast delight  
 Their good young lord oppose the proud old knight.  
 Our poet's father, at a first request,  
 Gave the young lord his vote and interest,  
 And, what he could, our poet; for he stung  
 The foe by verse satiric, said and sung.  
 Lord Frederick heard of all this youthful zeal,  
 And felt as lords upon a canvass feel; 110  
 He read the satire, and he saw the use }  
 That such cool insult, and such keen abuse, }  
 Might on the wavering minds of voting men produce; }  
 Then, too, his praises were in contrast seen,  
 "A lord as noble as the knight was mean."  
 "I much rejoice," he cried, "such worth to find;  
 To this the world must be no longer blind;  
 His glory will descend from sire to son,  
 The Burns of English race, the happier Chatterton."  
 Our poet's mind, now hurried and elate, 120  
 Alarm'd the anxious parent for his fate;  
 Who saw with sorrow, should their friend succeed,  
 That much discretion would the poet need.  
 Their friend succeeded, and repaid the zeal

The poet felt, and made opposers feel,  
 By praise (from lords how soothing and how sweet!)  
 And invitation to his noble seat.  
 The father ponder'd, doubtful if the brain  
 Of his proud boy such honour could sustain;  
 Pleased with the favours offer'd to a son, 130  
 But seeing dangers few so ardent shun.

Thus, when they parted, to the youthful breast  
 The father's fears were by his love impress'd:  
 "There you will find, my son, the courteous ease  
 That must subdue the soul it means to please;  
 That soft attention which ev'n beauty pays  
 To wake our passions, or provoke our praise;  
 There all the eye beholds will give delight,  
 Where every sense is flatter'd like the sight. 140  
 This is your peril; can you from such scene  
 Of splendour part, and feel your mind serene,  
 And in the father's humble state resume  
 The frugal diet and the narrow room?"  
 To this the youth with cheerful heart replied,  
 Pleased with the trial, but as yet untried;  
 And while professing patience, should he fail,  
 He suffer'd hope o'er reason to prevail.

Impatient, by the morning mail convey'd,  
 The happy guest his promised visit paid;  
 And now, arriving at the hall, he tried 150  
 For air composed, serene and satisfied;  
 As he had practised in his room alone,  
 And there acquired a free and easy tone.  
 There he had said, "Whatever the degree  
 A man obtains, what more than man is he?"  
 And when arrived—"This room is but a room;  
 Can aught we see the steady soul o'ercome?  
 Let me in all a manly firmness show,  
 Upheld by talents, and their value know."

This reason urged; but it surpass'd his skill 160  
 To be in act as manly as in will:  
 When he his lordship and the lady saw,  
 Brave as he was, he felt oppress'd with awe;  
 And spite of verse, that so much praise had won,  
 The poet found he was the bailiff's son.

But dinner came, and the succeeding hours  
 Fix'd his weak nerves, and raised his failing powers;  
 Praised and assured, he ventured once or twice  
 On some remark, and bravely broke the ice;  
 So that at night, reflecting on his words, 170  
 He found in time, he might converse with lords.

Now was the sister of his patron seen—  
 A lovely creature, with majestic mien;  
 Who, softly smiling while she look'd so fair,  
 Praised the young poet with such friendly air;  
 Such winning frankness in her looks express'd,  
 And such attention to her brother's guest,  
 That so much beauty, join'd with speech so kind,  
 Raised strong emotions in the poet's mind;  
 Till reason fail'd his bosom to defend 180  
 From the sweet power of this enchanting friend.—  
 Rash boy! what hope thy frantic mind invades?  
 What love confuses, and what pride persuades?  
 Awake to truth! shouldst thou deluded feed  
 On hopes so groundless, thou art mad indeed.

What say'st thou, wise-one? "that all-powerful love  
 Can fortune's strong impediments remove;  
 Nor is it strange that worth should wed to worth,  
 The pride of genius with the pride of birth."  
 While thou art dreaming thus, the beauty spies 190  
 Love in thy tremor, passion in thine eyes;  
 And, with th' amusement pleased, of conquest vain,  
 She seeks her pleasure, careless of thy pain;  
 She gives thee praise to humble and confound,  
 Smiles to ensnare, and flatters thee to wound.

Why has she said that in the lowest state  
 The noble mind insures a noble fate?  
 And why thy daring mind to glory call?  
 That thou may'st dare and suffer, soar and fall.

Beauties are tyrants, and if they can reign, 200  
 They have no feeling for their subject's pain;  
 Their victim's anguish gives their charms applause,  
 And their chief glory is the woe they cause.  
 Something of this was felt, in spite of love,  
 Which hope, in spite of reason, would remove.  
 Thus lived our youth, with conversation, books,  
 And Lady Emma's soul-subduing looks;  
 Lost in delight, astonish'd at his lot, }  
 All prudence banish'd, all advice forgot— }  
 Hopes, fears, and every thought, were fix'd upon the spot. } 210  
 'Twas autumn yet, and many a day must frown  
 On Brandon-Hall, ere went my lord to town;  
 Meantime the father, who had heard his boy  
 Lived in a round of luxury and joy,  
 And, justly thinking that the youth was one  
 Who, meeting danger, was unskill'd to shun;  
 Knowing his temper, virtue, spirit, zeal,  
 How prone to hope and trust, believe and feel:  
 These on the parent's soul their weight impress'd,  
 And thus he wrote the counsels of his breast. 220  
 "John, thou'rt a genius; thou hast some pretence,  
 I think, to wit, but hast thou sterling sense?  
 That which, like gold, may through the world go forth,  
 And always pass for what 'tis truly worth?  
 Whereas this genius, like a bill, must take  
 Only the value our opinions make.  
 "Men famed for wit, of dangerous talents vain,  
 Treat those of common parts with proud disdain;  
 The powers that wisdom would, improving, hide,  
 They blaze abroad with inconsiderate pride; 230  
 While yet but mere probationers for fame,  
 They seize the honour they should then disclaim:  
 Honour so hurried to the light must fade;  
 The lasting laurels flourish in the shade.  
 "Genius is jealous; I have heard of some  
 Who, if unnoticed, grew perversely dumb;  
 Nay, different talents would their envy raise;  
 Poets have sicken'd at a dancer's praise;  
 And one, the happiest writer of his time,  
 Grew pale at hearing Reynolds was sublime; 240  
 That Rutland's duchess wore a heavenly smile—  
 And I, said he, neglected all the while!  
 "A waspish tribe are these, on gilded wings,  
 Humming their lays, and brandishing their stings;  
 And thus they move their friends and foes among,  
 Prepared for soothing or satiric song.  
 "Hear me, my boy; thou hast a virtuous mind—  
 But be thy virtues of the sober kind;  
 Be not a Quixote, ever up in arms  
 To give the guilty and the great alarms: 250  
 If never heeded, thy attack is vain;  
 And if they heed thee, they'll attack again;  
 Then, too, in striking at that heedless rate,  
 Thou in an instant may'st decide thy fate.  
 "Leave admonition—let the vicar give  
 Rules how the nobles of his flock should live;  
 Nor take that simple fancy to thy brain,  
 That thou canst cure the wicked and the vain.  
 "Our Pope, they say, once entertain'd the whim,  
 Who fear'd not God should be afraid of him; 260  
 But grant they fear'd him, was it further said,  
 That he reform'd the hearts he made afraid?  
 Did Chartres mend? Ward, Waters, and a score  
 Of flagrant felons, with his floggings sore?  
 Was Cibber silenced? No; with vigour bless'd,  
 And brazen front, half earnest, half in jest,  
 He dared the bard to battle, and was seen  
 In all his glory match'd with Pope and spleen;  
 Himself he stripp'd, the harder blow to hit,  
 Then boldly match'd his ribaldry with wit; 270  
 The poet's conquest Truth and Time proclaim,  
 But yet the battle hurt his peace and fame.  
 "Strive not too much for favour; seem at ease,  
 And rather pleased thyself, than bent to please:

Upon thy lord with decent care attend,  
 But not too near; thou canst not be a friend;  
 And favourite be not, 'tis a dangerous post—  
 Is gain'd by labour, and by fortune lost.  
 Talents like thine may make a man approved,  
 But other talents trusted and beloved. 280  
 Look round, my son, and thou wilt early see  
 The kind of man thou art not form'd to be.  
 "The real favourites of the great are they  
 Who to their views and wants attention pay,  
 And pay it ever; who, with all their skill,  
 Dive to the heart, and learn the secret will;  
 If that be vicious, soon can they provide  
 The favourite ill, and o'er the soul preside;  
 For vice is weakness, and the artful know  
 Their power increases as the passions grow; 290  
 If indolent the pupil, hard their task;  
 Such minds will ever for amusement ask;  
 And great the labour for a man to choose  
 Objects for one whom nothing can amuse!  
 For ere those objects can the soul delight,  
 They must to joy the soul herself excite;  
 Therefore it is, this patient, watchful kind  
 With gentle friction stir the drowsy mind;  
 Fix'd on their end, with caution they proceed,  
 And sometimes give, and sometimes take the lead; 300  
 Will now a hint convey, and then retire,  
 And let the spark awake the lingering fire;  
 Or seek new joys and livelier pleasures bring,  
 To give the jaded sense a quick'ning spring.  
 "These arts, indeed, my son must not pursue;  
 Nor must he quarrel with the tribe that do:  
 It is not safe another's crimes to know,  
 Nor is it wise our proper worth to show.—  
 'My lord,' you say, 'engaged me for that worth;'—  
 True, and preserve it ready to come forth: 310  
 If question'd, fairly answer—and, that done,  
 Shrink back, be silent, and thy father's son;  
 For they who doubt thy talents scorn thy boast,  
 But they who grant them will dislike thee most.  
 Observe the prudent; they in silence sit,  
 Display no learning, and affect no wit;  
 They hazard nothing, nothing they assume,  
 But know the useful art of *acting dumb*.  
 Yet to their eyes each varying look appears,  
 And every word finds entrance at their ears. 320  
 "Thou art religion's advocate—take heed,  
 Hurt not the cause thy pleasure 'tis to plead;  
 With wine before thee, and with wits beside,  
 Do not in strength of reas'ning powers confide;  
 What seems to thee convincing, certain, plain,  
 They will deny, and dare thee to maintain;  
 And thus will triumph o'er thy eager youth,  
 While thou wilt grieve for so disgracing truth.  
 "With pain I've seen, these wrangling wits among,  
 Faith's weak defenders, passionate and young; 330  
 Weak thou art not, yet not enough on guard,  
 Where wit and humour keep their watch and ward:  
 Men gay and noisy will o'erwhelm thy sense,  
 Then loudly laugh at Truth's and thy expense;  
 While the kind ladies will do all they can  
 To check their mirth, and cry, '*The good young man!*'  
 "Prudence, my boy, forbids thee to commend  
 The cause or party of thy noble friend;  
 What are his praises worth, who must be known  
 To take a patron's maxims for his own? 340  
 When ladies sing, or in thy presence play,  
 Do not, dear John, in rapture melt away;  
 'Tis not thy part, there will be list'ners round,  
 To cry '*divine!*' and dote upon the sound;  
 Remember too, that though the poor have ears,  
 They take not in the music of the spheres;  
 They must not feel the warble and the thrill,  
 Or be dissolved in ecstasy at will;  
 Beside, 'tis freedom in a youth like thee



To drop his awe, and deal in ecstasy! 350  
 "In silent ease, at least in silence, dine,  
 Nor one opinion start of food or wine:  
 Thou know'st that all the science thou canst boast  
 Is of thy father's simple boil'd and roast;  
 Nor always these; he sometimes saved his cash,  
 By interlinear days of frugal hash.  
 Wine hadst thou seldom; wilt thou be so vain  
 As to decide on claret or champagne?  
 Dost thou from me derive this taste sublime,  
 Who order port the dozen at a time; 360  
 When (every glass held precious in our eyes)  
 We judged the value by the bottle's size?  
 Then, never merit for thy praise assume,  
 Its worth well knows each servant in the room.  
 "Hard, boy, thy task, to steer thy way among  
 That servile, supple, shrewd, insidious throng;  
 Who look upon thee as of doubtful race,  
 An interloper, one who wants a place:  
 Freedom with these let thy free soul condemn,  
 Nor with thy heart's concerns associate them. 370  
 "Of all be cautious—but be most afraid  
 Of the pale charms that grace my lady's maid;  
 Of those sweet dimples, of that fraudulent eye, }  
 The frequent glance, design'd for thee to spy; }  
 The soft bewitching look, the fond bewailing sigh. }  
 Let others frown and envy; she the while  
 (Insidious syren!) will demurely smile;  
 And, for her gentle purpose, every day  
 Inquire thy wants, and meet thee in thy way;  
 She has her blandishments, and, though so weak, 380  
 Her person pleases, and her actions speak.  
 At first her folly may her aim defeat;  
 But kindness shown at length will kindness meet.  
 Have some offended? them will she disdain,  
 And, for thy sake, contempt and pity feign;  
 She hates the vulgar, she admires to look  
 On woods and groves, and dotes upon a book;  
 Let her once see thee on her features dwell,  
 And hear one sigh—then, liberty, farewell.  
 "But, John, remember, we cannot maintain 390  
 A poor, proud girl, extravagant and vain.  
 "Doubt much of friendship: shouldst thou find a friend  
 Pleased to advise thee, anxious to commend;  
 Should he the praises he has heard report,  
 And confidence (in thee confiding) court;  
 Much of neglectful patrons should he say,  
 And then exclaim—'How long must merit stay;'  
 Then show how high thy modest hopes may stretch,  
 And point to stations far beyond thy reach:  
 Let such designer, by thy conduct, see 400  
 (Civil and cool) he makes no dupe of thee;  
 And he will quit thee, as a man too wise  
 For him to ruin first, and then despise.  
 "Such are thy dangers;—yet, if thou canst steer  
 Past all the perils, all the quicksands clear,  
 Then may'st thou profit; but if storms prevail,  
 If foes beset thee, if thy spirits fail—  
 No more of winds or waters be the sport,  
 But in thy father's mansion find a port."  
 Our poet read.—"It is, in truth," said he, 410  
 "Correct in part, but what is *this* to me?  
 I love a foolish Abigail! in base  
 And sordid office! fear not such disgrace:  
 Am I so blind?"—"Or thou wouldst surely see  
 That lady's fall, if she should stoop to thee."—  
 "The cases differ."—"True! for what surprise  
 Could from thy marriage with the maid arise?  
 But through the island would the shame be spread,  
 Should the fair mistress deign with thee to wed."  
 John saw not this; and many a week had pass'd, 420  
 While the vain beauty held her victim fast;  
 The noble friend still condescension show'd,  
 And, as before, with praises overflow'd;  
 But his grave lady took a silent view

Of all that pass'd, and, smiling, pitied too.  
 Cold grew the foggy morn; the day was brief;  
 Loose on the cherry hung the crimson leaf;  
 The dew dwelt ever on the herb; the woods  
 Roar'd with strong blasts, with mighty showers the floods;  
 All green was vanish'd, save of pine and yew, 430  
 That still display'd their melancholy hue;  
 Save the green holly with its berries red,  
 And the green moss that o'er the gravel spread.  
 To public views my lord must soon attend;  
 And soon the ladies—would they leave their friend?  
 The time was fix'd—approach'd—was near—was come,  
 The trying time that fill'd his soul with gloom.  
 Thoughtful our poet in the morning rose,  
 And cried, "One hour my fortune will disclose;  
 Terrific hour! from thee have I to date 440  
 Life's loftier views, or my degraded state;  
 For now to be what I have been before  
 Is so to fall, that I can rise no more."  
 The morning meal was past, and all around  
 The mansion rang with each discordant sound;  
 Haste was in every foot, and every look  
 The trav'ler's joy for London-journey spoke.  
 Not so our youth; whose feelings, at the noise  
 Of preparation, had no touch of joys;  
 He pensive stood, and saw each carriage drawn, 450  
 With lackeys mounted, ready on the lawn.  
 The ladies came; and John in terror threw  
 One painful glance, and then his eyes withdrew;  
 Not with such speed, but he in other eyes  
 With anguish read—"I pity but despise—  
 Unhappy boy! presumptuous scribbler!—you  
 To dream such dreams!—be sober, and adieu!"  
 Then came the noble friend—"And will my lord  
 Vouchsafe no comfort? drop no soothing word?  
 Yes, he must speak:" he speaks, "My good young friend,—  
 You know my views; upon my care depend; 461  
 My hearty thanks to your good father pay,  
 And be a student.—Harry, drive away."  
 Stillness reign'd all around; of late so full,  
 The busy scene deserted now and dull.  
 Stern is his nature who forbears to feel  
 Gloom o'er his spirits on such trials steal;  
 Most keenly felt our poet as he went  
 From room to room without a fix'd intent;  
 "And here," he thought, "I was caress'd; admired 470  
 Were here my songs; she smiled, and I aspired:  
 The change how grievous!" As he mused, a dame  
 Busy and peevish to her duties came;  
 Aside the tables and the chairs she drew,  
 And sang and mutter'd in the poet's view:—  
 "This was her fortune; here they leave the poor;  
 Enjoy themselves, and think of us no more;  
 I had a promise—" here his pride and shame  
 Urged him to fly from this familiar dame;  
 He gave one farewell look, and by a coach 480  
 Reach'd his own mansion at the night's approach.  
 His father met him with an anxious air,  
 Heard his sad tale, and check'd what seem'd despair;  
 Hope was in him corrected, but alive;  
 My lord would something for a friend contrive;  
 His word was pledged; our hero's feverish mind  
 Admitted this, and half his grief resign'd.  
 But when three months had fled, and every day  
 Drew from the sickening hopes their strength away,  
 The youth became abstracted, pensive, dull; 490  
 He utter'd nothing, though his heart was full.  
 Teased by inquiring words and anxious looks,  
 And all forgetful of his muse and books,  
 Awake he mourn'd, but in his sleep perceived  
 A lovely vision that his pain relieved;  
 His soul transported, hail'd the happy seat,  
 Where once his pleasure was so pure and sweet;  
 Where joys departed came in blissful view,  
 Till reason wak'd, and not a joy he knew.

Questions now vex'd his spirit, most from those 500  
 Who are called friends, because they are not foes.  
 "John!" they would say; he, starting, turn'd around;  
 "John!" there was something shocking in the sound;  
 Ill brook'd he then the pert familiar phrase,  
 The untaught freedom, and th' inquiring gaze;  
 Much was his temper touch'd, his spleen provoked,  
 When ask'd how ladies talk'd, or walk'd, or look'd?  
 What said my lord of politics? how spent  
 He there his time? and was he glad he went?"  
 At length a letter came, both cool and brief, 510  
 But still it gave the burthen'd heart relief:  
 Though not inspired by lofty hopes, the youth  
 Placed much reliance on Lord Frederick's truth;  
 Summon'd to town, he thought the visit one  
 Where something fair and friendly would be done;  
 Although he judged not, as before his fall,  
 When all was love and promise at the hall.  
 Arrived in town, he early sought to know  
 The fate such dubious friendship would bestow;  
 At a tall building, trembling, he appear'd, 520  
 And his low rap was indistinctly heard;  
 A well-known servant came—"A while," said he,  
 "Be pleased to wait; my lord has company."  
 Alone our hero sate; the news in hand,  
 Which, though he read, he could not understand.  
 Cold was the day; in days so cold as these  
 There needs a fire, where minds and bodies freeze;  
 The vast and echoing room, the polish'd grate,  
 The crimson chairs, the sideboard with its plate;  
 The splendid sofa, which, though made for rest, 530  
 He then had thought it freedom to have press'd;  
 The shining tables, curiously inlaid,  
 Were all in comfortless proud style display'd;  
 And to the troubled feelings terror gave,  
 That made the once-dear friend the sick'ning slave.  
 "Was he forgotten?" Thrice upon his ear  
 Struck the loud clock, yet no relief was near;  
 Each rattling carriage, and each thundering stroke  
 On the loud door, the dream of fancy broke;  
 Oft as a servant chanced the way to come, 540  
 "Brings he a message?" no! he pass'd the room.  
 At length 'tis certain; "Sir you will attend  
 At twelve on Thursday!" Thus the day had end.  
 Vex'd by these tedious hours of needless pain,  
 John left the noble mansion with disdain;  
 For there was something in that still, cold place,  
 That seem'd to threaten and portend disgrace.  
 Punctual again the modest rap declared  
 The youth attended; then was all prepared: 550  
 For the same servant, by his lord's command,  
 A paper offer'd to his trembling hand.  
 "No more!" he cried; "disdains he to afford  
 One kind expression, one consoling word?"  
 With troubled spirit he began to read  
 That "In the church my lord could not succeed;"  
 Who had "to peers of either kind applied,  
 And was with dignity and grace denied;  
 While his own livings were by men possess'd,  
 Not likely in their chancels yet to rest;  
 And therefore, all things weigh'd (as he, my lord, 560  
 Had done maturely, and he pledged his word),  
 Wisdom it seem'd for John to turn his view  
 To busier scenes, and bid the church adieu!"  
 Here grieved the youth; he felt his father's pride  
 Must with his own be shock'd and mortified;  
 But when he found his future comforts placed  
 Where he, alas! conceived himself disgraced—  
 In some appointment on the London quays,  
 He bade farewell to honour and to ease;  
 His spirit fell; and, from that hour assured 570  
 How vain his dreams, he suffer'd and was cured.  
 Our poet hurried on, with wish to fly  
 From all mankind, to be conceal'd, and die.  
 Alas! what hopes, what high romantic views }

Did that one visit to the soul infuse, }  
 Which cherish'd with such love, 'twas worse than death to lose! }  
 Still he would strive, though painful was the strife,  
 To walk in this appointed road of life;  
 On these low duties duteous he would wait, 580  
 And patient bear the anguish of his fate.  
 Thanks to the patron, but of coldest kind,  
 Express'd the sadness of the poet's mind;  
 Whose heavy hours were pass'd with busy men,  
 In the dull practice of th' official pen;  
 Who to superiors must in time impart  
 (The custom this) his progress in their art.  
 But so had grief on his perception wrought,  
 That all unheeded were the duties taught;  
 No answers gave he when his trial came, 590  
 Silent he stood, but suffering without shame;  
 And they observed that words severe or kind  
 Made no impression on his wounded mind;  
 For all perceived from whence his failure rose—  
 Some grief whose cause he deign'd not to disclose.  
 A soul averse from scenes and works so new;  
 Fear, ever shrinking from the vulgar crew;  
 Distaste for each mechanic law and rule,  
 Thoughts of past honour and a patron cool;  
 A grieving parent, and a feeling mind, 600  
 Timid and ardent, tender and refined:  
 These all with mighty force the youth assail'd,  
 Till his soul fainted, and his reason fail'd.  
 When this was known, and some debate arose  
 How they who saw it should the fact disclose,  
 He found their purpose, and in terror fled  
 From unseen kindness, with mistaken dread.  
 Meantime the parent was distress'd to find  
 His son no longer for a priest design'd;  
 But still he gain'd some comfort by the news 610  
 Of John's promotion, though with humbler views;  
 For he conceived that in no distant time  
 The boy would learn to scramble and to climb.  
 He little thought a son, his hope and pride,  
 His favour'd boy, was now a home denied:  
 Yes! while the parent was intent to trace  
 How men in office climb from place to place,  
 By day, by night, o'er moor and heath and hill, }  
 Roved the sad youth, with ever-changing will, }  
 Of every aid bereft, exposed to every ill. } 620  
 Thus as he sate, absorb'd in all the care  
 And all the hope that anxious fathers share,  
 A friend abruptly to his presence brought,  
 With trembling hand, the subject of his thought,  
 Whom he had found afflicted and subdued  
 By hunger, sorrow, cold, and solitude.  
 Silent he enter'd the forgotten room  
 As ghostly forms may be conceived to come;  
 With sorrow-shrunken face and hair upright,  
 He look'd dismay, neglect, despair, affright;  
 But, dead to comfort, and on misery thrown, 630  
 His parent's loss he felt not, nor his own.  
 The good man, struck with horror, cried aloud,  
 And drew around him an astonish'd crowd;  
 The sons and servants to the father ran,  
 To share the feelings of the grieved old man.  
 "Our brother, speak!" they all exclaim'd; "explain  
 Thy grief, thy suffering;"—but they ask'd in vain:  
 The friend told all he knew; and all was known,  
 Save the sad causes whence the ills had grown.  
 But, if obscure the cause, they all agreed 640  
 From rest and kindness must the cure proceed:  
 And he was cured; for quiet, love, and care,  
 Strove with the gloom, and broke on the despair.  
 Yet slow their progress; and, as vapours move  
 Dense and reluctant from the wintry grove;  
 All is confusion till the morning light  
 Gives the dim scene obscurely to the sight;  
 More and yet more defined the trunks appear,  
 Till the wild prospect stands distinct and clear—

So the dark mind of our young poet grew  
 Clear and sedate; the dreadful mist withdrew; 650  
 And he resembled that bleak wintry scene,  
 Sad, though unclouded; dismal, though serene.  
 At times he utter'd, "What a dream was mine!  
 And what a prospect! glorious and divine!  
 Oh! in that room, and on that night, to see  
 These looks, that sweetness beaming all on me;  
 That syren-flattery—and to send me then,  
 Hope-raised and soften'd, to those heartless men;  
 That dark-brow'd stern director, pleased to show 660  
 Knowledge of subjects I disdain'd to know;  
 Cold and controlling—but 'tis gone, 'tis past;  
 I had my trial, and have peace at last."  
 Now grew the youth resign'd; he bade adieu  
 To all that hope, to all that fancy drew;  
 His frame was languid, and the hectic heat  
 Flush'd on his pallid face, and countless beat  
 The quick'ning pulse, and faint the limbs that bore  
 The slender form that soon would breathe no more.  
 Then hope of holy kind the soul sustain'd, 670  
 And not a lingering thought of earth remain'd;  
 Now Heaven had all, and he could smile at love,  
 And the wild sallies of his youth reprove;  
 Then could he dwell upon the tempting days,  
 The proud aspiring thought, the partial praise;  
 Victorious now, his worldly views were closed,  
 And on the bed of death the youth reposed.  
 The father grieved—but, as the poet's heart  
 Was all unfitted for his earthly part;  
 As, he conceived, some other haughty fair 680  
 Would, had he lived, have led him to despair;  
 As, with this fear, the silent grave shut out  
 All feverish hope, and all tormenting doubt;  
 While the strong faith the pious youth possess'd,  
 His hope enlivening, gave his sorrows rest:  
 Soothed by these thoughts, he felt a mournful joy  
 For his aspiring and devoted boy.  
 Meantime the news through various channels spread:  
 The youth, once favour'd with such praise, was dead.  
 "Emma," the lady cried, "my words attend, 690  
 Your syren-smiles have kill'd your humble friend;  
 The hope you raised can now delude no more,  
 Nor charms, that once inspired, can now restore."  
 Faint was the flush of anger and of shame,  
 That o'er the cheek of conscious beauty came.  
 "You censure not," said she, "the sun's bright rays,  
 When fools imprudent dare the dangerous gaze;  
 And, should a stripling look till he were blind,  
 You would not justly call the light unkind.—  
 But is he dead? and am I to suppose 700  
 The power of poison in such looks as those?"  
 She spoke, and, pointing to the mirror, cast  
 A pleased gay glance, and curtsied as she pass'd.  
 My lord, to whom the poet's fate was told,  
 Was much affected, for a man so cold.  
 "Dead!" said his lordship, "run distracted, mad!  
 Upon my soul I'm sorry for the lad;  
 And now, no doubt, th' obliging world will say  
 That my harsh usage help'd him on his way.  
 What! I suppose, I should have nursed his muse, 710  
 And with champagne have brighten'd up his views;  
 Then had he made me famed my whole life long,  
 And stunn'd my ears with gratitude and song.  
 Still, should the father hear that I regret  
 Our joint misfortune—Yes! I'll not forget."—  
 Thus they.—The father to his grave convey'd  
 The son he loved, and his last duties paid.  
 "There lies my boy," he cried, "of care bereft,  
 And, Heav'n be praised, I've not a genius left:  
 No one among ye, sons! is doom'd to live 720  
 On high-raised hopes of what the great may give;  
 None, with exalted views and fortunes mean,  
 To die in anguish, or to live in spleen.  
 Your pious brother soon escaped the strife

Of such contention, but it cost his life;  
You then, my sons, upon yourselves depend,  
And in your own exertions find the friend."

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## TALE VI.

### THE FRANK COURTSHIP.

Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, "Father, as it please you;" but [yet] for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, "Father, as it pleases me."  
*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act II. Scene 1.

He cannot flatter, he!  
An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth.  
*King Lear*, Act II. Scene 2.

God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, [and you lisp, and] nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.  
*Hamlet*, Act III. Scene 1.

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?  
[Stand I condemn'd] for pride and scorn so much?  
*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III. Scene 1.

## TALE VI.

### THE FRANK COURTSHIP.

Grave Jonas Kindred, Sybil Kindred's sire,  
Was six feet high, and look'd six inches higher;  
Erect, morose, determined, solemn, slow,  
Who knew the man, could never cease to know;  
His faithful spouse, when Jonas was not by,  
Had a firm presence and a steady eye;  
But with her husband dropp'd her look and tone,  
And Jonas ruled unquestion'd and alone.

He read, and oft would quote the sacred words,  
How pious husbands of their wives were lords; 10  
Sarah called Abraham lord! and who could be,  
So Jonas thought, a greater man than he?  
Himself he view'd with undisguised respect,  
And never pardon'd freedom or neglect.

They had one daughter, and this favourite child  
Had oft the father of his spleen beguiled;  
Soothed by attention from her early years,  
She gain'd all wishes by her smiles or tears:  
But Sybil then was in that playful time, 20  
When contradiction is not held a crime;  
When parents yield their children idle praise  
For faults corrected in their after days.

Peace in the sober house of Jonas dwelt,  
Where each his duty and his station felt:  
Yet not that peace some favour'd mortals find,  
In equal views and harmony of mind;  
Not the soft peace that blesses those who love,  
Where all with one consent in union move;  
But it was that which one superior will 30  
Commands, by making all inferiors still;  
Who bids all murmurs, all objections cease,  
And with imperious voice announces—Peace!

They were, to wit, a remnant of that crew,  
Who, as their foes maintain, their sovereign slew:  
An independent race, precise, correct,  
Who ever married in the kindred sect.  
No son or daughter of their order wed  
A friend to England's king who lost his head;  
Cromwell was still their saint, and, when they met,  
They mourn'd that saints<sup>[4]</sup> were not our rulers yet. 40

Fix'd were their habits; they arose betimes,  
Then pray'd their hour, and sang their party-rhymes:  
Their meals were plenteous, regular, and plain;  
The trade of Jonas brought him constant gain;  
Vender of hops and malt, of coals and corn—  
And, like his father, he was merchant born.  
Neat was their house; each table, chair, and stool,  
Stood in its place, or moving moved by rule;

No lively print or picture graced the room;  
 A plain brown paper lent its decent gloom;  
 But here the eye, in glancing round, survey'd  
 A small recess that seem'd for china made;  
 Such pleasing pictures seem'd this pencill'd ware,  
 That few would search for nobler objects there—  
 Yet, turn'd by chosen friends, and there appear'd  
 His stern, strong features, whom they all revered;  
 For there in lofty air was seen to stand  
 The bold protector of the conquer'd land;  
 Drawn in that look with which he wept and swore,  
 Turn'd out the members, and made fast the door,  
 Ridding the house of every knave and drone;  
 Forced, though it grieved his soul, to rule alone.  
 The stern, still smile each friend, approving, gave;  
 Then turn'd the view, and all again were grave.

There stood a clock, though small the owner's need—  
 For habit told when all things should proceed.  
 Few their amusements, but, when friends appear'd,  
 They with the world's distress their spirits cheer'd;  
 The nation's guilt, that would not long endure  
 The reign of men so modest and so pure.  
 Their town was large, and seldom pass'd a day  
 But some had fail'd, and others gone astray;  
 Clerks had absconded, wives eloped, girls flown  
 To Gretna-Green, or sons rebellious grown;  
 Quarrels and fires arose;—and it was plain  
 The times were bad; the saints had ceased to reign!  
 A few yet lived to languish and to mourn  
 For good old manners, never to return.

Jonas had sisters, and of these was one  
 Who lost a husband and an only son:  
 Twelve months her sables she in sorrow wore,  
 And mourn'd so long that she could mourn no more.  
 Distant from Jonas, and from all her race,  
 She now resided in a lively place;  
 There, by the sect unseen, at whist she play'd,  
 Nor was of churchmen or their church afraid.  
 If much of this the graver brother heard,  
 He something censured, but he little fear'd;  
 He knew her rich and frugal; for the rest,  
 He felt no care, or, if he felt, suppress'd;  
 Nor, for companion when she ask'd her niece,  
 Had he suspicions that disturbed his peace;  
 Frugal and rich, these virtues as a charm  
 Preserved the thoughtful man from all alarm;  
 An infant yet, she soon would home return,  
 Nor stay the manners of the world to learn;  
 Meantime his boys would all his care engross,  
 And be his comforts if he felt the loss.

The sprightly Sybil, pleased and unconfined,  
 Felt the pure pleasure of the op'ning mind:  
 All here was gay and cheerful—all at home  
 Unvaried quiet and unruffled gloom.  
 There were no changes, and amusements few;  
 Here, all was varied, wonderful, and new;  
 There were plain meals, plain dresses, and grave looks—  
 Here, gay companions and amusing books;  
 And the young beauty soon began to taste  
 The light vocations of the scene she graced.

A man of business feels it as a crime  
 On calls domestic to consume his time;  
 Yet this grave man had not so cold a heart,  
 But with his daughter he was grieved to part;  
 And he demanded that in every year  
 The aunt and niece should at his house appear.

"Yes! we must go, my child, and by our dress  
 A grave conformity of mind express;  
 Must sing at meeting, and from cards refrain,  
 The more t' enjoy when we return again."

Thus spake the aunt, and the discerning child  
 Was pleased to learn how fathers are beguiled.  
 Her artful part the young dissembler took,  
 And from the matron caught th' approving look.  
 When thrice the friends had met, excuse was sent



For more delay, and Jonas was content;  
Till a tall maiden by her sire was seen,  
In all the bloom and beauty of sixteen;  
He gazed admiring;—she, with visage prim,  
Glanced an arch look of gravity on him;  
For she was gay at heart, but wore disguise,  
And stood a vestal in her father's eyes— 130  
Pure, pensive, simple, sad; the damsel's heart,  
When Jonas praised, reproved her for the part;  
For Sybil, fond of pleasure, gay and light,  
Had still a secret bias to the right;  
Vain as she was—and flattery made her vain—  
Her simulation gave her bosom pain.

Again return'd, the matron and the niece  
Found the late quiet gave their joy increase;  
The aunt, infirm, no more her visits paid,  
But still with her sojourn'd the favourite maid. 140  
Letters were sent when franks could be procured;  
And, when they could not, silence was endured.  
All were in health, and, if they older grew,  
It seem'd a fact that none among them knew;  
The aunt and niece still led a pleasant life,  
And quiet days had Jonas and his wife.

Near him a widow dwelt of worthy fame:  
Like his her manners, and her creed the same.  
The wealth her husband left her care retain'd  
For one tall youth, and widow she remained; 150  
His love respectful all her care repaid,  
Her wishes watch'd, and her commands obey'd.

Sober he was and grave from early youth,  
Mindful of forms, but more intent on truth;  
In a light drab he uniformly dress'd,  
And look serene th' unruffled mind express'd;  
A hat with ample verge his brows o'erspread,  
And his brown locks curl'd graceful on his head;  
Yet might observers in his speaking eye }  
Some observation, some acuteness spy; } 160  
The friendly thought it keen, the treacherous deem'd it sly. }  
Yet not a crime could foe or friend detect;  
His actions all were, like his speech, correct;  
And they who jested on a mind so sound,  
Upon his virtues must their laughter found:  
'Chaste, sober, solemn,' and 'devout' they named  
Him who was thus, and not of *this* ashamed.

Such were the virtues Jonas found in one  
In whom he warmly wish'd to find a son. 170  
Three years had pass'd since he had Sybil seen;  
But she was doubtless what she once had been—  
Lovely and mild, obedient and discreet:  
The pair must love whenever they should meet;  
Then, ere the widow or her son should choose  
Some happier maid, he would explain his views.  
Now she, like him, was politic and shrewd,  
With strong desire of lawful gain embued;  
To all he said, she bow'd with much respect,  
Pleased to comply, yet seeming to reject;  
Cool, and yet eager, each admired the strength 180  
Of the opponent, and agreed at length.  
As a drawn battle shows to each a force,  
Powerful as his, he honours it of course:  
So in these neighbours, each the power discern'd,  
And gave the praise that was to each return'd.

Jonas now ask'd his daughter; and the aunt,  
Though loth to lose her, was obliged to grant.—  
But would not Sybil to the matron cling,  
And fear to leave the shelter of her wing?  
No! in the young there lives a love of change, 190  
And to the easy they prefer the strange!  
Then too the joys she once pursued with zeal,  
From whist and visits sprung, she ceased to feel;  
When with the matrons Sybil first sat down,  
To cut for partners and to stake her crown,  
This to the youthful maid preferment seem'd,  
Who thought [that] woman she was then esteem'd;  
But in few years, when she perceived, indeed,

The real woman to the girl succeed,  
 No longer tricks and honours fill'd her mind, 200  
 But other feelings, not so well defined.  
 She then reluctant grew, and thought it hard,  
 To sit and ponder o'er an ugly card;  
 Rather the nut-tree shade the nymph preferr'd,  
 Pleased with the pensive gloom and evening bird;  
 Thither, from company retired, she took  
 The silent walk, or read the fav'rite book.  
 The father's letter, sudden, short, and kind,  
 Awaked her wonder, and disturb'd her mind;  
 She found new dreams upon her fancy seize, 210  
 Wild roving thoughts and endless reveries.  
 The parting came;—and, when the aunt perceived  
 The tears of Sybil, and how much she grieved,  
 To love for her that tender grief she laid,  
 That various, soft, contending passions made.  
 When Sybil rested in her father's arms,  
 His pride exulted in a daughter's charms;  
 A maid accomplish'd he was pleased to find,  
 Nor seem'd the form more lovely than the mind. 220  
 But when the fit of pride and fondness fled,  
 He saw his judgment by his hopes misled;  
 High were the lady's spirits, far more free  
 Her mode of speaking than a maid's should be;  
 Too much, as Jonas thought, she seem'd to know,  
 And all her knowledge was disposed to show:  
 "Too gay her dress, like theirs who idly dote  
 On a young coxcomb, or a coxcomb's coat;  
 In foolish spirits when our friends appear,  
 And vainly grave when not a man is near."  
 Thus Jonas, adding to his sorrow blame, 230  
 And terms disdainful to his sister's name:—  
 "The sinful wretch has by her arts defiled  
 The ductile spirit of my darling child."  
 "The maid is virtuous," said the dame.—Quoth he,  
 "Let her give proof, by acting virtuously:  
 Is it in gaping when the elders pray?  
 In reading nonsense half a summer's day?  
 In those mock forms that she delights to trace,  
 Or her loud laughs in Hezekiah's face?  
 She—O Susannah!—to the world belongs; } 240  
 She loves the follies of its idle throngs, }  
 And reads soft tales of love, and sings love's soft'ning songs. }  
 But, as our friend is yet delay'd in town,  
 We must prepare her till the youth comes down;  
 You shall advise the maiden; I will threat;  
 Her fears and hopes may yield us comfort yet."  
 Now the grave father took the lass aside,  
 Demanding sternly, "Wilt thou be a bride?"  
 She answer'd, calling up an air sedate,  
 "I have not vow'd against the holy state." 250  
 "No folly, Sybil," said the parent; "know  
 What to their parents virtuous maidens owe:  
 A worthy, wealthy youth, whom I approve,  
 Must thou prepare to honour and to love.  
 Formal to thee his air and dress may seem,  
 But the good youth is worthy of esteem;  
 Shouldst thou with rudeness treat him, of disdain  
 Should he with justice or of slight complain,  
 Or of one taunting speech give certain proof:  
 Girl! I reject thee from my sober roof." 260  
 "My aunt," said Sybil, "will with pride protect  
 One whom a father can for this reject;  
 Nor shall a formal, rigid, soul-less boy  
 My manners alter, or my views destroy!"  
 Jonas [then] lifted up his hands on high, }  
 And, utt'ring something 'twixt a groan and sigh, }  
 Left the determined maid her doubtful mother by. }  
 "Hear me," she said; "incline thy heart, my child,  
 And fix thy fancy on a man so mild;  
 Thy father, Sybil, never could be moved 270  
 By one who loved him, or by one he loved.  
 Union like ours is but a bargain made  
 By slave and tyrant—he will be obey'd,

Then calls the quiet comfort;—but thy youth  
Is mild by nature, and as frank as truth.”

“But will he love?” said Sybil; “I am told  
That these mild creatures are by nature cold.”

“Alas!” the matron answer’d, “much I dread  
That dangerous love by which the young are led!  
That love is earthy; you the creature prize, 280  
And trust your feelings and believe your eyes:  
Can eyes and feelings inward worth descry?  
No! my fair daughter, on our choice rely!  
Your love, like that display’d upon the stage,  
Indulged is folly, and opposed is rage;—  
More prudent love our sober couples show,  
All that to mortal beings mortals owe.  
All flesh is grass—before you give a heart,  
Remember, Sybil, that in death you part;  
And, should your husband die before your love, 290  
What needless anguish must a widow prove!  
No! my fair child, let all such visions cease;  
Yield but esteem, and only try for peace.”

“I must be loved,” said Sybil; “I must see  
The man in terrors who aspires to me;  
At my forbidding frown his heart must ache,  
His tongue must falter, and his frame must shake;  
And, if I grant him at my feet to kneel,  
What trembling, fearful pleasure must he feel;  
Nay, such the raptures that my smiles inspire, 300  
That reason’s self must for a time retire.”

“Alas! for good Josiah,” said the dame,  
“These wicked thoughts would fill his soul with shame.  
He kneel and tremble at a thing of dust!  
He cannot, child.”—The child replied, “He must.”

They ceased; the matron left her with a frown;  
So Jonas met her when the youth came down.  
“Behold,” said he, “thy future spouse attends;  
Receive him, daughter, as the best of friends;  
Observe, respect him—humble be each word, 310  
That welcomes home thy husband and thy lord.”

Forewarn’d, thought Sybil, with a bitter smile,  
I shall prepare my manner and my style.  
Ere yet Josiah enter’d on his task,  
The father met him:—“Deign to wear a mask  
A few dull days, Josiah—but a few—  
It is our duty, and the sex’s due;  
I wore it once, and every grateful wife  
Repay it with obedience through her life:  
Have no regard to Sybil’s dress, have none } 320  
To her pert language, to her flippant tone: }  
Henceforward thou shalt rule unquestion’d and alone; }  
And she thy pleasure in thy looks shall seek—  
How she shall dress, and whether she may speak.”

A sober smile return’d the youth, and said,  
“Can I cause fear, who am myself afraid?”

Sybil, meantime, sat thoughtful in her room,  
And often wonder’d—“Will the creature come?  
Nothing shall tempt, shall force me to bestow  
My hand upon him—yet I wish to know.” 330

The door unclosed, and she beheld her sire  
Lead in the youth, then hasten to retire.  
“Daughter, my friend—my daughter, friend,” he cried,  
And gave a meaning look, and stepp’d aside;  
That look contain’d a mingled threat and prayer,  
“Do take him, child—offend him, if you dare.”

The couple gazed—were silent; and the maid  
Look’d in his face, to make the man afraid;  
The man, unmoved, upon the maiden cast  
A steady view—so salutation pass’d; 340  
But in this instant Sybil’s eye had seen  
The tall fair person, and the still staid mien;  
The glow that temp’rance o’er the cheek had spread,  
Where the soft down half veil’d the purest red;  
And the serene deportment that proclaim’d  
A heart unspotted, and a life unblamed.  
But then with these she saw attire too plain,  
The pale brown coat, though worn without a stain;

The formal air, and something of the pride  
 That indicates the wealth it seems to hide; 350  
 And looks that were not, she conceived, exempt  
 From a proud pity, or a sly contempt.  
 Josiah's eyes had their employment too,  
 Engaged and soften'd by so bright a view:  
 A fair and meaning face, an eye of fire,  
 That check'd the bold, and made the free retire.  
 But then with these he mark'd the studied dress  
 And lofty air, that scorn or pride express;  
 With that insidious look, that seem'd to hide  
 In an affected smile the scorn and pride; 360  
 And if his mind the virgin's meaning caught, }  
 He saw a foe with treacherous purpose fraught— }  
 Captive the heart to take, and to reject it caught. }  
 Silent they sate—thought Sybil, that he seeks  
 Something, no doubt; I wonder if he speaks.  
 Scarcely she wonder'd, when these accents fell  
 Slow in her ear—"Fair maiden, art thou well?"—  
 "Art thou physician?" she replied; "my hand,  
 My pulse, at least, shall be at thy command."  
 She said—and saw, surprised, Josiah kneel, 370  
 And gave his lips the offer'd pulse to feel;  
 The rosy colour rising in her cheek  
 Seem'd that surprise, unmix'd with wrath, to speak;  
 Then sternness she assumed, and—"Doctor, tell,  
 Thy words cannot alarm me—am I well?"  
 "Thou art," said he; "and yet thy dress so light,  
 I do conceive, some danger must excite."  
 "In whom?" said Sybil, with a look demure;  
 "In more," said he, "than I expect to cure.  
 I, in thy light luxuriant robe, behold }  
 Want and excess, abounding and yet cold: }  
 Here needed, there display'd, in many a wanton fold; }  
 Both health and beauty, learned authors show,  
 From a just medium in our clothing flow."  
 "Proceed, good doctor; if so great my need,  
 What is thy fee? Good doctor! pray proceed."  
 "Large is my fee, fair lady, but I take  
 None till some progress in my cure I make.  
 Thou hast disease, fair maiden; thou art vain;  
 Within that face sit insult and disdain; 390  
 Thou art enamour'd of thyself; my art  
 Can see the naughty malice of thy heart;  
 With a strong pleasure would thy bosom move,  
 Were I to own thy power, and ask thy love;  
 And such thy beauty, damsel, that I might, }  
 But for thy pride, feel danger in thy sight, }  
 And lose my present peace in dreams of vain delight." }  
 "And can thy patients," said the nymph, "endure  
 Physic like this? and will it work a cure?"  
 "Such is my hope, fair damsel; thou, I find, 400  
 Hast the true tokens of a noble mind;  
 But the world wins thee, Sybil, and thy joys  
 Are placed in trifles, fashions, follies, toys;  
 Thou hast sought pleasure in the world around,  
 That in thine own pure bosom should be found.  
 Did all that world admire thee, praise and love,  
 Could it the least of nature's pains remove?  
 Could it for errors, follies, sins atone,  
 Or give thee comfort, thoughtful and alone?  
 It has, believe me, maid, no power to charm 410  
 Thy soul from sorrow, or thy flesh from harm:  
 Turn then, fair creature, from a world of sin,  
 And seek the jewel happiness within."  
 "Speak'st thou at meeting?" said the nymph; "thy speech  
 Is that of mortal very prone to teach;  
 But wouldst thou, doctor, from the patient learn  
 Thine own disease?—The cure is thy concern."  
 "Yea, with good will."—"Then know, 'tis thy complaint,  
 That, for a sinner, thou'rt too much a saint;  
 Hast too much show of the sedate and pure, 420  
 And without cause art formal and demure:  
 This makes a man unsocial, unpolite;  
 Odious when wrong, and insolent if right.

Thou may'st be good, but why should goodness be  
 Wrapt in a garb of such formality?  
 Thy person well might please a damsel's eye,  
 In decent habit with a scarlet dye;  
 But, jest apart—what virtue canst thou trace  
 In that broad brim that hides thy sober face? 430  
 Does that long-skirted drab, that over-nice  
 And formal clothing, prove a scorn of vice?  
 Then for thine accent—what in sound can be  
 So void of grace as dull monotony?  
 Love has a thousand varied notes to move  
 The human heart—thou may'st not speak of love  
 Till thou hast cast thy formal ways aside,  
 And those becoming youth and nature tried;  
 Not till exterior freedom, spirit, ease,  
 Prove it thy study and delight to please; 440  
 Not till these follies meet thy just disdain,  
 While yet thy virtues and thy worth remain."  
 "This is severe!—Oh! maiden, wilt not thou  
 Something for habits, manners, modes, allow?"—  
 "Yes! but allowing much, I much require,  
 In my behalf, for manners, modes, attire!"  
 "True, lovely Sybil; and, this point agreed,  
 Let me to those of greater weight proceed:  
 Thy father"—"Nay," she quickly interposed,  
 "Good doctor, here our conference is closed!" 450  
 Then left the youth, who, lost in his retreat,  
 Pass'd the good matron on her garden-seat;  
 His looks were troubled, and his air, once mild  
 And calm, was hurried:—"My audacious child!"  
 Exclaim'd the dame, "I read what she has done  
 In thy displeasure—Ah! the thoughtless one;  
 But yet, Josiah, to my stern good man  
 Speak of the maid as mildly as you can.  
 Can you not seem to woo a little while  
 The daughter's will, the father to beguile,  
 So that his wrath in time may wear away? 460  
 Will you preserve our peace, Josiah? say!"  
 "Yes! my good neighbour," said the gentle youth,  
 "Rely securely on my care and truth;  
 And, should thy comfort with my efforts cease,  
 And only then—perpetual is thy peace."  
 The dame had doubts: she well his virtues knew,  
 His deeds were friendly, and his words were true;  
 "But to address this vixen is a task  
 He is ashamed to take, and I to ask."  
 Soon as the father from Josiah learn'd 470  
 What pass'd with Sybil, he the truth discern'd.  
 "He loves," the man exclaim'd, "he loves, 'tis plain,  
 The thoughtless girl, and shall he love in vain?  
 She may be stubborn, but she shall be tried,  
 Born as she is of wilfulness and pride."  
 With anger fraught, but willing to persuade,  
 The wrathful father met the smiling maid.  
 "Sybil," said he, "I long, and yet I dread  
 To know thy conduct—hath Josiah fled,  
 And, grieved and fretted by thy scornful air, 480  
 For his lost peace betaken him to prayer?  
 Couldst thou his pure and modest mind distress, }  
 By vile remarks upon his speech, address, }  
 Attire, and voice?"—"All this I must confess."— }  
 "Unhappy child! what labour will it cost  
 To win him back!"—"I do not think him lost."  
 "Courts he then, trifler, insult and disdain?"—  
 "No: but from these he courts me to refrain."—  
 "Then hear me, Sybil: should Josiah leave  
 Thy father's house?"—"My father's child would grieve."—  
 "That is of grace; and if he come again 491  
 To speak of love?"—"I might from grief refrain."—  
 "Then wilt thou, daughter, our design embrace?"—  
 "Can I resist it, if it be of grace?"—  
 "Dear child! in three plain words thy mind express—  
 Wilt thou have this good youth?"—"Dear father! yes."

## TALE VII.

### *THE WIDOW'S TALE.*

Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,  
[Could] ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;  
But, either it was different in blood, [...]  
Or else misgrafted in respect of years, [...]  
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends, [...]  
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,  
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it.  
*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act I. Scene 1.*

Oh! thou didst then ne'er love so heartily,  
If thou rememberest not the slightest folly  
That ever love did make thee run into ...  
*As You Like It, Act II. Scene 4.*

Cry the man mercy; love him; take his offer.  
*As You Like It, Act III. Scene 5.*

## TALE VII.

### *THE WIDOW'S TALE.*

To farmer Moss, in Langar Vale, came down  
His only daughter, from her school in town;  
A tender, timid maid! who knew not how  
To pass a pig-sty, or to face a cow:  
Smiling she came, with petty talents graced,  
A fair complexion, and a slender waist.  
Used to spare meals, disposed in manner pure,  
Her father's kitchen she could ill endure;  
Where by the steaming beef he hungry sat,  
And laid at once a pound upon his plate; 10  
Hot from the field, her eager brother seized  
An equal part, and hunger's rage appeased;  
The air, surcharged with moisture, flagg'd around,  
And the offended damsel sigh'd and frown'd;  
The swelling fat in lumps conglomerate laid,  
And fancy's sickness seized the loathing maid.  
But, when the men beside their station took,  
The maidens with them, and with these the cook;  
When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,  
Fill'd with huge balls of farinaceous food; 20  
With bacon, mass saline, where never lean  
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen;  
When from a single horn the party drew  
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;  
When the coarse cloth she saw, with many a stain,  
Soil'd by rude hinds who cut and came again—  
She could not breathe; but, with a heavy sigh,  
Rein'd the fair neck, and shut th' offended eye;  
She minced the sanguine flesh in frustums fine,  
And wonder'd much to see the creatures dine: 30  
When she resolved her father's heart to move,  
If hearts of farmers were alive to love.  
She now entreated by herself to sit  
In the small parlour, if papa thought fit,  
And there to dine, to read, to work alone.—  
"No!" said the farmer, in an angry tone;  
"These are your school-taught airs; your mother's pride  
Would send you there; but I am now your guide.—  
Arise betimes, our early meal prepare,  
And, this despatch'd, let business be your care; 40  
Look to the lasses, let there not be one  
Who lacks attention, till her tasks be done;  
In every household work your portion take,  
And what you make not, see that others make.  
At leisure times attend the wheel, and see  
The whit'ning web be sprinkled on the [lea];  
When thus employ'd, should our young neighbour view  
An useful lass, you may have more to do."

Dreadful were these commands; but worse than these  
 The parting hint—a farmer could not please: 50  
 'Tis true she had without abhorrence seen  
 Young Harry Carr, when he was smart and clean;  
 But to be married—be a farmer's wife—  
 A slave! a drudge!—she could not, for her life.  
 With swimming eyes the fretful nymph withdrew,  
 And, deeply sighing, to her chamber flew;  
 There on her knees, to Heav'n she grieving pray'd  
 For change of prospect to a tortured maid.  
 Harry, a youth whose late-departed sire  
 Had left him all industrious men require, 60  
 Saw the pale beauty—and her shape and air  
 Engaged him much, and yet he must forbear:  
 "For my small farm what can the damsel do?"  
 He said—then stopp'd to take another view:  
 "Pity so sweet a lass will nothing learn  
 Of household cares—for what can beauty earn  
 By those small arts which they at school attain,  
 That keep them useless, and yet make them vain?"  
 This luckless damsel look'd the village round,  
 To find a friend, and one was quickly found; 70  
 A pensive widow—whose mild air and dress }  
 Pleased the sad nymph, who wish'd her soul's distress }  
 To one so seeming kind, confiding, to confess.— }  
 "What lady that?" the anxious lass inquired,  
 Who then beheld the one she most admired.  
 "Here," said the brother, "are no ladies seen—  
 That is a widow dwelling on the green;  
 A dainty dame, who can but barely live  
 On her poor pittance, yet contrives to give;  
 She happier days has known, but seems at ease, 80  
 And you may call her lady, if you please.  
 But if you wish, good sister, to improve,  
 You shall see twenty better worth your love."  
 These Nancy met; but, spite of all they taught,  
 This useless widow was the one she sought.  
 The father growl'd; but said he knew no harm  
 In such connexion that could give alarm;  
 "And if we thwart the trifler in her course,  
 'Tis odds against us she will take a worse."  
 Then met the friends; the widow heard the sigh 90  
 That ask'd at once compassion and reply:—  
 "Would you, my child, converse with one so poor,  
 Yours were the kindness—yonder is my door;  
 And, save the time that we in public pray,  
 From that poor cottage I but rarely stray."  
 There went the nymph, and made her strong complaints,  
 Painting her wo as injured feeling paints.  
 "Oh, dearest friend! do think how one must feel,  
 Shock'd all day long, and sicken'd every meal;  
 Could you behold our kitchen (and to you 100  
 A scene so shocking must indeed be new),  
 A mind like yours, with true refinement graced,  
 Would let no vulgar scenes pollute your taste;  
 And yet, in truth, from such a polish'd mind  
 All base ideas must resistance find,  
 And sordid pictures from the fancy pass,  
 As the breath startles from the polish'd glass.  
 "Here you enjoy a sweet romantic scene,  
 Without so pleasant, and within so clean;  
 These twining jess'mines, what delicious gloom 110  
 And soothing fragrance yield they to the room!  
 What lovely garden! there you oft retire,  
 And tales of wo and tenderness admire:  
 In that neat case, your books, in order placed,  
 Soothe the full soul, and charm the cultured taste;  
 And thus, while all about you wears a charm,  
 How must you scorn the farmer and the farm!"  
 The widow smiled, and "Know you not," said she, }  
 "How much these farmers scorn or pity me; }  
 Who see what you admire, and laugh at all they see? } 120  
 True, their opinion alters not my fate,  
 By falsely judging of an humble state:  
 This garden, you with such delight behold,

Tempts not a feeble dame who dreads the cold;  
 These plants, which please so well your livelier sense,  
 To mine but little of their sweets dispense;  
 Books soon are painful to my failing sight,  
 And oftener read from duty than delight;  
 (Yet let me own, that I can sometimes find  
 Both joy and duty in the act combined;) 130  
 But view me rightly, you will see no more  
 Than a poor female, willing to be poor;  
 Happy indeed, but not in books nor flowers,  
 Not in fair dreams, indulged in earlier hours,  
 Of never-tasted joys—such visions shun,  
 My youthful friend, nor scorn the farmer's son."  
 "Nay," said the damsel, nothing pleased to see  
 A friend's advice could like a father's be;  
 "Bless'd in your cottage, you must surely smile  
 At those who live in our detested style. 140  
 To my Lucinda's sympathizing heart  
 Could I my prospects and my griefs impart,  
 She would console me; but I dare not show  
 Ills that would wound her tender soul to know:  
 And I confess, it shocks my pride to tell  
 The secrets of the prison where I dwell;  
 For that dear maiden would be shock'd to feel  
 The secrets I should shudder to reveal;  
 When told her friend was by a parent ask'd,  
 'Fed you the swine?'—Good heav'n! how I am task'd! 150  
 What! can you smile? Ah! smile not at the grief  
 That woos your pity and demands relief."  
 "Trifles, my love; you take a false alarm;  
 Think, I beseech you, better of the farm:  
 Duties in every state demand your care,  
 And light are those that will require it there:  
 Fix on the youth a favouring eye, and these,  
 To him pertaining, or as his, will please."  
 "What words," the lass replied, "offend my ear!  
 Try you my patience? Can you be sincere? 160  
 And am I told a willing hand to give  
 To a rude farmer, and with rustic live?  
 Far other fate was yours—some gentle youth  
 Admired your beauty, and avow'd his truth;  
 The power of love prevail'd, and freely both  
 Gave the fond heart, and pledged the binding oath;  
 And then the rivals' plot, the parent's power,  
 And jealous fears, drew on the happy hour:  
 Ah! let not memory lose the blissful view,  
 But fairly show what love has done for you." 170  
 "Agreed, my daughter; what my heart has known  
 Of love's strange power shall be with frankness shown:  
 But let me warn you, that experience finds  
 Few of the scenes that lively hope designs."—  
 "Mysterious all," said Nancy; "you, I know,  
 Have suffer'd much; now deign the grief to show—  
 I am your friend, and so prepare my heart  
 In all your sorrows to receive a part."  
 The widow answer'd: "I had once, like you,  
 Such thoughts of love; no dream is more untrue. 180  
 You judge it fated and decreed to dwell }  
 In youthful hearts, which nothing can expel, }  
 A passion doom'd to reign, and irresistible. }  
 The struggling mind, when once subdued, in vain  
 Rejects the fury or defies the pain;  
 The strongest reason fails the flame t' allay,  
 And resolution droops and faints away:  
 Hence, when the destined lovers meet, they prove  
 At once the force of this all-powerful love;  
 Each from that period feels the mutual smart, 190  
 Nor seeks to cure it—heart is changed for heart;  
 Nor is there peace till they delighted stand,  
 And, at the altar, hand is join'd to hand.  
 "Alas! my child, there are who, dreaming so,  
 Waste their fresh youth, and waking feel the wo;  
 There is no spirit sent the heart to move  
 With such prevailing and alarming love;  
 Passion to reason will submit—or why



Should wealthy maids the poorest swains deny? 200  
 Or how could classes and degrees create  
 The slightest bar to such resistless fate?  
 Yet high and low, you see, forbear to mix;  
 No beggars' eyes the heart of kings transfix;  
 And who but am'rous peers or nobles sigh  
 When titled beauties pass triumphant by?  
 For reason wakes, proud wishes to reprove;  
 You cannot hope, and therefore dare not love:  
 All would be safe, did we at first inquire—  
 'Does reason sanction what our hearts desire?' 210  
 But, quitting precept, let example show  
 What joys from love uncheck'd by prudence flow.  
 "A youth my father in his office placed,  
 Of humble fortune, but with sense and taste;  
 But he was thin and pale, had downcast looks;  
 He studied much, and pored upon his books:  
 Confused he was when seen, and, when he saw  
 Me or my sisters, would in haste withdraw;  
 And had this youth departed with the year,  
 His loss had cost us neither sigh nor tear.  
 "But with my father still the youth remain'd, 220  
 And more reward and kinder notice gain'd:  
 He often, reading, to the garden stray'd,  
 Where I by books or musing was delay'd;  
 This to discourse in summer evenings led,  
 Of these same evenings, or of what we read.  
 On such occasions we were much alone;  
 But, save the look, the manner, and the tone,  
 (These might have meaning,) all that we discuss'd  
 We could with pleasure to a parent trust.  
 "At length 'twas friendship—and my friend and I 230  
 Said we were happy, and began to sigh;  
 My sisters first, and then my father, found  
 That we were wandering o'er enchanted ground;  
 But he had troubles in his own affairs,  
 And would not bear addition to his cares.  
 With pity moved, yet angry, 'Child,' said he,  
 'Will you embrace contempt and beggary?  
 Can you endure to see each other cursed  
 By want, of every human wo the worst?  
 Warring for ever with distress, in dread 240  
 Either of begging or of wanting bread;  
 While poverty, with unrelenting force,  
 Will your own offspring from your love divorce;  
 They, through your folly, must be doom'd to pine,  
 And you deplore your passion, or resign;  
 For, if it die, what good will then remain?  
 And if it live, it doubles every pain.'"—  
 "But you were true," exclaim'd the lass, "and fled }  
 The tyrant's power who fill'd your soul with dread?"— }  
 "But," said the smiling friend, "he fill'd my mouth with bread; } 250  
 And in what other place that bread to gain  
 We long consider'd, and we sought in vain.  
 This was my twentieth year—at thirty-five  
 Our hope was fainter, yet our love alive;  
 So many years in anxious doubt had pass'd."—  
 "Then," said the damsel, "you were bless'd at last?"  
 A smile again adorn'd the widow's face,  
 But soon a starting tear usurp'd its place.—  
 "Slow pass'd the heavy years, and each had more 260  
 Pains and vexations than the years before.  
 My father fail'd; his family was rent,  
 And to new states his grieving daughters sent;  
 Each to more thriving kindred found a way,  
 Guests without welcome—servants without pay;  
 Our parting hour was grievous; still I feel  
 The sad, sweet converse at our final meal:  
 Our father then reveal'd his former fears,  
 Cause of his sternness, and then join'd our tears;  
 Kindly he strove our feelings to repress,  
 But died, and left us heirs to his distress. 270  
 The rich, as humble friends, my sisters chose;  
 I with a wealthy widow sought repose;  
 Who with a chilling frown her friend received,

Bade me rejoice, and wonder'd that I grieved:  
 In vain my anxious lover tried his skill  
 To rise in life, he was dependent still;  
 We met in grief, nor can I paint the fears  
 Of these unhappy, troubled, trying years:  
 Our dying hopes and stronger fears between,  
 We felt no season peaceful or serene; 280  
 Our fleeting joys, like meteors in the night,  
 Shone on our gloom with inauspicious light;  
 And then domestic sorrows, till the mind,  
 Worn with distresses, to despair inclined;  
 Add too the ill that from the passion flows,  
 When its contemptuous frown the world bestows—  
 The peevish spirit caused by long delay,  
 When being gloomy we condemn the gay,  
 When, being wretched, we incline to hate  
 And censure others in a happier state; 290  
 Yet loving still, and still compell'd to move  
 In the sad labyrinth of ling'ring love:  
 While you, exempt from want, despair, alarm,  
 May wed—oh! take the farmer and the farm."  
 "Nay," said the nymph, "joy smiled on you at last!"  
 "Smiled for a moment," she replied, "and pass'd:  
 My lover still the same dull means pursued,  
 Assistant call'd, but kept in servitude;  
 His spirits wearied in the prime of life,  
 By fears and wishes in eternal strife; 300  
 At length he urged impatient—'Now consent;  
 With thee united, fortune may relent.'  
 I paused, consenting; but a friend arose,  
 Pleased a fair view, though distant, to disclose;  
 From the rough ocean we beheld a gleam  
 Of joy, as transient as the joys we dream;  
 By lying hopes deceived, my friend retired,  
 And sail'd—was wounded—reach'd us—and expired!  
 You shall behold his grave, and, when I die,  
 There—but 'tis folly—I request to lie." 310  
 "Thus," said the lass, "to joy you bade adieu!  
 But how a widow?—that cannot be true;  
 Or was it force, in some unhappy hour,  
 That placed you, grieving, in a tyrant's power?"  
 "Force, my young friend, when forty years are fled,  
 Is what a woman seldom has to dread;  
 She needs no brazen locks nor guarding walls,  
 And seldom comes a lover, though she calls.  
 Yet moved by fancy, one approved my face,  
 Though time and tears had wrought it much disgrace. 320  
 "The man I married was sedate and meek,  
 And spoke of love as men in earnest speak;  
 Poor as I was, he ceaseless sought, for years,  
 A heart in sorrow and a face in tears;  
 That heart I gave not; and 'twas long before  
 I gave attention, and then nothing more;  
 But in my breast some grateful feeling rose  
 For one whose love so sad a subject chose;  
 Till long delaying, fearing to repent,  
 But grateful still, I gave a cold assent. 330  
 "Thus we were wed; no fault had I to find,  
 And he but one; my heart could not be kind:  
 Alas! of every early hope bereft,  
 There was no fondness in my bosom left;  
 So had I told him, but had told in vain,  
 He lived but to indulge me and complain.  
 His was this cottage, he inclosed this ground,  
 And planted all these blooming shrubs around;  
 He to my room these curious trifles brought,  
 And with assiduous love my pleasure sought; 340  
 He lived to please me, and I oft-times strove  
 Smiling, to thank his unrequited love;  
 'Teach me,' he cried, 'that pensive mind to ease,  
 For all my pleasure is the hope to please.'  
 "Serene, though heavy, were the days we spent,  
 Yet kind each word, and gen'rous each intent;  
 But his dejection lessen'd every day,  
 And to a placid kindness died away.

In tranquil ease we pass'd our latter years,  
 By griefs untroubl'd, unassail'd by fears. 350

“Let not romantic views your bosom sway,  
 Yield to your duties, and their call obey:  
 Fly not a youth, frank, honest, and sincere;  
 Observe his merits, and his passion hear!  
 'Tis true, no hero, but a farmer sues—  
 Slow in his speech, but worthy in his views;  
 With him you cannot that affliction prove,  
 That rends the bosom of the poor in love;  
 Health, comfort, competence, and cheerful days,  
 Your friends' approval, and your father's praise, 360  
 Will crown the deed, and you escape *their* fate  
 Who plan so wildly, and are wise too late.”

The damsel heard; at first th' advice was strange,  
 Yet wrought a happy, nay, a speedy change.  
 “I have no care,” she said, when next they met,  
 “But one may wonder he is silent yet;  
 He looks around him with his usual stare,  
 And utters nothing—not that I shall care.”

This pettish humour pleased th' experienced friend—  
 None need despair, whose silence can offend; 370  
 “Should I,” resumed the thoughtful lass, “consent  
 To hear the man, the man may now repent.  
 Think you my sighs shall call him from the plough,  
 Or give one hint, that ‘You may woo me now?’”

“Persist, my love,” replied the friend, “and gain  
 A parent's praise, *that* cannot be in vain.”

The father saw the change, but not the cause,  
 And gave the alter'd maid his fond applause.  
 The coarser manners she in part removed,  
 In part endured, improving and improved; 380  
 She spoke of household works, she rose betimes,  
 And said neglect and indolence were crimes;  
 The various duties of their life she weigh'd,  
 And strict attention to her dairy paid;  
 The names of servants now familiar grew,  
 And fair Lucinda's from her mind withdrew.  
 As prudent travellers for their ease assume  
*Their* modes and language to whose lands they come:  
 So to the farmer this fair lass inclined,  
 Gave to the business of the farm her mind; 390  
 To useful arts she turn'd her hand and eye;  
 And by her manners told him—“You may try.”

Th' observing lover more attention paid,  
 With growing pleasure, to the alter'd maid;  
 He fear'd to lose her, and began to see  
 That a slim beauty might a helpmate be;  
 'Twixt hope and fear he now the lass address'd,  
 And in his Sunday robe his love express'd.  
 She felt no chilling dread, no thrilling joy,  
 Nor was too quickly kind, too slowly coy; 400  
 But still she lent an unreluctant ear  
 To all the rural business of the year;  
 Till love's strong hopes endured no more delay,  
 And Harry ask'd, and Nancy named the day.

“A happy change! my boy,” the father cried:  
 “How lost your sister all her school-day pride?”  
 The youth replied, “It is the widow's deed:  
 The cure is perfect, and was wrought with speed.”—  
 “And comes there, boy, this benefit of books,  
 Of that smart dress, and of those dainty looks? 410  
 We must be kind—some offerings from the farm  
 To the white cot will speak our feelings warm;  
 Will show that people, when they know the fact,  
 Where they have judged severely, can retract.  
 Oft have I smil'd, when I beheld her pass  
 With cautious step, as if she hurt the grass;  
 Where if a snail's retreat she chanced to storm,  
 She look'd as begging pardon of the worm;  
 And what, said I, still laughing at the view,  
 Have these weak creatures in the world to do? 420  
 But some are made for action, some to speak; }  
 And, while she looks so pitiful and meek, }  
 Her words are weighty, though her nerves are weak.” }

Soon told the village-bells the rite was done,  
That join'd the school-bred miss and farmer's son;  
Her former habits some slight scandal raised,  
But real worth was soon perceived and praised;  
She, her neat taste imparted to the farm,  
And he, th' improving skill and vigorous arm.

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## TALE VIII.

### THE MOTHER.

What though you have beauty,  
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?  
*As You Like It, Act III. Scene 5.*

I would not marry her, though she were endow'd with all  
that Adam had left him before he transgress'd.  
*Much Ado about Nothing, Act II. Scene 1.*

Wilt thou love such a woman? What! to make thee an  
instrument, and play false strains upon thee!—Not to be endured.  
*As You Like It, Act IV. Scene 3.*

Your son,  
As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know  
Her estimation [home].  
*All's Well that Ends Well, Act V, Scene 3.*

He [lost] a wife  
...whose words all ears took captive,  
Whose dear perfection, hearts that scorn'd to serve  
Humbly call'd mistress....  
Be this sweet Helen's knell.  
*All's Well that Ends Well, Act V. Scene 3.*

## TALE VIII.

### THE MOTHER.

There was a worthy, but a simple pair,  
Who nursed a daughter, fairest of the fair.  
Sons they had lost, and she alone remain'd,  
Heir to the kindness they had all obtain'd;  
Heir to the fortune they design'd for all,  
Nor had th' allotted portion then been small;  
But now, by fate enrich'd with beauty rare,  
They watch'd their treasure with peculiar care.  
The fairest features they could early trace, }  
And, blind with love, saw merit in her face— } 10  
Saw virtue, wisdom, dignity, and grace; }  
And Dorothea, from her infant years,  
Gain'd all her wishes from their pride or fears;  
She wrote a billet, and a novel read,  
And with her fame her vanity was fed;  
Each word, each look, each action was a cause  
For flattering wonder, and for fond applause;  
She rode or danced, and ever glanced around,  
Seeking for praise, and smiling when she found. }  
The yielding pair to her petitions gave } 20  
An humble friend to be a civil slave;  
Who for a poor support herself resign'd  
To the base toil of a dependent mind.  
By nature cold, our heiress stoop'd to art,  
To gain the credit of a tender heart;  
Hence at her door must suppliant paupers stand,  
To bless the bounty of her beauteous hand.  
And now, her education all complete,  
She talk'd of virtuous love and union sweet;  
She was indeed by no soft passion moved, } 30  
But wish'd, with all her soul, to be beloved.  
Here on the favour'd beauty fortune smiled;  
Her chosen husband was a man so mild,  
So humbly temper'd, so intent to please, }  
It quite distress'd her to remain at ease, }  
Without a cause to sigh, without pretence to tease. }  
She tried his patience in a thousand modes,  
And tired it not upon the roughest roads.  
Pleasure she sought, and, disappointed, sigh'd  
For joys, she said, "to her alone denied;" } 40  
And she was "sure her parents, if alive,  
Would many comforts for their child contrive."

The gentle husband bade her name him one;—  
 “No—that,” she answer’d, “should for her be done;  
 How could she say what pleasures were around?  
 But she was certain many might be found.”—  
 “Would she some sea-port, Weymouth, Scarborough, grace?”—  
 “He knew she hated every watering-place.”—  
 “The town?”—“What! now ’twas empty, joyless, dull?”  
 —“In winter?”—“No; she liked it worse when full.” 50  
 She talk’d of building—“Would she plan a room?”—  
 “No! she could live, as he desired, in gloom.”—  
 “Call then our friends and neighbours?”—“He might call, }  
 And they might come and fill his ugly hall; }  
 A noisy vulgar set, he knew she scorn’d them all.”— }  
 “Then, might their two dear girls the time employ,  
 And their improvement yield a solid joy?”—  
 “Solid indeed! and heavy—oh! the bliss  
 Of teaching letters to a lisping Miss!”—  
 “My dear, my gentle Dorothea, say, 60  
 Can I oblige you?”—“You may go away.”  
 Twelve heavy years this patient soul sustain’d }  
 This wasp’s attacks, and then her praise obtain’d, }  
 Graved on a marble tomb, where he at peace remain’d. }  
 Two daughters wept their loss: the one a child  
 With a plain face, strong sense, and temper mild,  
 Who keenly felt the mother’s angry taunt,  
 “Thou art the image of thy pious aunt.”  
 Long time had Lucy wept her slighted face,  
 And then began to smile at her disgrace. 70  
 Her father’s sister, who the world had seen  
 Near sixty years when Lucy saw sixteen,  
 Begg’d the plain girl: the gracious mother smiled,  
 And freely gave her grieved but passive child;  
 And with her elder-born, the [beauty-bless’d,  
 This parent rested, if such minds can rest.  
 No miss her waxen babe could so admire,  
 Nurse with such care, or with such pride attire;  
 They were companions meet, with equal mind,  
 Bless’d with one love, and to one point inclined: 80  
 Beauty to keep, adorn, increase, and guard,  
 Was their sole care, and had its full reward.  
 In rising splendor with the one it reign’d, }  
 And in the other was by care sustain’d, }  
 The daughter’s charms increased, the parent’s yet remain’d.— }  
 Leave we these ladies to their daily care,  
 To see how meekness and discretion fare.  
 A village maid, unvex’d by want or love,  
 Could not with more delight than Lucy move;  
 The village-lark, high mounted in the spring, 90  
 Could not with purer joy than Lucy sing;  
 Her cares all light, her pleasures all sincere,  
 Her duty joy, and her companion dear;  
 In tender friendship and in true respect  
 Lived aunt and niece, no flattery, no neglect—  
 They read, walk’d, visited—together pray’d,  
 Together slept the matron and the maid.  
 There was such goodness, such pure nature seen  
 In Lucy’s looks, a manner so serene; 100  
 Such harmony in motion, speech, and air,  
 That without fairness she was more than fair;  
 Had more than beauty in each speaking grace,  
 That lent their cloudless glory to the face;  
 Where mild good sense in placid looks were shown,  
 And felt in every bosom but her own.  
 The one presiding feature in her mind,  
 Was the pure meekness of a will resign’d;  
 A tender spirit, freed from all pretence  
 Of wit, and pleased in mild benevolence;  
 Bless’d in protecting fondness she reposed, 110  
 With every wish indulged though undisclosed;  
 But love, like zephyr on the limpid lake, }  
 Was now the bosom of the maid to shake, }  
 And in that gentle mind a gentle strife to make. }  
 Among their chosen friends, a favour’d few,  
 The aunt and niece a youthful rector knew;  
 Who, though a younger brother, might address

A younger sister, fearless of success.  
 His friends, a lofty race, their native pride  
 At first display'd, and their assent denied; 120  
 But, pleased such virtues and such love to trace,  
 They own'd she would adorn the loftiest race.  
 The aunt, a mother's caution to supply,  
 Had watch'd the youthful priest with jealous eye;  
 And, anxious for her charge, had view'd unseen  
 The cautious life that keeps the conscience clean.  
 In all she found him all she wish'd to find,  
 With slight exception of a lofty mind:  
 A certain manner that express'd desire,  
 To be received as brother to the 'squire. 130  
 Lucy's meek eye had beam'd with many a tear,  
 Lucy's soft heart had beat with many a fear,  
 Before he told (although his looks, she thought,  
 Had oft confess'd) that he her favour sought;  
 But when he kneel'd, (she wish'd him not to kneel,)  
 And spoke the fears and hopes that lovers feel;  
 When too the prudent aunt herself confess'd,  
 Her wishes on the gentle youth would rest;  
 The maiden's eye with tender passion beam'd,  
 She dwelt with fondness on the life she schemed— 140  
 The household cares, the soft and lasting ties  
 Of love, with all his binding charities;  
 Their village taught, consoled, assisted, fed,  
 Till the young zealot tears of pleasure shed.  
 But would her mother? Ah! she fear'd it wrong  
 To have indulged these forward hopes so long;  
 Her mother loved, but was not used to grant  
 Favours so freely as her gentle aunt.—  
 Her gentle aunt, with smiles that angels wear,  
 Dispell'd her Lucy's apprehensive tear: 150  
 Her prudent foresight the request had made  
 To one whom none could govern, few persuade;  
 She doubted much if one in earnest woo'd  
 A girl with not a single charm endued;  
 The sister's nobler views she then declared,  
 And what small sum for Lucy could be spared;  
 "If more than this the foolish priest requires,  
 Tell him," she wrote, "to check his vain desires."  
 At length, with many a cold expression mix'd,  
 With many a sneer on girls so fondly fix'd, 160  
 There came a promise—should they not repent, }  
 But take with grateful minds the portion meant, }  
 And wait the sister's day—the mother might consent. }  
 And here, might pitying hope o'er truth prevail,  
 Or love o'er fortune, we would end our tale:  
 For who more bless'd than youthful pair removed  
 From fear of want—by mutual friends approved—  
 Short time to wait, and in that time to live  
 With all the pleasures hope and fancy give;  
 Their equal passion raised on just esteem, 170  
 When reason sanctions all that love can dream?  
 Yes! reason sanctions what stern fate denies:  
 The early prospect in the glory dies,  
 As the soft smiles on dying infants play  
 In their mild features, and then pass away.  
 The beauty died, ere she could yield her hand  
 In the high marriage by the mother plann'd:  
 Who grieved indeed, but found a vast relief  
 In a cold heart, that ever warr'd with grief.  
 Lucy was present when her sister died, 180  
 Heiress to duties that she ill supplied:  
 There were no mutual feelings, sister arts,  
 No kindred taste, nor intercourse of hearts;  
 When in the mirror play'd the matron's smile,  
 The maiden's thoughts were travelling all the while;  
 And, when desired to speak, she sigh'd to find  
 Her pause offended:—"Envy made her blind;  
 Tasteless she was, nor had a claim in life  
 Above the station of a rector's wife;  
 Yet as an heiress, she must shun disgrace, 190  
 Although no heiress to her mother's face:  
 It is your duty," said th' imperious dame, }

"(Advanced your fortune) to advance your name, }  
And with superior rank, superior offers claim. }  
Your sister's lover, when his sorrows die,  
May look upon you, and for favour sigh;  
Nor can you offer a reluctant hand;  
His birth is noble, and his seat is grand."

Alarm'd was Lucy, was in tears—"A fool!  
Was she a child in love?—a miss at school? 200  
Doubts any mortal, if a change of state  
Dissolves all claims and ties of earlier date?"

The rector doubted, for he came to mourn  
A sister dead, and with a wife return.  
Lucy with heart unchanged received the youth,  
True in herself, confiding in his truth;  
But own'd her mother's change: the haughty dame  
Pour'd strong contempt upon the youthful flame;  
She firmly vow'd her purpose to pursue, 210  
Judged her own cause, and bade the youth adieu!  
The lover begg'd, insisted, urged his pain;  
His brother wrote to threaten and complain;  
Her sister, reasoning, proved the promise made,  
Lucy, appealing to a parent, pray'd;  
But all opposed th' event that she design'd,  
And all in vain—she never changed her mind;  
But coldly answer'd in her wonted way,  
That she "would rule, and Lucy must obey."

With peevish fear, she saw her health decline,  
And cried, "Oh! monstrous, for a man to pine; 220  
But if your foolish heart must yield to love,  
Let him possess it whom I now approve;  
This is my pleasure."—Still the rector came  
With larger offers and with bolder claim;  
But the stern lady would attend no more—  
She frown'd, and rudely pointed to the door;  
Whate'er he wrote, he saw unread return'd,  
And he, indignant, the dishonour spurn'd;  
Nay, fix'd suspicion where he might confide,  
And sacrificed his passion to his pride. 230

Lucy, meantime, though threaten'd and distress'd,  
Against her marriage made a strong protest.  
All was domestic war: the aunt rebell'd  
Against the sovereign will, and was expell'd;  
And every power was tried and every art,  
To bend to falsehood one determin'd heart;  
Assail'd, in patience it received the shock,  
Soft as the wave, unshaken as the rock;  
But while th' unconquer'd soul endures the storm  
Of angry fate, it preys upon the form. 240

With conscious virtue she resisted still,  
And conscious love gave vigour to her will;  
But Lucy's trial was at hand; with joy  
The mother cried—"Behold your constant boy—  
Thursday—was married—take the paper, sweet,  
And read the conduct of your reverend cheat;  
See with what pomp of coaches, in what crowd  
The creature married—of his falsehood proud!  
False, did I say?—at least no whining fool;  
And thus will hopeless passions ever cool: 250  
But shall his bride your single state reproach?  
No! give him crowd for crowd, and coach for coach.  
Oh! you retire; reflect then, gentle miss,  
And gain some spirit in a cause like this."

Some spirit Lucy gain'd; a steady soul,  
Defying all persuasion, all control:  
In vain reproach, derision, threats were tried; }  
The constant mind all outward force defied, }  
By vengeance vainly urged, in vain assail'd by pride. } 260  
Fix'd in her purpose, perfect in her part,  
She felt the courage of a wounded heart;  
The world receded from her rising view,  
When Heaven approach'd as earthly things withdrew;  
Not strange before, for in the days of love,  
Joy, hope, and pleasure, she had thoughts above;  
Pious when most of worldly prospects fond,  
When they best pleased her she could look beyond;



Had the young priest a faithful lover died,  
 Something had been her bosom to divide; 270  
 Now Heaven had all, for in her holiest views  
 She saw the matron whom she fear'd to lose;  
 While from her parent the dejected maid  
 Forced the unpleasant thought, or thinking pray'd.  
 Surprised, the mother saw the languid frame,  
 And felt indignant, yet forbore to blame.  
 Once with a frown she cried, "And do you mean  
 To die of love—the folly of fifteen?"  
 But as her anger met with no reply,  
 She let the gentle girl in quiet die;  
 And to her sister wrote, impell'd by pain, 280  
 "Come quickly, Martha, or you come in vain."  
 Lucy meantime profess'd with joy sincere,  
 That nothing held, employ'd, engaged her here.—  
 "I am an humble actor, doom'd to play  
 A part obscure, and then to glide away;  
 Incurious how the great or happy shine,  
 Or who have parts obscure and sad as mine;  
 In its best prospect I but wish'd, for life,  
 To be th' assiduous, gentle, useful wife;  
 That lost, with wearied mind, and spirit poor, 290  
 I drop my efforts, and can act no more;  
 With growing joy I feel my spirits tend  
 To that last scene where all my duties end."  
 Hope, ease, delight, the thoughts of dying gave,  
 Till Lucy spoke with fondness of the grave;  
 She smiled with wasted form, but spirit firm,  
 And said, she left but little for the worm.  
 As toll'd the bell, "There's one," she said, "hath press'd  
 Awhile before me to the bed of rest;"  
 And she beside her with attention spread 300  
 The decorations of the maiden dead.  
 While quickly thus the mortal part declined,  
 The happiest visions fill'd the active mind;  
 A soft, religious melancholy gain'd  
 Entire possession, and for ever reign'd;  
 On holy writ her mind reposing dwelt,  
 She saw the wonders, she the mercies felt;  
 Till in a bless'd and glorious reverie, }  
 She seem'd the Saviour as on earth to see, }  
 And, fill'd with love divine, th' attending friend to be; } 310  
 Or she, who trembling, yet confiding, stole  
 Near to the garment, touch'd it, and was whole;  
 When, such th' intenseness of the working thought,  
 On her it seem'd the very deed was wrought;  
 She the glad patient's fear and rapture found,  
 The holy transport, and the healing wound;  
 This was so fix'd, so grafted in the heart,  
 That she adopted, nay became, the part.  
 But one chief scene was present to her sight:  
 Her Saviour resting in the tomb by night; 320  
 Her fever rose, and still her wedded mind  
 Was to that scene, that hallow'd cave, confined—  
 Where in the shade of death the body laid,  
 There watch'd the spirit of the wandering maid;  
 Her looks were fix'd, entranced, illumed, serene,  
 In the still glory of the midnight scene;  
 There at her Saviour's feet, in visions bless'd,  
 Th' enraptured maid a sacred joy possess'd;  
 In patience waiting for the first-born ray  
 Of that all-glorious and triumphant day. 330  
 To this idea all her soul she gave,  
 Her mind reposing by the sacred grave;  
 Then sleep would seal the eye, the vision close,  
 And steep the solemn thoughts in brief repose.  
 Then grew the soul serene, and all its powers,  
 Again restored illumed the dying hours;  
 But reason dwelt where fancy stray'd before,  
 And the mind wander'd from its views no more;  
 Till death approach'd, when every look express'd  
 A sense of bliss, till every sense had rest. 340  
 The mother lives, and has enough to buy  
 Th' attentive ear and the submissive eye

Of abject natures—these are daily told,  
How triumph'd beauty in the days of old;  
How, by her window seated, crowds have cast  
Admiring glances, wondering as they pass'd;  
How from her carriage as she stepp'd to pray,  
Divided ranks would humbly make her way;  
And how each voice in the astonish'd throng  
Pronounced her peerless as she moved along.

350

Her picture then the greedy dame displays;  
Touch'd by no shame, she now demands its praise;  
In her tall mirror then she shows a face,  
Still coldly fair with unaffecting grace;  
These she compares: "It has the form," she cries,  
"But wants the air, the spirit, and the eyes;  
This, as a likeness, is correct and true,  
But there alone the living grace we view."  
This said, th' applauding voice the dame required,  
And, gazing, slowly from the glass retired.

360

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## TALE IX.

### ARABELLA.

Thrice blessed they that master so their blood—  
[.....]

But earthly happier is the rose distill'd,  
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

*Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I. Scene 1.

I [something] do excuse the thing I hate,  
For his advantage whom I dearly love.

*Measure for Measure*, Act II. Scene 4.

Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act III. Scene 1.

## TALE IX.

### ARABELLA.

Of a fair town, where Doctor Rack was guide,  
His only daughter was the boast and pride;  
Wise Arabella—yet not wise alone,  
She like a bright and polish'd brilliant shone;  
Her father own'd her for his prop and stay,  
Able to guide, yet willing to obey;  
Pleased with her learning while discourse could please,  
And with her love in languor and disease.

To every mother were her virtues known,  
And to their daughters as a pattern shown; 10  
Who in her youth had all that age requires,  
And, with her prudence, all that youth admires.

These odious praises made the damsels try  
Not to obtain such merits, but deny;  
For, whatsoever wise mammas might say,  
To guide a daughter this was not the way;  
From such applause disdain and anger rise,  
And envy lives where emulation dies.

In all his strength contends the noble horse  
With one who just precedes him on the course; 20  
But when the rival flies too far before,  
His spirit fails, and he attempts no more.

This reasoning maid, above her sex's dread,  
Had dared to read, and dared to say she read;  
Not the last novel, not the new-born play;  
Not the mere trash and scandal of the day;  
But (though her young companions felt the shock)  
She studied Berkeley, Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke:  
Her mind within the maze of history dwelt,  
And of the moral muse the beauty felt; 30  
The merits of the Roman page she knew,  
And could converse with Moore and Montagu:  
Thus she became the wonder of the town,  
From that she reap'd, to that she gave, renown;  
And strangers, coming, all were taught t' admire  
The learned lady, and the lofty spire.

Thus fame in public fix'd the maid, where all  
Might throw their darts, and see the idol fall;  
A hundred arrows came with vengeance keen,  
From tongues envenom'd, and from arms unseen; 40  
A thousand eyes were fix'd upon the place,  
That, if she fell, she might not fly disgrace.  
But malice vainly throws the poison'd dart,  
Unless our frailty shows the peccant part;  
And Arabella still preserved her name  
Untouch'd, and shone with undisputed fame;  
Her very notice some respect would cause,  
And her esteem was honour and applause.

Men she avoided—not in childish fear,  
As if she thought some savage foe was near; 50  
Not as a prude, who hides that man should seek,  
Or who by silence hints that they should speak;

But with discretion all the sex she view'd,  
Ere yet engaged, pursuing, or pursued;  
Ere love had made her to his vices blind,  
Or hid the favourite's failings from her mind.

Thus was the picture of the man portray'd,  
By merit destined for so rare a maid;  
At whose request she might exchange her state,  
Or still be happy in a virgin's fate.

60

He must be one with manners like her own,  
His life unquestion'd, his opinions known;  
His stainless virtue must all tests endure,  
His honour spotless, and his bosom pure;  
She no allowance made for sex or times,  
Of lax opinion—crimes were ever crimes;  
No wretch forsaken must his frailty curse,  
No spurious offspring drain his private purse:  
He at all times his passions must command,  
And yet possess—or be refused her hand.

70

All this without reserve the maiden told,  
And some began to weigh the rector's gold;  
To ask what sum a prudent man might gain,  
Who had such store of virtues to maintain?

A Doctor Campbell, north of Tweed, came forth,  
Declared his passion, and proclaim'd his worth;  
Not unapproved, for he had much to say  
On every cause, and in a pleasant way;  
Not all his trust was in a pliant tongue,

80

His form was good, and ruddy he, and young.  
But, though the Doctor was a man of parts,  
He read not deeply male or female hearts;  
But judged that all whom he esteem'd as wise  
Must think alike, though some assumed disguise;  
That every reasoning Bramin, Christian, Jew,  
Of all religions took their liberal view;  
And of her own, no doubt, this learned maid  
Denied the substance, and the forms obey'd;  
And thus persuaded, he his thoughts express'd  
Of her opinions, and his own profess'd:

90

"All states demand this aid, the vulgar need  
Their priests and pray'rs, their sermons and their creed;  
And those of stronger minds should never speak  
(In his opinion) what might hurt the weak.

A man may smile, but still he should attend }  
His hour at church, and be the church's friend, }  
What there he thinks conceal, and what he hears commend." }

Frank was the speech, but heard with high disdain,  
Nor had the Doctor leave to speak again;  
A man who own'd, nay gloried in deceit,  
"He might despise her, but he should not cheat."

100

Then Vicar Holmes appear'd; he heard it said  
That ancient men best pleased the prudent maid;  
And true it was her ancient friends she loved;  
Servants when old she favour'd and approved;  
Age in her pious parents she revered,  
And neighbours were by length of days endear'd;  
But, if her husband too must ancient be,  
The good old Vicar found it was not he.

110

On Captain Bligh her mind in balance hung—  
Though valiant, modest; and reserved, though young:  
Against these merits must defects be set—  
Though poor, imprudent; and though proud, in debt:  
In vain the Captain close attention paid;  
She found him wanting, whom she fairly weigh'd.

Then came a youth, and all their friends agreed,  
That Edward Huntly was the man indeed;  
Respectful duty he had paid awhile,  
Then ask'd her hand, and had a gracious smile:  
A lover now declared, he led the fair

120

To woods and fields, to visits and to pray'r;  
Then whisper'd softly—"Will you name the day?"  
She softly whisper'd—"If you love me, stay."—  
"Oh! try me not beyond my strength," he cried;—  
"Oh! be not weak," the prudent maid replied;  
"But by some trial your affection prove—  
Respect and not impatience argues love;

And love no more is by impatience known,  
 Than Ocean's depth is by its tempests shown.  
 He whom a weak and fond impatience sways, } 130  
 But for himself with all his fervour prays, }  
 And not the maid he woos, but his own will obeys; }  
 And will she love the being who prefers,  
 With so much ardour, his desire to hers?"

Young Edward grieved, but let not grief be seen;  
 He knew obedience pleased his fancy's queen:  
 Awhile he waited, and then cried—"Behold!  
 The year advancing, be no longer cold!"  
 For she had promised—"Let the flowers appear,  
 And I will pass with thee the smiling year." } 140  
 Then pressing grew the youth; the more he press'd,  
 The less inclined the maid to his request:  
 "Let June arrive."—Alas! when April came,  
 It brought a stranger, and the stranger, shame;  
 Nor could the lover from his house persuade  
 A stubborn lass whom he had mournful made;  
 Angry and weak, by thoughtless vengeance moved,  
 She told her story to the fair beloved;  
 In strongest words th' unwelcome truth was shown,  
 To blight his prospects, careless of her own. } 150

Our heroine grieved, but had too firm a heart  
 For him to soften, when she swore to part;  
 In vain his seeming penitence and pray'r,  
 His vows, his tears: she left him in despair.  
 His mother fondly laid her grief aside,  
 And to the reason of the nymph applied—  
 "It well becomes thee, lady, to appear,  
 But not to be, in very truth, severe;  
 Although the crime be odious in thy sight,  
 That daring sex is taught such things to slight: } 160  
 His heart is thine, although it once was frail;  
 Think of his grief, and let his love prevail!"—  
 "Plead thou no more," the lofty lass return'd;  
 "Forgiving woman is deceived and spurn'd.  
 Say that the crime is common—shall I take  
 A common man my wedded lord to make?  
 See! a weak woman by his arts betray'd,  
 An infant born his father to upbraid;  
 Shall I forgive his vileness, take his name,  
 Sanction his error, and partake his shame? } 170  
 No! this assent would kindred frailty prove,  
 A love for him would be a vicious love:  
 Can a chaste maiden secret counsel hold  
 With one whose crime by every mouth is told?  
 Forbid it spirit, prudence, virtuous pride;  
 He must despise me, were he not denied.  
 The way from vice the erring mind to win }  
 Is with presuming sinners to begin, }  
 And show, by scorning them, a just contempt for sin." } 180

The youth, repulsed, to one more mild convey'd } 180  
 His heart, and smiled on the remorseless maid;  
 The maid, remorseless in her pride, the while  
 Despised the insult, and return'd the smile.  
 First to admire, to praise her, and defend,  
 Was (now in years advanced) a virgin friend:  
 Much she preferr'd, she cried, a single state,  
 "It was her choice"—it surely was her fate;  
 And much it pleased her in the train to view  
 A maiden vot'ress, wise and lovely too.

Time to the yielding mind his change imparts, } 190  
 He varies notions, and he alters hearts;  
 'Tis right, 'tis just to feel contempt for vice,  
 But he that shows it may be over-nice:  
 There are who feel, when young, the false sublime,  
 And proudly love to show disdain for crime;  
 To whom the future will new thoughts supply,  
 The pride will soften, and the scorn will die;  
 Nay, where they still the vice itself condemn,  
 They bear the vicious, and consort with them.  
 Young Captain Grove, when one had changed his side, } 200  
 Despised the venal turn-coat, and defied;  
 Old Colonel Grove now shakes him by the hand,

Though he who bribes may still his vote command.  
 Why would not Ellen to Belinda speak,  
 When she had flown to London for a week,  
 And then return'd, to every friend's surprise,  
 With twice the spirit, and with half the size?  
 She spoke not then—but, after years had flown,  
 A better friend had Ellen never known:  
 Was it the lady her mistake had seen? 210  
 Or had she also such a journey been?  
 No: 'twas the gradual change in human hearts,  
 That time, in commerce with the world, imparts;  
 That on the roughest temper throws disguise,  
 And steals from virtue her asperities.  
 The young and ardent, who with glowing zeal  
 Felt wrath for trifles, and were proud to feel,  
 Now find those trifles all the mind engage,  
 To soothe dull hours, and cheat the cares of age;  
 As young Zelinda, in her quaker-dress, 220  
 Disdain'd each varying fashion's vile excess,  
 And now her friends on old Zelinda gaze,  
 Pleased in rich silks and orient gems to blaze.  
 Changes like these 'tis folly to condemn,  
 So virtue yields not, nor is changed with them.  
 Let us proceed:—Twelve brilliant years were past,  
 Yet each with less of glory than the last;  
 Whether these years to this fair virgin gave  
 A softer mind—effect they often have;  
 Whether the virgin-state was not so bless'd 230  
 As that good maiden in her zeal profess'd;  
 Or whether lovers falling from her train,  
 Gave greater price to those she could retain,  
 Is all unknown;—but Arabella now  
 Was kindly listening to a merchant's vow;  
 Who offer'd terms so fair, against his love  
 To strive was folly; so she never strove.—  
 Man in his earlier days we often find  
 With a too easy and unguarded mind;  
 But, by increasing years and prudence taught, 240  
 He grows reserved, and locks up every thought.  
 Not thus the maiden, for in blooming youth  
 She hides her thought, and guards the tender truth;  
 This, when no longer young, no more she hides,  
 But frankly in the favour'd swain confides.  
 Man, stubborn man, is like the growing tree,  
 That longer standing, still will harder be;  
 And like its fruit the virgin, first austere,  
 Then kindly softening with the ripening year. 250  
 Now was the lover urgent, and the kind  
 And yielding lady to his suit inclined:  
 "A little time, my friend, is just, is right;  
 We must be decent in our neighbours' sight."  
 Still she allow'd him of his hopes to speak,  
 And in compassion took off week by week;  
 Till few remain'd, when, wearied with delay,  
 She kindly meant to take off day by day.  
 That female friend who gave our virgin praise  
 For flying man and all his treacherous ways,  
 Now heard with mingled anger, shame and fear, 260  
 Of one accepted, and a wedding near;  
 But she resolved again with friendly zeal  
 To make the maid her scorn of wedlock feel;  
 For she was grieved to find her work undone,  
 And like a sister mourn'd the failing nun.  
 Why are these gentle maidens prone to make  
 Their sister-doves the tempting world forsake?  
 Why all their triumph when a maid disdains  
 The tyrant-sex, and scorns to wear its chains?  
 Is it pure joy to see a sister flown 270  
 From the false pleasures they themselves have known?  
 Or do they, as the call-birds in the cage,  
 Try, in pure envy, others to engage;  
 And therefore paint their native woods and groves,  
 As scenes of dangerous joys and naughty loves?  
 Strong was the maiden's hope; her friend was proud,  
 And had her notions to the world avow'd;

And, could she find the Merchant weak and frail,  
 With power to prove it, then she must prevail;  
 For she aloud would publish his disgrace, 280  
 And save his victim from a man so base.

When all inquiries had been duly made,  
 Came the kind friend her burthen to unlade:—  
 “Alas! my dear! not all our care and art  
 Can tread the maze of man’s deceitful heart:  
 Look not surprise—nor let resentment swell  
 Those lovely features, all will yet be well;  
 And thou, from love’s and man’s deceptions free,  
 Wilt dwell in virgin-state, and walk to heav’n with me.”

The maiden frown’d, and then conceived “that wives 290  
 Could walk as well, and lead as holy lives  
 As angry prudes who scorn’d the marriage-chain,  
 Or luckless maids who sought it still in vain.”

The friend was vex’d—she paused, at length she cried:  
 “Know your own danger, then your lot decide;  
 That traitor Beswell, while he seeks your hand,  
 Has, I affirm, a wanton at command;  
 A slave, a creature from a foreign place,  
 The nurse and mother of a spurious race;  
 Brown, ugly bastards—(Heaven the word forgive, 300  
 And the deed punish!)—in his cottage live;  
 To town if business calls him, there he stays  
 In sinful pleasures wasting countless days;  
 Nor doubt the facts, for I can witness call  
 For every crime, and prove them one and all.”

Here ceased th’ informer; Arabella’s look  
 Was like a school-boy’s puzzled by his book;  
 Intent she cast her eyes upon the floor,  
 Paused—then replied—

“I wish to know no more:

I question not your motive, zeal, or love, 310  
 But must decline such dubious points to prove.—  
 All is not true, I judge, for who can guess  
 Those deeds of darkness men with care suppress?  
 He brought a slave perhaps to England’s coast,  
 And made her free; it is our country’s boast!  
 And she perchance too grateful—good and ill  
 Were sown at first, and grow together still;  
 The colour’d infants on the village-green,  
 What are they more than we have often seen?  
 Children half-clothed who round their village stray, } 320  
 In sun or rain, now starved, now beaten, they }  
 Will the dark colour of their fate betray; }  
 Let us in Christian love for all account,  
 And then behold to what such tales amount.”

“His heart is evil,” said th’ impatient friend—  
 “My duty bids me try that heart to mend,”  
 Replied the virgin—“We may be too nice,  
 And lose a soul in our contempt of vice;  
 If false the charge, I then shall show regard 330  
 For a good man, and be his just reward;  
 And what for virtue can I better do  
 Than to reclaim him, if the charge be true?”

She spoke, nor more her holy work delay’d;  
 ‘Twas time to lend an erring mortal aid:  
 “The noblest way,” she judged, “a soul to win, }  
 Was with an act of kindness to begin, }  
 To make the sinner sure, and then t’ attack the sin<sup>[5]</sup>.” }

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## TALE X.

### *THE LOVER'S JOURNEY.*

The sun is in the [heaven], and the proud day,  
Attended with the pleasures of the world,  
Is all too wanton.

*King John*, Act III. Scene 3.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
Are of imagination all compact.

*Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V. Scene 2.

Oh! how the spring of love resembleth  
Th' uncertain glory of an April day,  
Which now shows all her beauty to the sun,  
And by and by a cloud bears all away.

And happily I have arrived at last  
Unto the wished haven of my bliss.

*Taming of the Shrew*, Act V. Scene 1.

## TALE X.

### *THE LOVER'S JOURNEY.*

It is the soul that sees; the outward eyes }  
Present the object, but the mind describes; }  
And thence delight, disgust, or cool indiff'rence rise: }  
When minds are joyful, then we look around,  
And what is seen is all on fairy ground;  
Again they sicken, and on every view  
Cast their own dull and melancholy hue;  
Or, if absorb'd by their peculiar cares,  
The vacant eye on viewless matter glares,  
Our feelings still upon our views attend,  
And their own natures to the objects lend;  
Sorrow and joy are in their influence sure,  
Long as the passion reigns th' effects endure;  
But love in minds his various changes makes,  
And clothes each object with the change he takes;  
His light and shade on every view he throws,  
And on each object, what he feels, bestows.

Fair was the morning, and the month was June,  
When rose a lover; love awakens soon;  
Brief his repose, yet much he dreamt the while  
Of that day's meeting, and his Laura's smile;  
Fancy and love that name assign'd to her,  
Call'd Susan in the parish-register;  
And he no more was John—his Laura gave  
The name Orlando to her faithful slave.

Bright shone the glory of the rising day,  
When the fond traveller took his favourite way;  
He mounted gaily, felt his bosom light,  
And all he saw was pleasing in his sight.

"Ye hours of expectation, quickly fly,  
And bring on hours of blest reality;  
When I shall Laura see, beside her stand,  
Hear her sweet voice, and press her yielded hand."

First o'er a barren heath beside the coast  
Orlando rode, and joy began to boast.

"This neat low gorse," said he, "with golden bloom,  
Delights each sense, is beauty, is perfume;  
And this gay ling, with all its purple flowers,  
A man at leisure might admire for hours;  
This green-fringed cup-moss has a scarlet tip,  
That yields to nothing but my Laura's lip;  
And then how fine this herbage! men may say  
A heath is barren; nothing is so gay:  
Barren or bare to call such charming scene  
Argues a mind possess'd by care and spleen."

Onward he went, and fiercer grew the heat,  
Dust rose in clouds before the horse's feet;  
For now he pass'd through lanes of burning sand,

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Bounds to thin crops or yet uncultured land; 50  
 Where the dark poppy flourished on the dry  
 And sterile soil, and mock'd the thin-set rye.  
 "How lovely this!" the rapt Orlando said;  
 "With what delight is labouring man repaid!  
 The very lane has sweets that all admire,  
 The rambling suckling and the vigorous brier;  
 See! wholesome wormwood grows beside the way,  
 Where dew-press'd yet the dog-rose bends the spray;  
 Fresh herbs the fields, fair shrubs the banks adorn,  
 And snow-white bloom falls flaky from the thorn;  
 No fostering hand they need, no sheltering wall; 60  
 They spring uncultured and they bloom for all."  
 The lover rode as hasty lovers ride,  
 And reach'd a common pasture wild and wide;  
 Small black-legg'd sheep devour with hunger keen  
 The meagre herbage, fleshless, lank, and lean;  
 Such o'er thy level turf, Newmarket! stray,  
 And there, with other *black-legs* find their prey.  
 He saw some scatter'd hovels; turf was piled  
 In square brown stacks; a prospect bleak and wild!  
 A mill, indeed, was in the centre found, 70  
 With short sear herbage withering all around;  
 A smith's black shed opposed a wright's long shop,  
 And join'd an inn where humble travellers stop.  
 "Ay, this is Nature," said the gentle 'squire;  
 "This ease, peace, pleasure—who would not admire?  
 With what delight these sturdy children play,  
 And joyful rustics at the close of day;  
 Sport follows labour, on this even space  
 Will soon commence the wrestling and the race;  
 Then will the village-maidens leave their home, 80  
 And to the dance with buoyant spirits come;  
 No affectation in their looks is seen,  
 Nor know they what disguise or flattery mean;  
 Nor aught to move an envious pang they see—  
 Easy their service, and their love is free;  
 Hence early springs that love, it long endures,  
 And life's first comfort, while they live, ensures.  
 They the low roof and rustic comforts prize,  
 Nor cast on prouder mansions envying eyes;  
 Sometimes the news at yonder town they hear, 90  
 And learn what busier mortals feel and fear;  
 Secure themselves, although by tales amazed  
 Of towns bombarded and of cities razed;  
 As if they doubted, in their still retreat,  
 The very news that makes their quiet sweet,  
 And their days happy—happier only knows  
 He on whom Laura her regard bestows."  
 On rode Orlando, counting all the while  
 The miles he pass'd and every coming mile; 100  
 Like all attracted things, he quicker flies,  
 The place approaching where th' attraction lies;  
 When next appear'd a *dam*—so call the place—  
 Where lies a road confined in narrow space;  
 A work of labour, for on either side }  
 Is level fen, a prospect wild and wide, }  
 With dikes on either hand by ocean's self supplied. }  
 Far on the right the distant sea is seen,  
 And salt the springs that feed the marsh between;  
 Beneath an ancient bridge, the straiten'd flood  
 Rolls through its sloping banks of slimy mud; 110  
 Near it a sunken boat resists the tide,  
 That frets and hurries to th' opposing side;  
 The rushes sharp, that on the borders grow, }  
 Bend their brown flow'rets to the stream below, }  
 Impure in all its course, in all its progress slow: }  
 Here a grave Flora<sup>[6]</sup> scarcely deigns to bloom,  
 Nor wears a rosy blush, nor sheds perfume;  
 The few dull flowers that o'er the place are spread  
 Partake the nature of their fenny bed;  
 Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom, 120  
 Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume;  
 Here the dwarf sallows creep, the septfoil harsh,

And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh;  
 Low on the ear the distant billows sound,  
 And just in view appears their stony bound;  
 No hedge nor tree conceals the glowing sun, }  
 Birds, save a wat'ry tribe, the district shun, }  
 Nor chirp among the reeds where bitter waters run. }

“Various as beauteous, Nature, is thy face,”  
 Exclaim'd Orlando: “all that grows has grace; 130  
 All are appropriate—bog, and marsh, and fen,  
 Are only poor to undiscerning men;

Here may the nice and curious eye explore  
 How Nature's hand adorns the rushy moor;  
 Here the rare moss in secret shade is found,  
 Here the sweet myrtle of the shaking ground;  
 Beauties are these that from the view retire,  
 But well repay th' attention they require;  
 For these my Laura will her home forsake,  
 And all the pleasures they afford partake.” 140

Again the country was enclosed, a wide  
 And sandy road has banks on either side;  
 Where, lo! a hollow on the left appear'd,  
 And there a gipsy-tribe their tent had rear'd;  
 'Twas open spread, to catch the morning sun,  
 And they had now their early meal begun,  
 When two brown boys just left their grassy seat,  
 The early trav'ler with their pray'rs to greet.

While yet Orlando held his pence in hand,  
 He saw their sister on her duty stand; 150  
 Some twelve years old, demure, affected, sly,  
 Prepared the force of early powers to try;  
 Sudden a look of languor he descries,  
 And well-feign'd apprehension in her eyes;  
 Train'd but yet savage, in her speaking face  
 He mark'd the features of her vagrant race;  
 When a light laugh and roguish leer express'd  
 The vice implanted in her youthful breast.

Forth from the tent her elder brother came,  
 Who seem'd offended, yet forbore to blame 160  
 The young designer, but could only trace  
 The looks of pity in the trav'ler's face;

Within, the father, who from fences nigh }  
 Had brought the fuel for the fire's supply, }  
 Watch'd now the feeble blaze, and stood dejected by; }  
 On ragged rug, just borrow'd from the bed,  
 And by the hand of coarse indulgence fed,  
 In dirty patchwork negligently dress'd,  
 Reclined the wife, an infant at her breast;

In her wild face some touch of grace remain'd, 170  
 Of vigour palsied and of beauty stain'd;  
 Her bloodshot eyes on her unheeding mate  
 Were wrathful turn'd, and seem'd her wants to state,  
 Cursing his tardy aid—her mother there  
 With gipsy-state engross'd the only chair;  
 Solemn and dull her look; with such she stands,  
 And reads the milk-maid's fortune in her hands,  
 Tracing the lines of life; assumed through years,  
 Each feature now the steady falsehood wears;

With hard and savage eye she views the food, 180  
 And, grudging, pinches their intruding brood;  
 Last in the group, the worn-out grandsire sits  
 Neglected, lost, and living but by fits;  
 Useless, despised, his worthless labours done,  
 And half protected by the vicious son,  
 Who half supports him; he with heavy glance  
 Views the young ruffians who around him dance;  
 And, by the sadness in his face, appears  
 To trace the progress of their future years:

Through what strange course of misery, vice, deceit, 190  
 Must wildly wander each unpractised cheat!  
 What shame and grief, what punishment and pain,  
 Sport of fierce passions, must each child sustain—  
 Ere they like him approach their latter end,  
 Without a hope, a comfort, or a friend!

But this Orlando felt not; “Rogues,” said he,  
 “Doubtless they are, but merry rogues they be;

They wander round the land, and be it true,  
 They break the laws—then let the laws pursue  
 The wanton idlers; for the life they live, 200  
 Acquit I cannot, but I can forgive.”  
 This said, a portion from his purse was thrown,  
 And every heart seem'd happy like his own.  
 He hurried forth, for now the town was nigh—  
 “The happiest man of mortal men am I.”  
 Thou art! but change in every state is near,  
 (So, while the wretched hope, the blest may fear);  
 “Say, where is Laura!”—“That her words must show,”  
 A lass replied; “read this, and thou shalt know!”  
 “What, gone!”—Her friend insisted—forced to go— 210  
 Is vex'd, was teased, could not refuse her!—“No?”—  
 “But you can follow;”—“Yes;”—“The miles are few,  
 The way is pleasant; will you come?—Adieu!  
 Thy Laura!” “No! I feel I must resign  
 The pleasing hope; thou hadst been here, if mine.  
 A lady was it?—Was no brother there?  
 But why should I afflict me if there were?  
 ‘The way is pleasant.’”—What to me the way?  
 I cannot reach her till the close of day.  
 My dumb companion! is it thus we speed? 220  
 Not I from grief nor thou from toil art freed;  
 Still art thou doom'd to travel and to pine,  
 For my vexation—What a fate is mine!  
 “Gone to a friend, she tells me; I commend  
 Her purpose; means she to a female friend?  
 By Heaven, I wish she suffer'd half the pain  
 Of hope protracted through the day in vain:  
 Shall I persist to see th' ungrateful maid?  
 Yes, I will see her, slight her, and upbraid.  
 What! in the very hour? She knew the time, 230  
 And doubtless chose it to increase her crime.”  
 Forth rode Orlando by a river's side, }  
 Inland and winding, smooth, and full and wide, }  
 That roll'd majestic on, in one soft-flowing tide; }  
 The bottom gravel, flow'ry were the banks,  
 Tall willows, waving in their broken ranks;  
 The road, now near, now distant, winding led  
 By lovely meadows which the waters fed;  
 He pass'd the way-side inn, the village spire,  
 Nor stopp'd to gaze, to question, or admire; 240  
 On either side the rural mansions stood, }  
 With hedge-row trees, and hills high-crown'd with wood, }  
 And many a devious stream that reach'd the nobler flood. }  
 “I hate these scenes,” Orlando angry cried,  
 “And these proud farmers! yes, I hate their pride.  
 See! that sleek fellow, how he strides along,  
 Strong as an ox, and ignorant as strong;  
 Can yon close crops a single eye detain  
 But his who counts the profits of the grain?  
 And these vile beans with deleterious smell, 250  
 Where is their beauty? can a mortal tell?  
 These deep fat meadows I detest; it shocks  
 One's feelings there to see the grazing ox—  
 For slaughter fatted, as a lady's smile  
 Rejoices man, and means his death the while.  
 Lo! now the sons of labour! every day  
 Employ'd in toil, and vex'd in every way;  
 Theirs is but mirth assumed, and they conceal,  
 In their affected joys, the ills they feel:  
 I hate these long green lanes; there's nothing seen 260  
 In this vile country but eternal green;  
 Woods! waters! meadows! Will they never end?  
 'Tis a vile prospect.—Gone to see a friend!”—  
 Still on he rode! a mansion fair and tall  
 Rose on his view—the pride of Loddon-Hall:  
 Spread o'er the park he saw the grazing steer,  
 The full-fed steed, the herds of bounding deer;  
 On a clear stream the vivid sunbeams play'd, }  
 Through noble elms, and on the surface made }  
 That moving picture, checker'd light and shade; } 270  
 Th' attended children, there indulged to stray,  
 Enjoy'd and gave new beauty to the day;

Whose happy parents from their room were seen  
Pleased with the sportive idlers on the green.  
"Well!" said Orlando, "and for one so bless'd, }  
A thousand reasoning wretches are distress'd; }  
Nay, these so seeming glad, are grieving like the rest: }  
Man is a cheat—and all but strive to hide  
Their inward misery by their outward pride. 280  
What do yon lofty gates and walls contain,  
But fruitless means to soothe unconquer'd pain?  
The parents read each infant daughter's smile,  
Form'd to seduce, encouraged to beguile;  
They view the boys unconscious of their fate,  
Sure to be tempted, sure to take the bait;  
These will be Lauras, sad Orlando's these—  
There's guilt and grief in all one hears and sees."  
Our trav'ler, lab'ring up a hill, look'd down  
Upon a lively, busy, pleasant town;  
All he beheld were there alert, alive, 290  
The busiest bees that ever stock'd a hive:  
A pair were married, and the bells aloud  
Proclaim'd their joy, and joyful seem'd the crowd;  
And now proceeding on his way, he spied,  
Bound by strong ties, the bridegroom and the bride;  
Each by some friends attended, near they drew,  
And spleen beheld them with prophetic view.  
"Married! nay, mad!" Orlando cried in scorn;  
"Another wretch on this unlucky morn!  
What are this foolish mirth, these idle joys? 300  
Attempts to stifle doubt and fear by noise:  
To me these robes, expressive of delight,  
Foreshow distress, and only grief excite;  
And for these cheerful friends, will they behold  
Their wailing brood in sickness, want, and cold;  
And his proud look, and her soft languid air  
Will—but I spare you—go, unhappy pair!"  
And now approaching to the journey's end, }  
His anger fails, his thoughts to kindness tend, }  
He less offended feels, and rather fears t' offend: } 310  
Now gently rising, hope contends with doubt,  
And casts a sunshine on the views without;  
And still reviving joy and lingering gloom  
Alternate empire o'er his soul assume;  
Till, long perplex'd, he now began to find  
The softer thoughts engross the settling mind.  
He saw the mansion, and should quickly see  
His Laura's self—and angry could he be?  
No! the resentment melted all away—  
"For this my grief a single smile will pay," 320  
Our trav'ler cried;—"And why should it offend,  
That one so good should have a pressing friend?  
Grieve not, my heart! to find a favourite guest }  
Thy pride and boast—ye selfish sorrows, rest; }  
She will be kind, and I again be blest." }  
While gentler passions thus his bosom sway'd,  
He reach'd the mansion, and he saw the maid;  
"My Laura!"—"My Orlando!—this is kind;  
In truth I came persuaded, not inclined. 330  
Our friends' amusement let us now pursue,  
And I to-morrow will return with you."  
Like man entranced, the happy lover stood—  
"As Laura wills, for she is kind and good;  
Ever the truest, gentlest, fairest, best—  
As Laura wills, I see her and am blest."  
Home went the lovers through that busy place,  
By Loddon-Hall, the country's pride and grace;  
By the rich meadows where the oxen fed,  
Through the green vale that form'd the river's bed;  
And by unnumber'd cottages and farms, 340  
That have for musing minds unnumber'd charms,  
And how affected by the view of these  
Was then Orlando—did they pain or please?  
Nor pain nor pleasure could they yield—and why? }  
The mind was fill'd, was happy, and the eye }  
Roved o'er the fleeting views, that but appear'd to die. }  
Alone Orlando on the morrow paced

The well-known road; the [gipsy]-tent he traced;  
 The dam high-raised, the reedy dikes between,  
 The scatter'd hovels on the barren green,  
 The burning sand, the fields of thin-set rye,  
 Mock'd by the useless Flora, blooming by;  
 And last the heath with all its various bloom,  
 And the close lanes that led the trav'ler home.

Then could these scenes the former joys renew?  
 Or was there now dejection in the view?—  
 Nor one or other would they yield—and why?        }  
 The mind was absent, and the vacant eye               }  
 Wander'd o'er viewless scenes, that but appear'd to die.   }

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## TALE XI.

### EDWARD SHORE.

Seem they grave or learned?  
Why, so didst thou [.....  
.....] seem they religious?  
Why, so didst thou; or are they spare in diet,  
Free from gross passion or of mirth or anger,  
Constant in spirit, not swerving with the blood,  
Garnish'd and deck'd in modest compliment,  
Not working with the eye without the ear,  
And but [in] purged judgment trusting neither?  
Such and so finely bolted didst thou seem.  
*Henry V. Act II. Scene 2.*

Better I were distract:  
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,  
And woes by strong imagination lose  
The knowledge of themselves.  
*Lear, Act IV. Scene 6.*

## TALE XI.

### EDWARD SHORE.

Genius! thou gift of Heav'n! thou light divine!  
Amid what dangers art thou doom'd to shine!  
Oft will the body's weakness check thy force,  
Oft damp thy vigour, and impede thy course;  
And trembling nerves compel thee to restrain  
Thy nobler efforts, to contend with pain;  
Or Want (sad guest!) will in thy presence come,  
And breathe around her melancholy gloom;  
To life's low cares will thy proud thought confine,  
And make her sufferings, her impatience, thine. 10  
Evil and strong, seducing passions prey  
On soaring minds, and win them from their way;  
Who then to vice the subject spirits give,  
And in the service of the conqu'ror live;  
Like captive Samson making sport for all,  
Who fear'd their strength, and glory in their fall.  
Genius, with virtue, still may lack the aid  
Implored by humble minds and hearts afraid;  
May leave to timid souls the shield and sword  
Of the tried faith, and the resistless word; 20  
Amid a world of dangers venturing forth,  
Frail, but yet fearless, proud in conscious worth,  
Till strong temptation, in some fatal time,  
Assails the heart, and wins the soul to crime;  
When, left by honour, and by sorrow spent,  
Unused to pray, unable to repent,  
The nobler powers that once exalted high  
Th' aspiring man, shall then degraded lie:  
Reason, through anguish, shall her throne forsake,  
And strength of mind but stronger madness make. 30  
When EDWARD SHORE had reach'd his twentieth year,  
He felt his bosom light, his conscience clear;  
Applause at school the youthful hero gain'd,  
And trials there with manly strength sustain'd;  
With prospects bright upon the world he came,  
Pure love of virtue, strong desire of fame;  
Men watch'd the way his lofty mind would take,  
And all foretold the progress he would make.  
Boast of these friends, to older men a guide, 40  
Proud of his parts, but gracious in his pride;  
He bore a gay good-nature in his face,  
And in his air were dignity and grace;  
Dress that became his state and years he wore,  
And sense and spirit shone in Edward Shore.  
Thus while admiring friends the youth beheld,  
His own disgust their forward hopes repell'd;  
For he unfix'd, unfixing, look'd around,  
And no employment but in seeking found;

He gave his restless thoughts to views refined,  
 And shrank from worldly cares with wounded mind. 50  
 Rejecting trade, awhile he dwelt on laws,  
 "But who could plead, if unapproved the cause?"  
 A doubting, dismal tribe physicians seem'd;  
 Divines o'er texts and disputations dream'd;  
 War and its glory he perhaps could love,  
 But there again he must the cause approve.  
 Our hero thought no deed should gain applause,  
 Where timid virtue found support in laws;  
 He to all good would soar, would fly all sin,  
 By the pure prompting of the will within; 60  
 "Who needs a law that binds him not to steal,"  
 Ask'd the young teacher, "can he rightly feel?  
 To curb the will, or arm in honour's cause,  
 Or aid the weak—are these enforced by laws?  
 Should we a foul, ungenerous action dread,  
 Because a law condemns th' adulterous bed?  
 Or fly pollution, not for fear of stain,  
 But that some statute tells us to refrain?  
 The grosser herd in ties like these we bind,  
 In virtue's freedom moves th' enlighten'd mind." 70  
 "Man's heart deceives him," said a friend. "Of course,"  
 Replied the youth, "but, has it power to force?  
 Unless it forces, call it as you will,  
 It is but wish, and proneness to the ill."  
 "Art thou not tempted?" "Do I fall?" said Shore:  
 "The pure have fallen."—"Then are pure no more.  
 While reason guides me, I shall walk aright,  
 Nor need a steadier hand, or stronger light;  
 Nor this in dread of awful threats, design'd  
 For the weak spirit and the grov'ling mind, 80  
 But that, engaged by thoughts and views sublime,  
 I wage free war with grossness and with crime."  
 Thus look'd he proudly on the vulgar crew,  
 Whom statutes govern, and whom fears subdue.  
 Faith, with his virtue, he indeed profess'd,  
 But doubts deprived his ardent mind of rest;  
 Reason, his sovereign mistress, fail'd to show  
 Light through the mazes of the world below;  
 Questions arose, and they surpass'd the skill  
 Of his sole aid, and would be dubious still; 90  
 These to discuss he sought no common guide,  
 But to the doubters in his doubts applied;  
 When all together might in freedom speak,  
 And their loved truth with mutual ardour seek.  
 Alas! though men who feel their eyes decay  
 Take more than common pains to find their way,  
 Yet, when for this they ask each other's aid,  
 Their mutual purpose is the more delay'd:  
 Of all their doubts, their reasoning clear'd not one,  
 Still the same spots were present in the sun; 100  
 Still the same scruples haunted Edward's mind,  
 Who found no rest, nor took the means to find.  
 But though with shaken faith, and slave to fame,  
 Vain and aspiring on the world he came;  
 Yet was he studious, serious, moral, grave,  
 No passion's victim, and no system's slave;  
 Vice he opposed, indulgence he disdain'd,  
 And o'er each sense in conscious triumph reign'd.  
 Who often reads, will sometimes wish to write,  
 And Shore would yield instruction and delight: 110  
 A serious drama he design'd, but found  
 'Twas tedious travelling in that gloomy ground;  
 A deep and solemn story he would try,  
 But grew ashamed of ghosts, and laid it by;  
 Sermons he wrote, but they who knew his creed,  
 Or knew it not, were ill disposed to read;  
 And he would lastly be the nation's guide,  
 But, studying, fail'd to fix upon a side;  
 Fame he desired, and talents he possess'd,  
 But loved not labour, though he could not rest, 120  
 Nor firmly fix the vacillating mind,  
 That, ever working, could no centre find.  
 'Tis thus a sanguine reader loves to trace

The Nile forth rushing on his glorious race;  
 Calm and secure the fancied traveller goes  
 Through sterile deserts and by threat'ning foes;  
 He thinks not then of Afric's scorching sands,  
 Th' Arabian sea, the Abyssinian bands;  
 Fasils<sup>[7]</sup> and Michaels, and the robbers all,  
 Whom we politely chiefs and heroes call; 130  
 He of success alone delights to think, }  
 He views that fount, he stands upon the brink, }  
 And drinks a fancied draught, exulting so to drink. }

In his own room, and with his books around,  
 His lively mind its chief employment found;  
 Then idly busy, quietly employ'd,  
 And, lost to life, his visions were enjoy'd;  
 Yet still he took a keen inquiring view  
 Of all that crowds neglect, desire, pursue;  
 And thus abstracted, curious, still, serene, 140  
 He, unemploy'd, beheld life's shifting scene;  
 Still more averse from vulgar joys and cares,  
 Still more unfitted for the world's affairs.

There was a house where Edward oft-times went,  
 And social hours in pleasant trifling spent;  
 He read, conversed and reason'd, sang and play'd,  
 And all were happy while the idler stay'd;  
 Too happy one, for thence arose the pain,  
 Till this engaging trifler came again.

But did he love? We answer, day by day, 150  
 The loving feet would take th' accustom'd way;  
 The amorous eye would rove as if in quest  
 Of something rare, and on the mansion rest;  
 The same soft passion touch'd the gentle tongue,  
 And Anna's charms in tender notes were sung;  
 The ear too seem'd to feel the common flame,  
 Sooth'd and delighted with the fair one's name;  
 And thus as love each other part possess'd,  
 The heart, no doubt, its sovereign power confess'd.

Pleased in her sight, the youth required no more; 160  
 Not rich himself, he saw the damsel poor;  
 And he too wisely, nay, too kindly loved,  
 To pain the being whom his soul approved.

A serious friend our cautious youth possess'd,  
 And at his table sat a welcome guest;  
 Both unemploy'd, it was their chief delight  
 To read what free and daring authors write;  
 Authors who loved from common views to soar,  
 And seek the fountains never traced before;  
 Truth they profess'd, yet often left the true 170  
 And beaten prospect, for the wild and new.  
 His chosen friend his fiftieth year had seen,  
 His fortune easy, and his air serene;

Deist and atheist call'd; for few agreed  
 What were his notions, principles, or creed;  
 His mind reposed not, for he hated rest,  
 But all things made a query or a jest;  
 Perplex'd himself, he ever sought to prove  
 That man is doom'd in endless doubt to rove;  
 Himself in darkness he profess'd to be, 180  
 And would maintain that not a man could see.

The youthful friend, dissentient, reason'd still  
 Of the soul's prowess, and the subject will;  
 Of virtue's beauty, and of honour's force,  
 And a warm zeal gave life to his discourse;  
 Since from his feelings all his fire arose,  
 And he had interest in the themes he chose.

The friend, indulging a sarcastic smile,  
 Said—"Dear enthusiast! thou wilt change thy style,  
 When man's delusions, errors, crimes, deceit, 190  
 No more distress thee, and no longer cheat."

Yet lo! this cautious man, so coolly wise,  
 On a young beauty fix'd unguarded eyes;  
 And her he married. Edward at the view  
 Bade to his cheerful visits long adieu;  
 But haply err'd, for this engaging bride  
 No mirth suppress'd, but rather cause supplied;



And, when she saw the friends, by reasoning long,  
 Confused if right, and positive if wrong, 200  
 With playful speech and smile, that spoke delight,  
 She made them careless both of wrong and right.  
 This gentle damsel gave consent to wed,  
 With school and school-day dinners in her head:  
 She now was promised choice of daintiest food,  
 And costly dress, that made her sovereign good;  
 With walks on hilly heath to banish spleen,  
 And summer-visits when the roads were clean.  
 All these she loved, to these she gave consent,  
 And she was married to her heart's content.

Their manner this—the friends together read, 210  
 Till books a cause for disputation bred;  
 Debate then follow'd, and the vapour'd child  
 Declared they argued till her head was wild;  
 And strange to her it was that mortal brain  
 Could seek the trial, or endure the pain.  
 Then, as the friend reposed, the younger pair  
 Sat down to cards, and play'd beside his chair;  
 Till he, awaking, to his books applied,  
 Or heard the music of th' obedient bride.

If mild the evening, in the fields they stray'd, 220  
 And their own flock with partial eye survey'd;  
 But oft the husband, to indulgence prone,  
 Resumed his book, and bade them walk alone.  
 "Do, my kind Edward! I must take mine ease,  
 Name the dear girl the planets and the trees;  
 Tell her what warblers pour their evening song,  
 What insects flutter, as you walk along;  
 Teach her to fix the roving thoughts, to bind  
 The wandering sense, and methodize the mind."

This was obey'd; and oft when this was done, 230  
 They calmly gazed on the declining sun;  
 In silence saw the glowing landscape fade,  
 Or, sitting, sang beneath the arbour's shade:  
 Till rose the moon, and on each youthful face  
 Shed a soft beauty, and a dangerous grace.  
 When the young wife beheld in long debate  
 The friends, all careless as she seeming sate;  
 It soon appear'd, there was in one combined  
 The nobler person and the richer mind:

He wore no wig, no grisly beard was seen, 240  
 And none beheld him careless or unclean;  
 Or watch'd him sleeping—we indeed have heard  
 Of sleeping beauty, and it has appear'd;  
 'Tis seen in infants; there indeed we find  
 The features soften'd by the slumbering mind—  
 But other beauties, when disposed to sleep,  
 Should from the eye of keen inspector keep:  
 The lovely nymph who would her swain surprise,  
 May close her mouth, but not conceal her eyes;

Sleep from the fairest face some beauty takes, 250  
 And all the homely features homelier makes;  
 So thought our wife, beholding with a sigh  
 Her sleeping spouse, and Edward smiling by.  
 A sick relation for the husband sent;  
 Without delay the friendly sceptic went;  
 Nor fear'd the youthful pair, for he had seen  
 The wife untroubled, and the friend serene;  
 No selfish purpose in his roving eyes,  
 No vile deception in her fond replies:

So judged the husband, and with judgment true, 260  
 For neither yet the guilt or danger knew.  
 What now remain'd? but they again should play  
 Th' accustom'd game, and walk th' accustom'd way;  
 With careless freedom should converse or read,  
 And the friend's absence neither fear nor heed.  
 But rather now they seem'd confused, constrain'd; }  
 Within their room still restless they remain'd, }  
 And painfully they felt, and knew each other pain'd.— }  
 Ah! foolish men! how could ye thus depend,  
 One on himself, the other on his friend? 270  
 The youth with troubled eye the lady saw,  
 Yet felt too brave, too daring to withdraw;

While she, with tuneless hand the jarring keys  
Touching, was not one moment at her ease.  
Now would she walk, and call her friendly guide,  
Now speak of rain, and cast her cloak aside;  
Seize on a book, unconscious what she read,  
And restless still, to new resources fled;  
Then laugh'd aloud, then tried to look serene,  
And ever changed, and every change was seen. 280

Painful it is to dwell on deeds of shame—  
The trying day was past, another came;  
The third was all remorse, confusion, dread,  
And (all too late!) the fallen hero fled.

Then felt the youth, in that seducing time,  
How feebly honour guards the heart from crime:  
Small is his native strength; man needs the stay,  
The strength imparted in the trying day;  
For all that honour brings against the force  
Of headlong passion, aids its rapid course; 290  
Its slight resistance but provokes the fire,  
As wood-work stops the flame, and then conveys it higher.

The husband came; a wife by guilt made bold  
Had, meeting, sooth'd him, as in days of old;  
But soon this fact transpired; her strong distress,  
And his friend's absence, left him nought to guess.

Still cool, though grieved, thus prudence bade him write—

"I cannot pardon, and I will not fight;  
Thou art too poor a culprit for the laws,  
And I too faulty to support my cause. 300  
All must be punish'd; I must sigh alone,  
At home thy victim for her guilt atone;  
And thou, unhappy! virtuous now no more,  
Must loss of fame, peace, purity deplore;  
Sinners with praise will pierce thee to the heart,  
And saints deriding, tell thee what thou art."

Such was his fall; and Edward, from that time,  
Felt in full force the censure and the crime—  
Despised, ashamed; his noble views before,  
And his proud thoughts, degraded him the more. 310  
Should he repent—would that conceal his shame?  
Could peace be his? It perish'd with his fame.

Himself he scorn'd, nor could his crime forgive;  
He fear'd to die, yet felt ashamed to live;  
Grieved, but not contrite was his heart—oppress'd,  
Not broken; not converted, but distress'd;  
He wanted will to bend the stubborn knee,                    }  
He wanted light the cause of ill to see,                    }  
To learn how frail is man, how humble then should be;    }

For faith he had not, or a faith too weak 320  
To gain the help that humbled sinners seek;  
Else had he pray'd—to an offended God  
His tears had flown a penitential flood;  
Though far astray, he would have heard the call  
Of mercy—"Come! return, thou prodigal;"  
Then, though confused, distress'd, ashamed, afraid,  
Still had the trembling penitent obey'd;  
Though faith had fainted, when assail'd by fear,  
Hope to the soul had whisper'd, "Persevere!"  
Till, in his Father's house an humbled guest, 330  
He would have found forgiveness, comfort, rest.

But all this joy was to our youth denied  
By his fierce passions and his daring pride;  
And shame and doubt impell'd him in a course,  
Once so abhorr'd, with unresisted force.  
Proud minds and guilty, whom their crimes oppress,  
Fly to new crimes for comfort and redress;  
So found our fallen youth a short relief  
In wine, the opiate guilt applies to grief—  
From fleeting mirth that o'er the bottle lives; 340  
From the false joy its inspiration gives;

And from associates, pleased to find a friend  
With powers to lead them, gladden, and defend,  
In all those scenes where transient ease is found  
For minds whom sins oppress, and sorrows wound.  
Wine is like anger; for it makes us strong,                    }  
Blind and impatient, and it leads us wrong;                    }

The strength is quickly lost, we feel the error long. }  
 Thus led, thus strengthen'd in an evil cause  
 For folly pleading, sought the youth applause; 350  
 Sad for a time, then eloquently wild,  
 He gaily spoke as his companions smiled;  
 Lightly he rose, and with his former grace  
 Proposed some doubt, and argued on the case;  
 Fate and fore-knowledge were his favourite themes—  
 How vain man's purpose, how absurd his schemes:  
 "Whatever is, was ere our birth decreed; }  
 We think our actions from ourselves proceed, }  
 And idly we lament th' inevitable deed; }  
 It seems our own, but there's a power above 360  
 Directs the motion, nay, that makes us move;  
 Nor good nor evil can you beings name,  
 Who are but rooks and castles in the game;  
 Superior natures with their puppets play,  
 Till, bagg'd or buried, all are swept away."  
 Such were the notions of a mind to ill  
 Now prone, but ardent and determined still.  
 Of joy now eager, as before of fame,  
 And screen'd by folly when assail'd by shame,  
 Deeply he sank; obey'd each passion's call, 370  
 And used his reason to defend them all.  
 Shall I proceed, and step by step relate  
 The odious progress of a sinner's fate?  
 No—let me rather hasten to the time  
 (Sure to arrive) when misery waits on crime.  
 With virtue, prudence fled; what Shore possess'd  
 Was sold, was spent, and he was now distress'd;  
 And Want, unwelcome stranger, pale and wan,  
 Met with her haggard looks the hurried man;  
 His pride felt keenly what he must expect 380  
 From useless pity and from cold neglect.  
 Struck by new terrors, from his friends he fled,  
 And wept his woes upon a restless bed;  
 Retiring late, at early hour to rise,  
 With shrunken features, and with bloodshot eyes.  
 If sleep one moment closed the dismal view,  
 Fancy her terrors built upon the true;  
 And night and day had their alternate woes,  
 That baffled pleasure, and that mock'd repose;  
 Till to despair and anguish was consign'd 390  
 The wreck and ruin of a noble mind.  
 Now seized for debt, and lodged within a jail,  
 He tried his friendships, and he found them fail;  
 Then fail'd his spirits, and his thoughts were all  
 Fix'd on his sins, his sufferings, and his fall.  
 His ruffled mind was pictured in his face,  
 Once the fair seat of dignity and grace;  
 Great was the danger of a man so prone  
 To think of madness, and to think alone;  
 Yet pride still lived, and struggled to sustain 400  
 The drooping spirit and the roving brain;  
 But this too fail'd: a friend his freedom gave,  
 And sent him help the threat'ning world to brave;  
 Gave solid counsel what to seek or flee,  
 But still would stranger to his person be:  
 In vain! the truth determined to explore,  
 He traced the friend whom he had wrong'd before.  
 This was too much; both aided and advised  
 By one who shunn'd him, pitied, and despised,  
 He bore it not; 'twas a deciding stroke, 410  
 And on his reason like a torrent broke:  
 In dreadful stillness he appear'd awhile,  
 With vacant horror and a ghastly smile;  
 Then rose at once into the frantic rage,  
 That force controll'd not, nor could love assuage.  
 Friends now appear'd, but in the man was seen  
 The angry maniac, with vindictive mien;  
 Too late their pity gave to care and skill  
 The hurried mind and ever-wandering will;  
 Unnoticed pass'd all time, and not a ray 420  
 Of reason broke on his benighted way;  
 But now he spurn'd the straw in pure disdain,

And now laugh'd loudly at the clinking chain.

Then, as its wrath subsided, by degrees  
The mind sank slowly to infantine ease;  
To playful folly, and to causeless joy,  
Speech without aim, and without end, employ;  
He drew fantastic figures on the wall,  
And gave some wild relation of them all;  
With brutal shape he join'd the human face,  
And idiot smiles approved the motley race.

430

Harmless at length th' unhappy man was found,  
The spirit settled, but the reason drown'd;  
And all the dreadful tempest died away,  
To the dull stillness of the misty day.

And now his freedom he attain'd—if free,  
The lost to reason, truth, and hope, can be;  
His friends, or wearied with the charge, or sure  
The harmless wretch was now beyond a cure,  
Gave him to wander where he pleased, and find  
His own resources for the eager mind;  
The playful children of the place he meets,  
Playful with them he rambles through the streets;  
In all they need, his stronger arm he lends,  
And his lost mind to these approving friends.

440

That gentle maid, whom once the youth had loved,  
Is now with mild religious pity moved;  
Kindly she chides his boyish flights, while he  
Will for a moment fix'd and pensive be;  
And, as she trembling speaks, his lively eyes  
Explore her looks, he listens to her sighs;  
Charm'd by her voice, th' harmonious sounds invade  
His clouded mind, and for a time persuade:  
Like a pleased infant, who has newly caught  
From the maternal glance a gleam of thought;  
He stands enrapt, the half-known voice to hear,  
And starts, half-conscious, at the falling tear.

450

Rarely from town, nor then unwatch'd, he goes,  
In darker mood, as if to hide his woes;  
Returning soon, he with impatience seeks  
His youthful friends, and shouts, and sings, and speaks;  
Speaks a wild speech with action all as wild—  
The children's leader, and himself a child;  
He spins their top, or, at their bidding, bends  
His back, while o'er it leap his laughing friends;  
Simple and weak, he acts the boy once more,  
And heedless children call him Silly Shore.

460

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## TALE XII.

'SQUIRE THOMAS;

OR,

### THE PRECIPITATE CHOICE.

Such smiling rogues as these,  
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords in twain,  
Too intricate t' unloose——

*Lear*, Act II. Scene 2.

My other self, my counsel's consistory,  
My oracle, my prophet, ...  
I as a child will go by thy direction.

*Richard III.* Act II. Scene 2.

If I do not have pity [of] her, I'm a villain;  
if I do not love her, I am a Jew.

*Much Ado about Nothing*, Act II. Scene 3.

Women are soft, mild, [pitiful and] flexible;  
[Thou stern,] obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.

3 *Henry VI.* Act I. Scene 4.

He must be told of it, and he shall; the office  
Becomes a woman best; I'll take it upon me;  
If I prove honey-mouth'd, let my tongue blister.

*Winter's Tale*, Act II. Scene 2.

Disguise—I see thou art a wickedness.

*Twelfth Night*, Act II. Scene 2.

## TALE XII.

'SQUIRE THOMAS.

'Squire Thomas flatter'd long a wealthy aunt,  
Who left him all that she could give or grant:  
Ten years he tried, with all his craft and skill,  
To fix the sovereign lady's varying will;  
Ten years enduring at her board to sit,  
He meekly listen'd to her tales and wit;  
He took the meanest office man can take,  
And his aunt's vices for her money's sake.

By many a threat'ning hint she waked his fear,  
And he was pain'd to see a rival near;

10

Yet all the taunts of her contemptuous pride  
He bore, nor found his grov'ling spirit tried;  
Nay, when she wish'd his parents to traduce,  
Fawning he smiled, and justice call'd th' abuse;  
"They taught you nothing; are you not, at best," }  
Said the proud dame, "a trifler, and a jest?, }  
Confess you are a fool!"—he bow'd, and he confess'd. }

This vex'd him much, but could not always last:  
The dame is buried, and the trial past.

There was a female, who had courted long  
Her cousin's gifts, and deeply felt the wrong;  
By a vain boy forbidden to attend  
The private councils of her wealthy friend,  
She vow'd revenge, nor should that crafty boy  
In triumph undisturb'd his spoils enjoy;  
He heard, he smiled, and when the will was read,  
Kindly dismiss'd the kindred of the dead;  
"The dear deceased," he call'd her, and the crowd  
Moved off with curses deep and threat'nings loud.

20

The youth retired, and, with a mind at ease,  
Found he was rich, and fancied he must please.  
He might have pleased, and to his comfort found  
The wife he wish'd, if he had sought around;  
For there were lasses of his own degree,  
With no more hatred to the state than he;  
But he had courted spleen and age so long,  
His heart refused to woo the fair and young;

30

So long attended on caprice and whim,  
 He thought attention now was due to him;  
 And as his flattery pleased the wealthy dame, 40  
 Heir to the wealth he might the flattery claim;  
 But this the fair with one accord denied,  
 Nor waved for man's caprice the sex's pride.  
 There is a season when to them is due  
 Worship and awe, and they will claim it too:  
 "Fathers," they cry, "long hold us in their chain,  
 Nay, tyrant brothers claim a right to reign;  
 Uncles and guardians we in turn obey,  
 And husbands rule with ever-during sway; 50  
 Short is the time when lovers at the feet  
 Of beauty kneel, and own the slavery sweet;  
 And shall we this our triumph, this the aim  
 And boast of female power, forbear to claim?  
 No! we demand that homage, that respect,  
 Or the proud rebel punish and reject."  
 Our hero, still too indolent, too nice  
 To pay for beauty the accustom'd price,  
 No less forbore t' address the humbler maid,  
 Who might have yielded with the price unpaid;  
 But lived, himself to humour and to please, 60  
 To count his money, and enjoy his ease.  
 It pleased a neighbouring 'squire to recommend  
 A faithful youth, as servant to his friend;  
 Nay, more than servant, whom he praised for parts  
 Ductile yet strong, and for the best of hearts;  
 One who might ease him in his small affairs,  
 With tenants, tradesmen, taxes, and repairs;  
 Answer his letters, look to all his dues,  
 And entertain him with discourse and news.  
 The 'squire believed, and found the trusted youth 70  
 A very pattern for his care and truth;  
 Not for his virtues to be praised alone,  
 But for a modest mien and humble tone;  
 Assenting always, but as if he meant  
 Only to strength of reasons to assent:  
 For was he stubborn, and retain'd his doubt,  
 Till the more subtle 'squire had forced it out;  
 Nay, still was right, but he perceived that strong  
 And powerful minds could make the right the wrong. 80  
 When the 'squire's thoughts on some fair damsel dwelt,  
 The faithful friend his apprehensions felt;  
 It would rejoice his faithful heart to find  
 A lady suited to his master's mind;  
 But who deserved that master? who would prove  
 That hers was pure, uninterested love?  
 Although a servant, he would scorn to take  
 A countess, till she suffer'd for his sake;  
 Some tender spirit, humble, faithful, true,  
 Such, my dear master! must be sought for you.  
 Six months had pass'd, and not a lady seen, 90  
 With just this love, 'twixt fifty and fifteen;  
 All seem'd his doctrine or his pride to shun,  
 All would be woo'd, before they would be won;  
 When the chance naming of a race and fair  
 Our 'squire disposed to take his pleasure there.  
 The friend profess'd, "although he first began  
 To hint the thing, it seem'd a thoughtless plan:  
 The roads, he fear'd, were foul, the days were short,  
 The village far, and yet there might be sport."  
 "What! you of roads and starless nights afraid? 100  
 You think to govern! you to be obey'd!"  
 Smiling he spoke; the humble friend declared  
 His soul's obedience, and to go prepared.  
 The place was distant, but with great delight  
 They saw a race, and hail'd the glorious sight:  
 The 'squire exulted, and declared the ride  
 Had amply paid, and he was satisfied.  
 They gazed, they feasted, and, in happy mood,  
 Homeward return'd, and hastening as they rode;  
 For short the day, and sudden was the change 110  
 From light to darkness, and the way was strange;  
 Our hero soon grew peevish, then distress'd;

He dreaded darkness, and he sigh'd for rest:  
 Going, they pass'd a village; but, alas!  
 Returning saw no village to repass;  
 The 'squire remember'd too a noble hall,  
 Large as a church, and whiter than its wall:  
 This he had noticed as they rode along,  
 And justly reason'd that their road was wrong.  
 George, full of awe, was modest in reply— 120  
 "The fault was his, 'twas folly to deny;  
 And of his master's safety were he sure,  
 There was no grievance he would not endure."  
 This made his peace with the relenting 'squire,  
 Whose thoughts yet dwelt on supper and a fire;  
 When, as they reach'd a long and pleasant green,  
 Dwellings of men, and next a man, were seen.  
 "My friend," said George, "to travellers astray  
 Point out an inn, and guide us on the way."  
 The man look'd up; "Surprising! can it be 130  
 My master's son? as I'm alive, 'tis he."  
 "How! Robin," George replied, "and are we near  
 My father's house? how strangely things appear!—  
 Dear sir, though wanderers, we at last are right:  
 Let us proceed, and glad my father's sight;  
 We shall at least be fairly lodged and fed,  
 I can ensure a supper and a bed;  
 Let us this night, as one of pleasure date,  
 And of surprise: it is an act of fate."  
 "Go on," the 'squire in happy temper cried; 140  
 "I like such blunder! I approve such guide."  
 They ride, they halt; the farmer comes in haste;  
 Then tells his wife how much their house is graced;  
 They bless the chance, they praise the lucky son,  
 That caused the error.—Nay! it was not one,  
 But their good fortune—Cheerful grew the 'squire,  
 Who found dependants, flattery, wine, and fire;  
 He heard the jack turn round; the busy dame, }  
 Produced her damask; and with supper came, }  
 The daughter, dress'd with care, and full of maiden-shame. } 150  
 Surprised, our hero saw the air and dress,  
 And strove his admiration to express;  
 Nay! felt it too—for Harriot was, in truth,  
 A tall fair beauty in the bloom of youth;  
 And, from the pleasure and surprise, a grace  
 Adorn'd the blooming damsel's form and face;  
 Then too, such high respect and duty paid  
 By all—such silent reverence in the maid;  
 Vent'ring with caution, yet with haste, a glance;  
 Loth to retire, yet trembling to advance, 160  
 Appear'd the nymph, and in her gentle guest  
 Stirr'd soft emotions till the hour of rest.  
 Sweet was his sleep, and in the morn again  
 He felt a mixture of delight and pain:  
 "How fair, how gentle," said the 'squire, "how meek,  
 And yet how sprightly, when disposed to speak!  
 Nature has bless'd her form, and Heaven her mind,  
 But in her favours Fortune is unkind;  
 Poor is the maid—nay, poor she cannot prove  
 Who is enrich'd with beauty, worth, and love." 170  
 The 'squire arose, with no precise intent  
 To go or stay—uncertain what he meant.  
 He moved to part—they begg'd him first to dine;  
 And who could then escape from love and wine?  
 As came the night, more charming grew the fair,  
 And seem'd to watch him with a two-fold care:  
 On the third morn, resolving not to stay,  
 Though urged by love, he bravely rode away.  
 Arrived at home, three pensive days he gave  
 To feelings fond and meditations grave; 180  
 Lovely she was, and, if he did not err,  
 As fond of him as his fond heart of her;  
 Still he delay'd, unable to decide  
 Which was the master-passion, love or pride:  
 He sometimes wonder'd how his friend could make,  
 And then exulted in, the night's mistake;  
 Had she but fortune, "doubtless then," he cried,

"Some happier man had won the wealthy bride."  
 While thus he hung in balance, now inclined  
 To change his state, and then to change his mind— 190  
 That careless George dropp'd idly on the ground  
 A letter, which his crafty master found;  
 The stupid youth confess'd his fault, and pray'd  
 The generous 'squire to spare a gentle maid;  
 Of whom her tender mother, full of fears,  
 Had written much—"She caught her oft in tears,  
 For ever thinking on a youth above  
 Her humble fortune—still she own'd not love;  
 Nor can define, dear girl! the cherish'd pain,  
 But would rejoice to see the cause again. 200  
 That neighbouring youth, whom she endured before,  
 She now rejects, and will behold no more;  
 Raised by her passion, she no longer stoops  
 To her own equals, but she pines and droops:  
 Like to a lily, on whose sweets the sun  
 Has withering gazed—she saw and was undone.  
 His wealth allured her not—nor was she moved  
 By his superior state, himself she loved:  
 So mild, so good, so gracious, so genteel— }  
 But spare your sister, and her love conceal;, } 210  
 We must the fault forgive, since she the pain must feel." }  
 "Fault!" said the 'squire, "there's coarseness in the mind  
 That thus conceives of feelings so refined;  
 Here end my doubts, nor blame yourself, my friend,  
 Fate made you careless—here my doubts have end."  
 The way is plain before us—there is now  
 The lover's visit first, and then the vow  
 Mutual and fond, the marriage-rite, the bride  
 Brought to her home with all a husband's pride;  
 The 'squire receives the prize his merits won, 220  
 And the glad parents leave the patron-son.  
 But in short time he saw with much surprise, }  
 First gloom, then grief, and then resentment rise, }  
 From proud, commanding frowns and anger-darting eyes: }  
 "Is there in Harriot's humble mind this fire,  
 This fierce impatience?" ask'd the puzzled 'squire:  
 "Has marriage changed her? or the mask she wore  
 Has she thrown by, and is herself once more?"  
 Hour after hour, when clouds on clouds appear,  
 Dark and more dark, we know the tempest near; 230  
 And thus the frowning brow, the restless form,  
 And threat'ning glance, forerun domestic storm:  
 So read the husband, and, with troubled mind,  
 Reveal'd his fears—"My love, I hope you find  
 All here is pleasant—but I must confess }  
 You seem offended, or in some distress; }  
 Explain the grief you feel, and leave me to redress." }  
 "Leave it to you?" replied the nymph—"indeed!  
 What—to the cause from whence the ills proceed?  
 Good Heaven! to take me from a place, where I 240  
 Had every comfort underneath the sky;  
 And then immure me in a gloomy place,  
 With the grim monsters of your ugly race,  
 That from their canvas staring, make me dread  
 Through the dark chambers where they hang to tread!  
 No friend nor neighbour comes to give that joy,  
 Which all things here must banish or destroy:  
 Where is the promised coach? the pleasant ride?  
 Oh! what a fortune has a farmer's bride!  
 Your sordid pride has placed me just above 250  
 Your hired domestics—and what pays me? love!  
 A selfish fondness I endure each hour,  
 And share unwitness'd pomp, unenvied power;  
 I hear your folly, smile at your parade,  
 And see your favourite dishes duly made;  
 Then am I richly dress'd for you t' admire,  
 Such is my duty and my lord's desire;  
 Is this a life for youth, for health, for joy?  
 Are these my duties—this my base employ?  
 No! to my father's house will I repair, 260  
 And make your idle wealth support me there;  
 Was it your wish to have an humble bride



For bondage thankful? Curse upon your pride!  
 Was it a slave you wanted? You shall see,  
 That, if not happy, I at least am free;  
 Well, sir, your answer!"—silent stood the 'squire,  
 As looks a miser at his house on fire;  
 Where all he deems is vanish'd in that flame,  
 Swept from the earth his substance and his name:  
 So, lost to every promised joy of life, 270  
 Our 'squire stood gaping at his angry wife;—  
 His fate, his ruin, where he saw it vain  
 To hope for peace, pray, threaten, or complain;  
 And thus, betwixt his wonder at the ill  
 And his despair—there stood he gaping still.  
 "Your answer, sir—shall I depart a spot  
 I thus detest?"—"Oh, miserable lot!"  
 Exclaim'd the man; "Go, serpent! nor remain  
 To sharpen wo by insult and disdain: 280  
 A nest of harpies was I doom'd to meet;  
 What plots, what combinations of deceit!  
 I see it now—all plann'd, design'd, contrived;  
 Served by that villain—by this fury wived—  
 What fate is mine! What wisdom, virtue, truth,  
 Can stand, if dæmons set their traps for youth?  
 He lose his way! vile dog! he cannot lose  
 The way a villain through his life pursues;  
 And thou, deceiver! thou, afraid to move,  
 And hiding close the serpent in the dove!  
 I saw—but, fated to endure disgrace, 290  
 Unheeding saw, the fury in thy face;  
 And call'd it spirit—Oh! I might have found  
 Fraud and imposture—all the kindred round!  
 A nest of vipers"——  
   "Sir, I'll not admit  
 These wild effusions of your angry wit:  
 Have you that value, that we all should use  
 Such mighty arts for such important views?  
 Are you such prize—and is my state so fair,  
 That they should sell their souls to get me there?  
 Think you that we alone our thoughts disguise?    }  
 When in pursuit of some contended prize,    }  
 Mask we alone the heart, and soothe whom we despise?                                }  
 Speak you of craft and subtle schemes, who know  
 That all your wealth you to deception owe;  
 Who play'd for ten dull years a scoundrel-part,  
 To worm yourself into a widow's heart?  
 Now, when you guarded, with superior skill,  
 That lady's closet, and preserved her will,  
 Blind in your craft, you saw not one of those 310  
 Opposed by you might you in turn oppose;  
 Or watch your motions, and by art obtain  
 Share of that wealth you gave your peace to gain?  
 Did conscience never"——  
   "Cease, Tormentor, cease—  
 Or reach me poison—let me rest in peace!"  
   "Agreed—but hear me—let the truth appear"—  
   "Then state your purpose—I'll be calm and hear"—  
   "Know then, this wealth, sole object of your care,  
 I had some right, without your hand, to share;  
 My mother's claim was just—but soon she saw  
 Your power, compell'd, insulted, to withdraw: 320  
 'Twas then my father, in his anger, swore  
 You should divide the fortune, or restore;  
 Long we debated—and you find me now  
 Heroic victim to a father's vow;  
 Like Jephtha's daughter, but in different state,  
 And both decreed to mourn our early fate;  
 Hence was my brother servant to your pride,  
 Vengeance made him your slave—and me your bride.  
 Now all is known—a dreadful price I pay 330  
 For our revenge—but still we have our day;  
 All that you love you must with others share,  
 Or all you dread from their resentment dare!  
 Yet terms I offer—let contention cease:  
 Divide the spoil, and let us part in peace."  
   Our hero trembling heard—he sat—he rose—

Nor could his motions nor his mind compose;  
He paced the room—and, stalking to her side, }  
Gazed on the face of his undaunted bride; }  
And nothing there but scorn and calm aversion spied. }  
He would have vengeance, yet he fear'd the law: 340  
Her friends would threaten, and their power he saw;  
"Then let her go;"—but oh! a mighty sum  
Would that demand, since he had let her come;  
Nor from his sorrows could he find redress,  
Save that which led him to a like distress,  
And all his ease was in his wife to see  
A wretch as anxious and distress'd as he.  
Her strongest wish, the fortune to divide  
And part in peace, his avarice denied;  
And thus it happen'd, as in all deceit, 350  
The cheater found the evil of the cheat;  
The husband grieved—nor was the wife at rest;  
Him she could vex, and he could her molest;  
She could his passion into frenzy raise,  
But, when the fire was kindled, fear'd the blaze:  
As much they studied, so in time they found  
The easiest way to give the deepest wound;  
But then, like fencers, they were equal still,  
Both lost in danger what they gain'd in skill;  
Each heart a keener kind of rancour gain'd, 360  
And paining more, was more severely pain'd;  
And thus by both were equal vengeance dealt,  
And both the anguish they inflicted felt.

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### TALE XIII.

#### *JESSE AND COLIN.*

Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect.

*Merry Wives of Windsor, Act II. Scene 2.*

She hath spoken that she should not, I am sure of that; Heaven knows what she hath known.

*Macbeth, Act V. Scene 1.*

Our house is hell, and thou a merry devil.

*Merchant of Venice, Act II. Scene 3.*

And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit of too much, as they that starve with nothing; it is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean.

*Merchant of Venice, Act I. Scene 2.*

### TALE XIII.

#### *JESSE AND COLIN.*

A vicar died, and left his daughter poor—  
It hurt her not, she was not rich before:  
Her humble share of worldly goods she sold,  
Paid every debt, and then her fortune told;  
And found, with youth and beauty, hope and health,  
Two hundred guineas was her worldly wealth;  
It then remain'd to choose her path in life,  
And first, said Jesse, "Shall I be a wife?—  
Colin is mild and civil, kind and just,  
I know his love, his temper I can trust;  
But small his farm, it asks perpetual care,  
And we must toil as well as trouble share.  
True, he was taught in all the gentle arts  
That raise the soul, and soften human hearts,  
And boasts a parent, who deserves to shine  
In higher class, and I could wish her mine;  
Nor wants he will his station to improve,  
A just ambition waked by faithful love;—  
Still is he poor—and here my father's friend  
Deigns for his daughter, as her own, to send;  
A worthy lady, who it seems has known  
A world of griefs and troubles of her own.  
I was an infant, when she came, a guest  
Beneath my father's humble roof to rest;  
Her kindred all unfeeling, vast her woes;  
Such her complaint, and there she found repose;  
Enrich'd by fortune, now she nobly lives,  
And nobly, from the blest abundance, gives;  
The grief, the want of human life, she knows,  
And comfort there and here relief bestows;  
But are they not dependants?—Foolish pride!  
Am I not honour'd by such friend and guide?  
Have I a home," (here Jesse dropp'd a tear,  
"Or friend beside?"—A faithful friend was near.

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Now Colin came, at length resolved to lay  
His heart before her and to urge her stay;  
True, his own plough the gentle Colin drove,  
An humble farmer with aspiring love;  
Who, urged by passion, never dared till now,  
Thus urged by fears, his trembling hopes avow.  
Her father's glebe he managed; every year  
The grateful vicar held the youth more dear;  
He saw indeed the prize in Colin's view,  
And wish'd his Jesse with a man so true;  
Timid as true, he urged with anxious air  
His tender hope, and made the trembling prayer;  
When Jesse saw, nor could with coldness see,  
Such fond respect, such tried sincerity,  
Grateful for favours to her father dealt,

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She more than grateful for his passion felt; 50  
 Nor could she frown on one so good and kind,  
 Yet fear'd to smile, and was unfix'd in mind;  
 But prudence placed the female friend in view—  
 What might not one so rich and grateful do?  
 So lately, too, the good old vicar died, }  
 His faithful daughter must not cast aside }  
 The signs of filial grief, and be a ready bride: }  
 Thus, led by prudence, to the lady's seat  
 The village-beauty purpos'd to retreat;  
 But, as in hard-fought fields the victor knows 60  
 What to the vanquish'd he, in honour, owes,  
 So, in this conquest over powerful love,  
 Prudence resolv'd a generous foe to prove;  
 And Jesse felt a mingled fear and pain  
 In her dismissal of a faithful swain,  
 Gave her kind thanks, and when she saw his wo,  
 Kindly betray'd that she was loth to go.  
 But would she promise, if abroad she met }  
 A frowning world, she would remember yet }  
 "Where dwelt a friend?"—"That could she not forget." }  
 And thus they parted; but each faithful heart 71  
 Felt the compulsion, and refus'd to part.  
 Now by the morning mail the timid maid  
 Was to that kind and wealthy dame convey'd;  
 Whose invitation, when her father died,  
 Jesse as comfort to her heart applied.  
 She knew the days her generous friend had seen—  
 As wife and widow, evil days had been;  
 She married early, and for half her life  
 Was an insulted and forsaken wife; 80  
 Widow'd and poor, her angry father gave,  
 Mix'd with reproach, the pittance of a slave;  
 Forgetful brothers pass'd her, but she knew  
 Her humbler friends, and to their home withdrew;  
 The good old vicar to her sire applied  
 For help, and help'd her when her sire denied;  
 When in few years death stalk'd through bower and hall,  
 Sires, sons, and sons of sons, were buried all;  
 She then abounded, and had wealth to spare  
 For softening grief she once was doom'd to share; 90  
 Thus train'd in misery's school, and taught to feel,  
 She would rejoice an orphan's woes to heal.  
 So Jesse thought, who look'd within her breast,  
 And thence conceived how bounteous minds are bless'd.  
 From her vast mansion look'd the lady down  
 On humbler buildings of a busy town;  
 Thence came her friends of either sex, and all  
 With whom she lived on terms reciprocal.  
 They pass'd the hours with their accustom'd ease,  
 As guests inclined, but not compell'd to please; 100  
 But there were others in the mansion found,  
 For office chosen, and by duties bound;  
 Three female rivals, each of power possess'd,  
 Th' attendant-maid, poor friend, and kindred-guest.  
 To these came Jesse, as a seaman thrown  
 By the rude storm upon a coast unknown:  
 The view was flattering, civil seem'd the race,  
 But all unknown the dangers of the place.  
 Few hours had pass'd, when, from attendants freed,  
 The lady utter'd—"This is kind indeed; 110  
 Believe me, love! that I for one like you  
 Have daily pray'd, a friend discreet and true;  
 Oh! wonder not that I on you depend,  
 You are mine own hereditary friend:  
 Hearken, my Jesse, never can I trust  
 Beings ungrateful, selfish, and unjust;  
 But you are present, and my load of care  
 Your love will serve to lighten and to share.  
 Come near me, Jesse—let not those below  
 Of my reliance on your friendship know; 120  
 Look as they look, be in their freedoms free—  
 But all they say do you convey to me."  
 Here Jesse's thoughts to Colin's cottage flew,  
 And with such speed she scarce their absence knew.

"Jane loves her mistress, and should she depart,  
I lose her service, and she breaks her heart;  
My ways and wishes, looks and thoughts she knows,  
And duteous care by close attention shows;  
But is she faithful? in temptation strong?  
Will she not wrong me? ah! I fear the wrong. 130  
Your father loved me; now, in time of need,  
Watch for my good, and to his place succeed.

"Blood doesn't bind—that girl, who every day  
Eats of my bread, would wish my life away;  
I am her *dear relation*, and she thinks  
To make her fortune, an ambitious minx!  
She only courts me for the prospect's sake,  
Because she knows I have a will to make;  
Yes, love! my will delay'd, I know not how—  
But you are here, and I will make it now. 140

"That idle creature, keep her in your view,  
See what she does, what she desires to do;  
On her young mind may artful villains prey,  
And to my plate and jewels find a way;  
A pleasant humour has the girl; her smile  
And cheerful manner tedious hours beguile;  
But well observe her, ever near her be,  
Close in your thoughts, in your professions free.

"Again, my Jesse, hear what I advise,  
And watch a woman ever in disguise; 150  
Issop, that widow, serious, subtle, sly—  
But what of this?—I must have company.  
She markets for me, and although she makes  
Profit, no doubt, of all she undertakes,  
Yet she is one I can to all produce,  
And all her talents are in daily use;  
Deprived of her, I may another find  
As sly and selfish, with a weaker mind:

But never trust her, she is full of art,  
And worms herself into the closest heart; 160  
Seem then, I pray you, careless in her sight,  
Nor let her know, my love, how we unite.

"Do, my good Jesse, cast a view around,  
And let no wrong within my house be found;  
That girl associates with—I know not who  
Are her companions, nor what ill they do;  
'Tis then the widow plans, 'tis then she tries  
Her various arts and schemes for fresh supplies;  
'Tis then, if ever, Jane her duty quits,  
And, whom I know not, favours and admits: 170  
Oh! watch their movements all; for me 'tis hard,  
Indeed is vain, but you may keep a guard;  
And I, when none your watchful glance deceive,  
May make my will, and think what I shall leave."

Jesse, with fear, disgust, alarm, surprise,  
Heard of these duties for her ears and eyes;  
Heard by what service she must gain her bread,  
And went with scorn and sorrow to her bed.

Jane was a servant fitted for her place,  
Experienced, cunning, fraudulent, selfish, base; 180  
Skill'd in those mean, humiliating arts  
That make their way to proud and selfish hearts;  
By instinct taught, she felt an awe, a fear,  
For Jesse's upright, simple character;  
Whom with gross flattery she awhile assail'd,  
And then beheld with hatred when it fail'd;  
Yet, trying still upon her mind for hold,  
She all the secrets of the mansion told;  
And to invite an equal trust she drew

Of every mind a bold and rapid view; 190  
But on the widow'd friend with deep disdain,  
And rancorous envy, dwelt the treacherous Jane.—  
In vain such arts; without deceit or pride,  
With a just taste and feeling for her guide,  
From all contagion Jesse kept apart,  
Free in her manners, guarded in her heart.

Jesse one morn was thoughtful, and her sigh  
The widow heard as she was passing by;  
And—"Well!" she said, "is that some distant swain,

Or aught with us, that gives your bosom pain? 200  
 Come, we are fellow-sufferers, slaves in thrall,  
 And tasks and griefs are common to us all;  
 Think not my frankness strange: they love to paint  
 Their state with freedom, who endure restraint;  
 And there is something in that speaking eye  
 And sober mien, that prove I may rely.  
 You came a stranger; to my words attend,  
 Accept my offer, and you find a friend;  
 It is a labyrinth in which you stray,  
 Come, hold my clue, and I will lead the way. 210  
 "Good Heav'n! that one so jealous, envious, base,  
 Should be the mistress of so sweet a place;  
 She, who so long herself was low and poor,  
 Now broods suspicious on her useless store;  
 She loves to see us abject, loves to deal  
 Her insult round, and then pretends to feel;  
 Prepare to cast all dignity aside,  
 For know your talents will be quickly tried;  
 Nor think, from favours past, a friend to gain,  
 'Tis but by duties we our posts maintain: 220  
 I read her novels, gossip through the town,  
 And daily go, for idle stories, down;  
 I cheapen all she buys, and bear the curse  
 Of honest tradesmen for my niggard-purse;  
 And, when for her this meanness I display,  
 She cries, 'I heed not what I throw away;'  
 Of secret bargains I endure the shame,  
 And stake my credit for our fish and game;  
 Oft has she smiled to hear, 'her generous soul  
 Would gladly give, but stoops to my control'; 230  
 Nay! I have heard her, when she chanced to come  
 Where I contended for a petty sum,  
 Affirm 'twas painful to behold such care,  
 'But Issop's nature is to pinch and spare:'  
 Thus all the meanness of the house is mine,  
 And my reward—to scorn her, and to dine.  
 "See next that giddy thing, with neither pride  
 To keep her safe, nor principle to guide:  
 Poor, idle, simple flirt! as sure as fate  
 Her maiden-fame will have an early date. 240  
 Of her beware; for all who live below  
 Have faults they wish not all the world to know;  
 And she is fond of listening, full of doubt,  
 And stoops to guilt to find an error out.  
 "And now once more observe the artful maid,  
 A lying, prying, jilting, thievish jade;  
 I think, my love, you would not condescend  
 To call a low, illiterate girl your friend;  
 But in our troubles we are apt, you know,  
 To lean on all who some compassion show; 250  
 And she has flexile features, acting eyes,  
 And seems with every look to sympathise;  
 No mirror can a mortal's grief express  
 With more precision, or can feel it less;  
 That proud, mean spirit, she by fawning courts,  
 By vulgar flattery, and by vile reports;  
 And by that proof she every instant gives  
 To one so mean, that yet a meaner lives.—  
 "Come, I have drawn the curtain, and you see  
 Your fellow-actors, all our company; 260  
 Should you incline to throw reserve aside,  
 And in my judgment and my love confide,  
 I could some prospects open to your view,  
 That ask attention—and, till then, adieu."  
 "Farewell!" said Jesse, hastening to her room,  
 Where all she saw within, without, was gloom:  
 Confused, perplex'd, she pass'd a dreary hour,  
 Before her reason could exert its power;  
 To her all seem'd mysterious, all allied  
 To avarice, meanness, folly, craft, and pride; 270  
 Wearied with thought, she breathed the garden's air,  
 Then came the laughing lass, and join'd her there.  
 "My sweetest friend has dwelt with us a week,  
 And does she love us? be sincere and speak;

My aunt you cannot—Lord! how I should hate  
 To be like her, all misery and state;  
 Proud, and yet envious, she disgusted sees  
 All who are happy, and who look at ease.  
 Let friendship bind us, I will quickly show  
 Some favourites near us you'll be bless'd to know; 280  
 My aunt forbids it—but, can she expect,  
 To soothe her spleen, we shall ourselves neglect?  
 Jane and the widow were to watch and stay  
 My free-born feet; I watch'd as well as they;  
 Lo! what is this? this simple key explores  
 The dark recess that holds the spinster's stores;  
 And led by her ill star, I chanced to see  
 Where Issop keeps her stock of ratafie;  
 Used in the hours of anger and alarm,  
 It makes her civil, and it keeps her warm; 290  
 Thus bless'd with secrets, both would choose to hide,  
 Their fears now grant me what their scorn denied.  
 "My freedom thus by their assent secured,  
 Bad as it is, the place may be endured;  
 And bad it is, but her estates, you know,  
 And her beloved hoards, she must bestow;  
 So we can slyly our amusements take,  
 And friends of dæmons, if they help us, make."  
 "Strange creatures these," thought Jesse, half inclined  
 To smile at one malicious and yet kind; 300  
 Frank and yet cunning, with a heart to love  
 And malice prompt—the serpent and the dove;  
 Here could she dwell? or could she yet depart?  
 Could she be artful? could she bear with art?—  
 This splendid mansion gave the cottage grace,  
 She thought a dungeon was a happier place;  
 And Colin pleading, when he pleaded best,  
 Wrought not such sudden change in Jesse's breast.  
 The wondering maiden, who had only read  
 Of such vile beings, saw them now with dread; 310  
 Safe in themselves—for nature has design'd  
 The creature's poison harmless to the kind;  
 But all beside who in the haunts are found  
 Must dread the poison, and must feel the wound.  
 Days full of care, slow weary weeks pass'd on;  
 Eager to go, still Jesse was not gone;  
 Her time in trifling or in tears she spent,  
 She never gave, she never felt content:  
 The lady wonder'd that her humble guest  
 Strove not to please, would neither lie nor jest; 320  
 She sought no news, no scandal would convey,  
 But walk'd for health, and was at church to pray;  
 All this displeas'd, and soon the widow cried:  
 "Let me be frank—I am not satisfied;  
 You know my wishes, I your judgment trust;  
 You can be useful, Jesse, and you must;  
 Let me be plainer, child—I want an ear,  
 When I am deaf, instead of mine to hear;  
 When mine is sleeping, let your eye awake;  
 When I observe not, observation take; 330  
 Alas! I rest not on my pillow laid,  
 Then threat'ning whispers make my soul afraid;  
 The tread of strangers to my ear ascends,  
 Fed at my cost, the minions of my friends;  
 While you, without a care, a wish to please,  
 Eat the vile bread of idleness and ease."  
 Th' indignant girl astonish'd answer'd—"Nay!  
 This instant, madam, let me haste away;  
 Thus speaks my father's, thus an orphan's, friend?  
 This instant, lady, let your bounty end." 340  
 The lady frown'd indignant—"What!" she cried,  
 "A vicar's daughter with a princess' pride!  
 And pauper's lot! but pitying I forgive;  
 How, simple Jesse, do you think to live?  
 Have I not power to help you, foolish maid?  
 To my concerns be your attention paid;  
 With cheerful mind th' allotted duties take,  
 And recollect I have a will to make."  
 Jesse, who felt as liberal natures feel,

When thus the baser their designs reveal, 350  
 Replied—"Those duties were to her unfit,  
 Nor would her spirit to her tasks submit."  
 In silent scorn the lady sate awhile,  
 And then replied with stern contemptuous smile—  
 "Think you, fair madam, that you came to share  
 Fortunes like mine without a thought or care?  
 A guest, indeed! from every trouble free,  
 Dress'd by my help, with not a care for me.  
 When I a visit to your father made,  
 I for the poor assistance largely paid; 360  
 To his domestics I their tasks assign'd;  
 I fix'd the portion for his hungry hind;  
 And had your father (simple man!) obey'd  
 My good advice, and watch'd as well as pray'd,  
 He might have left you something with his prayers,  
 And lent some colour for these lofty airs.—  
 "In tears! my love! Oh, then my soften'd heart  
 Cannot resist—we never more will part;  
 I need your friendship—I will be your friend;  
 And thus determin'd, to my will attend." 370  
 Jesse went forth, but with determin'd soul  
 To fly such love, to break from such control;  
 "I hear enough," the trembling damsel cried;  
 "Flight be my care, and Providence my guide:  
 Ere yet a prisoner, I escape will make; }  
 Will, thus display'd, th' insidious arts forsake, }  
 And, as the rattle sounds, will fly the fatal snake." }  
 Jesse her thanks upon the morrow paid,  
 Prepared to go, determin'd though afraid.  
 "Ungrateful creature," said the lady, "this 380  
 Could I imagine?—are you frantic, miss?  
 What! leave your friend, your prospects—is it true?"  
 This Jesse answer'd by a mild "Adieu!"  
 The dame replied, "Then houseless may you rove,  
 The starving victim to a guilty love;  
 Branded with shame, in sickness doom'd to nurse  
 An ill-form'd cub, your scandal and your curse;  
 Spurn'd by its scoundrel father, and ill fed  
 By surly rustics with the parish-bread!—  
 Relent you not?—speak—yet I can forgive; 390  
 Still live with me"—"With you," said Jesse, "live?  
 No! I would first endure what you describe,  
 Rather than breathe with your detested tribe:  
 Who long have feign'd, till now their very hearts  
 Are firmly fix'd in their accursed parts;  
 Who all profess esteem, and feel disdain,  
 And all, with justice, of deceit complain;  
 Whom I could pity, but that, while I stay,  
 My terror drives all kinder thoughts away;  
 Grateful for this, that when I think of you, 400  
 I little fear what poverty can do."  
 The angry matron her attendant Jane  
 Summon'd in haste to soothe the fierce disdain.  
 "A vile detested wretch!" the lady cried, }  
 "Yet shall she be, by many an effort, tried, }  
 And, clogg'd with debt and fear, against her will abide; }  
 And, once secured, she never shall depart  
 Till I have proved the firmness of her heart;  
 Then when she dares not, would not, cannot go,  
 I'll make her feel what 'tis to use me so." 410  
 The pensive Colin in his garden stray'd,  
 But felt not then the beauties it display'd;  
 There many a pleasant object met his view,  
 A rising wood of oaks behind it grew;  
 A stream ran by it, and the village-green  
 And public road were from the gardens seen;  
 Save where the pine and larch the bound'ry made,  
 And on the rose-beds threw a softening shade.  
 The mother sat beside the garden-door,  
 Dress'd as in times ere she and hers were poor; 420  
 The broad-laced cap was known in ancient days,  
 When madam's dress compell'd the village praise;  
 And still she look'd as in the times of old,  
 Ere his last farm the erring husband sold;



While yet the mansion stood in decent state,  
 And paupers waited at the well-known gate.  
 "Alas! my son!" the mother cried, "and why  
 That silent grief and oft-repeated sigh?  
 True, we are poor, but thou hast never felt  
 Pangs to thy father for his error dealt; 430  
 Pangs from strong hopes of visionary gain,  
 For ever raised, and ever found in vain.  
 He rose unhappy! from his fruitless schemes,  
 As guilty wretches from their blissful dreams;  
 But thou wert then, my son, a playful child,  
 Wondering at grief, gay, innocent, and wild;  
 Listening at times to thy poor mother's sighs,  
 With curious looks and innocent surprise;  
 Thy father dying, thou, my virtuous boy,  
 My comfort always, waked my soul to joy; 440  
 With the poor remnant of our fortune left,  
 Thou hast our station of its gloom bereft:  
 Thy lively temper, and thy cheerful air,  
 Have cast a smile on sadness and despair;  
 Thy active hand has dealt to this poor space  
 The bliss of plenty and the charm of grace;  
 And all around us wonder when they find  
 Such taste and strength, such skill and power combined;  
 There is no mother, Colin, no not one,  
 But envies me so kind, so good a son; 450  
 By thee supported on this failing side,  
 Weakness itself awakes a parent's pride;  
 I bless the stroke that was my grief before,  
 And feel such joy that 'tis disease no more;  
 Shielded by thee, my want becomes my wealth—  
 And, soothed by Colin, sickness smiles at health;  
 The old men love thee, they repeat thy praise,  
 And say, like thee were youth in earlier days;  
 While every village-maiden cries, 'How gay,  
 How smart, how brave, how good is Colin Grey!' 460  
 "Yet art thou sad; alas! my son, I know  
 Thy heart is wounded, and the cure is slow;  
 Fain would I think that Jesse still may come  
 To share the comforts of our rustic home:  
 She surely loved thee; I have seen the maid,  
 When thou hast kindly brought the vicar aid—  
 When thou hast eased his bosom of its pain,  
 Oh! I have seen her—she will come again."  
 The matron ceased; and Colin stood the while  
 Silent, but striving for a grateful smile; 470  
 He then replied—"Ah! sure, had Jesse stay'd,  
 And shared the comforts of our sylvan shade,  
 The tenderest duty and the fondest love  
 Would not have fail'd that generous heart to move;  
 A grateful pity would have ruled her breast,  
 And my distresses would have made me blest.  
 "But she is gone, and ever has in view }  
 Grandeur and taste—and what will then ensue? }  
 Surprise and then delight in scenes so fair and new; }  
 For many a day, perhaps for many a week, 480  
 Home will have charms, and to her bosom speak;  
 But thoughtless ease, and affluence, and pride,  
 Seen day by day, will draw the heart aside:  
 And she at length, though gentle and sincere,  
 Will think no more of our enjoyments here."  
 Sighing he spake—but hark! he hears th' approach  
 Of rattling wheels! and lo! the evening-coach;  
 Once more the movement of the horses' feet  
 Makes the fond heart with strong emotion beat;  
 Faint were his hopes, but ever had the sight 490  
 Drawn him to gaze beside his gate at night;  
 And when with rapid wheels it hurried by,  
 He grieved his parent with a hopeless sigh;  
 And could the blessing have been bought—what sum  
 Had he not offer'd, to have Jesse come!  
 She came—he saw her bending from the door,  
 Her face, her smile, and he beheld no more;  
 Lost in his joy—the mother lent her aid  
 T' assist and to detain the willing maid;

Who thought her late, her present home to make, 500  
 Sure of a welcome for the vicar's sake.  
 But the good parent was so pleased, so kind,  
 So pressing Colin, she so much inclined,  
 That night advanced; and then so long detain'd, }  
 No wishes to depart she felt, or feign'd; }  
 Yet long in doubt she stood, and then perforce remain'd. }

Here was a lover fond, a friend sincere;  
 Here was content and joy, for she was here:  
 In the mild evening, in the scene around,  
 The maid, now free, peculiar beauties found; 510  
 Blended with village-tones, the evening-gale  
 Gave the sweet night-bird's warblings to the vale;  
 The youth embolden'd, yet abash'd, now told  
 His fondest wish, nor found the maiden cold;  
 The mother smiling whisper'd—"Let him go  
 And seek the licence!" Jesse answer'd, "No:"  
 But Colin went, I know not if they live  
 With all the comforts wealth and plenty give;  
 But with pure joy to envious souls denied,  
 To suppliant meanness and suspicious pride; 520  
 And village-maids of happy couples say,  
 "They live like Jesse Bourn and Colin Grey."

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## TALE XIV.

### THE STRUGGLES OF CONSCIENCE.

I am a villain; yet I lie, I am not;  
Fool! of thyself speak well:—Fool! do not flatter.  
My Conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale.

*Richard III. Act V. Scene 3.*

My Conscience is but a kind of hard Conscience.... The fiend  
gives the more friendly counsel.

*Merchant of Venice, Act II. Scene 2.*

Thou hast it now....  
...and I fear  
Thou play'dst most foully [for't].

*Macbeth, Act III. Scene 1.*

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Rase out the written troubles of the brain,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?

*Macbeth, Act V. Scene 3.*

Soft! I did but dream—  
Oh! coward Conscience, how dost thou afflict me!

*Richard III. Act V. Scene 3.*

## TALE XIV.

### THE STRUGGLES OF CONSCIENCE.

A serious toyman in the city dwelt,  
Who much concern for his religion felt;  
Reading, he changed his tenets, read again,  
And various questions could with skill maintain;  
Papist and quaker if we set aside,  
He had the road of every traveller tried;  
There walk'd awhile, and on a sudden turn'd  
Into some by-way he had just discern'd:  
He had a nephew, Fulham—Fulham went  
His uncle's way, with every turn content;  
He saw his pious kinsman's watchful care, }  
And thought such anxious pains his own might spare, }  
And he, the truth obtain'd, without the toil, might share. }  
In fact, young Fulham, though he little read,  
Perceived his uncle was by fancy led;  
And smiled to see the constant care he took,  
Collating creed with creed, and book with book.

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At length the senior fix'd; I pass the sect  
He call'd a church, 'twas precious and elect;  
Yet the seed fell not in the richest soil,  
For few disciples paid the preacher's toil;  
All in an attic-room were wont to meet,  
These few disciples at their pastor's feet;  
With these went Fulham, who, discreet and grave,  
Follow'd the light his worthy uncle gave;  
Till a warm preacher found a way t' impart  
Awakening feelings to his torpid heart:  
Some weighty truths, and of unpleasant kind,  
Sank, though resisted, in his struggling mind;  
He wish'd to fly them, but, compell'd to stay,  
Truth to the waking Conscience found her way;  
For though the youth was call'd a prudent lad,  
And prudent was, yet serious faults he had;  
Who now reflected—"Much am I surprised,  
I find these notions cannot be despised;  
No! there is something I perceive at last,  
Although my uncle cannot hold it fast;  
Though I the strictness of these men reject,  
Yet I determine to be circumspect:

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30

This man alarms me, and I must begin  
To look more closely to the things within; 40  
These sons of zeal have I derided long,  
But now begin to think the laughers wrong;  
Nay, my good uncle, by all teachers moved, }  
Will be preferr'd to him who none approved: }  
Better to love amiss than nothing to have loved." }

Such were his thoughts, when Conscience first began  
To hold close converse with th' awaken'd man.  
He from that time reserved and cautious grew,  
And for his duties felt obedience due; 50  
Pious he was not, but he fear'd the pain  
Of sins committed, nor would sin again.  
Whene'er he stray'd, he found his Conscience rose, }  
Like one determin'd what was ill t' oppose, }  
What wrong t' accuse, what secret to disclose; }  
To drag forth every latent act to light,  
And fix them fully in the actor's sight:  
This gave him trouble, but he still confess'd  
The labour useful, for it brought him rest.

The uncle died, and when the nephew read 60  
The will, and saw the substance of the dead—  
Five hundred guineas, with a stock in trade—  
He much rejoiced, and thought his fortune made;  
Yet felt aspiring pleasure at the sight,  
And, for increase, increasing appetite.  
Desire of profit idle habits check'd,  
(For Fulham's virtue was to be correct);  
He and his Conscience had their compact made—  
"Urge me with truth, and you will soon persuade;  
But not," he cried, "for mere ideal things 70  
Give me to feel those terror-breeding stings."

"Let not such thoughts," she said, "your mind confound;  
Trifles may wake me, but they never wound;  
In them indeed there is a wrong and right,  
But you will find me pliant and polite;  
Not like a Conscience of the dotard kind,  
Awake to dreams, to dire offences blind.  
Let all within be pure; in all beside  
Be your own master, governor, and guide;  
Alive to danger, in temptation strong— 80  
And I shall sleep our whole existence long."

"Sweet be thy sleep," said Fulham; "strong must be  
The tempting ill that gains access to me;  
Never will I to evil deed consent,  
Or, if surprised, oh! how will I repent!  
Should gain be doubtful, soon would I restore  
The dangerous good, or give it to the poor;  
Repose for them my growing wealth shall buy—  
Or build—who knows?—an hospital like Guy.—  
Yet why such means to soothe the smart within, 90  
While firmly purposed to renounce the sin?"

Thus our young Trader and his Conscience dwelt  
In mutual love, and great the joy they felt;  
But yet in small concerns, in trivial things,  
"She was," he said, "too ready with the stings;"  
And he too apt, in search of growing gains,  
To lose the fear of penalties and pains:  
Yet these were trifling bickerings, petty jars,  
Domestic strifes, preliminary wars;  
He ventured little, little she express'd 100  
Of indignation, and they both had rest.

Thus was he fix'd to walk the worthy way,  
When profit urged him to a bold essay.—  
A time was that when all at pleasure gamed  
In lottery-chances, yet of law unblamed;  
This Fulham tried: who would to him advance  
A pound or crown, he gave in turn a chance  
For weighty prize—and should they nothing share,  
They had their crown or pound in Fulham's ware;  
Thus the old stores within the shop were sold 110  
For that which none refuses, new or old.

Was this unjust? Yet Conscience could not rest  
But made a mighty struggle in the breast;  
And gave th' aspiring man an early proof,

That should they war he would have work enough:  
 "Suppose," said she, "your vended numbers rise  
 The same with those which gain each real prize,  
 (Such your proposal,) can you ruin shun?"  
 "A hundred thousand," he replied, "to one."—  
 "Still it may happen."—"I the sum must pay."— 120  
 "You know you cannot."—"I can run away."—  
 "That is dishonest."—"Nay, but you must wink  
 At a chance-hit; it cannot be, I think.  
 Upon my conduct as a whole decide,  
 Such trifling errors let my virtues hide;  
 Fail I at meeting? am I sleepy there?  
 My purse refuse I with the priest to share?  
 Do I deny the poor a helping hand?  
 Or stop the wicked women in the Strand?  
 Or drink at club beyond a certain pitch? 130  
 Which are your charges? Conscience, tell me which."  
 "'Tis well," said she, "but—" "Nay, I pray, have done:  
 Trust me, I will not into danger run."  
 The lottery drawn, not one demand was made;  
 Fulham gain'd profit and increase of trade.  
 "See now," said he—for Conscience yet arose—  
 "How foolish 'tis such measures to oppose:  
 Have I not blameless thus my state advanced?"—  
 "Still," mutter'd Conscience, "still it might have chanced."—  
 "Might!" said our hero, "who is so exact 140  
 As to inquire what might have been a fact?"  
 Now Fulham's shop contain'd a curious view  
 Of costly trifles, elegant and new:  
 The papers told where kind mammas might buy  
 The gayest toys to charm an infant's eye;  
 Where generous beaux might gentle damsels please,  
 And travellers call who cross the land or seas,  
 And find the curious art, the neat device,  
 Of precious value and of trifling price.  
 Here Conscience rested: she was pleased to find 150  
 No less an active than an honest mind;  
 But, when he named his price, and when he swore,  
 His Conscience check'd him, that he ask'd no more—  
 When half he sought had been a large increase  
 On fair demand—she could not rest in peace  
 (Beside th' affront to call th' adviser in,  
 Who would prevent, to justify the sin.)  
 She therefore told him, that "he vainly tried  
 To soothe her anger, conscious that he lied;  
 If thus he grasp'd at such usurious gains, 160  
 He must deserve, and should expect, her pains."  
 The charge was strong; he would in part confess  
 Offence there was—but, who offended less?  
 "What! is a mere assertion call'd a lie?  
 And if it be, are men compell'd to buy?  
 'Twas strange that Conscience on such points should dwell, }  
 While he was acting (he would call it) well; }  
 He bought as others buy, he sold as others sell: }  
 There was no fraud, and he demanded cause  
 Why he was troubled, when he kept the laws?" 170  
 "My laws?" said Conscience: "What," said he, "are thine?  
 Oral or written, human or divine?  
 Show me the chapter, let me see the text;  
 By laws uncertain subjects are perplex'd;  
 Let me my finger on the statute lay,  
 And I shall feel it duty to obey."  
 "Reflect," said Conscience, "'twas your own desire  
 That I should warn you—does the compact tire?  
 Repent you this? then bid me not advise,  
 And rather hear your passions as they rise; 180  
 So you may counsel and remonstrance shun,  
 But then remember it is war begun;  
 And you may judge from some attacks, my friend,  
 What serious conflicts will on war attend."  
 "Nay, but," at length the thoughtful man replied,  
 "I say not that; I wish you for my guide;  
 Wish for your checks and your reproofs—but then  
 Be like a Conscience of my fellow-men;  
 Worthy I mean, and men of good report,

And not the wretches who with conscience sport. 190  
 There's Bice, my friend, who passes off his grease  
 Of pigs for bears', in pots a crown apiece;  
 His Conscience never checks him when he swears  
 The fat he sells is honest fat of bears;  
 And so it is, for he contrives to give  
 A drachm to each—'tis thus that tradesmen live:  
 Now why should you and I be over-nice;  
 What man is held in more repute than Bice?"  
 Here ended the dispute; but yet 'twas plain  
 The parties both expected strife again. 200  
 Their friendship cool'd, he look'd about and saw  
 Numbers who seem'd unshackled by his awe;  
 While like a school-boy he was threaten'd still,  
 Now for the deed, now only for the will;  
 Here Conscience answer'd, "To thy neighbour's guide  
 Thy neighbour leave, and in thine own confide."  
 Such were each day the charges and replies,  
 When a new object caught the trader's eyes;  
 A vestry-patriot, could he gain the name,  
 Would famous make him, and would pay the fame. 210  
 He knew full well the sums bequeath'd in charge  
 For schools, for alms-men, for the poor, were large;  
 Report had told, and he could feel it true,  
 That most unfairly dealt the trusted few;  
 No partners would they in their office take,  
 Nor clear accounts at annual meetings make;  
 Aloud our hero in the vestry spoke  
 Of hidden deeds, and vow'd to draw the cloak;  
 It was the poor man's cause, and he for one  
 Was quite determined to see justice done. 220  
 His foes affected laughter, then disdain,                     }  
 They too were loud and threat'ning, but in vain;             }  
 The pauper's friend, their foe, arose and spoke again.        }  
 Fiercely he cried, "Your garbled statements show  
 That you determine we shall nothing know;  
 But we shall bring your hidden crimes to light,  
 Give you to shame, and to the poor their right."  
 Virtue like this might some approval ask—  
 But Conscience sternly said, "You wear a mask!"  
 "At least," said Fulham, "if I have a view 230  
 To serve myself, I serve the public too."  
 Fulham, though check'd, retain'd his former zeal,  
 And this the cautious rogues began to feel.  
 "Thus will he ever bark," in peevish tone  
 An elder cried—"the cur must have a bone."  
 They then began to hint—and to begin  
 Was all they needed: it was felt within;  
 In terms less veil'd an offer then was made,  
 Though distant still, it fail'd not to persuade;  
 More plainly then was every point proposed, 240  
 Approved, accepted, and the bargain closed.  
 "Th' exulting paupers hail'd their friend's success,  
 And bade adieu to murmurs and distress."  
 Alas! their friend had now superior light,  
 And, view'd by that, he found that all was right;  
 "There were no errors, the disbursements small;  
 This was the truth, and truth was due to all."  
 And rested Conscience? No! she would not rest,  
 Yet was content with making a protest.  
 Some acts she now with less resistance bore, 250  
 Nor took alarm so quickly as before;  
 Like those in towns besieged, who every ball  
 At first with terror view, and dread them all;  
 But, grown familiar with the scenes, they fear  
 The danger less, as it approaches near:  
 So Conscience, more familiar with the view  
 Of growing evils, less attentive grew;  
 Yet he who felt some pain, and dreaded more,  
 Gave a peace-offering to the angry poor.  
 Thus had he quiet—but the time was brief, 260  
 From his new triumph sprang a cause of grief;  
 In office join'd, and acting with the rest,  
 He must admit the sacramental test.  
 Now, as a sectary, who had all his life,

As he supposed, been with the church at strife  
(No rules of hers, no laws had he perused,  
Nor knew the tenets he by rote abused);  
Yet Conscience here arose more fierce and strong,  
Than when she told of robbery and wrong;  
"Change his religion! No! he must be sure  
That was a blow no conscience could endure." 270

Though friend to virtue, yet she oft abides  
In early notions, fix'd by erring guides,  
And is more startled by a call from those,  
Than when the foulest crimes her rest oppose;  
By error taught, by prejudice misled,  
She yields her rights, and fancy rules instead;  
When Conscience all her stings and terror deals,  
Not as truth dictates, but as fancy feels;  
And thus within our hero's troubled breast, 280  
Crime was less torture than the odious test.

New forms, new measures, he must now embrace,  
With sad conviction that they warr'd with grace;  
To his new church no former friend would come,  
They scarce preferr'd her to the church of Rome.  
But, thinking much, and weighing guilt and gain,  
Conscience and he commuted for her pain;  
Then promised Fulham to retain his creed,  
And their peculiar paupers still to feed;  
Their attic-room (in secret) to attend, 290  
And not forget he was the preacher's friend;  
Thus he proposed, and Conscience, troubled, tried,  
And wanting peace, reluctantly complied.

Now care subdued, and apprehensions gone,  
In peace our hero went aspiring on;  
But short the period—soon a quarrel rose,  
Fierce in the birth, and fatal in the close;  
With times of truce between, which rather proved  
That both were weary, than that either loved.

Fulham ev'n now disliked the heavy thrall, }  
And for her death would in his anguish call, }  
As Rome's mistaken friend exclaim'd, *Let Carthage fall!* }  
So felt our hero, so his wish express'd,  
Against this powerful sprite—*delenda est.*  
Rome in her conquest saw not danger near,  
Freed from her rival, and without a fear;  
So, Conscience conquer'd, men perceive how free,  
But not how fatal, such a state must be.  
Fatal, not free, our hero's: foe or friend, 310  
Conscience on him was destined to attend;  
She [dozed] indeed, grew dull, nor seem'd to spy  
Crime following crime, and each of deeper dye;  
But all were noticed, and the reckoning time  
With her account came on—crime following crime.

This, once a foe, now brother in the trust,  
Whom Fulham late described as fair and just,  
Was the sole guardian of a wealthy maid,  
Placed in his power, and of his frown afraid:  
Not quite an idiot, for her busy brain  
Sought, by poor cunning, trifling points to gain; 320  
Success in childish projects her delight,  
She took no heed of each important right.

The friendly parties met—the guardian cried,  
"I am too old; my sons have each a bride:  
Martha, my ward, would make an easy wife;  
On easy terms I'll make her yours for life;  
And then the creature is so weak and mild,  
She may be soothed and threaten'd as a child—"  
"Yet not obey," said Fulham, "for your fools,  
Female and male, are obstinate as mules." 330

Some points adjusted, these new friends agreed,  
Proposed the day, and hurried on the deed.

"'Tis a vile act," said Conscience;—"It will prove,"  
Replied the bolder man, "an act of love;  
Her wicked guardian might the girl have sold  
To endless misery for a tyrant's gold;  
Now may her life be happy—for I mean  
To keep my temper even and serene."  
"I cannot thus compound," the spirit cried,

"Nor have my laws thus broken and defied; 340  
 This is a fraud, a bargain for a wife;  
 Expect my vengeance, or amend your life."  
 The wife was pretty, trifling, childish, weak;  
 She could not think, but would not cease to speak.  
 This he forbid—she took the caution ill,  
 And boldly rose against his sovereign will;  
 With idiot-cunning she would watch the hour,  
 When friends were present, to dispute his power:  
 With tyrant-craft, he then was still and calm,  
 But raised in private terror and alarm: 350  
 By many trials, she perceived how far  
 To vex and tease, without an open war;  
 And he discover'd that so weak a mind  
 No art could lead, and no compulsion bind;  
 The rudest force would fail such mind to tame,  
 And she was callous to rebuke and shame;  
 Proud of her wealth, the power of law she knew,  
 And would assist him in the spending too.  
 His threat'ning words with insult she defied,  
 To all his reasoning with a stare replied; 360  
 And when he begg'd her to attend, would say,  
 "Attend I will—but let me have my way."  
 Nor rest had Conscience: "While you merit pain  
 From me," she cried, "you seek redress in vain."  
 His thoughts were grievous: "All that I possess  
 From this vile bargain adds to my distress;  
 To pass a life with one who will not mend, }  
 Who cannot love, nor save, nor wisely spend, }  
 Is a vile prospect, and I see no end; }  
 For if we part, I must of course restore 370  
 Much of her money, and must wed no more.  
 "Is there no way?"—here Conscience rose in power,  
 "Oh! fly the danger of this fatal hour;  
 I am thy Conscience, faithful, fond, and true,  
 Ah, fly this thought, or evil must ensue;  
 Fall on thy knees, and pray with all thy soul,  
 Thy purpose banish, thy design control;  
 Let every hope of such advantage cease,  
 Or never more expect a moment's peace."  
 Th' affrighten'd man a due attention paid, 380  
 Felt the rebuke, and the command obey'd.  
 Again the wife rebell'd, again express'd  
 A love for pleasure—a contempt of rest;  
 "She, whom she pleased, would visit, would receive  
 Those who pleased her, nor deign to ask for leave."  
 "One way there is," said he; "I might contrive  
 Into a trap this foolish thing to drive:  
 Who pleased her, said she?—I'll be certain who—"  
 "Take heed," said Conscience, "what thou mean'st to do:  
 Ensnare thy wife?"—"Why yes," he must confess, 390  
 "It might be wrong—but there was no redress;  
 Beside, to think," said he, "is not to sin."  
 "Mistaken man!" replied the power within.  
 No guest unnoticed to the lady came,  
 He judged th' event with mingled joy and shame;  
 Oft he withdrew, and seem'd to leave her free.  
 But still as watchful as a lynx was he;  
 Meanwhile the wife was thoughtless, cool, and gay,  
 And, without virtue, had no wish to stray.  
 Though thus opposed, his plans were not resign'd; 400  
 "Revenge," said he, "will prompt that daring mind;  
 Refused supplies, insulted and distress'd,  
 Enraged with me, and near a favourite guest—  
 Then will her vengeance prompt the daring deed,  
 And I shall watch, detect her, and be freed."  
 There was a youth—but let me hide the name,  
 With all the progress of this deed of shame;  
 He had his views—on him the husband cast  
 His net, and saw him in his trammels fast.  
 "Pause but a moment—think what you intend," 410  
 Said the roused sleeper; "I am yet a friend;  
 Must all our days in enmity be spent?"  
 "No!" and he paused—"I surely shall repent:"  
 Then hurried on—the evil plan was laid, }



The wife was guilty, and her friend betray'd, }  
And Fulham gain'd his wish, and for his will was paid. }

Had crimes less weighty on the spirit press'd,  
This troubled Conscience might have sunk to rest;  
And, like a foolish guard, been bribed to peace,  
By a false promise, that offence should cease; 420  
Past faults had seem'd familiar to the view,  
Confused if many, and obscure though true;  
And Conscience, troubled with the dull account,  
Had dropp'd her tale, and slumber'd o'er th' amount.

But, struck by daring guilt, alert she rose,  
Disturbed, alarm'd, and could no more repose;  
All hopes of friendship, and of peace, were past,  
And every view with gloom was overcast.  
Hence from that day, that day of shame and sin,  
Arose the restless enmity within; 430

On no resource could Fulham now rely,  
Doom'd all expedients, and in vain, to try;  
For Conscience, roused, sat boldly on her throne, }  
Watch'd every thought, attack'd the foe alone, }  
And with envenom'd sting drew forth the inward groan: }  
Expedients fail'd that brought relief before, }  
In vain his alms gave comfort to the poor: }  
Give what he would, to him the comfort came no more. }

Not prayer avail'd, and when (his crimes confess'd)  
He felt some ease, she said—"are they redress'd? 440  
You still retain the profit, and be sure,  
Long as it lasts, this anguish shall endure."

Fulham still tried to soothe her, cheat, mislead; }  
But Conscience laid her finger on the deed, }  
And read the crime with power, and all that must succeed. }  
He tried t' expel her, but was sure to find  
Her strength increased by all that he design'd;  
Nor ever was his groan more loud and deep,  
Than when refresh'd she rose from momentary sleep.

Now desperate grown, weak, harass'd, and afraid, 450  
From new allies he sought for doubtful aid;  
To thought itself he strove to bid adieu,  
And from devotions to diversions flew;  
He took a poor domestic for a slave,  
(Though Avarice grieved to see the price he gave);

Upon his board, once frugal, press'd a load  
Of viands rich, the appetite to goad;  
The long-protracted meal, the sparkling cup,  
Fought with his gloom, and kept his courage up;  
Soon as the morning came, there met his eyes 460  
Accounts of wealth, that he might reading rise;  
To profit then he gave some active hours,  
Till food and wine again should renovate his powers.

Yet, spite of all defence, of every aid,  
The watchful foe her close attention paid;  
In every thoughtful moment, on she press'd,  
And gave at once her dagger to his breast;  
He waked at midnight, and the fears of sin,  
As waters through a bursten dam, broke in;  
Nay, in the banquet, with his friends around, 470  
When all their cares and half their crimes were drown'd,

Would some chance act awake the slumbering fear,  
And care and crime in all their strength appear:  
The news is read, a guilty victim swings,  
And troubled looks proclaim the bosom-stings;  
Some pair are wed; this brings the wife in view,  
And some divorced: this shows the parting too;  
Nor can he hear of evil word or deed,  
But they to thought, and thought to sufferings lead.

Such was his life—no other changes came, 480  
The hurrying day, the conscious night the same;  
The night of horror—when he, starting, cried  
To the poor startled sinner at his side:  
"Is it in law? am I condemn'd to die?  
Let me escape!—I'll give—oh! let me fly—  
How! but a dream—no judges! dungeon! chain!  
Or these grim men!—I will not sleep again.—  
Wilt thou, dread being! thus thy promise keep?  
Day is thy time—and wilt thou murder sleep?"

Sorrow and want repose, and wilt thou come,  
Nor give one hour of pure untroubled gloom?  
“Oh! Conscience! Conscience! man’s most faithful friend,  
Him canst thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend;  
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,  
Thou art, oh! woe for me, his deadliest foe!”

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## TALE XV.

### ADVICE;

OR,

### THE 'SQUIRE AND THE PRIEST.

His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports—  
And never noted in him any study,  
Any retirement, any sequestration.

*Henry V.* Act I. Scene 1.

I will converse with iron-witted fools,  
With unrespective boys; none are for me,  
Who look into me with considerate eyes.

*Richard III.* Act IV. Scene 2.

You cram these words into mine ears, against  
The stomach of my sense.

*Tempest,* Act II. Scene 1.

## TALE XV.

### THE 'SQUIRE AND THE PRIEST.

A wealthy lord of far-extended land  
Had all that pleased him placed at his command;  
Widow'd of late, but finding much relief  
In the world's comforts, he dismiss'd his grief;  
He was by marriage of his daughters eased,  
And knew his sons could marry if they pleased;  
Meantime in travel he indulged the boys,  
And kept no spy nor partner of his joys.

These joys, indeed, were of the grosser kind,  
That fed the cravings of an earthly mind; 10  
A mind that, conscious of its own excess,  
Felt the reproach his neighbours would express.  
Long at th' indulgent board he loved to sit,  
Where joy was laughter, and profaneness wit;  
And such the guest and manners of the hall,  
No wedded lady on the 'squire would call.  
Here reign'd a favourite, and her triumph gain'd  
O'er other favourites who before had reign'd;  
Reserved and modest seem'd the nymph to be, 20  
Knowing her lord was charm'd with modesty;  
For he, a sportsman keen, the more enjoy'd,  
The greater value had the thing destroy'd.

Our 'squire declared, that, from a wife released,  
He would no more give trouble to a priest;  
Seem'd it not, then, ungrateful and unkind,  
That he should trouble from the priesthood find?  
The church he honour'd, and he gave the due  
And full respect to every son he knew;  
But envied those who had the luck to meet 30  
A gentle pastor, civil, and discreet;  
Who never bold and hostile sermon penn'd,  
To wound a sinner, or to shame a friend;  
One whom no being either shunn'd or fear'd,  
Such must be loved wherever they appear'd.

Not such the stern old rector of the time,  
Who soothed no culprit, and who spared no crime;  
Who would his fears and his contempt express,  
For irreligion and licentiousness;  
Of him our village lord, his guests among,  
By speech vindictive proved his feelings stung. 40

"Were he a bigot," said the 'squire, "whose zeal  
Condemn'd us all, I should disdain to feel:  
But when a man of parts, in college train'd,  
Prates of our conduct—who would not be pain'd,  
While he declaims (where no one dares reply) }  
On men abandon'd, grov'ling in the sty }  
(Like beasts in human shape) of shameless luxury? }  
Yet with a patriot's zeal I stand the shock  
Of vile rebuke, example to his flock;

But let this rector, thus severe and proud, 50  
 Change his wide surplice for a narrow shroud,  
 And I will place within his seat a youth,  
 Train'd by the Graces, to explain the truth;  
 Then shall the flock with gentle hand be led,  
 By wisdom won, and by compassion fed."

This purposed teacher was a sister's son,  
 Who of her children gave the priesthood one;  
 And she had early train'd for this employ  
 The pliant talents of her college-boy. 60  
 At various times her letters painted all  
 Her brother's views—the manners of the hall;  
 The rector's harshness, and the mischief made  
 By chiding those whom preachers should persuade:  
 This led the youth to views of easy life,  
 A friendly patron, an obliging wife;  
 His tithe, his glebe, the garden and the steed,  
 With books as many as he wish'd to read.

All this accorded with the uncle's will;  
 He loved a priest compliant, easy, still;  
 Sums he had often to his favourite sent, 70  
 "To be," he wrote, "in manly freedom spent;  
 For well it pleased his spirit to assist  
 An honest lad, who scorn'd a Methodist."  
 His mother too, in her maternal care,  
 Bade him of canting hypocrites beware;  
 Who from his duties would his heart seduce,  
 And make his talents of no earthly use.

Soon must a trial of his worth be made—  
 The ancient priest is to the tomb convey'd;  
 And the youth summon'd from a serious friend, 80  
 His guide and host, new duties to attend.

Three months before, the nephew and the 'squire  
 Saw mutual worth to praise and to admire;  
 And though the one too early left his wine,  
 The other still exclaim'd—"My boy will shine:  
 Yes, I perceive that he will soon improve,  
 And I shall form the very guide I love;  
 Decent abroad, he will my name defend,  
 And, when at home, be social and unbend."

The plan was specious, for the mind of James 90  
 Accorded duly with his uncle's schemes:  
 He then aspired not to a higher name  
 Than sober clerks of moderate talents claim;  
 Gravely to pray, and rev'rendly to preach,  
 Was all he saw, good youth! within his reach.  
 Thus may a mass of sulphur long abide,  
 Cold and inert, but, to the flame applied,  
 Kindling it blazes, and consuming turns  
 To smoke and poison, as it boils and burns.

James, leaving college, to a preacher stray'd; 100  
 What call'd, he knew not—but the call obey'd,  
 Mild, idle, pensive, ever led by those  
 Who could some specious novelty propose;  
 Humbly he listen'd, while the preacher dwelt  
 On touching themes, and strong emotions felt;  
 And in this night was fix'd that pliant will  
 To one sole point, and he retains it still.

At first his care was to himself confined;  
 Himself assured, he gave it to mankind:  
 His zeal grew active—honest, earnest zeal, 110  
 And comfort dealt to him, he long'd to deal;  
 He to his favourite preacher now withdrew,  
 Was taught to teach, instructed to subdue;  
 And train'd for ghostly warfare, when the call  
 Of his new duties reach'd him from the hall.

Now to the 'squire, although alert and stout,  
 Came unexpected an attack of gout;  
 And the grieved patron felt such serious pain,  
 He never thought to see a church again. 120  
 Thrice had the youthful rector taught the crowd,  
 Whose growing numbers spoke his powers aloud,  
 Before the patron could himself rejoice  
 (His pain still lingering) in the general voice;  
 For he imputed all this early fame

To graceful manner, and the well-known name;  
And to himself assumed a share of praise,  
For worth and talents he was pleased to raise.

A month had flown, and with it fled disease;  
What pleased before, began again to please;  
Emerging daily from his chamber's gloom, 130  
He found his old sensations hurrying home;  
Then call'd his nephew, and exclaim'd, "My boy,  
Let us again the balm of life enjoy;  
The foe has left me, and I deem it right,  
Should he return, to arm me for the fight."

Thus spoke the 'squire, the favourite nymph stood by,  
And view'd the priest with insult in her eye.  
She thrice had heard him when he boldly spoke  
On dangerous points, and fear'd he would revoke;  
For James she loved not—and her manner told, 140  
"This warm affection will be quickly cold."  
And still she fear'd impression might be made  
Upon a subject nervous and decay'd;  
She knew her danger, and had no desire  
Of reformation in the gallant 'squire;  
And felt an envious pleasure in her breast  
To see the rector daunted and distress'd.

Again the uncle to the youth applied—  
"Cast, my dear lad, that cursed gloom aside:  
There are for all things time and place; appear 150  
Grave in your pulpit, and be merry here.  
Now take your wine—for woes a sure resource,  
And the best prelude to a long discourse."

James half obey'd, but cast an angry eye  
On the fair lass, who still stood watchful by;  
Resolving thus, "I have my fears—but still  
I must perform my duties, and I will;  
No love, no interest, shall my mind control;  
Better to lose my comforts than my soul;  
Better my uncle's favour to abjure, 160  
Than the upbraidings of my heart endure."

He took his glass, and then address'd the 'squire:  
"I feel not well, permit me to retire."

The 'squire conceived that the ensuing day  
Gave him these terrors for the grand essay,  
When he himself should this young preacher try,  
And stand before him with observant eye;  
This raised compassion in his manly breast,  
And he would send the rector to his rest;  
Yet first, in soothing voice—"A moment stay, 170  
And these suggestions of a friend obey;  
Treasure these hints, if fame or peace you prize—  
The bottle emptied, I shall close my eyes.

"On every priest a two-fold care attends,  
To prove his talents, and insure his friends:  
First, of the first—your stores at once produce,  
And bring your reading to its proper use;  
On doctrines dwell, and every point enforce  
By quoting much, the scholar's sure resource;  
For he alone can show us on each head 180  
What ancient schoolmen and sage fathers said:  
No worth has knowledge, if you fail to show  
How well you studied, and how much you know.  
Is faith your subject, and you judge it right  
On theme so dark to cast a ray of light:  
Be it that faith the orthodox maintain,  
Found in the rubrick, what the creeds explain;  
Fail not to show us on this ancient faith  
(And quote the passage) what some martyr saith.

Dwell not one moment on a faith that shocks 190  
The minds of men sincere and orthodox:  
That gloomy faith, that robs the wounded mind  
Of all the comfort it was wont to find  
From virtuous acts, and to the soul denies  
Its proper due for alms and charities;  
That partial faith, that, weighing sins alone,  
Lets not a virtue for a fault atone;  
That starving faith, that would our tables clear,  
And make one dreadful Lent of all the year;

And cruel too, for this is faith that rends 200  
 Confiding beauties from protecting friends;  
 A faith that all embracing, what a gloom  
 Deep and terrific o'er the land would come!  
 What scenes of horror would that time disclose!  
 No sight but misery, and no sound but woes;  
 Your nobler faith, in loftier style convey'd,  
 Shall be with praise and admiration paid.  
 On points like these your hearers all admire  
 A preacher's depth, and nothing more require;  
 Shall we a studious youth to college send, 210  
 That every clown his words may comprehend?  
 'Tis for your glory, when your hearers own  
 Your learning matchless, but the sense unknown.  
 "Thus honour gain'd, learn now to gain a friend,  
 And the sure way is—never to offend;  
 For, James, consider—what your neighbours do  
 Is their own business, and concerns not you.  
 Shun all resemblance to that forward race  
 Who preach of sins before a sinner's face;  
 And seem as if they overlook'd a pew, 220  
 Only to drag a failing man in view.  
 Much should I feel, when groaning in disease,  
 If a rough hand upon my limb should seize;  
 But great my anger, if this hand were found  
 The very doctor's, who should make it sound;  
 So feel our minds, young priest, so doubly feel,  
 When hurt by those whose office is to heal.  
 "Yet of our duties you must something tell,  
 And must at times on sin and frailty dwell;  
 Here you may preach in easy, flowing style, 230  
 How errors cloud us, and how sins defile;  
 Here bring persuasive tropes and figures forth,  
 To show the poor that wealth is nothing worth;  
 That they, in fact, possess an ample share  
 Of the world's good, and feel not half its care;  
 Give them this comfort, and, indeed, my gout  
 In its full vigour causes me some doubt;  
 And let it always, for your zeal, suffice,  
 That vice you combat, in the abstract—vice:  
 The very captious will be quiet then; 240  
 We all confess we are offending men.  
 In lashing sin, of every stroke beware,  
 For sinners feel, and sinners you must spare;  
 In general satire, every man perceives  
 A slight attack, yet neither fears nor grieves;  
 But name th' offence, and you absolve the rest,  
 And point the dagger at a single breast.  
 "Yet are there sinners of a class so low,  
 That you with safety may the lash bestow:  
 Poachers, and drunkards, idle rogues, who feed 250  
 At others' cost, a mark'd correction need;  
 And all the better sort, who see your zeal,  
 Will love and reverence for their pastor feel;  
 Reverence for one who can inflict the smart,  
 And love, because he deals them not a part.  
 "Remember well what love and age advise;  
 A quiet rector is a parish prize,  
 Who in his learning has a decent pride;  
 Who to his people is a gentle guide;  
 Who only hints at failings that he sees; 260  
 Who loves his glebe, his patron, and his ease, }  
 And finds the way to fame and profit is to please." }

The nephew answer'd not, except a sigh  
 And look of sorrow might be term'd reply;  
 He saw the fearful hazard of his state,  
 And held with truth and safety strong debate;  
 Nor long he reason'd, for the zealous youth  
 Resolved, though timid, to profess the truth;  
 And, though his friend should like a lion roar,  
 Truth would he preach, and neither less nor more. 270

The bells had toll'd—arrived the time of prayer,  
 The flock assembled, and the 'squire was there:  
 And now can poet sing, or proseman say,  
 The disappointment of that trying day?

As he who long had train'd a favourite steed  
 (Whose blood and bone gave promise of his speed),  
 Sanguine with hope, he runs with partial eye  
 O'er every feature, and his bets are high;  
 Of triumph sure, he sees the rivals start,
 280  
 And waits their coming with exulting heart;  
 Forestalling glory, with impatient glance,  
 And sure to see his conquering steed advance;  
 The conquering steed advances—luckless day!  
 A rival's Herod bears the prize away;  
 Nor second his, nor third, but lagging last,  
 With hanging head he comes, by all surpass'd;  
 Surprise and wrath the owner's mind inflame,  
 Love turns to scorn, and glory ends in shame:—  
 Thus waited, high in hope, the partial 'squire,  
 Eager to hear, impatient to admire.
 290

When the young preacher in the tones that find  
 A certain passage to the kindling mind,  
 With air and accent strange, impressive, sad,  
 Alarm'd the judge—he trembled for the lad;  
 But when the text announced the power of grace, }  
 Amazement scowl'd upon his clouded face, }  
 At this degenerate son of his illustrious race; }  
 Staring he stood, till hope again arose,  
 That James might well define the words he chose:  
 For this he listen'd—but, alas! he found
 300  
 The preacher always on forbidden ground.  
 And now the uncle left the hated pew,  
 With James, and James's conduct in his view.  
 A long farewell to all his favourite schemes! }  
 For now no crazed fanatic's frantic dreams }  
 Seem'd vile as James's conduct, or as James. }  
 All he had long derided, hated, fear'd,  
 This from the chosen youth the uncle heard—  
 The needless pause, the fierce disorder'd air,  
 The groan for sin, the vehemence of prayer,
 310  
 Gave birth to wrath, that, in a long discourse  
 Of grace, triumphant rose to four-fold force.  
 He found his thoughts despised, his rules transgress'd; }  
 And, while the anger kindled in his breast, }  
 The pain must be endured that could not be express'd. }  
 Each new idea more inflamed his ire,  
 As fuel thrown upon a rising fire:  
 A hearer yet, he sought by threatening sign  
 To ease his heart, and awe the young divine;  
 But James refused those angry looks to meet,
 320  
 Till he dismiss'd his flock, and left his seat.  
 Exhausted then he felt his trembling frame,  
 But fix'd his soul—his sentiments the same;  
 And therefore wise it seem'd to fly from rage,  
 And seek for shelter in his parsonage:  
 There, if forsaken, yet consoled to find  
 Some comforts left, though not a few resign'd;  
 There, if he lost an erring parent's love,  
 An honest conscience must the cause approve;  
 If the nice palate were no longer fed,
 330  
 The mind enjoy'd delicious thoughts instead;  
 And if some part of earthly good was flown,  
 Still was the tithe of ten good farms his own.  
 Fear now, and discord, in the village reign, }  
 The cool remonstrate, and the meek complain; }  
 But there is war within, and wisdom pleads in vain. }  
 Now dreads the uncle, and proclaims his dread,  
 Lest the boy-priest should turn each rustic head;  
 The certain converts cost him certain wo;  
 The doubtful fear lest they should join the foe;
 340  
 Matrons of old, with whom he used to joke,  
 Now pass his Honour with a pious look;  
 Lasses, who met him once with lively airs,  
 Now cross his way, and gravely walk to prayers;  
 An old companion, whom he long has loved,  
 By coward fears confess'd his conscience moved;  
 As the third bottle gave its spirit forth.  
 And they bore witness to departed worth,  
 The friend arose, and he too would depart—





## TALE XVI.

### THE CONFIDANT.

Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon,  
With fresh suspicion?

*Othello*, Act III. Scene 3.

Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,  
And given my treasure and my rights [of] thee  
To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy?  
1 *Henry IV*. Act II. Scene 3.

It is excellent  
To have a giant's strength, but [it is] tyrannous  
To use it as a giant.  
*Measure for Measure*, Act II. Scene 2.

## TALE XVI.

### THE CONFIDANT.

Anna was young and lovely—in her eye  
The glance of beauty, in her cheek the dye;  
Her shape was slender, and her features small,  
But graceful, easy, unaffected all.  
The liveliest tints her youthful face disclosed;  
There beauty sparkled, and there health reposed;  
For the pure blood that flush'd that rosy cheek  
Spoke what the heart forbade the tongue to speak;  
And told the feelings of that heart as well,  
Nay, with more candour than the tongue could tell. 10  
Though this fair lass had with the wealthy dwelt,  
Yet like the damsel of the cot she felt;  
And, at the distant hint or dark surmise,  
The blood into the mantling cheek would rise.  
Now Anna's station frequent terrors wrought  
In one whose looks were with such meaning fraught;  
For on a lady, as an humble friend,  
It was her painful office to attend.  
Her duties here were of the usual kind—  
And some the body harass'd, some the mind: 20  
Billets she wrote, and tender stories read,  
To make the lady sleepy in her bed;  
She play'd at whist, but with inferior skill,  
And heard the summons as a call to drill;  
Music was ever pleasant till she play'd  
At a request that no request convey'd;  
The lady's tales with anxious looks she heard,  
For she must witness what her friend averr'd;  
The lady's taste she must in all approve, 30  
Hate whom she hated, whom she loved must love;  
These, with the various duties of her place,  
With care she studied, and perform'd with grace;  
She veil'd her troubles in a mask of ease,  
And show'd her pleasure was a power to please.  
Such were the damsel's duties; she was poor—  
Above a servant, but with service more.  
Men on her face with careless freedom gazed,  
Nor thought how painful was the glow they raised;  
A wealthy few to gain her favour tried,  
But not the favour of a grateful bride: 40  
They spoke their purpose with an easy air,  
That shamed and frighten'd the dependent fair:  
Past time she view'd, the passing time to cheat,  
But nothing found to make the present sweet;  
With pensive soul she read life's future page,  
And saw dependent, poor, repining age.  
But who shall dare t' assert what *years* may bring,  
When wonders from the passing *hour* may spring?—  
There dwelt a yeoman in the place, whose mind  
Was gentle, generous, cultivated, kind; 50  
For thirty years he labour'd; fortune then

Placed the mild rustic with superior men:  
 A richer Stafford, who had lived to save,  
 What he had treasured to the poorer gave;  
 Who with a sober mind that treasure view'd,  
 And the slight studies of his youth renew'd.  
 He not profoundly, but discreetly read,  
 And a fair mind with useful culture fed;  
 Then thought of marriage—"But the great," said he,  
 "I shall not suit, nor will the meaner me." 60  
 Anna he saw, admired her modest air;  
 He thought her virtuous, and he knew her fair;  
 Love raised his pity for her humble state,  
 And prompted wishes for her happier fate;  
 No pride in money would his feelings wound,  
 Nor vulgar manners hurt him and confound:  
 He then the lady at the hall address'd,  
 Sought her consent, and his regard express'd;  
 Yet, if some cause his earnest wish denied,  
 He begg'd to know it; and he bow'd and sigh'd. 70  
 The lady own'd that she was loth to part,  
 But praised the damsel for her gentle heart,  
 Her pleasing person, and her blooming health;  
 But ended thus, "Her virtue is her wealth."  
 "Then is she rich!" he cried, with lively air;  
 "But whence, so please you, came a lass so fair?"  
 "A placeman's child was Anna, one who died  
 And left a widow by afflictions tried;  
 She to support her infant daughter strove,  
 But early left the object of her love; 80  
 Her youth, her beauty, and her orphan-state  
 Gave a kind countess interest in her fate;  
 With her she dwelt, and still might dwelling be,  
 When the earl's folly caused the lass to flee;  
 A second friend was she compell'd to shun,  
 By the rude offers of an uncheck'd son;  
 I found her then, and with a mother's love  
 Regard the gentle girl whom you approve.  
 Yet, e'en with me, protection is not peace;  
 Nor man's designs, nor beauty's trial, cease; 90  
 Like sordid boys by costly fruit they feel:  
 They will not purchase, but they try to steal."  
 Now this good lady, like a witness true,  
 Told but the truth, and all the truth she knew;  
 And 'tis our duty and our pain to show  
 Truth this good lady had not means to know.  
 Yes, there was lock'd within the damsel's breast  
 A fact important to be now confess'd;  
 Gently, my muse, th' afflicting tale relate,  
 And have some feeling for a sister's fate. 100  
 Where Anna dwelt, a conquering hero came—  
 An Irish captain, Sedley was his name;  
 And he too had that same prevailing art,  
 That gave soft wishes to the virgin's heart.  
 In years they differ'd; he had thirty seen  
 When this young beauty counted just fifteen;  
 But still they were a lovely lively pair,  
 And trod on earth as if they trod on air.  
 On love, delightful theme! the captain dwelt  
 With force still growing with the hopes he felt; 110  
 But with some caution and reluctance told,  
 He had a father crafty, harsh, and old;  
 Who, as possessing much, would much expect,  
 Or both, for ever, from his love reject:  
 Why then offence to one so powerful give,  
 Who (for their comfort) had not long to live?  
 With this poor prospect the deluded maid,  
 In words confiding, was indeed betray'd;  
 And, soon as terrors in her bosom rose,  
 The hero fled; they hinder'd his repose. 120  
 Deprived of him, she to a parent's breast  
 Her secret trusted, and her pains impress'd:  
 Let her to town (so prudence urged) repair,  
 To shun disgrace, at least to hide it there;  
 But ere she went, the luckless damsel pray'd  
 A chosen friend might lend her timely aid:

"Yes! my soul's sister, my Eliza, come,  
 Hear her last sigh, and ease thy Anna's doom:"  
 "'Tis a fool's wish," the angry father cried,  
 But, lost in troubles of his own, complied; 130  
 And dear Eliza to her friend was sent,  
 T' indulge that wish, and be her punishment:  
 The time arrived, and brought a tenfold dread;  
 The time was past, and all the terror fled;  
 The infant died; the face resumed each charm,  
 And reason now brought trouble and alarm:  
 "Should her Eliza—no! she was too just,  
 Too good and kind—but ah! too young to trust."  
 Anna return'd, her former place resumed,  
 And faded beauty with new grace re-bloom'd; 140  
 And, if some whispers of the past were heard,  
 They died innocuous, as no cause appear'd;  
 But other cares on Anna's bosom press'd,  
 She saw her father gloomy and distress'd;  
 He died o'erwhelm'd with debt, and soon was shed }  
 The filial sorrow o'er a mother dead: }  
 She sought Eliza's arms, that faithful friend was wed; }  
 Then was compassion by the countess shown,  
 And all th' adventures of her life are known.

And now beyond her hopes—no longer tried 150  
 By slavish awe—she lived a yeoman's bride;  
 Then bless'd her lot, and with a grateful mind  
 Was careful, cheerful, vigilant, and kind.  
 The gentle husband felt supreme delight,  
 Bless'd by her joy, and happy in her sight;  
 He saw with pride in every friend and guest  
 High admiration and regard express'd;  
 With greater pride, and with superior joy,  
 He look'd exulting on his first-born boy;  
 To her fond breast the wife her infant strain'd, 160  
 Some feelings utter'd, some were not explain'd;  
 And she enraptured with her treasure grew,  
 The sight familiar, but the pleasure new.

Yet there appear'd within that tranquil state  
 Some threat'ning prospect of uncertain fate;  
 Between the married when a secret lies,  
 It wakes suspicion from enforced disguise.  
 Still thought the wife upon her absent friend,  
 With all that must upon her truth depend:  
 "There is no being in the world beside, 170  
 Who can discover what that friend will hide;  
 Who knew the fact, knew not my name or state,  
 Who these can tell cannot the fact relate;  
 But thou, Eliza, canst the whole impart,  
 And all my safety is thy generous heart."

Mix'd with these fears—but light and transient these—  
 Fled years of peace, prosperity, and ease;  
 So tranquil all that scarce a gloomy day  
 For days of gloom unmix'd prepared the way. 180  
 One eve, the wife, still happy in her state,  
 Sang gaily, thoughtless of approaching fate;  
 Then came a letter, that (received in dread  
 Not unobserved) she in confusion read;  
 The substance this—"Her friend rejoiced to find  
 That she had riches with a grateful mind;  
 While poor Eliza had from place to place  
 Been lured by hope to labour for disgrace;  
 That every scheme her wandering husband tried,  
 Pain'd while he lived, and perish'd when he died."  
 She then of want in angry style complain'd: } 190  
 Her child a burthen to her life remain'd, }  
 Her kindred shunn'd her prayers, no friend her soul sustain'd. }

"Yet why neglected? Dearest Anna knew  
 Her worth once tried, her friendship ever true;  
 She hoped, she trusted, though by wants oppress'd,  
 To lock the treasured secret in her breast;  
 Yet, vex'd by trouble, must apply to one,  
 For kindness due to her for kindness done."  
 In Anna's mind was tumult; in her face  
 Flushings of dread had momentary place. 200  
 "I must," she judged, "these cruel lines expose,

Or fears, or worse than fears, my crime disclose."

The letter shown, he said, with sober smile—

"Anna, your friend has not a friendly style.

Say, where could you with this fair lady dwell,

Who boasts of secrets that she scorns to tell?"

"At school," she answer'd; he "at school!" replied;

"Nay, then I know the secrets you would hide:

Some [early] longings these, without dispute;

Some youthful gaspings for forbidden fruit.

210

Why so disorder'd, love? are such the crimes

That give us sorrow in our graver times?

Come, take a present for your friend, and rest

In perfect peace—you find you are confess'd."

This cloud, though past, alarm'd the conscious wife,

Presaging gloom and sorrow for her life;

Who to her answer join'd a fervent prayer,

That her Eliza would a sister spare:

If she again—but was there cause?—should send,

Let her direct—and then she named a friend.—

220

A sad expedient, untried friends to trust,

And still to fear the tried may be unjust:

Such is his pain, who, by his debt oppress'd,

Seeks by new bonds a temporary rest.

Few were her peaceful days till Anna read

The words she dreaded, and had cause to dread:—

"Did she believe, did she, unkind, suppose

That thus Eliza's friendship was to close?

No! though she tried, and her desire was plain,

To break the friendly bond, she strove in vain:

230

Ask'd she for silence? why so loud the call,

And yet the token of her love so small?

By means like these will you attempt to bind

And check the movements of an injured mind?

Poor as I am, I shall be proud to show

What dangerous secrets I may safely know.

Secrets, to men of jealous minds convey'd,

Have many a noble house in ruins laid;

Anna, I trust, although with wrongs beset,

And urged by want, I shall be faithful yet;

240

But what temptation may from these arise,

To take a slighted woman by surprise,

Becomes a subject for your serious care—

For who offends, must for offence prepare."

Perplex'd, dismay'd, the wife foresaw her doom;

A day deferr'd was yet a day to come;

But still, though painful her suspended state,

She dreaded more the crisis of her fate;

Better to die than Stafford's scorn to meet,

And her strange friend perhaps would be discreet.

250

Presents she sent, and made a strong appeal

To woman's feelings, begging her to feel;

With too much force she wrote of jealous men,

And her tears falling spoke beyond the pen;

Eliza's silence she again implored,

And promised all that prudence could afford.

For looks composed and careless Anna tried;

She seem'd in trouble, and unconscious sigh'd:

The faithful husband, who devoutly loved

His silent partner, with concern reproved:

260

"What secret sorrows on my Anna press,

That love may not partake, nor care redress?"

"None, none," she answer'd, with a look so kind,

That the fond man determined to be blind.

A few succeeding weeks of brief repose

In Anna's cheek revived the faded rose;

A hue like this the western sky displays,

That glows awhile, and withers as we gaze.

Again the friend's tormenting letter came—

"The wants she suffer'd were affection's shame;

270

She with her child a life of terrors led,

Unhappy fruit! but of a lawful bed.

Her friend was tasting every bliss in life,

The joyful mother, and the wealthy wife;

While she was placed in doubt, in fear, in want,

To starve on trifles that the happy grant;

Poorly for all her faithful silence paid,  
And tantalized by ineffectual aid.  
She could not thus a beggar's lot endure;  
She wanted something permanent and sure: 280  
If they were friends, then equal be their lot,  
And she was free to speak if they were not."  
Despair and terror seized the wife, to find  
The artful workings of a vulgar mind:  
Money she had not, but the hint of dress  
Taught her new bribes, new terrors to redress;  
She with such feeling then described her woes,  
That envy's self might on the view repose;  
Then to a mother's pains she made appeal,  
And painted grief like one compell'd to feel. 290  
Yes! so she felt, that in her air, her face,  
In every purpose, and in every place;  
In her slow motion, in her languid mien,  
The grief, the sickness of her soul were seen.  
Of some mysterious ill the husband sure,  
Desired to trace it, for he hoped to cure;  
Something he knew obscurely, and had seen  
His wife attend a cottage on the green;  
Love, loth to wound, endured conjecture long,  
Till fear would speak, and spoke in language strong. 300  
"All I must know, my Anna—truly know  
Whence these emotions, terrors, troubles flow;  
Give me thy grief, and I will fairly prove  
Mine is no selfish, no ungenerous love."  
Now Anna's soul the seat of strife became:  
Fear with respect contended, love with shame;  
But fear, prevailing, was the ruling guide,  
Prescribing what to show and what to hide.  
"It is my friend," she said—"but why disclose  
A woman's weakness struggling with her woes? 310  
Yes, she has grieved me by her fond complaints,  
The wrongs she suffers, the distress she paints;  
Something we do—but she afflicts me still,  
And says, with power to help, I want the will.  
This plaintive style I pity and excuse,  
Help when I can, and grieve when I refuse;  
But here my useless sorrows I resign,  
And will be happy in a love like thine."  
The husband doubted; he was kind but cool:—  
"'Tis a strong friendship to arise at school; 320  
Once more then, love, once more the sufferer aid—  
I too can pity, but I must upbraid;  
Of these vain feelings then thy bosom free,  
Nor be o'erwhelm'd by useless sympathy."  
The wife again despatch'd the useless bribe,  
Again essay'd her terrors to describe;  
Again with kindest words entreated peace,  
And begg'd her offerings for a time might cease.  
A calm succeeded, but too like the one  
That causes terror ere the storm comes on: 330  
A secret sorrow lived in Anna's heart,  
In Stafford's mind a secret fear of art;  
Not long they lasted—this determined foe  
Knew all her claims, and nothing would forego;  
Again her letter came, where Anna read,  
"My child, one cause of my distress, is dead;  
Heav'n has my infant." "Heartless wretch!" she cried,  
"Is this thy joy?"—"I am no longer tied:  
Now will I, hast'ning to my friend, partake  
Her cares and comforts, and no more forsake; 340  
Now shall we both in equal station move,  
Save that my friend enjoys a husband's love."  
Complaint and threats so strong the wife amazed,  
Who wildly on her cottage-neighbour gazed;  
Her tones, her trembling, first betray'd her grief;  
When floods of tears gave anguish its relief.  
She fear'd that Stafford would refuse assent,  
And knew her selfish friend would not relent;  
She must petition, yet delay'd the task,  
Ashamed, afraid, and yet compell'd to ask; 350  
Unknown to him some object filled her mind,

And, once suspicious, he became unkind.—  
They sate one evening, each absorb'd in gloom, }  
When, hark! a noise and rushing to the room, }  
The friend tripp'd lightly in, and laughing said, "I come." }

Anna received her with an anxious mind,  
And meeting whisper'd, "Is Eliza kind?"  
Reserved and cool, the husband sought to prove  
The depth and force of this mysterious love. 360  
To nought that pass'd between the stranger-friend  
And his meek partner seem'd he to attend;  
But, anxious, listen'd to the lightest word  
That might some knowledge of his guest afford;  
And learn the reason one to him so dear  
Should feel such fondness, yet betray such fear.

Soon he perceived this uninvited guest,  
Unwelcome too, a sovereign power possess'd;  
Lofty she was and careless, while the meek  
And humbled Anna was afraid to speak: 370  
As mute she listen'd with a painful smile,  
Her friend sate laughing and at ease the while,  
Telling her idle tales with all the glee  
Of careless and unfeeling levity.

With calm good sense he knew his wife endued,  
And now with wounded pride her conduct view'd;  
Her speech was low, her every look convey'd—  
"I am a slave, subservient and afraid."  
All trace of comfort vanish'd if she spoke;  
The noisy friend upon her purpose broke, 380  
To her remarks with insolence replied,  
And her assertions doubted or denied;  
While the meek Anna like an infant shook,  
Wo-struck and trembling at the serpent's look.

"There is," said Stafford, "yes, there is a cause—  
This creature frights her, overpowers and awes."  
Six weeks had pass'd—"In truth, my love, this friend  
Has liberal notions; what does she intend?  
Without a hint she came, and will she stay  
Till she receives the hint to go away?"

Confused the wife replied, in spite of truth, 390  
"I love the dear companion of my youth."  
"Tis well," said Stafford; "then your loves renew;  
Trust me, your rivals, Anna, will be few."

Though playful this, she felt too much distress'd  
T' admit the consolation of a jest;  
Ill she reposed, and in her dreams would sigh  
And, murmuring forth her anguish, beg to die;  
With sunken eye, slow pace, and pallid cheek,  
She look'd confusion, and she fear'd to speak. 400

All this the friend beheld, for, quick of sight,  
She knew the husband eager for her flight;  
And that by force alone she could retain  
The lasting comforts she had hope to gain:  
She now perceived, to win her post for life,  
She must infuse fresh terrors in the wife;  
Must bid to friendship's feebler ties adieu,  
And boldly claim the object in her view;  
She saw the husband's love, and knew the power  
Her friend might use in some propitious hour. 410

Meantime the anxious wife, from pure distress  
Assuming courage, said, "I will confess;"  
But with her children felt a parent's pride,  
And sought once more the hated truth to hide.

Offended, grieved, impatient, Stafford bore  
The odious change till he could bear no more.  
A friend to truth, in speech and action plain,  
He held all fraud and cunning in disdain;  
But fraud to find, and falsehood to detect,  
For once he fled to measures indirect. 420

One day the friends were seated in that room  
The guest with care adorn'd, and named her home.  
To please the eye, there curious prints were placed,  
And some light volumes to amuse the taste;  
Letters and music, on a table laid,  
The favourite studies of the fair betray'd;  
Beneath the window was the toilet spread,

And the fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed.  
 In Anna's looks and falling tears were seen  
 How interesting had their subjects been:

430

"Oh! then," resumed the friend, "I plainly find  
 That you and Stafford know each other's mind;  
 I must depart, must on the world be thrown,  
 Like one discarded, worthless and unknown;  
 But shall I carry, and to please a foe,  
 A painful secret in my bosom? No!  
 Think not your friend a reptile you may tread  
 Beneath your feet, and say, the worm is dead:  
 I have some feeling, and will not be made  
 The scorn of her whom love cannot persuade.

440

Would not your word, your slightest wish, effect  
 All that I hope, petition, or expect?  
 The power you have, but you the use decline—  
 Proof that you feel not, or you fear not mine.  
 There was a time, when I, a tender maid,  
 Flew at a call, and your desires obey'd;  
 A very mother to the child became,  
 Consoled your sorrow, and conceal'd your shame;  
 But now, grown rich and happy, from the door  
 You thrust a bosom-friend, despised and poor;  
 That child alive, its mother might have known

450

The hard, ungrateful spirit she has shown."  
 Here paused the guest, and Anna cried at length—  
 "You try me, cruel friend! beyond my strength;  
 Would I had been beside my infant laid,  
 Where none would vex me, threaten, or upbraid."  
 In Anna's looks the friend beheld despair;  
 Her speech she soften'd, and composed her air;  
 Yet, while professing love, she answered still—  
 "You can befriend me, but you want the will."  
 They parted thus, and Anna went her way,

460

To shed her secret sorrows, and to pray.  
 Stafford, amused with books, and fond of home,  
 By reading oft dispell'd the evening gloom;  
 History or tale—all heard him with delight,  
 And thus was pass'd this memorable night.  
 The listening friend bestow'd a flattering smile;  
 A sleeping boy the mother held the while;  
 And, ere she fondly bore him to his bed,  
 On his fair face the tear of anguish shed.

470

And now, his task resumed, "My tale," said he,  
 "Is short and sad, short may our sadness be!"—  
 "The Caliph Harun<sup>[8]</sup>, as historians tell,  
 Ruled, for a tyrant, admirably well;  
 Where his own pleasures were not touch'd, to men  
 He was humane, and sometimes even then.  
 Harun was fond of fruits, and gardens fair;  
 And wo to all whom he found poaching there.  
 Among his pages was a lively boy,  
 Eager in search of every trifling joy;  
 His feelings vivid, and his fancy strong,

480

He sigh'd for pleasure while he shrank from wrong;  
 When by the caliph in the garden placed,  
 He saw the treasures which he long'd to taste;  
 And oft alone he ventured to behold  
 Rich hanging fruits with rind of glowing gold;  
 Too long he staid forbidden bliss to view,  
 His virtue failing, as his longings grew;  
 Athirst and wearied with the noon-tide heat,  
 Fate to the garden led his luckless feet;  
 With eager eyes and open mouth he stood,

490

Smelt the sweet breath, and touch'd the fragrant food;  
 The tempting beauty sparkling in the sun  
 Charm'd his young sense—he ate, and was undone.  
 When the fond glutton paused, his eyes around  
 He turn'd, and eyes upon him turning found;  
 Pleased he beheld the spy, a brother-page,  
 A friend allied in office and in age;  
 Who promised much that secret he would be,  
 But high the price he fix'd on secrecy.

500

"Were you suspected, my unhappy friend,'

Began the boy, 'where would your sorrows end?  
In all the palace there is not a page  
The caliph would not torture in his rage:  
I think I see thee now impaled alive,  
Writhing in pangs—but come, my friend! revive;  
Had some beheld you, all your purse contains  
Could not have saved you from terrific pains;  
I scorn such meanness; and, if not in debt,  
Would not an asper on your folly set.'

"The hint was strong; young Osmyn search'd his store  
For bribes, and found he soon could bribe no more;

511

That time arrived, for Osmyn's stock was small,  
And the young tyrant now possess'd it all;  
The cruel youth, with his companions near,  
Gave the broad hint that raised the sudden fear;  
Th' ungenerous insult now was daily shown,  
And Osmyn's peace and honest pride were flown;  
Then came augmenting woes, and fancy strong  
Drew forms of suffering, a tormenting throng;  
He felt degraded, and the struggling mind  
Dared not be free, and could not be resign'd;  
And all his pains and fervent prayers obtain'd  
Was truce from insult, while the fears remain'd.

520

"One day it chanced that this degraded boy  
And tyrant-friend were fix'd at their employ;  
Who now had thrown restraint and form aside,  
And for his bribe in plainer speech applied:  
'Long have I waited, and the last supply  
Was but a pittance, yet how patient I!  
But, give me now what thy first terrors gave,  
My speech shall praise thee, and my silence save.'

530

"Osmyn had found, in many a dreadful day,  
The tyrant fiercer when he seem'd in play:  
He begg'd forbearance: 'I have not to give;  
Spare me awhile, although 'tis pain to live.  
Oh! had that stolen fruit the power possess'd  
To war with life, I now had been at rest.'

"'So fond of death,' replied the boy, "'tis plain  
Thou hast no certain notion of the pain;  
But, to the caliph were a secret shown,  
Death has no pain that would be then unknown,'

540

"Now," says the story, "in a closet near,  
The monarch, seated, chanced the boys to hear;  
There oft he came, when wearied on his throne,  
To read, sleep, listen, pray, or be alone.

"The tale proceeds: when first the caliph found  
That he was robb'd, although alone, he frown'd;  
And swore in wrath, that he would send the boy  
Far from his notice, favour, or employ;  
But gentler movements soothed his ruffled mind,  
And his own failings taught him to be kind.

550

"Relenting thoughts then painted Osmyn young,  
His passion urgent, and temptation strong;  
And that he suffer'd from that villain-spy  
Pains worse than death till he desired to die;  
Then, if his morals had received a stain,  
His bitter sorrows made him pure again;  
To Reason Pity lent her generous aid,  
For one so tempted, troubled, and betray'd;  
And a free pardon the glad boy restored  
To the kind presence of a gentle lord;  
Who from his office and his country drove  
That traitor-friend, whom pains nor pray'rs could move;  
Who raised the fears no mortal could endure,  
And then with cruel av'rice sold the cure.

560

"My tale is ended; but, to be applied,  
I must describe the place where caliphs hide."

Here both the females look'd alarm'd, distress'd,  
With hurried passions hard to be express'd.

"It was a closet by a chamber placed,  
Where slept a lady of no vulgar taste;  
Her friend attended in that chosen room  
That she had honour'd and proclaim'd her home;  
To please the eye were chosen pictures placed,  
And some light volumes to amuse the taste;

570



Letters and music on a table laid,  
For much the lady wrote, and often play'd;  
Beneath the window was a toilet spread,  
And a fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed."

He paused, he rose; with troubled joy the wife  
Felt the new era of her changeful life;  
Frankness and love appear'd in Stafford's face,  
And all her trouble to delight gave place.

Twice made the guest an effort to sustain }  
Her feelings, twice resumed her seat in vain, }  
Nor could suppress her shame, nor could support her pain. }  
Quick she retired, and all the dismal night  
Thought of her guilt, her folly, and her flight;  
Then sought unseen her miserable home,  
To think of comforts lost, and brood on wants to come.

580

590

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## TALE XVII.

### RESENTMENT.

*She* hath a tear for pity, and a hand  
Open as day for melting charity;  
Yet, notwithstanding, being incensed, is flint—  
*Her* temper, therefore, must be well observ'd.  
*2 Henry IV.* Act IV. Scene 4.

Three or four wenches, where I stood, cried—“Alas! good soul!” and forgave him with all their hearts; but [there’s] no heed to be taken of them; if Cæsar had stabb’d their mothers, they would have done no less.  
*Julius Cæsar,* Act I. Scene 2.

How dost...? Art cold?  
I’m cold myself—Where is the straw, my fellow?  
The art of our necessities is strange,  
That can make vile things precious.  
*King Lear,* Act III. Scene 2.

## TALE XVII.

### RESENTMENT.

Females there are of unsuspecting mind,  
Easy and soft, and credulous and kind;  
Who, when offended for the twentieth time,  
Will hear th’ offender and forgive the crime;  
And there are others whom, like these to cheat,  
Asks but the humblest effort of deceit;  
But they, once injured, feel a strong disdain,  
And, seldom pardoning, never trust again;  
Urged by religion, they forgive—but yet  
Guard the warm heart, and never more forget. 10  
Those are like wax—apply them to the fire,  
Melting, they take th’ impressions you desire;  
Easy to mould, and fashion as you please,  
And again moulded with an equal ease;  
Like smelted iron these the forms retain,  
But once impress’d will never melt again.  
A busy port a serious merchant made  
His chosen place to recommence his trade;  
And brought his lady, who, their children dead,  
Their native seat of recent sorrow fled. 20  
The husband duly on the quay was seen;  
The wife at home became at length serene;  
There in short time the social couple grew  
With all acquainted, friendly with a few;  
When the good lady, by disease assail’d,  
In vain resisted—hope and science fail’d.  
Then spake the female friends, by pity led,  
“Poor merchant Paul! what think ye? will he wed?  
A quiet, easy, kind, religious man,  
Thus can he rest?—I wonder if he can.” 30  
He too, as grief subsided in his mind,  
Gave place to notions of congenial kind;  
Grave was the man, as we have told before;  
His years were forty—he might pass for more;  
Composed his features were, his stature low,  
His air important, and his motion slow;  
His dress became him, it was neat and plain,  
The colour purple, and without a stain;  
His words were few, and special was his care  
In simplest terms his purpose to declare. 40  
A man more civil, sober, and discreet,  
More grave and courteous, you could seldom meet.  
Though frugal he, yet sumptuous was his board,  
As if to prove how much he could afford;  
For, though reserved himself, he loved to see  
His table plenteous, and his neighbours free.  
Among these friends he sat in solemn style,  
And rarely soften’d to a sober smile;

For this observant friends their reasons gave—  
 “Concerns so vast would make the idlest grave; 50  
 And for such man to be of language free,  
 Would seem incongruous as a singing tree:  
 Trees have their music, but the birds they shield  
 The pleasing tribute for protection yield;  
 Each ample tree the tuneful choir defends,  
 As this rich merchant cheers his happy friends!”  
 In the same town it was his chance to meet  
 A gentle lady, with a mind discreet;  
 Neither in life’s decline, nor bloom of youth, 60  
 One fam’d for maiden modesty and truth.  
 By nature cool, in pious habits bred,  
 She look’d on lovers with a virgin’s dread:  
 Deceivers, rakes, and libertines were they,  
 And harmless beauty their pursuit and prey;  
 As bad as giants in the ancient times  
 Were modern lovers, and the same their crimes.  
 Soon as she heard of her all-conquering charms,  
 At once she fled to her defensive arms;  
 Conn’d o’er the tales her maiden aunt had told,  
 And, statue-like, was motionless and cold; 70  
 From prayer of love, like that Pygmalion pray’d,  
 Ere the hard stone became the yielding maid,  
 A different change in this chaste nymph ensued,  
 And turn’d to stone the breathing flesh and blood.  
 Whatever youth described his wounded heart,  
 “He came to rob her, and she scorn’d his art;  
 And who of raptures once presumed to speak,  
 Told listening maids he thought them fond and weak.  
 But should a worthy man his hopes display  
 In few plain words, and beg a *yes* or *nay*, 80  
 He would deserve an answer just and plain, }  
 Since adulation only moved disdain— }  
 Sir, if my friends object not, come again.” }  
 Hence, our grave lover, though he liked the face,  
 Praised not a feature—dwelt not on a grace;  
 But in the simplest terms declared his state:  
 “A widow’d man, who wish’d a virtuous mate;  
 Who fear’d neglect, and was compell’d to trust  
 Dependents wasteful, idle, or unjust; 90  
 Or, should they not the trusted stores destroy,  
 At best, they could not help him to enjoy;  
 But with her person and her prudence blest,  
 His acts would prosper, and his soul have rest.  
 Would she be his?”—“Why, that was much to say;  
 She would consider; he awhile might stay;  
 She liked his manners, and believed his word;  
 He did not flatter, flattery she abhorr’d;  
 It was her happy lot in peace to dwell—  
 Would change make better what was now so well?  
 But she would ponder.”—“This,” he said, “was kind,” 100  
 And begg’d to know “when she had fix’d her mind.”  
 Romantic maidens would have scorn’d the air,  
 And the cool prudence of a mind so fair;  
 But well it pleased this wiser maid to find  
 Her own mild virtues in her lover’s mind.  
 His worldly wealth she sought, and quickly grew  
 Pleased with her search, and happy in the view  
 Of vessels freighted with abundant stores,  
 Of rooms whose treasures press’d the groaning floors;  
 And he of clerks and servants could display 110  
 A little army, on a public day:  
 Was this a man like needy bard to speak  
 Of balmy lip, bright eye, or rosy cheek?  
 The sum appointed for her widow’d state,  
 Fix’d by her friend, excited no debate;  
 Then the kind lady gave her hand and heart,  
 And, never finding, never dealt with art:  
 In his engagements she had no concern;  
 He taught her not, nor had she wish to learn:  
 On him in all occasions she relied, 120  
 His word her surety, and his worth her pride.  
 When ship was launch’d, and merchant Paul had share,  
 A bounteous feast became the lady’s care;

Who then her entry to the dinner made,  
 In costly raiment, and with kind parade.  
 Call'd by this duty on a certain day,  
 And robed to grace it in a rich array,  
 Forth from her room with measured step she came,  
 Proud of th' event, and stately look'd the dame.

130

The husband met her at his study-door—  
 "This way, my love—one moment and no more:  
 A trifling business—you will understand,  
 The law requires that you affix your hand;  
 But first attend, and you shall learn the cause  
 Why forms like these have been prescribed by laws:"  
 Then from his chair a man in black arose,  
 And with much quickness hurried off his prose:  
 That "Ellen Paul the wife, and so forth, freed  
 From all control, her own the act and deed,  
 And forasmuch"—said she, "I've no distrust,

140

For he that asks it is discreet and just;  
 Our friends are waiting—where am I to sign?—  
 There!—Now be ready when we meet to dine."  
 This said, she hurried off in great delight:  
 The ship was launch'd, and joyful was the night.  
 Now, says the reader, and in much disdain,  
 This serious merchant was a rogue in grain;  
 A treacherous wretch, an artful, sober knave,  
 And ten times worse for manners cool and grave;  
 And she devoid of sense, to set her hand

150

To scoundrel deeds she could not understand.  
 Alas! 'tis true; and I in vain had tried  
 To soften crime, that cannot be denied;  
 And might have labour'd many a tedious verse  
 The latent cause of mischief to rehearse:  
 Be it confess'd, that long with troubled look  
 This trader view'd a huge accompting-book  
 (His former marriage for a time delay'd  
 The dreaded hour, the present lent its aid);  
 But he too clearly saw the evil day,

160

And put the terror, by deceit, away;  
 Thus by connecting with his sorrows crime,  
 He gain'd a portion of uneasy time.—  
 All this too late the injured lady saw,  
 What law had given, again she gave to law;  
 His guilt, her folly—these at once impress'd  
 Their lasting feelings on her guileless breast.  
 "Shame I can bear," she cried, "and want sustain,  
 But will not see this guilty wretch again:"

170

For all was lost, and he, with many a tear,  
 Confess'd the fault—she turning scorn'd to hear.  
 To legal claims he yielded all his worth;  
 But small the portion, and the wrong'd were wroth,  
 Nor to their debtor would a part allow;  
 And where to live he knew not—knew not how.  
 The wife a cottage found, and thither went  
 The suppliant man, but she would not relent;  
 Thenceforth she utter'd with indignant tone,  
 "I feel the misery, and will feel alone."  
 He would turn servant for her sake, would keep

180

The poorest school; the very streets would sweep,  
 To show his love—"It was already shown,  
 And her affliction should be all her own.  
 His wants and weakness might have touch'd her heart,  
 But from his meanness she resolved to part."  
 In a small alley was she lodged, beside  
 Its humblest poor, and at the view she cried:  
 "Welcome—yes! let me welcome, if I can,  
 The fortune dealt me by this cruel man;  
 Welcome this low thatch'd roof, this shatter'd door,

190

These walls of clay, this miserable floor;  
 Welcome my envied neighbours; this, to you,  
 Is all familiar—all to me is new.  
 You have no hatred to the loathsome meal;        }  
 Your firmer nerves no trembling terrors feel,       }  
 Nor, what you must expose, desire you to conceal;   }  
 What your coarse feelings bear without offence,  
 Disgusts my taste, and poisons every sense.

Daily shall I your sad relations hear,  
 Of wanton women, and of men severe; 200  
 There will dire curses, dreadful oaths abound,  
 And vile expressions shock me and confound;  
 Noise of dull wheels, and songs with horrid words,  
 Will be the music that this lane affords;  
 Mirth that disgusts, and quarrels that degrade  
 The human mind, must my retreat invade.  
 Hard is my fate! yet easier to sustain,  
 Than to abide with guilt and fraud again,  
 A grave impostor—who expects to meet,  
 In such grey locks and gravity, deceit? 210  
 Where the sea rages, and the billows roar,  
 Men know the danger, and they quit the shore;  
 But, be there nothing in the way descried,  
 When o'er the rocks smooth runs the wicked tide—  
 Sinking unwarn'd, they execrate the shock,  
 And the dread peril of the sunken rock.”  
 A frowning world had now the man to dread,  
 Taught in no arts, to no profession bred;  
 Pining in grief, beset with constant care,  
 Wandering he went, to rest he knew not where. 220  
 Meantime the wife—but she abjured the name—  
 Endured her lot, and struggled with the shame:  
 When, lo! an uncle on the mother's side,  
 In nature something, as in blood allied,  
 Admired her firmness, his protection gave,  
 And show'd a kindness she disdain'd to crave.  
 Frugal and rich the man, and frugal grew  
 The sister-mind, without a selfish view;  
 And further still—the temp'rate pair agreed  
 With what they saved the patient poor to feed. 230  
 His whole estate, when to the grave consign'd,  
 Left the good kinsman to the kindred mind;  
 Assured that law, with spell secure and tight,  
 Had fix'd it as her own peculiar right.  
 Now to her ancient residence removed,  
 She lived as widow, well endow'd and loved;  
 Decent her table was, and to her door  
 Came daily welcomed the neglected poor.  
 The absent sick were soothed by her relief,  
 As her free bounty sought the haunts of grief; 240  
 A plain and homely charity had she,  
 And loved the objects of her alms to see;  
 With her own hands she dress'd the savoury meat,  
 With her own fingers wrote the choice receipt;  
 She heard all tales that injured wives relate,  
 And took a double interest in their fate;  
 But of all husbands not a wretch was known  
 So vile, so mean, so cruel, as her own.  
 This bounteous lady kept an active spy,  
 To search th' abodes of want, and to supply; 250  
 The gentle Susan served the liberal dame—  
 Unlike their notions, yet their deeds the same:  
 No practised villain could a victim find,  
 Than this stern lady more completely blind;  
 Nor (if detected in his fraud) could meet  
 One less disposed to pardon a deceit;  
 The wrong she treasured, and on no pretence  
 Received th' offender, or forgot th' offence;  
 But the kind servant, to the thrice-proved knave  
 A fourth time listen'd, and the past forgave. 260  
 First in her youth, when she was blithe and gay,  
 Came a smooth rogue, and stole her love away;  
 Then to another and another flew,  
 To boast the wanton mischief he could do.  
 Yet she forgave him, though so great her pain,  
 That she was never blithe or gay again.  
 Then came a spoiler, who, with villain-art,  
 Implored her hand, and agonized her heart;  
 He seized her purse, in idle waste to spend  
 With a vile wanton, whom she call'd her friend; 270  
 Five years she suffer'd—he had revell'd five—  
 Then came to show her he was just alive;  
 Alone he came, his vile companion dead,

And he, a wand'ring pauper, wanting bread;  
His body wasted, wither'd life and limb,  
When this kind soul became a slave to him.  
Nay, she was sure that, should he now survive,  
No better husband would be left alive;  
For him she mourn'd, and then, alone and poor,  
Sought and found comfort at her lady's door: 280  
Ten years she served, and, mercy her employ,  
Her tasks were pleasure, and her duty joy.

Thus lived the mistress and the maid, design'd  
Each other's aid—one cautious, and both kind.  
Oft at their window, working, they would sigh  
To see the aged and the sick go by;  
Like wounded bees, that at their home arrive,  
Slowly and weak, but labouring for the hive.

The busy people of a mason's yard  
The curious lady view'd with much regard; 290  
With steady motion she perceived them draw  
Through blocks of stone the slowly-working saw;  
It gave her pleasure and surprise to see  
Among these men the signs of revelry;  
Cold was the season, and confined their view,  
Tedious their tasks, but merry were the crew.

There she beheld an aged pauper wait,  
Patient and still, to take an humble freight;  
Within the panniers on an ass he laid  
The ponderous grit, and for the portion paid; 300  
This he re-sold, and, with each trifling gift,  
Made shift to live, and wretched was the shift.

Now will it be by every reader told  
Who was this humble trader, poor and old.—  
In vain an author would a name suppress,  
From the least hint a reader learns to guess;  
Of children lost our novels sometimes treat;  
We never care—assured again to meet.  
In vain the writer for concealment tries,  
We trace his purpose under all disguise; 310  
Nay, though he tells us they are dead and gone,  
Of whom we wot—they will appear anon;  
Our favourites fight, are wounded, hopeless lie;  
Survive they cannot—nay, they cannot die:  
Now, as these tricks and stratagems are known,  
'Tis best, at once, the simple truth to own.

This was the husband—in an humble shed  
He nightly slept, and daily sought his bread.  
Once for relief the weary man applied;  
"Your wife is rich," the angry vestry cried; 320  
Alas! he dared not to his wife complain,  
Feeling her wrongs, and fearing her disdain:  
By various methods he had tried to live,  
But not one effort would subsistence give.

He was an usher in a school, till noise  
Made him less able than the weaker boys;  
On messages he went, till he in vain  
Strove names, or words, or meanings to retain;  
Each small employment in each neighbouring town  
By turn he took, to lay as quickly down; 330  
For, such his fate, he fail'd in all he plann'd,  
And nothing prosper'd in his luckless hand.

At his old home, his motive half suppress'd,  
He sought no more for riches, but for rest:  
There lived the bounteous wife, and at her gate  
He saw in cheerful groups the needy wait;  
"Had he a right with bolder hope t' apply?"  
He ask'd—was answer'd, and went groaning by;  
For some remains of spirit, temper, pride,  
Forbade a prayer he knew would be denied. 340

Thus was the grieving man, with burthen'd ass,  
Seen day by day along the street to pass:  
"Who is he, Susan? who the poor old man?  
He never calls—do make him, if you can."—  
The conscious damsel still delay'd to speak,  
She stopp'd confused, and had her words to seek;  
From Susan's fears the fact her mistress knew,  
And cried—"The wretch! what scheme has he in view?"

Is this his lot?—but let him, let him feel—  
 Who wants the courage, not the will to steal." 350  
 A dreadful winter came, each day severe,  
 Misty when mild, and icy cold when clear;  
 And still the humble dealer took his load,  
 Returning slow, and shivering on the road:  
 The lady, still relentless, saw him come,  
 And said—"I wonder, has the wretch a home?"—  
 "A hut! a hovel!"—"Then his fate appears  
 To suit his crime;"—"Yes, lady, not his years—  
 No! nor his sufferings—nor that form decay'd."—  
 "Well! let the parish give its paupers aid; 360  
 You must the vileness of his acts allow."—  
 "And you, dear lady, that he feels it now."—  
 "When such dissemblers on their deeds reflect,  
 Can they the pity they refused expect?  
 He that doth evil, evil shall he dread."— }  
 "The snow," quoth Susan, "falls upon his bed— }  
 It blows beside the thatch—it melts upon his head."— }  
 "'Tis weakness, child, for grieving guilt to feel."—  
 "Yes, but he never sees a wholesome meal;  
 Through his bare dress appears his shrivell'd skin, 370  
 And ill he fares without, and worse within;  
 With that weak body, lame, diseased, and slow,  
 What cold, pain, peril, must the sufferer know!"—  
 "Think on his crime."—"Yes, sure 'twas very wrong;  
 But look, (God bless him!) how he gropes along."—  
 "Brought me to shame."—"Oh! yes, I know it all— }  
 What cutting blast! and he can scarcely crawl; }  
 He freezes as he moves—he dies! if he should fall. }  
 With cruel fierceness drives this icy sleet—  
 And must a Christian perish in the street, 380  
 In sight of Christians?—There! at last, he lies;  
 Nor unsupported can he ever rise:  
 He cannot live."—"But is he fit to die?"—  
 Here Susan softly mutter'd a reply,  
 Look'd round the room—said something of its state,  
 Dives the rich, and Lazarus at his gate;  
 And then, aloud—"In pity do behold  
 The man affrighten'd, weeping, trembling, cold.  
 Oh! how those flakes of snow their entrance win  
 Through the poor rags, and keep the frost within; 390  
 His very heart seems frozen as he goes,  
 Leading that starved companion of his woes:  
 He tried to pray—his lips, I saw them move,  
 And he so turn'd his piteous looks above;  
 But the fierce wind the willing heart opposed,  
 And, ere he spoke, the lips in misery closed.  
 Poor suffering object! yes, for ease you pray'd,  
 And God will hear—he only, I'm afraid."—  
 "Peace! Susan, peace! Pain ever follows sin."—  
 "Ah! then," thought Susan, "when will ours begin? 400  
 When reach'd his home, to what a cheerless fire  
 And chilling bed will those cold limbs retire!  
 Yet ragged, wretched as it is, that bed  
 Takes half the space of his contracted shed;  
 I saw the thorns beside the narrow grate,  
 With straw collected in a putrid state.  
 There will he, kneeling, strive the fire to raise,  
 And that will warm him, rather than the blaze;  
 The sullen, smoky blaze, that cannot last  
 One moment after his attempt is past: 410  
 And I so warmly and so purely laid,  
 To sink to rest—indeed, I am afraid."—  
 "Know you his conduct?"—"Yes, indeed, I know—  
 And how he wanders in the wind and snow:  
 Safe in our rooms the threat'ning storm we hear,  
 But he feels strongly what we faintly fear."—  
 "Wilful was rich, and he the storm defied;  
 Wilful is poor, and must the storm abide;"  
 Said the stern lady;—" 'tis in vain to feel;  
 Go and prepare the chicken for our meal." 420  
 Susan her task reluctantly began,  
 And utter'd as she went—"The poor old man!"—  
 But while her soft and ever-yielding heart

Made strong protest against her lady's part,  
The lady's self began to think it wrong,  
To feel so wrathful and resent so long.

"No more the wretch would she receive again,  
No more behold him—but she would sustain;  
Great his offence, and evil was his mind—  
But he had suffer'd, and she would be kind: 430  
She spurn'd such baseness, and she found within  
A fair acquittal from so foul a sin;  
Yet she too err'd, and must of Heaven expect  
To be rejected, him should she reject."

Susan was summon'd—"I'm about to do  
A foolish act, in part seduced by you:  
Go to the creature—say that I intend,  
Foe to his sins, to be his sorrow's friend;  
Take, for his present comforts, food and wine,  
And mark his feelings at this act of mine; 440  
Observe if shame be o'er his features spread,  
By his own victim to be soothed and fed;  
But, this inform him, that it is not love  
That prompts my heart, that duties only move.  
Say, that no merits in his favour plead,  
But miseries only, and his abject need;  
Nor bring me grov'ling thanks, nor high-flown praise;  
I would his spirits, not his fancy raise.  
Give him no hope that I shall ever more  
A man so vile to my esteem restore; 450  
But warn him rather, that, in time of rest,  
His crimes be all remember'd and confess'd:  
I know not all that form the sinner's debt,  
But there is one that he must not forget."

The mind of Susan prompted her with speed  
To act her part in every courteous deed:  
All that was kind she was prepared to say,  
And keep the lecture for a future day;  
When he had all life's comforts by his side,  
Pity might sleep, and good advice be tried. 460

This done, the mistress felt disposed to look,  
As self-approving, on a pious book:  
Yet, to her native bias still inclined,  
She felt her act too merciful and kind;  
But when, long musing on the chilling scene  
So lately past—the frost and sleet so keen—  
The man's whole misery in a single view—  
Yes! she could think some pity was his due.

Thus fix'd, she heard not her attendant glide  
With soft slow step—till, standing by her side, 470  
The trembling servant gasp'd for breath, and shed  
Relieving tears, then utter'd—"He is dead!"

"Dead!" said the startled lady; "Yes, he fell  
Close at the door where he was wont to dwell;  
There his sole friend, the ass, was standing by,  
Half-dead himself, to see his master die."

"Expired he then, good Heaven! for want of food?"—  
"No! crusts and water in a corner stood;—  
To have this plenty, and to wait so long,  
And to be right too late, is doubly wrong: 480  
Then, every day to see him totter by,  
And to forbear—Oh! what a heart had I!"—

"Blame me not, child; I tremble at the news."—  
"'Tis my own heart," said Susan, "I accuse:  
To have this money in my purse—to know  
What grief was his, and what to grief we owe;  
To see him often, always to conceive  
How he must pine and languish, groan and grieve;  
And every day in ease and peace to dine  
And rest in comfort!—what a heart is mine!"— 490



## TALE XVIII.

### THE WAGER.

'Tis thought your deer doth hold you at a bay.  
*Taming [of] the Shrew*, Act V. Scene 2.

I choose her for myself:  
If she and I are pleased, what's that to you?  
——, Act II. Scene 1.

Let's send each one to his wife,  
And he whose wife is most obedient  
[.....]  
Shall win the wager.  
——, Act V. Scene 2.

Now by the world it is a lusty wench,  
I love her ten times more than e'er I did.  
——, Act II. Scene 1.

## TALE XVIII.

### THE WAGER.

Counter and Clubb were men in trade, whose pains,  
Credit, and prudence, brought them constant gains;  
Partners and punctual, every friend agreed  
Counter and Clubb were men who must succeed.  
When they had fix'd some little time in life,  
Each thought of taking to himself a wife;  
As men in trade alike, as men in love  
They seem'd with no according views to move;  
As certain ores in outward view the same,  
They show'd their difference when the magnet came. 10  
Counter was vain; with spirit strong and high,  
'Twas not in him like suppliant swain to sigh:  
"His wife might o'er his men and maids preside,  
And in her province be a judge and guide;  
But what he thought, or did, or wish'd to do,  
She must not know, or censure if she knew;  
At home, abroad, by day, by night, if he  
On aught determined, so it was to be.  
How is a man," he ask'd, "for business fit,  
Who to a female can his will submit? 20  
Absent awhile, let no inquiring eye  
Or plainer speech presume to question why,  
But all be silent; and, when seen again,  
Let all be cheerful—shall a wife complain?  
Friends I invite, and who shall dare t' object,  
Or look on them with coolness or neglect?  
No! I must ever of my house be head,  
And, thus obey'd, I condescend to wed."  
Clubb heard the speech—"My friend is nice," said he;  
"A wife with less respect will do for me. 30  
How is he certain such a prize to gain? }  
What he approves, a lass may learn to feign, }  
And so affect t' obey till she begins to reign; }  
Awhile complying, she may vary then,  
And be as wives of more unwary men;  
Beside, to him who plays such lordly part,  
How shall a tender creature yield her heart?  
Should he the promised confidence refuse,  
She may another more confiding choose;  
May show her anger, yet her purpose hide, 40  
And wake his jealousy, and wound his pride.  
In one so humbled, who can trace the friend?  
I on an equal, not a slave, depend;  
If true, my confidence is wisely placed,  
And, being false, she only is disgraced."  
Clubb, with these notions, cast his eye around,  
And one so easy soon a partner found.  
The lady chosen was of good repute;  
Meekness she had not, and was seldom mute;

Though quick to anger, still she loved to smile; 50  
 And would be calm if men would wait awhile:  
 She knew her duty, and she loved her way,  
 More pleased in truth to govern than obey;  
 She heard her priest with reverence, and her spouse  
 As one who felt the pressure of her vows.  
 Useful and civil, all her friends confess'd—  
 Give her her way, and she would choose the best;  
 Though some indeed a sly remark would make—  
 Give it her not, and she would choose to take.

All this, when Clubb some cheerful months had spent, 60  
 He saw, confess'd, and said he was content.  
 Counter meantime selected, doubted, weigh'd,  
 And then brought home a young complying maid—  
 A tender creature, full of fears as charms,  
 A beauteous nursling from its mother's arms;  
 A soft, sweet blossom, such as men must love,  
 But to preserve must keep it in the stove.  
 She had a mild, subdued, expiring look—  
 Raise but the voice, and this fair creature shook;  
 Leave her alone, she felt a thousand fears— 70  
 Chide, and she melted into floods of tears;  
 Fondly she pleaded and would gently sigh,  
 For very pity, or she knew not why;  
 One whom to govern none could be afraid—  
 Hold up the finger, this meek thing obey'd;  
 Her happy husband had the easiest task—  
 Say but his will, no question would she ask;  
 She sought no reasons, no affairs she knew,  
 Of business spoke not, and had nought to do.

Oft he exclaim'd, "How meek! how mild! how kind! 80  
 With her 'twere cruel but to seem unkind;  
 Though ever silent when I take my leave,  
 It pains my heart to think how hers will grieve;  
 'Tis heaven on earth with such a wife to dwell,  
 I am in raptures to have sped so well;  
 But let me not, my friend, your envy raise,  
 No! on my life, your patience has my praise."  
 His friend, though silent, felt the scorn implied—  
 "What need of patience?" to himself he cried:  
 "Better a woman o'er her house to rule, 90  
 Than a poor child just hurried from her school:  
 Who has no care, yet never lives at ease;  
 Unfit to rule, and indisposed to please;  
 What if he govern, there his boast should end,  
 No husband's power can make a slave his friend."  
 It was the custom of these friends to meet  
 With a few neighbours in a neighbouring street;  
 Where Counter oft-times would occasion seize,  
 To move his silent friend by words like these:  
 "A man," said he, "if govern'd by his wife, 100  
 Gives up his rank and dignity in life;  
 Now better fate befalls my friend and me."—  
 He spoke, and look'd th' approving smile to see.  
 The quiet partner, when he chose to speak,  
 Desired his friend, "another theme to seek;  
 When thus they met, he judged that state-affairs  
 And such important subjects should be theirs."  
 But still the partner, in his lighter vein,  
 Would cause in Clubb affliction or disdain;  
 It made him anxious to detect the cause 110  
 Of all that boasting—"Wants my friend applause?  
 This plainly proves him not at perfect ease,  
 For, felt he pleasure, he would wish to please.—  
 These triumphs here for some regrets atone—  
 Men who are blest let other men alone."  
 Thus made suspicious, he observed and saw  
 His friend each night at early hour withdraw;  
 He sometimes mention'd Juliet's tender nerves,  
 And what attention such a wife deserves.  
 "In this," thought Clubb, "full sure some mystery lies— }  
 He laughs at me, yet he with much complies, }  
 And all his vaunts of bliss are proud apologies." } 121  
 With such ideas treasured in his breast,  
 He grew composed, and let his anger rest;

Till Counter once (when wine so long went round  
 That friendship and discretion both were drown'd)  
 Began in teasing and triumphant mood  
 His evening banter—"Of all earthly good,  
 The best," he said, "was an obedient spouse,  
 Such as my friend's—that every one allows: 130  
 What if she wishes his designs to know?  
 It is because she would her praise bestow;  
 What if she wills that he remains at home?  
 She knows that mischief may from travel come.  
 I, who am free to venture where I please,  
 Have no such kind preventing checks as these;  
 But mine is double duty, first to guide  
 Myself aright, then rule a house beside;  
 While this our friend, more happy than the free,  
 Resigns all power, and laughs at liberty." 140  
 "By Heaven," said Clubb, "excuse me if I swear,  
 I'll bet a hundred guineas, if he dare,  
 That uncontroll'd I will such freedoms take,  
 That he will fear to equal—there's my stake."  
 "A match!" said Counter, much by wine inflamed;  
 "But we are friends—let smaller stake be named:  
 Wine for our future meeting, that will I  
 Take and no more—what peril shall we try?"  
 "Let's to Newmarket," Clubb replied; "or choose  
 Yourself the place, and what you like to lose; 150  
 And he who first returns, or fears to go,  
 Forfeits his cash."—Said Counter, "Be it so."  
 The friends around them saw with much delight  
 The social war, and hail'd the pleasant night;  
 Nor would they further hear the cause discuss'd,  
 Afraid the recreant heart of Clubb to trust.  
 Now sober thoughts return'd as each withdrew,  
 And of the subject took a serious view.  
 "'Twas wrong," thought Counter, "and will grieve my love;"  
 "'Twas wrong," thought Clubb, "my wife will not approve;  
 But friends were present; I must try the thing, 161  
 Or with my folly half the town will ring."  
 He sought his lady—"Madam, I'm to blame,  
 But was reproach'd, and could not bear the shame;  
 Here in my folly—for 'tis best to say  
 The very truth—I've sworn to have my way:  
 To that Newmarket—(though I hate the place,  
 And have no taste or talents for a race,  
 Yet so it is—well, now prepare to chide—)  
 I laid a wager that I dared to ride; 170  
 And I must go: by Heaven, if you resist  
 I shall be scorn'd, and ridiculed, and hiss'd;  
 Let me with grace before my friends appear,  
 You know the truth, and must not be severe;  
 He too must go, but that he will of course;  
 Do you consent?—I never think of force."  
 "You never need," the worthy dame replied;  
 "The husband's honour is the woman's pride;  
 If I in trifles be the wilful wife,  
 Still for your credit I would lose my life; 180  
 Go! and when fix'd the day of your return,  
 Stay longer yet, and let the blockheads learn,  
 That, though a wife may sometimes wish to rule,  
 She would not make th' indulgent man a fool;  
 I would at times advise—but idle they  
 Who think th' assenting husband *must* obey."  
 The happy man, who thought his lady right  
 In other cases, was assured to-night;  
 Then for the day with proud delight prepared,  
 To show his doubting friends how much he dared. 190  
 Counter—who grieving sought his bed, his rest  
 Broken by pictures of his love distress'd—  
 With soft and winning speech the fair prepared:  
 "She all his councils, comforts, pleasures shared;  
 She was assured he loved her from his soul;  
 She never knew and need not fear control;  
 But so it happen'd—he was grieved at heart,  
 It happen'd so, that they awhile must part—  
 A little time—the distance was but short,

And business call'd him—he despised the sport; 200  
 But to Newmarket he engaged to ride,  
 With his friend Clubb;" and there he stopp'd and sigh'd.  
 Awhile the tender creature look'd dismay'd,  
 Then floods of tears the call of grief obey'd:—  
 "She an objection! No!" she sobb'd, "not one;  
 Her work was finish'd, and her race was run;  
 For die she must, indeed she would not live  
 A week alone, for all the world could give;  
 He too must die in that same wicked place;  
 It always happen'd—was a common case; 210  
 Among those horrid horses, jockeys, crowds,  
 'Twas certain death—they might bespeak their shrouds;  
 He would attempt a race, be sure to fall—  
 And she expire with terror—that was all;  
 With love like hers she was indeed unfit  
 To bear such horrors, but she must submit."—  
 "But for three days, my love! three days at most—"  
 "Enough for me; I then shall be a ghost.—"  
 "My honour's pledged!"—"Oh! yes, my dearest life,  
 I know your honour must outweigh your wife; 220  
 But ere this absence, have you sought a friend—  
 I shall be dead—on whom can you depend?—  
 Let me one favour of your kindness crave:  
 Grant me the stone I mention'd for my grave.—"  
 "Nay, love, attend—why, bless my soul—I say  
 I will return—there—weep no longer—nay!"—  
 "Well! I obey, and to the last am true,  
 But spirits fail me; I must die; adieu!"  
 "What, madam! must?—'tis wrong—I'm angry—zounds!  
 Can I remain and lose a thousand pounds?" 230  
 "Go then, my love! it is a monstrous sum,  
 Worth twenty wives—go, love! and I am dumb—  
 Nor be displeas'd—[had] I the power to live,  
 You might be angry, now you must forgive;  
 Alas! I faint—ah! cruel—there's no need  
 Of wounds or fevers—this had done the deed."  
 The lady fainted, and the husband sent  
 For every aid, for every comfort went;  
 Strong terror seized him; "Oh! she loved so well,  
 And who th' effect of tenderness could tell?" 240  
 She now recover'd, and again began  
 With accent querulous—"Ah! cruel man—"  
 Till the sad husband, conscience-struck, confess'd,  
 'Twas very wicked with his friend to jest;  
 For now he saw that those who were obey'd,  
 Could like the most subservient feel afraid;  
 And, though a wife might not dispute the will  
 Of her liege lord, she could prevent it still.  
 The morning came, and Clubb prepared to ride  
 With a smart boy, his servant and his guide; 250  
 When, ere he mounted on the ready steed,  
 Arrived a letter, and he stopp'd to read.  
 "My friend," he read—"our journey I decline:  
 A heart too tender for such strife is mine;  
 Yours is the triumph, be you so inclined;  
 But you are too considerate and kind,  
 In tender pity to my Juliet's fears  
 I thus relent, o'ercome by love and tears;  
 She knows your kindness; I have heard her say,  
 A man like you 'tis pleasure to obey. 260  
 Each faithful wife, like ours, must disapprove  
 Such dangerous trifling with connubial love;  
 What has the idle world, my friend, to do  
 With our affairs? they envy me and you.  
 What if I could my gentle spouse command—  
 Is that a cause I should her tears withstand?  
 And what if you, a friend of peace, submit  
 To one you love—is that a theme for wit?  
 'Twas wrong; and I shall henceforth judge it weak  
 Both of submission and control to speak. 270  
 Be it agreed that all contention cease,  
 And no such follies vex our future peace;  
 Let each keep guard against domestic strife,  
 And find nor slave nor tyrant in his wife."

"Agreed," said Clubb, "with all my soul agreed"—

And to the boy, delighted, gave his steed;  
"I think my friend has well his mind express'd,  
And I assent; such things are not a jest."

"True," said the wife, "no longer he can hide  
The truth that pains him by his wounded pride.

280

Your friend has found it not an easy thing,  
Beneath his yoke this yielding soul to bring;  
These weeping willows, though they seem inclined }  
By every breeze, yet not the strongest wind }  
Can from their bent divert this weak but stubborn kind; }  
Drooping they seek your pity to excite,  
But 'tis at once their nature and delight.

Such women feel not; while they sigh and weep,  
'Tis but their habit—their affections sleep;  
They are like ice that in the hand we hold,  
So very melting, yet so very cold;

290

On such affection let not man rely:  
The husbands suffer, and the ladies sigh.  
But your friend's offer let us kindly take,  
And spare his pride for his vexation's sake;  
For he has found, and through his life will find, }  
'Tis easiest dealing with the firmest mind— }  
More just when it resists, and, when it yields, more kind." }

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## TALE XIX.

### THE CONVERT.

A tapster is a good trade, an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a wither'd serving-man a fresh tapster.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act I. Scene 3.

A fellow, sir, that I have known go about with [troll-my-dames].

*Winter's Tale*, Act IV. Scene 3.

I myself, sometimes leaving the fear of Heaven on the left hand, and [hiding] mine honour in my necessity, am forced to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch.

*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act II. Scene 3.

Yea, and at that very moment,  
Consideration like an angel came,  
And whipp'd th' offending Adam out of him.

*Henry V.* Act I. Scene 1.

I have lived long enough: my May of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have.

*Macbeth*, Act V. Scene 3.

## TALE XIX.

### THE CONVERT.

Some to our hero have a hero's name  
Denied, because no father's he could claim;  
Nor could his mother with precision state  
A full fair claim to her certificate;  
On her own word the marriage must depend—  
A point she was not eager to defend.  
But who, without a father's name, can raise  
His own so high, deserves the greater praise:  
The less advantage to the strife he brought,  
The greater wonders has his prowess wrought;  
He who depends upon his wind and limbs,  
Needs neither cork or bladder when he swims;  
Nor will by empty breath be puff'd along,  
As not himself—but in his helpers—strong.

10

Suffice it then, our hero's name was clear,  
For, call John Dighton, and he answer'd, "Here!"  
But who that name in early life assign'd  
He never found, he never tried to find;  
Whether his kindred were to John disgrace,  
Or John to them, is a disputed case;  
His infant-state owed nothing to their care—  
His mind neglected, and his body bare;  
All his success must on himself depend,  
He had no money, counsel, guide, or friend;  
But, in a market-town, an active boy  
Appear'd, and sought in various ways employ;  
Who soon, thus cast upon the world, began  
To show the talents of a thriving man.

20

With spirit high John learn'd the world to brave,  
And in both senses was a ready knave;  
Knave [as of] old, obedient, keen, and quick,  
Knave as at present, skill'd to shift and trick.  
Some humble part of many trades he caught:  
He for the builder and the painter wrought;  
For serving-maids on secret errands ran,  
The waiter's helper, and the hostler's man;  
And, when he chanced (oft chanced he) place to lose,  
His varying genius shone in blacking shoes.  
A midnight fisher by the pond he stood;  
Assistant poacher, he o'erlook'd the wood;  
At an election John's impartial mind  
Was to no cause nor candidate confined;

30

40

To all in turn he full allegiance swore,  
 And in his hat the various badges bore;  
 His liberal soul with every sect agreed;  
 Unheard their reasons, he received their creed.  
 At church he deign'd the organ-pipes to fill,  
 And at the meeting sang both loud and shrill;  
 But the full purse these different merits gain'd,  
 By strong demands his lively passions drain'd; 50  
 Liquors he loved of each inflaming kind,  
 To midnight revels flew with ardent mind;  
 Too warm at cards, a losing game he play'd;  
 To fleecing beauty his attention paid;  
 His boiling passions were by oaths express'd,  
 And lies he made his profit and his jest.

Such was the boy, and such the man had been,  
 But fate or happier fortune changed the scene;  
 A fever seized him; "he should surely die—" 60  
 He fear'd, and lo! a friend was praying by.  
 With terror moved, this teacher he address'd,  
 And all the errors of his youth confess'd:  
 The good man kindly clear'd the sinner's way  
 To lively hope, and counsell'd him to pray:  
 Who then resolved, should he from sickness rise,  
 To quit cards, liquors, poaching, oaths, and lies.

His health restored, he yet resolved, and grew  
 True to his masters, to their meeting true;  
 His old companions at his sober face }  
 Laugh'd loud, while he, attesting it was grace, } 70  
 With tears besought them all his calling to embrace. }  
 To his new friends such convert gave applause,  
 Life to their zeal, and glory to their cause;  
 Though terror wrought the mighty change, yet strong  
 Was the impression, and it lasted long;  
 John at the lectures due attendance paid,  
 A convert meek, obedient, and afraid.

His manners strict, though form'd on fear alone, }  
 Pleased the grave friends, nor less his solemn tone, }  
 The lengthen'd face of care, the low and inward groan. } 80  
 The stern good men exulted, when they saw  
 Those timid looks of penitence and awe;  
 Nor thought that one so passive, humble, meek,  
 Had yet a creed and principles to seek.

The faith that reason finds, confirms, avows,  
 The hopes, the views, the comforts she allows—  
 These were not his, who by his feelings found,  
 And by them only, that his faith was sound:  
 Feelings of terror these, for evil past,  
 Feelings of hope, to be received at last; 90  
 Now weak, now lively, changing with the day,  
 These were his feelings, and he felt his way.

Sprung from such sources, will this faith remain  
 While these supporters can their strength retain?  
 As heaviest weights the deepest rivers pass,  
 While icy chains fast bind the solid mass:  
 So, born of feelings, faith remains secure,  
 Long as their firmness and their strength endure;  
 But, when the waters in their channel glide,  
 A bridge must bear us o'er the threat'ning tide; 100  
 Such bridge is reason, and there faith relies,  
 Whether the varying spirits fall or rise.

His patrons, still disposed their aid to lend,  
 Behind a counter placed their humble friend;  
 Where pens and paper were on shelves display'd,  
 And pious pamphlets on the windows laid.  
 By nature active, and from vice restrain'd,  
 Increasing trade his bolder views sustain'd;  
 His friends and teachers, finding so much zeal  
 In that young convert whom they taught to feel, 110  
 His trade encouraged, and were pleased to find  
 A hand so ready, with such humble mind.

And now, his health restored, his spirits eased,  
 He wish'd to marry, if the teachers pleased.  
 They, not unwilling, from the virgin-class  
 Took him a comely and a courteous lass;  
 Simple and civil, loving and beloved,

She long a fond and faithful partner proved;  
In every year the elders and the priest  
Were duly summon'd to a christening feast; 120  
Nor came a babe, but by his growing trade,  
John had provision for the coming made;  
For friends and strangers all were pleased to deal  
With one whose care was equal to his zeal.

In human friendships, it compels a sigh,  
To think what trifles will dissolve the tie.  
John, now become a master of his trade,  
Perceived how much improvement might be made;  
And, as this prospect open'd to his view, 130  
A certain portion of his zeal withdrew;

His fear abated—"What had he to fear—  
His profits certain, and his conscience clear?"  
Above his door a board was placed by John,  
And "Dighton, stationer," was gilt thereon;  
His window next, enlarged to twice the size,  
Shone with such trinkets as the simple prize;  
While in the shop with pious works were seen  
The last new play, review, or magazine.

In orders punctual, he observed—"The books  
He never read, and could he judge their looks? 140  
Readers and critics should their merits try,  
He had no office but to sell and buy;  
Like other traders, profit was his care;  
Of what they print, the authors must beware."  
He held his patrons and his teachers dear,  
But with his trade—they must not interfere.

'Twas certain now that John had lost the dread  
And pious thoughts that once such terrors bred;  
His habits varied, and he more inclined  
To the vain world, which he had half resign'd: 150  
He had moreover in his brethren seen,

Or he imagined, craft, conceit, and spleen;  
"They are but men," said John, "and shall I then  
Fear man's control, or stand in awe of men?  
'Tis their advice (their convert's rule and law),  
And good it is—I will not stand in awe."

Moreover Dighton, though he thought of books  
As one who chiefly on the title looks,  
Yet sometimes ponder'd o'er a page to find,  
When vex'd with cares, amusement for his mind; 160  
And by degrees that mind had treasured much  
From works his teachers were afraid to touch.  
Satiric novels, poets bold and free,  
And what their writers term philosophy,  
All these were read; and he began to feel  
Some self-approval on his bosom steal.

Wisdom creates humility, but he  
Who thus collects it, will not humble be.  
No longer John was fill'd with pure delight  
And humble reverence in a pastor's sight, 170  
Who, like a grateful zealot, listening stood,  
To hear a man so friendly and so good;  
But felt the dignity of one who made  
Himself important by a thriving trade;  
And growing pride in Dighton's mind was bred  
By the strange food on which it coarsely fed.

Their brother's fall the grieving brethren heard,  
The pride indeed to all around appear'd;  
The world, his friends agreed, had won the soul  
From its best hopes, the man from their control. 180  
To make him humble, and confine his views  
Within their bounds, and books which they peruse,  
A deputation from these friends select,  
Might reason with him to some good effect;  
Arm'd with authority, and led by love,  
They might those follies from his mind remove;  
Deciding thus, and with this kind intent,  
A chosen body with its speaker went.

"John," said the teacher, "John, with great concern  
We see thy frailty, and thy fate discern— 190  
Satan with toils thy simple soul beset,  
And thou art careless, slumbering in the net;



Unmindful art thou of thy early vow;  
 Who at the morning-meeting sees thee now?  
 Who at the evening? where is brother John?  
 We ask—are answer'd, "To the tavern gone."  
 Thee on the sabbath seldom we behold;  
 Thou canst not sing, thou'rt nursing for a cold:  
 This from the churchmen thou hast learn'd, for they  
 Have colds and fevers on the sabbath-day; 200  
 When in some snug warm room they sit, and pen  
 Bills from their ledgers, world-entangled men!  
 "See with what pride thou hast enlarged thy shop;  
 To view thy tempting stores the heedless stop;  
 By what strange names dost thou these baubles know,  
 Which wantons wear, to make a sinful show?  
 Hast thou in view these idle volumes placed  
 To be the pander of a vicious taste?  
 What's here? a book of dances!—you advance  
 In goodly knowledge—John, wilt learn to dance? 210  
 How! 'Go—' it says, and 'to the devil go!  
 And shake thyself!' I tremble—but 'tis so—  
 Wretch as thou art, what answer canst thou make?  
 Oh! without question, thou wilt go and shake.  
 What's here? 'The School for Scandal'—pretty schools!  
 Well, and art thou proficient in the rules?  
 Art thou a pupil, is it thy design  
 To make our names contemptible as thine?  
 'Old Nick, a Novel!' oh! 'tis mighty well—  
 A fool has courage when he laughs at hell; 220  
 'Frolic and Fun,' 'The humours of Tim Grin';  
 Why, John, thou grow'st facetious in thy sin;  
 And what? 'The Archdeacon's Charge'—'tis mighty well—  
 If Satan publish'd, thou wouldst doubtless sell;  
 Jests, novels, dances, and this precious stuff—  
 To crown thy folly we have seen enough;  
 We find thee fitted for each evil work—  
 Do print the Koran, and become a Turk!  
 "John, thou art lost; success and worldly pride }  
 O'er all thy thoughts and purposes preside, } 230  
 Have bound thee fast, and drawn thee far aside; }  
 Yet turn, these sin-traps from thy shop expel,  
 Repent and pray, and all may yet be well.  
 "And here thy wife, thy Dorothy, behold,  
 How fashion's wanton robes her form infold!  
 Can grace, can goodness with such trappings dwell?  
 John, thou hast made thy wife a Jezebel.  
 See! on her bosom rests the sign of sin,  
 The glaring proof of naughty thoughts within;  
 What? 'tis a cross; come hither—as a friend, 240  
 Thus from thy neck the shameful badge I rend."  
 "Rend, if you dare," said Dighton; "you shall find  
 A man of spirit, though to peace inclined;  
 Call me ungrateful! have I not my pay  
 At all times ready for the expected day?—  
 To share my plenteous board you deign to come,  
 Myself your pupil, and my house your home;  
 And shall the persons who my meat enjoy  
 Talk of my faults, and treat me as a boy? 250  
 Have you not told how Rome's insulting priests  
 Led their meek laymen like a herd of beasts;  
 And by their fleecing and their forgery made  
 Their holy calling an accursed trade?  
 Can you such acts and insolence condemn,  
 Who to your utmost power resemble them?  
 "Concerns it you what books I set for sale?  
 The tale perchance may be a virtuous tale;  
 And, for the rest, 'tis neither wise nor just  
 In you, who read not, to condemn on trust;  
 Why should th' Archdeacon's Charge your spleen excite?  
 He, or perchance th' archbishop, may be right. 261  
 "That from your meetings I refrain, is true;  
 I meet with nothing pleasant—nothing new,  
 But the same proofs, that not one text explain,  
 And the same lights, where all things dark remain;  
 I thought you saints on earth—but I have found  
 Some sins among you, and the best unsound;

You have your failings, like the crowds below,  
 And at your pleasure hot and cold can blow. 270  
 When I at first your grave deportment saw,  
 (I own my folly,) I was fill'd with awe;  
 You spoke so warmly, and it [seemed] so well,  
 I should have thought it treason to rebel.  
 Is it a wonder that a man like me  
 Should such perfection in such teachers see;  
 Nay, should conceive you sent from Heav'n to brave  
 The host of sin, and sinful souls to save?  
 But, as our reason wakes, our prospects clear,  
 And failings, flaws, and blemishes appear.

"When you were mounted in your rostrum high, 280  
 We shrank beneath your tone, your frown, your eye;  
 Then you beheld us abject, fallen, low,  
 And felt your glory from our baseness grow;  
 Touch'd by your words, I trembled like the rest,  
 And my own vileness and your power confess'd:  
 These, I exclaim'd, are men divine, and gazed  
 On him who taught, delighted and amazed;  
 Glad, when he finish'd, if by chance he cast  
 One look on such a sinner, as he pass'd.

"But, when I view'd you in a clearer light, 290  
 And saw the frail and carnal appetite;  
 When, at his humble pray'r, you deign'd to eat,  
 Saints as you are, a civil sinner's meat;  
 When, as you sat contented and at ease,  
 Nibbling at leisure on the ducks and peas,  
 And, pleased some comforts in such place to find,  
 You could descend to be a little kind;  
 And gave us hope, in Heaven there might be room  
 For a few souls beside your own to come; 300  
 While this world's good engaged your carnal view,  
 And like a sinner you enjoy'd it too:  
 All this perceiving, can you think it strange  
 That change in you should work an equal change?"  
 "Wretch that thou art," an elder cried, "and gone  
 For everlasting"—"Go thyself," said John;  
 "Depart this instant, let me hear no more;  
 My house my castle is, and that my door."  
 The hint they took, and from the door withdrew,  
 And John to meeting bade a long adieu;  
 Attach'd to business; he in time became 310  
 A wealthy man of no inferior name.  
 It seem'd, alas! in John's deluded sight,  
 That all was wrong because not all was right;  
 And, when he found his teachers had their stains,  
 Resentment and not reason broke his chains.  
 Thus on his feelings he again relied,  
 And never look'd to reason for his guide.  
 Could he have wisely view'd the frailty shown,  
 And rightly weigh'd their wanderings and his own,  
 He might have known that men may be sincere, 320  
 Though gay and feasting on the savoury cheer;  
 That doctrines sound and sober they may teach,  
 Who love to eat with all the glee they preach;  
 Nay, who believe the duck, the grape, the pine,  
 Were not intended for the dog and swine.  
 But Dighton's hasty mind on every theme  
 Ran from the truth, and rested in th' extreme;  
 Flaws in his friends he found, and then withdrew  
 (Vain of his knowledge) from their virtues too;  
 Best of his books he loved the liberal kind, 330  
 That, if they improve not, still enlarge the mind;  
 And found himself, with such advisers, free  
 From a fix'd creed, as mind enlarged could be.  
 His humble wife at these opinions sigh'd,  
 But her he never heeded till she died;  
 He then assented to a last request,  
 And by the meeting-window let her rest;  
 And on her stone the sacred text was seen,  
 Which had her comfort in departing been.

Dighton with joy beheld his trade advance, 340  
 Yet seldom published, loth to trust to chance;  
 Then wed a doctor's sister—poor indeed,

But skill'd in works her husband could not read;  
Who, if he wish'd new ways of wealth to seek,  
Could make her half-crown pamphlet in a week:  
This he rejected, though without disdain,  
And chose the old and certain way to gain.

Thus he proceeded; trade increased the while,  
And fortune woo'd him with perpetual smile.  
On early scenes he sometimes cast a thought, 350  
When on his heart the mighty change was wrought;  
And all the ease and comfort converts find  
Was magnified in his reflecting mind;  
Then on the teacher's priestly pride he dwelt,  
That caused his freedom, but with this he felt  
The danger of the free—for since that day,  
No guide had shown, no brethren join'd his way;  
Forsaking one, he found no second creed,  
But reading doubted, doubting what to read.

Still, though reproof had brought some present pain, 360  
The gain he made was fair and honest gain;  
He laid his wares indeed in public view,  
But that all traders claim a right to do.  
By means like these, he saw his wealth increase,  
And felt his consequence, and dwelt in peace.

Our hero's age was threescore years and five,  
When he exclaim'd, "Why longer should I strive?  
Why more amass, who never must behold  
A young John Dighton to make glad the old?" 370  
(The sons he had to early graves were gone,  
And girls were burdens to the mind of John.)  
"Had I [a] boy, he would our name sustain,  
That now to nothing must return again;  
But what are all my profits, credit, trade,  
And parish-honours?—folly and parade."

Thus Dighton thought, and in his looks appear'd  
Sadness, increased by much he saw and heard.  
The brethren often at the shop would stay,  
And make their comments ere they walk'd away;  
They mark'd the window, fill'd in every pane 380  
With lawless prints of reputations slain;  
Distorted forms of men with honours graced,  
And our chief rulers in derision placed:  
Amazed they stood, remembering well the days,  
When to be humble was their brother's praise;  
When at the dwelling of their friend they stopp'd  
To drop a word, or to receive it dropp'd;  
Where they beheld the prints of men renown'd,  
And far-famed preachers pasted all around; 390  
(Such mouths! eyes! hair! so prim! so fierce! so sleek!  
They look'd as speaking what is wo to speak):  
On these the passing brethren loved to dwell—  
How long they spake! how strongly! warmly! well!  
What power had each to dive in mysteries deep,  
To warm the cold, to make the harden'd weep;  
To lure, to fright, to soothe, to awe the soul,  
And list'ning flocks to lead and to control!

But now discoursing, as they linger'd near,  
They tempted John (whom they accused) to hear  
Their weighty charge—"And can the lost-one feel, 400  
As in the time of duty, love, and zeal:  
When all were summon'd at the rising sun,  
And he was ready with his friends to run;  
When he, partaking with a chosen few,  
Felt the great change, sensation rich and new?  
No! all is lost, her favours Fortune shower'd  
Upon the man, and he is overpower'd;  
The world has won him with its tempting store  
Of needless wealth, and that has made him poor.  
Success undoes him; he has risen to fall, 410  
Has gain'd a fortune, and has lost his all;  
Gone back from Sion, he will find his age  
Loth to commence a second pilgrimage;  
He has retreated from the chosen track;  
And now must ever bear the burden on his back."

Hurt by such censure, John began to find  
Fresh revolutions working in his mind;

He sought for comfort in his books, but read  
Without a plan or method in his head; 420  
What once amused, now rather made him sad,  
What should inform, increased the doubts he had;  
Shame would not let him seek at church a guide,  
And from his meeting he was held by pride;  
His wife derided fears she never felt,  
And passing brethren daily censures dealt;  
Hope for a son was now for ever past,  
He was the first John Dighton, and the last;  
His stomach fail'd, his case the doctor knew,  
But said, "he still might hold a year or two."  
"No more?" he said, "but why should I complain? 430  
A life of doubt must be a life of pain.  
Could I be sure—but why should I despair?  
I'm sure my conduct has been just and fair;  
In youth indeed I had a wicked will,  
But I repented, and have sorrow still;  
I had my comforts, and a growing trade  
Gave greater pleasure than a fortune made;  
And, as I more possess'd and reason'd more,  
I lost those comforts I enjoy'd before,  
When reverend guides I saw my table round, 440  
And in my guardian guest my safety found.  
Now sick and sad, no appetite, no ease,  
Nor pleasure have I, nor a wish to please;  
Nor views, nor hopes, nor plans, nor taste have I,  
Yet sick of life, have no desire to die."  
He said, and died; his trade, his name is gone,  
And all that once gave consequence to John.  
Unhappy Dighton! had he found a friend,  
When conscience told him it was time to mend! 450  
A friend discreet, considerate, kind, sincere,  
Who would have shown the grounds of hope and fear;  
And proved that spirits, whether high or low,  
No certain tokens of man's safety show;  
Had reason ruled him in her proper place,  
And virtue led him while he lean'd on grace;  
Had he while zealous been discreet and pure,  
His knowledge humble, and his hope secure—  
These guides had placed him on the solid rock,  
Where faith had rested, nor received a shock;  
But his, alas! was placed upon the sand, 460  
Where long it stood not, and where none can stand.

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## TALE XX.

### THE BROTHERS.

A brother noble,  
Whose nature is so far from doing harms  
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty  
My [practices] ride easy.

*King Lear, Act I. Scene 2.*

He lets me feed with [his] hinds; bars me the place of brother.  
*As You Like It, Act I. Scene 1.*

'Twas I, but 'tis not I: I do not shame  
To tell you what I was, [...  
...] being [the thing] I am.

*As You Like It, Act IV. Scene 3.*

## TALE XX.

### THE BROTHERS.

Than old George Fletcher on the British coast

Dwelt not a seaman who had more to boast:  
Kind, simple, and sincere—he seldom spoke,  
But sometimes sang and chorus'd "*Hearts of Oak;*"  
In dangers steady, with his lot content,  
His days in labour and in love were spent.

He left a son so like him, that the old  
With joy exclaim'd, "'Tis Fletcher we behold;"  
But to his brother when the kinsmen came,  
And view'd his form, they grudged the father's name. 10

George was a bold, intrepid, careless lad,  
With just the failings that his father had;  
Isaac was weak, attentive, slow, exact,  
With just the virtues that his father lack'd.

George lived at sea: upon the land a guest—  
He sought for recreation, not for rest—  
While, far unlike, his brother's feebler form  
Shrank from the cold, and shudder'd at the storm;  
Still with the seaman's to connect his trade,  
The boy was bound where blocks and ropes were made. 20

George, strong and sturdy, had a tender mind,  
And was to Isaac pitiful and kind;  
A very father, till his art was gain'd,  
And then a friend unwearied he remain'd.  
He saw his brother was of spirit low,  
His temper peevish, and his motions slow;  
Not fit to bustle in a world, or make  
Friends to his fortune for his merit's sake:  
But the kind sailor could not boast the art  
Of looking deeply in the human heart; 30  
Else had he seen that this weak brother knew  
What men to court—what objects to pursue;  
That he to distant gain the way discern'd,  
And none so crooked but his genius learn'd.

Isaac was poor, and this the brother felt;  
He hired a house, and there the landman dwelt;  
Wrought at his trade, and had an easy home,  
For there would George with cash and comforts come;  
And, when they parted, Isaac look'd around,  
Where other friends and helpers might be found. 40

He wish'd for some port-place, and one might fall,  
He wisely thought, if he should try for all;  
He had a vote—and, were it well applied,  
Might have its worth—and he had views beside;  
Old Burgess Steel was able to promote  
An humble man who served him with a vote;  
For Isaac felt not what some tempers feel,  
But bow'd and bent the neck to Burgess Steel;  
And great attention to a lady gave,  
His ancient friend, a maiden spare and grave: 50  
One whom the visage long and look demure  
Of Isaac pleased—he seem'd sedate and pure;

And his soft heart conceived a gentle flame  
For her who waited on this virtuous dame:  
Not an outrageous love, a scorching fire,  
But friendly liking and chastised desire;  
And thus he waited, patient in delay,  
In present favour and in fortune's way.

George then was coasting—war was yet delay'd,  
And what he gain'd was to his brother paid;  
Nor ask'd the seaman what he saved or spent:  
But took his grog, wrought hard, and was content;  
Till war awaked the land, and George began  
To think what part became a useful man:  
"Press'd, I must go; why, then, 'tis better far  
At once to enter like a British tar,  
Than a brave captain and the foe to shun,  
As if I fear'd the music of a gun."

"Go not!" said Isaac—"You shall wear disguise."  
"What!" said the seaman, "clothe myself with lies?"—  
"Oh! but there's danger."—"Danger in the fleet?  
You cannot mean, good brother, of defeat;  
And other dangers I at land must share—  
So now adieu! and trust a brother's care."

Isaac awhile demurr'd—but, in his heart,  
So might he share, he was disposed to part:  
The better mind will sometimes feel the pain }  
Of benefactions—favour is a chain; }  
But they the feeling scorn, and what they wish, disdain;— }  
While beings form'd in coarser mould will hate }  
The helping hand they ought to venerate. }  
No wonder George should in this cause prevail,  
With one contending who was glad to fail:

"Isaac, farewell! do wipe that doleful eye; }  
Crying we came, and groaning we may die. }  
Let us do something 'twixt the groan and cry: }  
And hear me, brother, whether pay or prize,  
One half to thee I give and I devise;  
For thou hast oft occasion for the aid  
Of learn'd physicians, and they will be paid:  
Their wives and children men support, at sea,  
And thou, my lad, art wife and child to me:  
Farewell!—I go where hope and honour call,  
Nor does it follow that who fights must fall."

Isaac here made a poor attempt to speak,  
And a huge tear moved slowly down his cheek;  
Like Pluto's iron drop, hard sign of grace, }  
It slowly roll'd upon the rueful face, }  
Forced by the striving will alone its way to trace. }

Years fled—war lasted—George at sea remain'd,  
While the slow landman still his profits gain'd.  
A humble place was vacant—he besought  
His patron's interest, and the office caught;  
For still the virgin was his faithful friend,  
And one so sober could with truth commend,  
Who of his own defects most humbly thought,  
And their advice with zeal and reverence sought.  
Whom thus the mistress praised, the maid approved,  
And her he wedded whom he wisely loved.

No more he needs assistance—but, alas!  
He fears the money will for liquor pass;  
Or that the seaman might to flatterers lend,  
Or give support to some pretended friend.  
Still, he must write—he wrote, and he confess'd  
That, till absolved, he should be sore distress'd;  
But one so friendly would, he thought, forgive  
The hasty deed—Heav'n knew how he should live;  
"But you," he added, "as a man of sense,  
Have well consider'd danger and expense:  
I ran, alas! into the fatal snare,

And now for trouble must my mind prepare;  
And how, with children, I shall pick my way,  
Through a hard world, is more than I can say:  
Then change not, brother, your more happy state,  
Or on the hazard long deliberate."

George answer'd gravely, "It is right and fit,  
In all our crosses, humbly to submit:

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Your apprehensions are unwise, unjust;  
 Forbear repining, and expel distrust."—

He added, "Marriage was the joy of life," 130  
 And gave his service to his brother's wife;  
 Then vow'd to bear in all expense a part,  
 And thus concluded, "Have a cheerful heart."

Had the glad Isaac been his brother's guide,  
 In these same terms the seaman had replied;  
 At such reproofs the crafty landman smiled,  
 And softly said—"This creature is a child."

Twice had the gallant ship a capture made—  
 And when in port the happy crew were paid,  
 Home went the sailor, with his pocket stored, 140  
 Ease to enjoy, and pleasure to afford.  
 His time was short; joy shone in every face;  
 Isaac half fainted in the fond embrace;  
 The wife resolved her honour'd guest to please,  
 The children clung upon their uncle's knees;  
 The grog went round, the neighbours drank his health,  
 And George exclaim'd—"Ah! what to this is wealth?  
 Better," said he, "to bear a loving heart,  
 Than roll in riches—but we now must part!"

All yet is still—but hark! the winds o'ersweep 150  
 The rising waves, and howl upon the deep;  
 Ships, late becalm'd, on mountain-billows ride—  
 So life is threaten'd, and so man is tried.  
 Ill were the tidings that arrived from sea:  
 The worthy George must now a cripple be;  
 His leg was lopp'd; and, though his heart was sound,  
 Though his brave captain was with glory crown'd—  
 Yet much it vex'd him to repose on shore,  
 An idle log, and be of use no more.

True, he was sure that Isaac would receive 160  
 All of his brother that the foe might leave;  
 To whom the seaman his design had sent,  
 Ere from the port the wounded hero went;  
 His wealth and expectations told, he "knew  
 Wherein they fail'd, what Isaac's love would do;  
 That he the grog and cabin would supply,  
 Where George at anchor during life would lie."

The landman read—and, reading, grew distress'd:—  
 "Could he resolve t' admit so poor a guest?  
 Better at Greenwich might the sailor stay, 170  
 Unless his purse could for his comforts pay;"  
 So Isaac judged, and to his wife appeal'd,  
 But yet acknowledged it was best to yield:  
 "Perhaps his pension, with what sums remain  
 Due or unsquander'd, may the man maintain;  
 Refuse we must not."—With a heavy sigh  
 The lady heard, and made her kind reply:  
 "Nor would I wish it, Isaac, were we sure  
 How long his crazy building will endure;  
 Like an old house, that every day appears 180  
 About to fall—he may be propp'd for years;  
 For a few months, indeed, we might comply,  
 But these old batter'd fellows never die."

The hand of Isaac George on entering took,  
 With love and resignation in his look;  
 Declared his comfort in the fortune past,  
 And joy to find his anchor safely cast;  
 "Call then my nephews, let the grog be brought,  
 And I will tell them how the ship was fought."

Alas! our simple seaman should have known, } 190  
 That all the care, the kindness, he had shown, }  
 Were from his brother's heart, if not his memory, flown: }  
 All swept away to be perceived no more,  
 Like idle structures on the sandy shore;  
 The chance amusement of the playful boy,  
 That the rude billows in their rage destroy.

Poor George confess'd, though loth the truth to find,  
 Slight was his knowledge of a brother's mind:  
 The vulgar pipe was to the wife offence,  
 The frequent grog to Isaac an expense; 200  
 "Would friends like hers," she question'd, "choose to come,  
 Where clouds of poison'd fume defiled a room?"

This could their lady-friend, and Burgess Steel,  
(Teased with his worship's asthma) bear to feel?  
Could they associate or converse with him—  
A loud rough sailor with a timber limb?"

Cold as he grew, still Isaac strove to show,  
By well-feign'd care, that cold he could not grow;  
And when he saw his brother look distress'd,  
He strove some petty comforts to suggest; 210  
On his wife solely their neglect to lay,  
And then t' excuse it as a woman's way;  
He too was chidden when her rules he broke,  
And then she sicken'd at the scent of smoke.

George, though in doubt, was still consoled to find  
His brother wishing to be reckon'd kind.  
That Isaac seem'd concern'd by his distress,  
Gave to his injured feelings some redress;  
But none he found disposed to lend an ear  
To stories all were once intent to hear; 220  
Except his nephew, seated on his knee,  
He found no creature cared about the sea;  
But George indeed—for George they call'd the boy,  
When his good uncle was their boast and joy—  
Would listen long, and would contend with sleep,  
To hear the woes and wonders of the deep;  
Till the fond mother cried—"That man will teach  
The foolish boy his loud and boisterous speech."  
So judged the father—and the boy was taught  
To shun the uncle, whom his love had sought. 230

The mask of kindness now but seldom worn,  
George felt each evil harder to be borne;  
And cried (vexation growing day by day),  
"Ah! brother Isaac!—What! I'm in the way!"—  
"No! on my credit, look ye, No! but I }  
Am fond of peace, and my repose would buy }  
On any terms—in short, we must comply: }  
My spouse had money—she must have her will—  
Ah! brother—marriage is a bitter pill."—

George tried the lady—"Sister, I offend"— 240  
"Me?" she replied; "Oh no!—you may depend  
On my regard—but watch your brother's way,  
Whom I, like you, must study and obey."

"Ah!" thought the seaman, "what a head was mine,  
That easy birth at Greenwich to resign!  
I'll to the parish"—but a little pride,  
And some affection, put the thought aside.

Now gross neglect and open scorn he bore  
In silent sorrow—but he felt the more;  
The odious pipe he to the kitchen took, 250  
Or strove to profit by some pious book.

When the mind stoops to this degraded state,  
New griefs will darken the dependent's fate;  
"Brother!" said Isaac, "you will sure excuse  
The little freedom I'm compell'd to use:  
My wife's relations—(curse the haughty crew)—  
Affect such niceness, and such dread of you:  
You speak so loud—and they have natures soft—  
Brother—I wish—do go upon the loft!"

Poor George obey'd, and to the garret fled, 260  
Where not a being saw the tears he shed.  
But more was yet required, for guests were come,  
Who could not dine if he disgraced the room.  
It shock'd his spirit to be esteem'd unfit  
With an own brother and his wife to sit;  
He grew rebellious—at the vestry spoke  
For weekly aid—they heard it as a joke:  
So kind a brother, and so wealthy—you  
Apply to us?—No! this will never do:  
Good neighbour Fletcher," said the overseer, 270  
"We are engaged—you can have nothing here!"

George mutter'd something in despairing tone,  
Then sought his loft, to think and grieve alone;  
Neglected, slighted, restless on his bed,  
With heart half broken, and with scraps ill fed;  
Yet was he pleased that hours for play design'd  
Were given to ease his ever-troubled mind;



The child still listen'd with increasing joy,  
 And he was soothed by the attentive boy.

At length he sicken'd, and this duteous child 280  
 Watch'd o'er his sickness, and his pains beguiled;  
 The mother bade him from the loft refrain,  
 But, though with caution, yet he went again;  
 And now his tales the sailor feebly told,  
 His heart was heavy, and his limbs were cold:  
 The tender boy came often to entreat  
 His good kind friend would of his presents eat,  
 Purloin'd or purchased; for he saw, with shame,  
 The food untouch'd that to his uncle came:

Who, sick in body and in mind, received 290  
 The boy's indulgence, gratified and grieved.  
 "Uncle will die!" said George—the piteous wife  
 Exclaim'd, "she saw no value in his life;  
 But sick or well, to my commands attend,  
 And go no more to your complaining friend."  
 The boy was vex'd, he felt his heart reprove  
 The stern decree.—What! punish'd for his love!  
 No! he would go, but softly, to the room  
 Stealing in silence—for he knew his doom.

Once in a week the father came to say, 300  
 "George, are you ill?"—and hurried him away;  
 Yet to his wife would on their duties dwell,  
 And often cry, "Do use my brother well;"  
 And something kind, no question, Isaac meant,  
 Who took vast credit for the vague intent.

But, truly kind, the gentle boy essay'd  
 To cheer his uncle, firm, although afraid;  
 But now the father caught him at the door,  
 And, swearing—yes, the man in office swore,  
 And cried, "Away! How! Brother, I'm surprised, 310  
 That one so old can be so ill advised.  
 Let him not dare to visit you again,  
 Your cursed stories will disturb his brain;  
 Is it not vile to court a foolish boy,  
 Your own absurd narrations to enjoy?  
 What! sullen!—ha! George Fletcher? you shall see,  
 Proud as you are, your bread depends on me!"

He spoke, and, frowning, to his dinner went,  
 Then cool'd and felt some qualms of discontent;  
 And thought on times when he compell'd his son 320  
 To hear these stories, nay, to beg for one;  
 But the wife's wrath o'ercame the brother's pain,  
 And shame was felt, and conscience rose in vain.

George yet stole up—he saw his uncle lie  
 Sick on the bed, and heard his heavy sigh:  
 So he resolved, before he went to rest,  
 To comfort one so dear and so distress'd;  
 Then watch'd his time, but, with a child-like art,  
 Betray'd a something treasured at his heart.

Th' observant wife remark'd, "the boy is grown 330  
 So like your brother, that he seems his own;  
 So close and sullen! and I still suspect  
 They often meet—do watch them and detect."  
 George now remark'd that all was still as night,  
 And hasten'd up with terror and delight;  
 "Uncle!" he cried, and softly tapp'd the door;  
 "Do let me in"—but he could add no more;  
 The careful father caught him in the fact,  
 And cried, "You serpent! is it thus you act?  
 Back to your mother!" and, with hasty blow, 340  
 He sent th' indignant boy to grieve below;  
 Then at the door an angry speech began:  
 "Is this your conduct—is it thus you plan?  
 Seduce my child, and make my house a scene  
 Of vile dispute—What is it that you mean?—  
 George, are you dumb? do learn to know your friends,  
 And think awhile on whom your bread depends.—  
 What! not a word? be thankful I am cool;  
 But, sir, beware, nor longer play the fool.—  
 Come! brother, come! what is that you seek 350  
 By this rebellion?—Speak, you villain, speak!—  
 Weeping! I warrant, sorrow makes you dumb;



## TALE XXI.

### *THE LEARNED BOY.*

Like one well studied in a sad ostent,  
To please his grandam.  
*Merchant of Venice*, Act II. Scene 2.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school.  
*As You Like It*, Act II. Scene 7.

He is a better scholar than I thought he was.—  
He [is] a good sprag memory.  
*Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act IV. Scene 1.

One that feeds  
On objects, arts, and imitations,  
Which, out of use, and stal'd by other men,  
Begin his fashion.  
*Julius Cæsar*, Act IV. Scene 1.

Oh! torture me no more—I will confess.  
*2 Henry VI.* Act III. Scene 3.

## TALE XXI.

### *THE LEARNED BOY.*

An honest man was Farmer Jones, and true;  
He did by all as all by him should do;  
Grave, cautious, careful, fond of gain was he,  
Yet famed for rustic hospitality.  
Left with his children in a widow'd state,  
The quiet man submitted to his fate;  
Though prudent matrons waited for his call,  
With cool forbearance he avoided all;  
Though each profess'd a pure maternal joy,  
By kind attention to his feeble boy. 10  
And—though a friendly widow knew no rest,  
Whilst neighbour Jones was lonely and distress'd,  
Nay, though the maidens spoke in tender tone  
Their hearts' concern to see him left alone—  
Jones still persisted in that cheerless life,  
As if t'were sin to take a second wife.  
Oh! 'tis a precious thing, when wives are dead,  
To find such numbers who will serve instead;  
And, in whatever state a man be thrown,  
'Tis that precisely they would wish their own. 20  
Left the departed infants—then their joy  
Is to sustain each lovely girl and boy;  
Whatever calling his, whatever trade,  
To that their chief attention has been paid;  
His happy taste in all things they approve,  
His friends they honour, and his food they love;  
His wish for order, prudence in affairs,  
And equal temper, (thank their stars!) are theirs;  
In fact, it seem'd to be a thing decreed,  
And fix'd as fate, that marriage must succeed. 30  
Yet some, like Jones, with stubborn hearts and hard,  
Can hear such claims, and show them no regard.  
Soon as our farmer, like a general, found  
By what strong foes he was encompass'd round—  
Engage he dared not, and he could not fly,  
But saw his hope in gentle parley lie;  
With looks of kindness then, and trembling heart,  
He met the foe, and art opposed to art.  
Now spoke that foe insidious—gentle tones,  
And gentle looks, assumed for Farmer Jones: 40  
"Three girls," the widow cried, "a lively three  
To govern well—indeed it cannot be."  
"Yes," he replied, "it calls for pains and care;  
But I must bear it."—"Sir, you cannot bear;

Your son is weak, and asks a mother's eye."—  
 "That, my kind friend, a father's may supply."—  
 "Such growing griefs your very soul will tease."—  
 "To grieve another would not give me ease;  
 I have a mother."—"She, poor ancient soul!  
 Can she the spirits of the young control? 50  
 Can she thy peace promote, partake thy care,  
 Procure thy comforts, and thy sorrows share?  
 Age is itself impatient, uncontroll'd."—  
 "But wives like mothers must at length be old."—  
 "Thou hast shrewd servants—they are evils sore."—  
 "Yet a shrewd mistress might afflict me more."—  
 "Wilt thou not be a weary wailing man?"—  
 "Alas! and I must bear it as I can."

Resisted thus, the widow soon withdrew,  
 That in his pride the hero might pursue; 60  
 And off his wonted guard, in some retreat,  
 Find from a foe prepared entire defeat.  
 But he was prudent, for he knew in flight  
 These Parthian warriors turn again and fight;  
 He but at freedom, not at glory aim'd,  
 And only safety by his caution claim'd.

Thus, when a great and powerful state decrees  
 Upon a small one, in its love, to seize—  
 It vows in kindness to protect, defend, 70  
 And be the fond ally, the faithful friend;  
 It therefore wills that humbler state to place  
 Its hopes of safety in a fond embrace:  
 Then must that humbler state its wisdom prove,  
 By kind rejection of such pressing love;  
 Must dread such dangerous friendship to commence,  
 And stand collected in its own defence.—  
 Our farmer thus the proffer'd kindness fled,  
 And shunn'd the love that into bondage led.

The widow failing, fresh besiegers came,  
 To share the fate of this retiring dame; 80  
 And each foresaw a thousand ills attend  
 The man that fled from so discreet a friend;  
 And pray'd, kind soul! that no event might make  
 The harden'd heart of Farmer Jones to ache.

But he still govern'd with resistless hand,  
 And where he could not guide he would command.  
 With steady view in course direct he steer'd,  
 And his fair daughters loved him, though they fear'd;  
 Each had her school, and, as his wealth was known,  
 Each had in time a household of her own. 90

The boy indeed was, at the grandam's side,  
 Humour'd and train'd, her trouble and her pride:  
 Companions dear, with speech and spirits mild,  
 The childish widow and the vapourish child.  
 This nature prompts; minds uninform'd and weak  
 In such alliance ease and comfort seek;  
 Push'd by the levity of youth aside, }  
 The cares of man, his humour, or his pride, }  
 They feel, in their defenceless state, allied. }  
 The child is pleased to meet regard from age, 100  
 The old are pleased ev'n children to engage;  
 And all their wisdom, scorn'd by proud mankind,  
 They love to pour into the ductile mind,  
 By its own weakness into error led,  
 And by fond age with prejudices fed.

The father, thankful for the good he had,  
 Yet saw with pain a whining, timid lad;  
 Whom he, instructing, led through cultured fields,  
 To show what man performs, what nature yields;  
 But Stephen, listless, wander'd from the view; } 110  
 From beasts he fled, for butterflies he flew, }  
 And idly gazed about, in search of something new. }  
 The lambs indeed he loved, and wish'd to play  
 With things so mild, so harmless, and so gay;  
 Best pleased the weakest of the flock to see,  
 With whom he felt a sickly sympathy.

Meantime, the dame was anxious, day and night, }  
 To guide the notions of her babe aright, }  
 And on the favourite mind to throw her glimmering light; }

Her Bible-stories she impress'd betimes, 120  
 And fill'd his head with hymns and holy rhymes;  
 On powers unseen, the good and ill, she dwelt,  
 And the poor boy mysterious terrors felt;  
 From frightful dreams, he, waking, sobb'd in dread,  
 Till the good lady came to guard his bed.  
 The father wish'd such errors to correct,  
 But let them pass in duty and respect.  
 But more it grieved his worthy mind to see  
 That Stephen never would a farmer be;  
 In vain he tried the shiftless lad to guide, 130  
 And yet 'twas time that something should be tried.  
 He at the village-school perchance might gain  
 All that such mind could gather and retain;  
 Yet the good dame affirm'd her favourite child  
 Was apt and studious, though sedate and mild;  
 "That he on many a learned point could speak,  
 And that his body, not his mind, was weak."  
 The father doubted—but to school was sent  
 The timid Stephen, weeping as he went:  
 There the rude lads compell'd the child to fight, 140  
 And sent him bleeding to his home at night;  
 At this the grandam more indulgent grew,  
 And bade her darling "shun the beastly crew;  
 Whom Satan ruled, and who were sure to lie  
 Howling in torments, when they came to die."  
 This was such comfort, that in high disdain  
 He told their fate, and felt their blows again.  
 Yet, if the boy had not a hero's heart,  
 Within the school he play'd a better part:  
 He wrote a clean, fine hand, and at his slate 150  
 With more success than many a hero sate;  
 He thought not much indeed—but what depends  
 On pains and care was at his fingers' ends.  
 This had his father's praise, who now espied  
 A spark of merit, with a blaze of pride;  
 And, though a farmer he would never make,  
 He might a pen with some advantage take;  
 And as a clerk that instrument employ,  
 So well adapted to a timid boy.  
 A London cousin soon a place obtain'd, 160  
 Easy but humble—little could be gain'd.  
 The time arriv'd when youth and age must part,  
 Tears in each eye, and sorrow in each heart;  
 The careful father bade his son attend  
 To all his duties, and obey his friend;  
 To keep his church and there behave aright, }  
 As one existing in his Maker's sight, }  
 Till acts to habits led, and duty to delight: }  
 "Then try, my boy, as quickly as you can,  
 T' assume the looks and spirit of a man; 170  
 I say, be honest, faithful, civil, true,  
 And this you may, and yet have courage too.  
 Heroic men, their country's boast and pride,  
 Have fear'd their God, and nothing fear'd beside;  
 While others daring, yet imbecile, fly  
 The power of man, and that of God defy.  
 Be manly then, though mild, for, sure as fate,  
 Thou art, my Stephen, too effeminate;  
 Here, take my purse, and make a worthy use  
 ('Tis fairly stock'd) of what it will produce; 180  
 And now my blessing, not as any charm  
 Or conjuration; but 'twill do no harm."  
 Stephen, whose thoughts were wandering up and down,  
 Now charm'd with promised sights in London-town,  
 Now loth to leave his grandam—lost the force,  
 The drift and tenor of this grave discourse;  
 But, in a general way, he understood  
 'Twas good advice, and meant, "My son, be good;"  
 And Stephen knew that all such precepts mean,  
 That lads should read their Bible, and be clean. 190  
 The good old lady, though in some distress,  
 Begg'd her dear Stephen would his grief suppress:  
 "Nay, dry those eyes, my child—and, first of all,  
 Hold fast thy faith, whatever may befall;

Hear the best preacher, and preserve the text  
 For meditation, till you hear the next;  
 Within your Bible night and morning look—  
 There is your duty, read no other book;  
 Be not in crowds, in broils, in riots seen,  
 And keep your conscience and your linen clean. 200  
 Be you a Joseph, and the time may be,  
 When kings and rulers will be ruled by thee.”  
 “Nay,” said the father—“Hush, my son,” replied  
 The dame—“The Scriptures must not be denied.”  
 The lad, still weeping, heard the wheels approach,  
 And took his place within the evening coach,  
 With heart quite rent asunder: On one side  
 Was love, and grief, and fear, for scenes untried;  
 Wild beasts and wax-work fill’d the happier part  
 Of Stephen’s varying and divided heart; 210  
 This he betray’d by sighs and questions strange,  
 Of famous shows, the Tower, and the Exchange.  
 Soon at his desk was placed the curious boy,  
 Demure and silent at his new employ;  
 Yet, as he could, he much attention paid  
 To all around him, cautious and afraid.  
 On older clerks his eager eyes were fix’d,  
 But Stephen never in their council mix’d;  
 Much their contempt he fear’d, for, if like them,  
 He felt assured he should himself contemn: 220  
 “Oh! they were all so eloquent, so free,  
 No! he was nothing—nothing could he be.  
 They dress so smartly, and so boldly look,  
 And talk as if they read it from a book;  
 But I,” said Stephen, “will forbear to speak,  
 And they will think me prudent, and not weak.  
 They talk, the instant they have dropp’d the pen,  
 Of singing-women and of acting-men;  
 Of plays and places where at night they walk  
 Beneath the lamps, and with the ladies talk; 230  
 While other ladies for their pleasure sing,  
 Oh! ’tis a glorious and a happy thing.  
 They would despise me, did they understand  
 I dare not look upon a scene so grand;  
 Or see the plays when critics rise and roar,  
 And hiss and groan, and cry—‘Encore! encore!’—  
 There’s one among them looks a little kind;  
 If more encouraged, I would ope my mind.”  
 Alas! poor Stephen, happier had he kept  
 His purpose secret, while his envy slept; 240  
 Virtue, perhaps, had conquer’d, or his shame  
 At least preserved him simple as he came.  
 A year elapsed before this clerk began  
 To treat the rustic something like a man;  
 He then in trifling points the youth advised,  
 Talk’d of his coat, and had it modernized;  
 Or with the lad a Sunday-walk would take,  
 And kindly strive his passions to awake;  
 Meanwhile explaining all they heard and saw,  
 Till Stephen stood in wonderment and awe. 250  
 To a neat garden near the town they stray’d,  
 Where the lad felt delighted and afraid;  
 There all he saw was smart, and fine, and fair—  
 He could but marvel how he ventured there:  
 Soon he observed, with terror and alarm,  
 His friend enlock’d within a lady’s arm,  
 And freely talking—“But it is,” said he,  
 “A near relation, and that makes him free;”  
 And much amazed was Stephen, when he knew  
 This was the first and only interview; 260  
 Nay, had that lovely arm by him been seized,  
 The lovely owner had been highly pleased:  
 “Alas!” he sigh’d, “I never can contrive,  
 At such bold, blessed freedoms to arrive;  
 Never shall I such happy courage boast;  
 I dare as soon encounter with a ghost.”  
 Now to a play the friendly couple went,  
 But the boy murmur’d at the money spent;  
 “He loved,” he said, “to buy, but not to spend—

They only talk awhile, and there's an end." 270  
 "Come, you shall purchase books," the friend replied;  
 "You are bewilderd, and you want a guide;  
 To me refer the choice, and you shall find  
 The light break in upon your stagnant mind!"  
 The cooler clerks exclaim'd, "In vain your art  
 T' improve a cub without a head or heart;  
 Rustics, though coarse, and savages, though wild,  
 Our cares may render liberal and mild;  
 But what, my friend, can flow from all these pains?  
 There is no dealing with a lack of brains."— 280  
 "True I am hopeless to behold him man;  
 But let me make the booby what I can:  
 Though the rude stone no polish will display,  
 Yet you may strip the rugged coat away."  
 Stephen beheld his books—"I love to know  
 How money goes—now here is that to show;  
 And now," he cried, "I shall be pleased to get  
 Beyond the Bible—there I puzzle yet."  
 He spoke abash'd—"Nay, nay!" the friend replied,  
 "You need not lay the good old book aside; 290  
 Antique and curious, I myself indeed  
 Read it at times, but as a man should read;  
 A fine old work it is, and I protest  
 I hate to hear it treated as a jest;  
 The book has wisdom in it, if you look  
 Wisely upon it, as another book;  
 For superstition (as our priests of sin  
 Are pleased to tell us) makes us blind within.—  
 Of this hereafter—we will now select  
 Some works to please you, others to direct; 300  
 Tales and romances shall your fancy feed,  
 And reasoners form your morals and your creed."  
 The books were view'd, the price was fairly paid,  
 And Stephen read, undaunted, undismay'd—  
 But not till first he paper'd all the row,  
 And placed in order, to enjoy the show;  
 Next letter'd all the backs with care and speed,  
 Set them in ranks, and then began to read.  
 The love of order,—I the thing receive 310  
 From reverend men, and I in part believe—  
 Shows a clear mind and clean, and whoso needs  
 This love but seldom in the world succeeds;  
 And yet with this some other love must be,  
 Ere I can fully to the fact agree.  
 Valour and study may by order gain,  
 By order sovereigns hold more steady reign;  
 Through all the tribes of nature order runs,  
 And rules around in systems and in suns;  
 Still has the love of order found a place }  
 With all that's low, degrading, mean, and base, } 320  
 With all that merits scorn, and all that meets disgrace: }  
 In the cold miser, of all change afraid;  
 In pompous men, in public seats obey'd;  
 In humble placemen, heralds, solemn drones,  
 Fanciers of flowers, and lads like Stephen Jones;  
 Order to these is armour and defence,  
 And love of method serves in lack of sense.  
 For rustic youth could I a list produce  
 Of Stephen's books, how great might be the use;  
 But evil fate was theirs—survey'd, enjoy'd 330  
 Some happy months, and then by force destroy'd.  
 So will'd the fates—but these, with patience read,  
 Had vast effect on Stephen's heart and head.  
 This soon appear'd—within a single week  
 He oped his lips, and made attempt to speak;  
 He fail'd indeed—but still his friend confess'd  
 The best have fail'd, and he had done his best.  
 The first of swimmers, when at first he swims,  
 Has little use or freedom in his limbs;  
 Nay, when at length he strikes with manly force, 340  
 The cramp may seize him, and impede his course.  
 Encouraged thus, our clerk again essay'd  
 The daring act, though daunted and afraid;  
 Succeeding now, though partial his success,

And pertness mark'd his manner and address,  
Yet such improvement issued from his books,  
That all discern'd it in his speech and looks.  
He ventured then on every theme to speak,  
And felt no feverish tingling in his cheek;  
His friend, approving, hail'd the happy change;  
The clerks exclaim'd—" 'Tis famous, and 'tis strange."—

350

Two years had pass'd; the youth attended still,  
(Though thus accomplish'd) with a ready quill;  
He sat th' allotted hours, though hard the case,  
While timid prudence ruled in virtue's place;  
By promise bound, the son his letters penn'd  
To his good parent, at the quarter's end.  
At first, he sent those lines, the state to tell  
Of his own health, and hoped his friends were well;  
He kept their virtuous precepts in his mind,  
And need'd nothing—then his name was sign'd;  
But now he wrote of Sunday walks and views,  
Of actors' names, choice novels, and strange news;  
How coats were cut, and of his urgent need  
For fresh supply, which he desired with speed.  
The father doubted, when these letters came,  
To what they tended, yet was loth to blame:  
"Stephen was once *my duteous son*, and now  
*My most obedient*—this can I allow?  
Can I with pleasure or with patience see  
A boy at once so heartless, and so free?"

360

But soon the kinsman heavy tidings told,  
That love and prudence could no more withhold:  
"Stephen, though steady at his desk, was grown  
A rake and coxcomb—this he grieved to own;  
His cousin left his church, and spent the day  
Lounging about in quite a heathen way;  
Sometimes he swore, but had indeed the grace  
To show the shame imprinted on his face.  
I search'd his room, and in his absence read  
Books that I knew would turn a stronger head:  
The works of atheists half the number made,  
The rest were lives of harlots leaving trade;  
Which neither man nor boy would deign to read,  
If from the scandal and pollution freed.  
I sometimes threaten'd, and would fairly state  
My sense of things so vile and profligate;  
But I'm a cit, such works are lost on me—  
They're knowledge, and (good Lord!) philosophy."

370

"Oh, send him down," the father soon replied;  
"Let me behold him, and my skill be tried:  
If care and kindness lose their wonted use,  
Some rougher medicine will the end produce."

380

Stephen with grief and anger heard his doom—  
"Go to the farmer? to the rustic's home?  
Curse the base threat'ning—" "Nay, child, never curse;  
Corrupted long, your case is growing worse."—  
"I!" quoth the youth, "I challenge all mankind  
To find a fault; what fault have you to find?  
Improve I not in manner, speech, and grace?  
Inquire—my friends will tell it to your face;  
Have I been taught to guard his kine and sheep?  
A man like me has other things to keep;  
This let him know."—"It would his wrath excite;  
But come, prepare, you must away to-night."—  
"What! leave my studies, my improvements leave,  
My faithful friends and intimates to grieve!"—  
"Go to your father, Stephen, let him see  
All these improvements; they are lost on me."

390

The youth, though loth, obey'd, and soon he saw  
The farmer-father, with some signs of awe:  
Who kind, yet silent, waited to behold  
How one would act, so daring, yet so cold;  
And soon he found, between the friendly pair  
That secrets pass'd which he was not to share;  
But he resolved those secrets to obtain,  
And quash rebellion in his lawful reign.

400

Stephen, though vain, was with his father mute;  
He fear'd a crisis, and he shunn'd dispute;

410



And yet he long'd with youthful pride to show 420  
 He knew such things as farmers could not know;  
 These to the grandam he with freedom spoke,  
 Saw her amazement, and enjoy'd the joke.  
 But, on the father when he cast his eye,  
 Something he found that made his valour shy;  
 And thus there seem'd to be a hollow truce,  
 Still threat'ning something dismal to produce.  
 Ere this the father at his leisure read  
 The son's choice volumes, and his wonder fled;  
 He saw how wrought the works of either kind 430  
 On so presuming, yet so weak, a mind;  
 These in a chosen hour he made his prey,  
 Condemn'd, and bore with vengeful thoughts away;  
 Then in a close recess the couple near,  
 He sat unseen to see, unheard to hear.  
 There soon a trial for his patience came;  
 Beneath were placed the youth and ancient dame,  
 Each on a purpose fix'd—but neither thought  
 How near a foe, with power and vengeance fraught.  
 And now the matron told, as tidings sad, 440  
 What she had heard of her beloved lad;  
 How he to graceless, wicked men gave heed,  
 And wicked books would night and morning read;  
 Some former lectures she again began,  
 And begg'd attention of her little man;  
 She brought, with many a pious boast, in view  
 His former studies, and condemn'd the new:  
 Once he the names of saints and patriarchs old,  
 Judges and kings, and chiefs and prophets, told;  
 Then he in winter-nights the Bible took, 450  
 To count how often in the sacred book  
 The sacred name appear'd, and could rehearse  
 Which were the middle chapter, word, and verse,  
 The very letter in the middle placed,  
 And so employ'd the hours that others waste.  
 "Such wert thou once; and now, my child, they say  
 Thy faith like water runneth fast away;  
 The prince of devils hath, I fear, beguiled  
 The ready wit of my backsliding child."  
 On this, with lofty looks, our clerk began 460  
 His grave rebuke, as he assumed the man—  
 "There is no devil," said the hopeful youth,  
 "Nor prince of devils; that I know for truth.  
 Have I not told you how my books describe  
 The arts of priests and all the canting tribe?  
 Your Bible mentions Egypt, where, it seems,  
 Was Joseph found when Pharaoh dream'd his dreams.  
 Now, in that place, in some bewilder'd head,  
 (The learned write) religious dreams were bred;  
 Whence through the earth, with various forms combined,  
 They came to frighten and afflict mankind, 471  
 Prone (so I read) to let a priest invade }  
 Their souls with awe, and by his craft be made }  
 Slave to his will, and profit to his trade. }  
 So say my books, and how the rogues agreed  
 To blind the victims, to defraud and lead;  
 When joys above to ready dupes were sold,  
 And hell was threaten'd to the shy and cold.  
 "Why so amazed, and so prepared to pray?  
 As if a Being heard a word we say! 480  
 This may surprise you; I myself began  
 To feel disturb'd, and to my Bible ran;  
 I now am wiser—yet agree in this,  
 The book has things that are not much amiss;  
 It is a fine old work, and I protest  
 I hate to hear it treated as a jest:  
 The book has wisdom in it, if you look  
 Wisely upon it as another book."—  
 "Oh! wicked! wicked! my unhappy child,  
 How hast thou been by evil men beguiled!"— 490  
 "How! wicked, say you? you can little guess  
 The gain of that which you call wickedness:  
 Why, sins you think it sinful but to name  
 Have gain'd both wives and widows wealth and fame;

And this, because such people never dread  
 Those threaten'd pains; hell comes not in their head.  
 Love is our nature, wealth we all desire,  
 And what we wish 'tis lawful to acquire;  
 So say my books—and what beside they show  
 'Tis time to let this honest farmer know. 500  
 Nay, look not grave; am I commanded down  
 To feed his cattle and become his clown?  
 Is such his purpose? then he shall be told  
 The vulgar insult——”

——“Hold, in mercy hold——”  
 “Father, oh! father! throw the whip away;  
 I was but jesting, on my knees I pray—  
 There, hold his arm—oh! leave us not alone;  
 In pity cease, and I will yet atone  
 For all my sin—” In vain: stroke after stroke 510  
 On side and shoulder quick as mill-wheels broke;  
 Quick as the patient's pulse, who trembling cried,  
 And still the parent with a stroke replied;  
 Till all the medicine he prepared was dealt,  
 And every bone the precious influence felt;  
 Till all the panting flesh was red and raw,  
 And every thought was turn'd to fear and awe;  
 Till every doubt to due respect gave place—  
 Such cures are done when doctors know the case.

“Oh! I shall die—my father! do receive  
 My dying words; indeed, I do believe; 520  
 The books are lying books, I know it well,  
 There is a devil, oh! there is a hell;  
 And I'm a sinner: spare me, I am young,  
 My sinful words were only on my tongue;  
 My heart consented not; 'tis all a lie:  
 Oh! spare me then, I'm not prepared to die.”

“Vain, worthless, stupid wretch!” the father cried,  
 “Dost thou presume to teach? art thou a guide?  
 Driveller and dog, it gave the mind distress 530  
 To hear thy thoughts in their religious dress;  
 Thy pious folly moved my strong disdain,  
 Yet I forgave thee for thy want of brain.  
 But Job in patience must the man exceed  
 Who could endure thee in thy present creed;  
 Is it for thee, thou idiot, to pretend  
 The wicked cause a helping hand to lend?  
 Canst thou a judge in any question be?  
 Atheists themselves would scorn a friend like thee.—

“Lo! yonder blaze thy worthies; in one heap 540  
 Thy scoundrel-favourites must for ever sleep:  
 Each yields its poison to the flame in turn,  
 Where whores and infidels are doom'd to burn;  
 Two noble faggots made the flame you see,  
 Reserving only two fair twigs for thee;  
 That in thy view the instruments may stand,  
 And be in future ready for my hand:  
 The just mementos that, though silent, show  
 Whence thy correction and improvements flow;  
 Beholding these, thou wilt confess their power,  
 And feel the shame of this important hour. 550

“Hadst thou been humble, I had first design'd  
 By care from folly to have freed thy mind;  
 And, when a clean foundation had been laid,  
 Our priest, more able, would have lent his aid.  
 But thou art weak, and force must folly guide,  
 And thou art vain, and pain must humble pride.  
 Teachers men honour, learners they allure;                    }  
 But learners teaching of contempt are sure;                    }  
 Scorn is their certain meed, and smart their only cure!”    }

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## TALES OF THE HALL.

*TO HER GRACE  
 THE DUCHESS OF RUTLAND*

It is the privilege of those who are placed in that elevated situation to which your Grace is an ornament, that they give honour to the person upon whom they confer a favour. When I dedicate to your Grace the fruits of many years, and speak of my debt to the House of Rutland, I feel that I am not without pride in the confession nor insensible to the honour which such gratitude implies. Forty years have elapsed since this debt commenced. On my entrance into the cares of life, and while contending with its difficulties, a Duke and Duchess of Rutland observed and protected me—in my progress a Duke and Duchess of Rutland favoured and assisted me—and, when I am retiring from the world, a Duke and Duchess of Rutland receive my thanks, and accept my offering. All, even in this world of mutability, is not change: I have experienced unvaried favour—I have felt undiminished respect.

With the most grateful remembrance of what I owe, and the most sincere conviction of the little I can return, I present these pages to your Grace's acceptance, and beg leave to subscribe myself,

May it please Your Grace,

With respect and gratitude,

Your Grace's

Most obedient, humble,

And devoted servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.

*Trowbridge,*  
*June, 1819.*

## PREFACE.

If I did not fear that it would appear to my readers like arrogance, or if it did not seem to myself indecorous to send two volumes of considerable magnitude from the press without preface or apology, without one petition for the reader's attention, or one plea for the writer's defects, I would most willingly spare myself an address of this kind, and more especially for these reasons: first, because a preface is a part of a book seldom honoured by a reader's perusal; secondly, because it is both difficult and distressing to write that which we think will be disregarded; and thirdly, because I do not conceive that I am called upon for such introductory matter by any of the motives which usually influence an author when he composes his prefatory address.

When a writer, whether of poetry or prose, first addresses the public, he has generally something to offer which relates to himself or to his work, and which he considers as a necessary prelude to the work itself, to prepare his readers for the entertainment or the instruction they may expect to receive; for one of these every man who publishes must suppose he affords—this the act itself implies, and in proportion to his conviction of this fact must be his feeling of the difficulty in which he has placed himself: the difficulty consists in reconciling the implied presumption of the undertaking, whether to please or to instruct mankind, with the diffidence and modesty of an untried candidate for fame or favour. Hence originate the many reasons an author assigns for his appearance in that character, whether they actually exist, or are merely offered to hide the motives which cannot be openly avowed: namely, the want or the vanity of the man, as his wishes for profit or reputation may most prevail with him.

Now, reasons of this kind, whatever they may be, cannot be availing beyond their first appearance. An author, it is true, may again feel his former apprehensions, may again be elevated or depressed by the suggestions of vanity and diffidence, and may be again subject to the cold and hot fit of aguish expectation; but he is no more a stranger to the press, nor has the motives or privileges of one who is. With respect to myself, it is certain they belong not to me. Many years have elapsed since I became a candidate for indulgence as an inexperienced writer; and to assume the language of such writer now, and to plead for his indulgences, would be proof of my ignorance of the place assigned to me, and the degree of favour which I have experienced; but of that place I am not uninformed, and with that degree of favour I have no reason to be dissatisfied.

It was the remark of the pious, but on some occasions the querulous, author of the *Night Thoughts*, that he had "been so long remembered, he was forgotten"—an expression in which there is more appearance of discontent than of submission: if he had patience, it was not the patience that *smiles at grief*. It is not therefore entirely in the sense of the good Doctor that I apply these words to myself, or to my more early publications. So many years indeed have passed since their first appearance, that I have no reason to complain, on that account, if they be now slumbering with other poems of decent reputation in their day—not dead indeed, nor entirely forgotten, but certainly not the subjects of discussion or conversation as when first introduced to the notice of the public by those whom the public will not forget, whose protection was credit to their author, and whose approbation was

fame to them. Still these early publications had so long preceded any other, that, if not altogether unknown, I was, when I came again before the public, in a situation which excused, and perhaps rendered necessary, some explanation; but this also has passed away, and none of my readers will now take the trouble of making any inquiries respecting my motives for writing or for publishing these Tales or verses of any description. Known to each other as readers and authors are known, they will require no preface to bespeak their good will; nor shall I be under the necessity of soliciting the kindness which experience has taught me, endeavouring to merit, I shall not fail to receive.

There is one motive—and it is a powerful one—which sometimes induces an author, and more particularly a poet, to ask the attention of his readers to his prefatory address. This is when he has some favourite and peculiar style or manner which he would explain and defend, and chiefly if he should have adopted a mode of versification of which an uninitiated reader was not likely to perceive either the merit or the beauty. In such case it is natural, and surely pardonable, to assert and to prove, as far as reason will bear us on, that such method of writing has both; to show in what the beauty consists, and what peculiar difficulty there is, which, when conquered, creates the merit. How far any particular poet has or has not succeeded in such attempt is not my business nor my purpose to inquire: I have no peculiar notion to defend, no poetical heterodoxy to support, nor theory of any kind to vindicate or oppose—that which I have used is probably the most common measure in our language; and therefore, whatever be its advantages or defects, they are too well known to require from me a description of the one, or an apology for the other.

Perhaps still more frequent than any explanation of the work is an account of the author himself, the situation in which he is placed, or some circumstances of peculiar kind in his life, education, or employment. How often has youth been pleaded for deficiencies or redundancies, for the existence of which youth may be an excuse, and yet be none for their exposure. Age too has been pleaded for the errors and failings in a work which the octogenarian had the discernment to perceive, and yet had not the fortitude to suppress. Many other circumstances are made apologies for a writer's infirmities: his much employment, and many avocations, adversity, necessity, and the good of mankind. These, or any of them, however availing in themselves, avail not me. I am neither so young nor so old, so much engaged by one pursuit, or by many—I am not so urged by want, or so stimulated by a desire of public benefit—that I can borrow one apology from the many which I have named. How far they prevail with our readers, or with our judges, I cannot tell; and it is unnecessary for me to inquire into the validity of arguments which I have not to produce.

If there be any combination of circumstances which may be supposed to affect the mind of a reader, and in some degree to influence his judgment, the junction of youth, beauty, and merit in a female writer may be allowed to do this; and yet one of the most forbidding of titles is "Poems by a very young Lady"—and this, although beauty and merit were largely insinuated. Ladies, it is true, have of late little need of any indulgence as authors, and names may readily be found which rather excite the envy of man than plead for his lenity. Our estimation of title also in a writer has materially varied from that of our predecessors; "Poems by a Nobleman" would create a very different sensation in our minds from that which was formerly excited when they were so announced. A noble author had then no pretensions to a seat so secure on the "sacred hill," that authors not noble, and critics not gentle, dared not attack; and they delighted to take revenge, by their contempt and derision of the poet, for the pain which their submission and respect to the man had cost them. But in our times we find that a nobleman writes, not merely as well, but better than other men: insomuch that readers in general begin to fancy that the Muses have relinquished their old partiality for rags and a garret, and are become altogether aristocratical in their choice. A conceit so well supported by fact would be readily admitted, did it not appear at the same time, that there were in the higher ranks of society men who could write as tamely, or as absurdly, as they had ever been accused of doing. We may, therefore, regard the works of any noble author as extraordinary productions, but must not found any theory upon them; and, notwithstanding their appearance, must look on genius and talent as we are wont to do on time and chance, that happen indifferently to all mankind.

But, whatever influence any peculiar situation of a writer might have, it cannot be a benefit to me, who have no such peculiarity. I must rely upon the willingness of my readers to be pleased with that which was designed to give them pleasure, and upon the cordiality which naturally springs from a remembrance of our having before parted without any feelings of disgust on the one side, or of mortification on the other.

With this hope I would conclude the present subject; but I am called upon by duty to acknowledge my obligations, and more especially for two of the following Tales—the Story of Lady Barbara, in Book XVI; and that of Ellen in Book XVIII. The first of these I owe to the kindness of a fair friend, who will, I hope, accept the thanks which I very gratefully pay, and pardon me if I have not given to her relation the advantages which she had so much reason to expect. The other story, that of Ellen, could I give it in the language of him who related it to me, would please and affect my readers. It is by no means my only debt, though the one I now more particularly acknowledge; for who shall describe all that he gains in the social, the unrestrained, and the frequent conversations with a friend, who is

at once communicative and judicious—whose opinions, on all subjects of literary kind, are founded on good taste, and exquisite feeling? It is one of the greatest “pleasures of my memory” to recal in absence those conversations; and, if I do not in direct terms mention with whom I conversed, it is both because I have no permission, and my readers will have no doubt.

The first intention of the poet must be to please; for, if he means to instruct, he must render the instruction which he hopes to convey palatable and pleasant. I will not assume the tone of a moralist, nor promise that my relations shall be beneficial to mankind; but I have endeavoured, not unsuccessfully I trust, that, in whatsoever I have related or described, there should be nothing introduced which has a tendency to excuse the vices of man by associating with them sentiments that demand our respect, and talents that compel our admiration. There is nothing in these pages which has the mischievous effect of confounding truth and error, or confusing our ideas of right and wrong. I know not which is most injurious to the yielding minds of the young—to render virtue less respectable by making its possessors ridiculous, or by describing vice with so many fascinating qualities, that it is either lost in the assemblage, or pardoned by the association. Man’s heart is sufficiently prone to make excuse for man’s infirmity, and needs not the aid of poetry, or eloquence, to take from vice its native deformity. A character may be respectable with all its faults, but it must not be made respectable by them. It is grievous when genius will condescend to place strong and evil spirits in a commanding view, or excite our pity and admiration for men of talents, degraded by crime, when struggling with misfortune. It is but too true that great and wicked men may be so presented to us as to demand our applause, when they should excite our abhorrence; but it is surely for the interest of mankind, and our own self-direction, that we should ever keep at unapproachable distance our respect and our reproach.

I have one observation more to offer. It may appear to some that a minister of religion, in the decline of life, should have no leisure for such amusements as these; and for them I have no reply. But to those who are more indulgent to the propensities, the studies, and the habits of mankind, I offer some apology when I produce these volumes, not as the occupations of my life, but the fruits of my leisure—the employment of that time which, if not given to them, had passed in the vacuity of unrecorded idleness, or had been lost in the indulgence of unregistered thoughts and fancies, that melt away in the instant they are conceived, and “*leave not a wreck behind.*”

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## TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK I.

### *THE HALL.*

The Meeting of the Brothers, George and Richard—The Retirement of the elder to his native Village—Objects and Persons whom he found there—The Brother described in various Particulars—The Invitation and Journey of the younger—His Soliloquy and Arrival.

## TALES OF THE HALL.

### BOOK I.

#### *THE HALL.*

The Brothers met who many a year had past  
Since their last meeting, and that seem'd their last;  
They had no parent then or common friend  
Who might their hearts to mutual kindness bend;  
Who, touching both in their divided state,  
Might generous thoughts and warm desires create;  
For there are minds whom we must first excite  
And urge to feeling, ere they can unite;  
As we may hard and stubborn metals beat  
And blend together, if we duly heat.

10

The elder, George, had past his threescore years,  
A busy actor, sway'd by hopes and fears  
Of powerful kind; and he had fill'd the parts  
That try our strength and agitate our hearts.  
He married not, and yet he well approved  
The social state; but then he rashly loved;  
Gave to a strong delusion all his youth,  
Led by a vision till alarm'd by truth.  
That vision past, and of that truth possest,  
His passions wearied and disposed to rest,  
George yet had will and power a place to choose,  
Where Hope might sleep, and terminate her views.  
He chose his native village, and the hill  
He climb'd a boy had its attraction still;  
With that small brook beneath, where he would stand,  
And stooping fill the hollow of his hand,  
To quench th' impatient thirst—then stop awhile  
To see the sun upon the waters smile,  
In that sweet weariness when, long denied,  
We drink and view the fountain that supplied  
The sparkling bliss—and feel, if not express,  
Our perfect ease in that sweet weariness.

20

30

The oaks yet flourish'd in that fertile ground,  
Where still the church with lofty tower was found;  
And still that Hall, a first, a favourite view,  
But not the elms that form'd its avenue;  
They fell ere George arrived, or yet had stood,  
For he in reverence held the living wood,  
That widely spreads in earth the deepening root,  
And lifts to heaven the still aspiring shoot;  
From age to age they fill'd a growing space,  
But hid the mansion they were meant to grace.

40

It was an ancient, venerable hall,  
And once surrounded by a moat and wall;  
A part was added by a squire of taste,  
Who, while unvalued acres ran to waste,  
Made spacious rooms, whence he could look about,  
And mark improvements as they rose without:  
He fill'd the moat, he took the wall away,  
He thinn'd the park, and bade the view be gay.  
The scene was rich, but he who should behold  
Its worth was poor, and so the whole was sold.

50

Just then our merchant from his desk retired,  
And made the purchase that his heart desired—  
The Hall of Binning, his delight a boy,  
That gave his fancy in her flight employ.  
Here, from his father's modest home, he gazed,  
Its grandeur charm'd him, and its height amazed,

Work of past ages; and the brick-built place  
Where he resided was in much disgrace; 60  
But never in his fancy's proudest dream  
Did he the master of that mansion seem.  
Young was he then, and little did he know  
What years on care and diligence bestow;  
Now, young no more, retired to views well known,  
He finds that object of his awe his own:  
The Hall at Binning!—how he loves the gloom  
That sun-excluding window gives the room;  
Those broad brown stairs on which he loves to tread;  
Those beams within; without, that length of lead, 70  
On which the names of wanton boys appear,  
Who died old men, and left memorials here—  
Carvings of feet and hands, and knots and flowers,  
The fruits of busy minds in idle hours.

Here, while our squire the modern part possess'd, }  
His partial eye upon the old would rest; }  
That best his comforts gave—this sooth'd his feelings best. }

Here, day by day, withdrawn from busy life,  
No child t' awake him, to engage no wife,  
When friends were absent, not to books inclined, 80  
He found a sadness steal upon his mind;  
Sighing the works of former lords to see,  
"I follow them," he cried, "but who will follow me?"

Some ancient men whom he a boy had known  
He knew again; their changes were his own.  
Comparing now he view'd them, and he felt  
That time with him in lenient mood had dealt;  
While some the half-distinguish'd features bore }  
That he was doubtful if he saw before, }  
And some in memory lived, whom he must see no more. }

Here George had found, yet scarcely hoped to find,  
Companions meet, minds fitted to his mind;  
Here, late and loth, the worthy rector came,  
From college dinners and a fellow's fame;  
Yet, here when fix'd, was happy to behold  
So near a neighbour in a friend so old.  
Boys on one form they parted, now to meet  
In equal state, their worships on one seat.

Here were a sister-pair, who seem'd to live  
With more respect than affluence can give; 100  
Although not affluent, they, by nature graced,  
Had sense and virtue, dignity and taste;  
Their minds by sorrows, by misfortunes tried,  
Were vex'd and heal'd, were pain'd and purified.

Hither a sage physician came, and plann'd,  
With books his guides, improvements on his land;  
Nor less to mind than matter would he give  
His noble thoughts, to know how spirits live,  
And what is spirit; him his friends advised  
To think with fear; but caution he despised; 110  
And hints of fear provoked him till he dared  
Beyond himself, nor bold assertion spared,  
But fiercely spoke, like those who strongly feel,  
"Priests and their craft, enthusiasts and their zeal."

More yet appear'd, of whom as we proceed—  
Ah! yield not yet to languor—you shall read.

But ere the events that from this meeting rose,  
Be they of pain or pleasure, we disclose,  
It is of custom, doubtless is of use,  
That we our heroes first should introduce. 120  
Come, then, fair Truth! and let me clearly see  
The minds I paint, as they are seen in thee;  
To me their merits and their faults impart; }  
Give me to say, "frail being! such thou art," }  
And closely let me view the naked human heart. }

GEORGE loved to think; but, as he late began  
To muse on all the grander thoughts of man,  
He took a solemn and a serious view  
Of his religion, and he found it true;  
Firmly, yet meekly, he his mind applied 130  
To this great subject, and was satisfied.

He then proceeded, not so much intent,  
But still in earnest, and to church he went.

Although they found some difference in their creed,  
He and his pastor cordially agreed,  
Convinced that they who would the truth obtain  
By disputation, find their efforts vain;  
The church he view'd as liberal minds will view,  
And there he fix'd his principles and pew.

He saw—he thought he saw—how weakness, pride,  
And habit, draw seceding crowds aside: 140  
Weakness, that loves on trifling points to dwell;  
Pride, that at first from Heaven's own worship fell;  
And habit, going where it went before,  
Or to the meeting or the tavern door.

George loved the cause of freedom, but reproved  
All who with wild and boyish ardour loved:  
Those who believed they never could be free,  
Except when fighting for their liberty;  
Who by their very clamour and complaint 150  
Invite coercion or enforce restraint.

He thought a trust so great, so good a cause,  
Was only to be kept by guarding laws;  
For, public blessings firmly to secure,  
We must a lessening of the good endure.  
The public waters are to none denied;  
All drink the stream, but only few must guide.

There must be reservoirs to hold supply,  
And channels form'd to send the blessing by;  
The public good must be a private care; 160  
None all they would may have, but all a share.  
So we must freedom with restraint enjoy;  
What crowds possess they will, uncheck'd, destroy;  
And hence, that freedom may to all be dealt,  
Guards must be fix'd, and safety must be felt.

So thought our squire, nor wish'd the guards t' appear  
So strong, that safety might be bought too dear;  
The constitution was the ark that he  
Join'd to support with zeal and sanctity;  
Nor would expose it, as th' accursed son 170  
His father's weakness, to be gazed upon.

"I for that freedom make," said he, "my prayer,  
That suits with all, like atmospheric air;  
That is to mortal man by heaven assign'd,  
Who cannot bear a pure and perfect kind.  
The lighter gas, that, taken in the frame,  
The spirit heats, and sets the blood in flame:  
Such is the freedom which when men approve,  
They know not what a dangerous thing they love." 180

George chose the company of men of sense,  
But could with wit in moderate share dispense;  
He wish'd in social ease his friends to meet,  
When still he thought the female accent sweet;  
Well from the ancient, better from the young,  
He loved the lisplings of the mother tongue.

He ate and drank, as much as men who think  
Of life's best pleasures, ought to eat or drink;  
Men purely temperate might have taken less,  
But still he loved indulgence, not excess;  
Nor would alone the grants of fortune taste, 190  
But shared the wealth he judged it crime to waste;  
And thus obtained the sure reward of care—  
For none can spend like him who learns to spare.

Time, thought, and trouble made the man appear—  
By nature shrewd—sarcastic and severe;  
Still, he was one whom those who fully knew  
Esteem'd and trusted, one correct and true;  
All on his word with surety might depend,  
Kind as a man, and faithful as a friend.

But him the many [knew] not, knew not cause 200  
In their new squire for censure or applause;  
Ask them, "Who dwelt within that lofty wall?"  
And they would say, "the gentleman was tall;  
Look'd old when follow'd, but alert when met,  
And had some vigour in his movements yet;  
He stoops, but not as one infirm; and wears  
Dress that becomes his station and his years."

Such was the man who from the world return'd  
New friend nor foe, he priz'd it not, nor scorn'd



nor friend nor foe; he prized it not, nor spurn'd;  
 But came and sat him in his village down, 210  
 Safe from its smile, and careless of its frown:  
 He, fairly looking into life's account,  
 Saw frowns and favours were of like amount;  
 And viewing all—his perils, prospects, purse—  
 He said, "Content! 'tis well it is no worse."  
 Through ways more rough had fortune RICHARD led,  
 The world he traversed was the book he read;  
 Hence clashing notions and opinions strange  
 Lodged in his mind: all liable to change.

By nature generous, open, daring, free, 220  
 The vice he hated was hypocrisy.  
 Religious notions, in her latter years,  
 His mother gave, admonish'd by her fears;  
 To these he added, as he chanced to read  
 A pious work or learn a christian creed.  
 He heard the preacher by the highway side,  
 The church's teacher, and the meeting's guide;  
 And, mixing all their matters in his brain,  
 Distill'd a something he could ill explain; 230  
 But still it served him for his daily use,  
 And kept his lively passions from abuse;  
 For he believed, and held in reverence high,  
 The truth so dear to man—"not all shall die."  
 The minor portions of his creed hung loose,  
 For time to shapen and a whole produce;  
 This love effected, and a favourite maid  
 With clearer views his honest flame repaid;  
 Hers was the thought correct, the hope sublime,  
 She shaped his creed, and did the work of time. 240

He spake of freedom as a nation's cause, 240  
 And loved, like George, our liberty and laws;  
 But had more youthful ardour to be free,  
 And stronger fears for injured liberty.  
 With him, on various questions that arose,  
 The monarch's servants were the people's foes;  
 And, though he fought with all a Briton's zeal,  
 He felt for France as Freedom's children feel;  
 Went far with her in what she thought reform,  
 And hail'd the revolutionary storm;  
 Yet would not here, where there was least to win, 250  
 And most to lose, the doubtful work begin;  
 But look'd on change with some religious fear,  
 And cried, with filial dread, "Ah! come not here."  
 His friends he did not as the thoughtful choose;  
 Long to deliberate was, he judged, to lose;  
 Frankly he join'd the free, nor suffered pride  
 Or doubt to part them, whom their fate allied;  
 Men with such minds at once each other aid; }  
 "Frankness," they cry, "with frankness is repaid; }  
 If honest, why suspect? if poor, of what afraid? } 260  
 Wealth's timid votaries may with caution move;  
 Be it our wisdom to confide and love."  
 So pleasures came, (not purchased first or plann'd)  
 But the chance pleasures that the poor command;  
 They came but seldom, they remain'd not long,  
 Nor gave him time to question "are they wrong?"  
 These he enjoy'd, and left to after time  
 To judge the folly or decide the crime;  
 Sure had he been, he had perhaps been pure  
 From this reproach—but Richard was not sure— 270  
 Yet from the sordid vice, the mean, the base,  
 He stood aloof—death frown'd not like disgrace.  
 With handsome figure, and with manly air,  
 He pleased the sex, who all to him were fair;  
 With filial love he look'd on forms decay'd,  
 And admiration's debt to beauty paid;  
 On sea or land, wherever Richard went,  
 He felt affection, and he found content;  
 There was in him a strong presiding hope  
 In fortune's tempests, and it bore him up. 280  
 But when that mystic vine his mansion graced,  
 When numerous branches round his board were placed,  
 When sighs of apprehensive love were heard—  
 Then first the spirit of the hour fear'd:

Then first the spirit of the hero tear'd;  
Then he reflected on the father's part,  
And all an husband's sorrow touch'd his heart;  
Then thought he, "Who will their assistance lend?  
And be the children's guide, the parent's friend?  
Who shall their guardian, their protector be?  
I have a brother—Well!—and so has he."

290

And now they met; a message—kind, 'tis true,  
But verbal only—ask'd an interview;  
And many a mile, perplex'd by doubt and fear,  
Had Richard past, unwilling to appear—  
"How shall I now my unknown way explore,  
He proud and rich—I very proud and poor?  
Perhaps my friend a dubious speech mistook,  
And George may meet me with a stranger's look;  
Then to my home when I return again, }  
How shall I bear this business to explain, }  
And tell of hopes raised high, and feelings hurt, in vain? }

300

"How stands the case? My brother's friend and mine  
Met at an inn, and sat them down to dine:  
When, having settled all their own affairs,  
And kindly canvass'd such as were not theirs,  
Just as my friend was going to retire—  
'Stay!—you will see the brother of our squire,'  
Said his companion; 'be his friend, and tell  
The captain that his brother loves him well,  
And, when he has no better thing in view,  
Will be rejoiced to see him. Now, adieu!'

310

Well! here I am; and, brother, take you heed,  
I am not come to flatter you and feed;  
You shall no soother, fawner, hearer find,  
I will not brush your coat, nor smooth your mind;  
I will not hear your tales the whole day long,  
Nor swear you're right if I believe you wrong.  
Nor be a witness of the facts you state,  
Nor as my own adopt your love or hate:  
I will not earn my dinner when I dine,  
By taking all your sentiments for mine;  
Nor watch the guiding motions of your eye,  
Before I venture question or reply;  
Nor when you speak affect an awe profound,  
Sinking my voice, as if I fear'd the sound;  
Nor to your looks obediently attend,  
The poor, the humble, the dependant friend;  
Yet, son of that dear mother could I meet—  
But lo! the mansion—'tis a fine old seat!"

320

The Brothers met, with both too much at heart  
To be observant of each other's part.

330

"Brother, I'm glad," was all that George could say,  
Then stretch'd his hand, and turn'd his head away;  
For he in tender tears had no delight,  
But scorn'd the thought, and ridiculed the sight;  
Yet now with pleasure, though with some surprise,  
He felt his heart o'erflowing at his eyes.

Richard, mean time, made some attempts to speak,  
Strong in his purpose, in his trial weak;  
We cannot nature by our wishes rule,  
Nor at our will her warm emotions cool;—  
At length affection, like a risen tide,  
Stood still, and then seem'd slowly to subside;  
Each on the other's looks had power to dwell,  
And Brother Brother greeted passing well.

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK II.

### *THE BROTHERS.*

Further Account of the Meeting—Of the Men—The Mother—The Uncle—The private Tutor—The second Husband—Dinner Conversation— School of the Rector and Squire—The Master.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK II.

### *THE BROTHERS.*

At length the Brothers met, no longer tried  
By those strong feelings that in time subside;  
Not fluent yet their language, but the eye  
And action spoke both question and reply;  
Till the heart rested, and could calmly feel;  
Till the shook compass felt the settling steel;  
Till playful smiles on graver converse broke,  
And either speaker less abruptly spoke.  
Still was there oft-times silence, silence blest,  
Expressive, thoughtful—their emotions' rest: 10  
Pauses that came not from a want of thought,  
But want of ease, by wearied passion sought;  
For souls, when hurried by such powerful force,  
Rest, and retrace the pleasure of the course.  
They differ'd much; yet might observers trace  
Likeness of features both in mind and face;  
Pride they possess'd, that neither strove to hide,  
But not offensive, not obtrusive pride.  
Unlike had been their life, unlike the fruits  
Of different tempers, studies, and pursuits; 20  
Nay, in such varying scenes the men had moved,  
'Twas passing strange that aught alike they loved.  
But all distinction now was thrown apart,  
While these strong feelings ruled in either heart.  
As various colours in a painted ball,  
While it has rest, are seen distinctly all,  
Till, whirl'd around by some exterior force,  
They all are blended in the rapid course:  
So in repose, and not by passion sway'd,  
We saw the difference by their habits made; 30  
But, tried by strong emotions, they became  
Fill'd with one love, and were in heart the same;  
Joy to the face its own expression sent,  
And gave a likeness in the looks it lent.  
All now was sober certainty; the joy  
That no strong passions swell till they destroy:  
For they, like wine, our pleasures raise so high,  
That they subdue our strength, and then they die.  
George in his brother felt a glowing pride,  
He wonder'd who that fertile mind supplied— 40  
"Where could the wanderer gather on his road  
Knowledge so various? how the mind this food?  
No college train'd him, guideless through his life,  
Without a friend—not so! he has a wife.  
Ah! had I married, I might now have seen  
My—No! it never, never could have been,  
That long enchantment, that pernicious state!—  
True, I recover'd, but alas! too late—  
And here is Richard, poor indeed—but—nay!  
This is self-torment—foolish thoughts, away!" 50  
Ease leads to habit, as success to ease,  
He lives by rule who lives himself to please;  
For change is trouble, and a man of wealth  
Consults his quiet as he guards his health;  
And habit now on George had sovereign power,  
His actions all had their accustom'd hour:  
At the fix'd time he slept. he walk'd. he read.

Or sought his grounds, his gruel, and his bed;  
 For every season he with caution dress'd, 60  
 And morn and eve had the appropriate vest;  
 He talk'd of early mists, and night's cold air,  
 And in one spot was fix'd his worship's chair.  
 But not a custom yet on Richard's mind  
 Had force, or him to certain modes confined;  
 To him no joy such frequent visits paid  
 That habit by its beaten track was made;  
 He was not one who at his ease could say,  
 "We'll live to-morrow as we lived to-day;"  
 But he and his were as the ravens fed,  
 As the day came it brought the daily bread. 70  
 George, born to fortune, though of moderate kind,  
 Was not in haste his road through life to find.  
 His father early lost, his mother tried }  
 To live without him, liked it not, and—sigh'd, }  
 When, for her widow'd hand, an amorous youth applied. }  
 She still was young, and felt that she could share  
 A lover's passion, and an husband's care;  
 Yet past twelve years before her son was told,  
 To his surprise, "your father you behold."  
 But he beheld not with his mother's eye 80  
 The new relation, and would not comply,  
 But all obedience, all connexion spurn'd,  
 And fled their home, where he no more return'd.  
 His father's brother was a man whose mind  
 Was to his business and his bank confined;  
 His guardian care the captious nephew sought,  
 And was received, caress'd, advised, and taught.  
 "That Irish beggar, whom your mother took,  
 Does you this good, he sends you to your book;  
 Yet love not books beyond their proper worth, 90  
 But, when they fit you for the world, go forth:  
 They are like beauties, and may blessings prove,  
 When we with caution study them, or love;  
 But, when to either we our souls devote,  
 We grow unfitted for that world, and dote."  
 George to a school of higher class was sent,  
 But he was ever grieving that he went:  
 A still, retiring, musing, dreaming boy,  
 He relish'd not their sudden bursts of joy;  
 Nor the tumultuous pleasures of a rude, 100  
 A noisy, careless, fearless multitude.  
 He had his own delights, as one who flies  
 From every pleasure that a crowd supplies;  
 Thrice he return'd, but then was weary grown,  
 And was indulg'd with studies of his own.  
 Still could the rector and his friend relate  
 The small adventures of that distant date;  
 And Richard listen'd as they spake of time  
 Past in that world of misery and crime.  
 Freed from his school, a priest of gentle kind 110  
 The uncle found to guide the nephew's mind;  
 Pleased with his teacher, George so long remain'd,  
 The mind was weaken'd by the store it gain'd.  
 His guardian uncle, then on foreign ground,  
 No time to think of his improvements found;  
 Nor had the nephew, now to manhood grown,  
 Talents or taste for trade or commerce shown,  
 But shunn'd a world of which he little knew,  
 Nor of that little did he like the view.  
 His mother chose, nor I the choice upbraid, 120  
 An Irish soldier of an house decay'd,  
 And passing poor; but, precious in her eyes  
 As she in his, they both obtain'd a prize.  
 To do the captain justice, she might share  
 What of her jointure his affairs could spare;  
 Irish he was in his profusion—true,  
 But he was Irish in affection too;  
 And, though he spent her wealth and made her grieve,  
 He always said "my dear" and "with your leave."  
 Him she survived; she saw his boy possess'd 130  
 Of manly spirit, and then sank to rest.  
 Her sons thus left, some legal cause required

That they should meet, but neither this desired.  
George, a recluse, with mind engaged, was one  
Who did no business, with whom none was done;  
Whose heart, engross'd by its peculiar care,  
Shared no one's counsel—no one his might share.

Richard, a boy, a lively boy, was told  
Of his half-brother, haughty, stern, and cold;  
And his boy folly, or his manly pride, 140  
Made him on measures cool and harsh decide.

So, when they met, a distant cold salute  
Was of a long-expected day the fruit;  
The rest by proxies managed, each withdrew,  
Vex'd by the business and the brother too;  
But now they met when time had calm'd the mind;  
Both wish'd for kindness, and it made them kind.  
George had no wife or child, and was disposed  
To love the man on whom his hope reposed: 150  
Richard had both; and those so well beloved,  
Husband and father were to kindness moved;  
And thus th' affections check'd, subdued, restrain'd,  
Rose in their force, and in their fulness reign'd.

The bell now bids to dine; the friendly priest,  
Social and shrewd, the day's delight increased.  
Brief and abrupt their speeches while they dined,  
Nor were their themes of intellectual kind;  
Nor, dinner past, did they to these advance,  
But left the subjects they discuss'd to chance. 160

Richard, whose boyhood in the place was spent,  
Profound attention to the speakers lent,  
Who spake of men; and, as he heard a name,  
Actors and actions to his memory came.  
Then, too, the scenes he could distinctly trace,  
Here he had fought, and there had gain'd a race;  
In that church-walk he had affrighted been;  
In that old tower he had a something seen—  
What time, dismiss'd from school, he upward cast  
A fearful look, and trembled as he past. 170

No private tutor Richard's parents sought,  
Made keen by hardship, and by trouble taught;  
They might have sent him—some the counsel gave—  
Seven gloomy winters of the North to brave:  
Where a few pounds would pay for board and bed,  
While the poor frozen boy was taught and fed;  
When, say he lives, fair, freckled, lank and lean,  
The lad returns shrewd, subtle, close and keen;  
With all the northern virtues, and the rules  
Taught to the thrifty in these thriving schools. 180  
There had he gone, and borne this trying part—  
But Richard's mother had a mother's heart.

Now squire and rector were return'd to school,  
And spoke of him who there had sovereign rule:  
He was, it seem'd, a tyrant of the sort  
Who make the cries of tortured boys his sport;  
One of a race, if not extinguish'd, tamed—  
The flogger now is of the act ashamed;  
But this great mind all mercy's calls withstood;  
This Holofernes was a man of blood. 190

"Students," he said, "like horses on the road,  
Must well be lash'd before they take the load;  
They may be willing for a time to run,  
But you must whip them ere the work be done.  
To tell a boy, that, if he will improve,  
His friends will praise him, and his parents love,  
Is doing nothing—he has not a doubt  
But they will love him, nay, applaud, without;  
Let no fond sire a boy's ambition trust,  
To make him study, let him see he must." 200

Such his opinion; and, to prove it true,  
At least sincere, it was his practice too.  
Pluto they call'd him, and they named him well:  
'Twas not an heaven where he was pleased to dwell.  
From him a smile was like the Greenland sun,  
Surprising, nay portentous, when it shone;  
Or like the lightning, for the sudden flash  
Prepared the children for the thunder's crash.

O! had Narcissa, when she fondly kiss'd  
The weeping boy whom she to school dismiss'd,  
Had she beheld him shrinking from the arm  
Uplifted high to do the greater harm,  
Then seen her darling stript, and that pure white,  
And—O! her soul had fainted at the sight;  
And with those looks that love could not withstand,  
She would have cried, "Barbarian, hold thy hand!"  
In vain! no grief to this stern soul could speak,  
No iron-tear roll down this Pluto's cheek.

210

Thus far they went, half earnest, half in jest,  
Then turn'd to themes of deeper interest;  
While Richard's mind, that for awhile had stray'd,  
Call'd home its powers, and due attention paid.

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK III.

### *BOYS AT SCHOOL.*

The School—School-Boys—The Boy-Tyrant—Sir Hector Blane— School-Boys in after Life, how changed—how the same—The patronized Boy, his Life and Death—Reflections—Story of Harry Bland.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK III.

### *BOYS AT SCHOOL.*

We name the world a school, for day by day  
We something learn, till we are call'd away;  
The school we name a world,—for vice and pain,  
Fraud and contention, there begin to reign;  
And much, in fact, this lesser world can show  
Of grief and crime that in the greater grow.  
"You saw," said George, "in that still-hated school  
How the meek suffer, how the haughty rule;  
There soft, ingenuous, gentle minds endure  
Ills that ease, time, and friendship fail to cure; 10  
There the best hearts, and those, who shrink from sin,  
Find some seducing imp to draw them in,  
Who takes infernal pleasure to impart  
The strongest poison to the purest heart.  
Call to your mind this scene—Yon boy behold:  
How hot the vengeance of a heart so cold!  
See how he beats, whom he had just reviled  
And made rebellious—that imploring child;  
How fierce his eye, how merciless his blows, 20  
And how his anger on his insult grows;  
You saw this Hector and his patient slave,  
Th' insulting speech, the cruel blows he gave.  
Mix'd with mankind, his interest in his sight,  
We found this Nimrod civil and polite;  
There was no triumph in his manner seen,  
He was so humble you might think him mean.  
Those angry passions slept till he attain'd  
His purposed wealth, and waked when that was gain'd;  
He then resumed the native wrath and pride, 30  
The more indulged, as longer laid aside;  
Wife, children, servants, all obedience pay,  
The slaves at school no greater slaves than they;  
No more dependant, he resumes the rein,  
And shows the school-boy turbulence again.  
"Were I a poet, I would say, he brings  
To recollection some impetuous springs;  
See one that issues from its humble source,  
To gain new powers, and run its noisy course:  
Frothy and fierce among the rocks it goes, 40  
And threatens all that bound it or oppose;  
Till wider grown, and finding large increase,  
Though bounded still, it moves along in peace;  
And, as its waters to the ocean glide,  
They bear a busy people on its tide;  
But there arrived, and from its channel free,  
Those swelling waters meet the mighty sea;  
With threat'ning force the new-form'd billows swell,  
And now affright the crowd they bore so well."  
"Yet," said the rector, "all these early signs 50  
Of vice are lost, and vice itself declines;  
Religion counsels; troubles, sorrows rise,  
And the vile spirit in the conflict dies.  
"Sir Hector Blane, the champion of the school,  
Was very blockhead, but was form'd for rule;  
Learn he could not; he said he could not learn,  
But he profess'd it gave him no concern.  
Books were his horror. dinner his delight.

And his amusement to shake hands and fight;  
 Argue he could not, but in case of doubt,  
 Or disputation, fairly box'd it out. 60  
 This was his logic, and his arm so strong,  
 His cause prevail'd, and he was never wrong;  
 But so obtuse—you must have seen his look,  
 Desponding, angry, puzzled o'er his book.  
 "Can you not see him on the morn that proved  
 His skill in figures? Pluto's self was moved—  
 'Come, six times five?' th' impatient teacher cried;  
 In vain, the pupil shut his eyes, and sigh'd.  
 'Try, six times count your fingers; how he stands!—  
 Your fingers, idiot!'—'What, of both my hands?' 70  
 "With parts like these his father felt assured,  
 In busy times, a ship might be procured;  
 He too was pleased to be so early freed:  
 He now could fight, and he in time might read.  
 So he has fought, and in his country's cause  
 Has gain'd him glory, and our hearts' applause.  
 No more the blustering boy a school defies;}  
 We see the hero from the tyrant rise, }  
 And in the captain's worth the student's dulness dies." }  
 "Be all allow'd;" replied the squire, "I give 80  
 Praise to his actions; may their glory live!  
 Nay, I will hear him in his riper age  
 Fight his good ship, and with the foe engage;  
 Nor will I quit him when the cowards fly,  
 Although, like them, I dread his energy.  
 "But still, my friend, that ancient spirit reigns;  
 His powers support the credit of his brains,  
 Insisting ever that he must be right,  
 And for his reasons still prepared to fight. 90  
 Let him a judge of England's prowess be,  
 And all her floating terrors on the sea;  
 But this contents not, this is not denied;  
 He claims a right on all things to decide,  
 A kind of patent-wisdom; and he cries,  
 "'Tis so!' and bold the hero that denies.  
 Thus the boy-spirit still the bosom rules,  
 And the world's maxims were at first the school's."  
 "No doubt," said Jacques, "there are in minds the seeds  
 Of good and ill, the virtues and the weeds; 100  
 But is it not of study the intent  
 This growth of evil nature to prevent?  
 To check the progress of each idle shoot  
 That might retard the ripening of the fruit?  
 Our purpose certain, and we much effect,  
 We something cure, and something we correct;  
 But do your utmost: when the man you see,  
 You find him what you saw the boy would be,  
 Disguised a little; but we still behold  
 What pleased and what offended us of old. 110  
 Years from the mind no native stain remove,  
 But lay the varnish of the world above.  
 Still, when he can, he loves to step aside  
 And be the boy, without a check or guide;  
 In the old wanderings he with pleasure strays,  
 And reassumes the bliss of earlier days.  
 "I left at school the boy with pensive look,  
 Whom some great patron order'd to his book;  
 Who from his mother's cot reluctant came,  
 And gave my lord, for this compassion, fame;  
 Who, told of all his patron's merit, sigh'd, 120  
 I know not why, in sorrow or in pride;  
 And would, with vex'd and troubled spirit, cry,  
 'I am not happy; let your envy die.'  
 Him left I with you; who, perhaps, can tell  
 If fortune bless'd him, or what fate befell.  
 I yet remember how the idlers ran  
 To see the carriage of the godlike man,  
 When pride restrain'd me; yet I thought the deed  
 Was noble, too—and how did it succeed?"  
 Jacques answer'd not till he had backward cast 130  
 His view, and dwelt upon the evil past;  
 Then, as he sigh'd, he smil'd;—from folly rise



Such smiles, and misery will create such sighs.  
And Richard now from his abstraction broke,  
Listening attentive as the rector spoke.

“This noble lord was one disposed to try  
And weigh the worth of each new luxury;  
Now, at a certain time, in pleasant mood,  
He tried the luxury of doing good. 140  
For this he chose a widow’s handsome boy,  
Whom he would first improve, and then employ.  
The boy was gentle, modest, civil, kind,  
But not for bustling through the world design’d;  
Reserved in manner, with a little gloom,  
Apt to retire, but never to assume;  
Possess’d of pride that he could not subdue,  
Although he kept his origin in view.  
Him sent my lord to school, and this became  
A theme for praise, and gave his lordship fame;  
But when the boy was told how great his debt, 150  
He proudly ask’d, ‘is it contracted yet?’  
“With care he studied, and with some success;  
His patience great, but his acquirements less:  
Yet when he heard that Charles would not excel,  
His lordship answer’d, with a smile, ‘tis well;  
Let him proceed, and do the best he can,  
I want no pedant, but a useful man.’  
“The speech was heard, and praise was amply dealt,  
His lordship felt it, and he said he felt—  
‘It is delightful,’ he observed, ‘to raise 160  
And foster merit—it is more than praise.’  
“Five years at school th’ industrious boy had past,  
‘And what,’ was whisper’d, ‘will be done at last?’  
“My lord was troubled, for he did not mean  
To have his bounty watch’d and overseen;  
Bounty that sleeps when men applaud no more  
The generous act that waked their praise before;  
The deed was pleasant while the praise was new,  
But none the progress would with wonder view.  
It was a debt contracted; he who pays 170  
A debt is just, but must not look for praise:  
The deed that once had fame must still proceed,  
Though fame no more proclaims ‘how great the deed!’  
The boy is taken from his mother’s side,  
And he who took him must be now his guide.  
But this, alas! instead of bringing fame,  
A tax, a trouble, to my lord became.  
“‘The boy is dull, you say,—why then by trade,  
By law, by physic, nothing can be made;  
If a small living—mine are both too large, 180  
And then the college is a cursed charge.  
The sea is open; should he there display  
Signs of dislike, he cannot run away.’  
“Now Charles, who acted no heroic part,  
And felt no seaman’s glory warm his heart,  
Refused the offer—anger touch’d my lord.—  
‘He does not like it—Good, upon my word—  
If I at college place him, he will need  
Supplies for ever, and will not succeed;—  
Doubtless in me ’tis duty to provide 190  
Not for his comfort only, but his pride—  
Let him to sea!’—He heard the words again,  
With promise join’d—with threat’ning; all in vain:  
Charles had his own pursuits; for aid to these  
He had been thankful, and had tried to please;  
But urged again, as meekly as a saint,  
He humbly begg’d to stay at home, and paint.  
‘Yes, pay some dauber, that this stubborn fool  
May grind his colours, and may boast his school.’  
“As both persisted, ‘Choose, good sir, your way,’ 200  
The peer exclaim’d, ‘I have no more to say,  
I seek your good, but I have no command  
Upon your will, nor your desire withstand.’  
“Resolved and firm, yet dreading to offend,  
Charles pleaded *genius* with his noble friend:

'Genius!' he cried, 'the name that triflers give  
 To their strong wishes without pains to live;  
 Genius! the plea of all who feel desire  
 Of fame, yet grudge the labours that acquire—  
 But say 'tis true: how poor, how late the gain, 210  
 And certain ruin if the hope be vain!'

Then to the world appeal'd my lord, and cried,  
 'Whatever happens, I am justified.'  
 Nay, it was trouble to his soul to find  
 There was such hardness in the human mind:  
 He wash'd his hands before the world, and swore  
 That he 'such minds would patronize no more.'  
 "Now Charles his bread by daily labours sought,  
 And this his solace, 'so Corregio wrought.'  
 Alas, poor youth! however great his name, 220  
 And humble thine, thy fortune was the same.  
 Charles drew and painted, and some praise obtain'd  
 For care and pains; but little more was gain'd:  
 Fame was his hope, and he contempt display'd  
 For approbation, when 'twas coolly paid;  
 His daily tasks he call'd a waste of mind,  
 Vex'd at his fate, and angry with mankind:  
 'Thus have the blind to merit ever done,  
 And Genius mourn'd for each neglected son.'  
 "Charles murmur'd thus, and, angry and alone, 230  
 Half breathed the curse, and half suppress'd the groan;  
 Then still more sullen grew, and still more proud; }  
 Fame so refused he to himself allow'd; }  
 Crowds in contempt he held, and all to him was crowd. }

"If aught on earth, the youth his mother loved,  
 And, at her death, to distant scenes removed.  
 "Years past away, and where he lived, and how,  
 Was then unknown—indeed we know not now;  
 But once at twilight walking up and down, 240  
 In a poor alley of the mighty town,  
 Where, in her narrow courts and garrets, hide  
 The grieving sons of genius, want, and pride,  
 I met him musing; sadness I could trace,  
 And conquer'd hope's meek anguish, in his face.  
 See him I must; but I with ease address'd,  
 And neither pity nor surprise express'd;  
 I strove both grief and pleasure to restrain,  
 But yet I saw that I was giving pain.  
 He said, with quick'ning pace, as loth to hold  
 A longer converse, that 'the day was cold, 250  
 That he was well, that I had scarcely light  
 To aid my steps,' and bade me then good night!  
 "I saw him next where he had lately come,  
 A silent pauper in a crowded room;  
 I heard his name, but he conceal'd his face,  
 To his sad mind his misery was disgrace;  
 In vain I strove to combat his disdain  
 Of my compassion—'Sir, I pray, refrain,'  
 For I had left my friends and stepp'd aside,  
 Because I fear'd his unrelenting pride. 260

"He then was sitting on a workhouse-bed,  
 And on the naked boards reclined his head,  
 Around were children with incessant cry,  
 And near was one, like him, about to die;  
 A broken chair's deal bottom held the store  
 That he required—he soon would need no more;  
 A yellow tea-pot, standing at his side,  
 From its half-spout the cold, black tea supplied.  
 "Hither, it seem'd, the fainting man was brought,  
 Found without food—it was no longer sought; 270  
 For his employers knew not whom they paid,  
 Nor where to seek him whom they wish'd to aid.  
 Here brought, some kind attendant he address'd,  
 And sought some trifles which he yet possess'd;  
 Then named a lightless closet, in a room  
 Hired at small rate, a garret's deepest gloom.  
 They sought the region, and they brought him all  
 That he his own, his proper wealth could call:  
 A better coat, less pieced; some linen neat,  
 Not whole; and papers, many a valued sheet— 280

Designs and drawings; these, at his desire,  
Were placed before him at the chamber fire,  
And while th' admiring people stood to gaze,  
He, one by one, committed to the blaze,  
Smiling in spleen; but one he held awhile,  
And gave it to the flames, and could not smile.

"The sickening man—for such appear'd the fact—  
Just in his need, would not a debt contract;

But left his poor apartment for the bed  
That earth might yield him, or some way-side shed; 290

Here he was found, and to this place convey'd,  
Where he might rest, and his last debt be paid:  
Fame was his wish, but he so far from fame, }  
That no one knew his kindred, or his name, }  
Or by what means he lived, or from what place he came. }

"Poor Charles! unnoticed by thy titled friend,  
Thy days had calmly past, in peace thine end;  
Led by thy patron's vanity astray,  
Thy own misled thee in thy trackless way,  
Urging thee on by hope absurd and vain, 300  
Where never peace or comfort smiled again!

"Once more I saw him, when his spirits fail'd,  
And my desire to aid him then prevail'd;  
He show'd a softer feeling in his eye,  
And watch'd my looks, and own'd the sympathy.  
'Twas now the calm of wearied pride; so long  
As he had strength was his resentment strong;  
But in such place, with strangers all around,  
And they such strangers, to have something found  
Allied to his own heart, an early friend— } 310

One, only one, who would on him attend, }  
To give and take a look at this his journey's end! }  
One link, however slender, of the chain  
That held him where he could not long remain;  
The one sole interest!—No, he could not now  
Retain his anger; Nature knew not how;  
And so there came a softness to his mind,  
And he forgave the usage of mankind.

His cold long fingers now were press'd to mine,  
And his faint smile of kinder thoughts gave sign; 320  
His lips moved often as he tried to lend  
His words their sound, and softly whisper'd 'friend!'  
Not without comfort in the thought express'd  
By that calm look with which he sank to rest."

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"The man," said George, "you see, through life retain'd  
The boy's defects; his virtues too remain'd.

"But where are now those minds so light and gay, }  
So forced on study, so intent on play, }  
Swept, by the world's rude blasts, from hope's dear views away } 330

Some grieved for long neglect in earlier times,  
Some sad from frailties, some lamenting crimes;  
Thinking, with sorrow, on the season lent  
For noble purpose, and in trifling spent;

And now, at last, when they in earnest view  
The nothings done—what work they find to do!  
Where is that virtue that the generous boy  
Felt, and resolved that nothing should destroy?  
He who with noble indignation glow'd  
When vice had triumph? who his tear bestow'd  
On injured merit? he who would possess 340  
Power, but to aid the children of distress;

Who has such joy in generous actions shown,  
And so sincere, they might be call'd his own;  
Knight, hero, patriot, martyr! on whose tongue,  
And potent arm, a nation's welfare hung;  
He who to public misery brought relief,  
And soothed the anguish of domestic grief?  
Where now this virtue's fervour, spirit, zeal?  
Who felt so warmly, has he ceased to feel?  
The boy's emotions of that noble kind, 350  
Ah! sure th' experienced man has not resign'd;  
Or are these feelings varied? has the knight,  
Virtue's own champion, now refused to fight?

Is the deliverer turn'd th' oppressor now?  
Has the reformer dropt the dangerous vow?  
Or has the patriot's bosom lost its heat,  
And forced him, shivering, to a snug retreat?  
Is such the grievous lapse of human pride?  
Is such the victory of the worth untried?

"Here will I pause, and then review the shame  
Of Harry Bland, to hear his parent's name.  
That mild, that modest boy, whom well we knew,  
In him long time the secret sorrow grew;  
He wept alone; then to his friend confess'd  
The grievous fears that his pure mind oppress'd;  
And thus, when terror o'er his shame obtain'd  
A painful conquest, he his case explain'd;  
And first his favourite question'd—'Willie, tell,  
Do all the wicked people go to hell?'

360

"Willie with caution answer'd, 'Yes, they do,  
Or else repent; but what is this to you?'  
'O! yes, dear friend:' he then his tale began—  
'He fear'd his father was a wicked man,  
Nor had repented of his naughty life;  
The wife he had indeed was not a wife,  
Not as my mother was; the servants all  
Call her a name—I'll whisper what they call.  
She saw me weep, and ask'd, in high disdain,  
If tears could bring my mother back again?  
This I could bear, but not when she pretends  
Such fond regard, and what I speak commends;  
Talks of my learning, fawning wretch! and tries  
To make me love her,—love! when I despise.  
Indeed I had it in my heart to say  
Words of reproach, before I came away;  
And then my father's look is not the same,  
He puts his anger on to hide his shame.'

370

"With all these feelings delicate and nice,  
This dread of infamy, this scorn of vice,  
He left the school, accepting, though with pride,  
His father's aid—but there would not reside;  
He married then a lovely maid, approved  
Of every heart as worthy to be loved;  
Mild as the morn in summer, firm as truth,  
And graced with wisdom in the bloom of youth.

380

"How is it, men, when they in judgment sit  
On the same fault, now censure, now acquit?  
Is it not thus, that *here* we view the sin,  
And *there* the powerful cause that drew us in?  
'Tis not that men are to the evil blind,  
But that a different object fills the mind.  
In judging others we can see too well  
Their grievous fall, but not how grieved they fell;  
Judging ourselves, we to our minds recall,  
Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall.  
Or could this man, so vex'd in early time,  
By this strong feeling for his father's crime;  
Who to the parent's sin was barely just,  
And mix'd with filial fear the man's disgust—  
Could he, without some strong delusion, quit  
The path of duty, and to shame submit?  
Cast off the virtue he so highly prized,  
'And be the very creature he despised?'

390

400

"A tenant's wife, half forward, half afraid,  
Features, it seem'd, of powerful cast displayed,  
That bore down faith and duty; common fame  
Speaks of a contract that augments the shame.

410

"There goes he, not unseen, so strong the will,  
And blind the wish, that bear him to the mill;  
There he degraded sits, and strives to please  
The miller's children, laughing at his knees;  
And little Dorcas, now familiar grown,  
Talks of her rich papa, and of her own.  
He woos the mother's now precarious smile  
By costly gifts, that tempers reconcile;  
While the rough husband, yielding to the pay  
That buys his absence, growling stalks away.  
'Tis said th' offending man will sometimes sigh,

420

And say, 'My God, in what a dream am I!  
I will awake;' but, as the day proceeds,  
The weaken'd mind the day's indulgence needs;  
Hating himself at every step he takes,  
His mind approves the virtue he forsakes,  
And yet forsakes her. O! how sharp the pain,  
Our vice, ourselves, our habits to disdain;  
To go where never yet in peace we went;                    }  
To feel our hearts can bleed, yet not relent;               }  
To sigh, yet not recede; to grieve, yet not repent!"    }

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK IV.

### *ADVENTURES OF RICHARD.*

Meeting of the Brothers in the Morning—Pictures, Music, Books— The Autumnal Walk—The Farm—The Flock—Effect of Retirement upon the Mind—Dinner—Richard's Adventure at Sea—George inquires into the Education of his Brother—Richard's Account of his Occupations in his early Life: his Pursuits, Associations, Partialities, Affections and Feelings—His Love of Freedom—The Society he chose—The Friendships he engaged in—and the Habits he contracted.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK IV.

### *ADVENTURES OF RICHARD.*

Eight days had past; the Brothers now could meet  
With ease, and take the customary seat.

"These" said the host—for he perceived where stray'd  
His brother's eye, and what he now survey'd—

"These are the costly trifles that we buy,  
Urged by the strong demands of vanity,  
The thirst and hunger of a mind diseased,  
That must with purchased flattery be appeased;  
But yet, 'tis true, the things that you behold  
Serve to amuse us as we're getting old.

10

These pictures, as I heard our artists say,  
Are genuine all, and I believe they may;  
They cost the genuine sums, and I should grieve  
If, being willing, I could not believe.

And there is music; when the ladies come,  
With their keen looks they scrutinize the room  
To see what pleases, and I must expect  
To yield them pleasure, or to find neglect:

For, as attractions from our person fly,  
Our purses, Richard, must the want supply;  
Yet would it vex me, could the triflers know  
That they can shut out comfort or bestow.

20

"But see this room: here, Richard, you will find  
Books for all palates, food for every mind;  
This readers term the ever-new delight,  
And so it is, if minds have appetite:

Mine once was craving; great my joy, indeed,  
Had I possess'd such food when I could feed;  
When at the call of every new-born wish  
I could have keenly relish'd every dish—

30

Now, Richard, now, I stalk around and look  
Upon the dress and title of a book,  
Try half a page, and then can taste no more,  
But the dull volume to its place restore;  
Begin a second slowly to peruse,

Then cast it by, and look about for news;  
The news itself grows dull in long debates—

I skip, and see what the conclusion states;  
And many a speech, with zeal and study made  
Cold and resisting spirits to persuade,  
Is lost on mine; alone, we cease to feel

40

What crowds admire, and wonder at their zeal.

"But how the day? No fairer will it be? }

Walk you? Alas! 'tis requisite for me— }

Nay, let me not prescribe—my friends and guests are free." }

It was a fair and mild autumnal sky,  
And earth's ripe treasures met th' admiring eye,  
As a rich beauty, when her bloom is lost,  
Appears with more magnificence and cost.  
The wet and heavy grass, where feet had stray'd,

50

Not yet erect, the wanderer's way betray'd;  
 Showers of the night had swell'd the deep'ning rill;  
 The morning breeze had urged the quick'ning mill;  
 Assembled rooks had wing'd their sea-ward flight, }  
 By the same passage to return at night; }  
 While proudly o'er them hung the steady kite, }  
 Then turn'd him back, and left the noisy throng,  
 Nor deign'd to know them as he sail'd along.  
 Long yellow leaves from oziers, strew'd around,  
 Choked the small stream, and hush'd the feeble sound; 60  
 While the dead foliage dropt from loftier trees  
 Our squire beheld not with his wonted ease,  
 But to his own reflections made reply,  
 And said aloud, "Yes! doubtless we must die."  
 "We must;" said Richard, "and we would not live  
 To feel what dotage and decay will give;  
 But we yet taste whatever we behold:  
 The morn is lovely, though the air is cold;  
 There is delicious quiet in this scene,  
 At once so rich, so varied, so serene; 70  
 Sounds too delight us—each discordant tone  
 Thus mingled please, that fail to please alone:  
 This hollow wind, this rustling of the brook, }  
 The farm-yard noise, the woodman at yon oak— }  
 See, the axe falls!—now listen to the stroke! }  
 That gun itself, that murders all this peace,  
 Adds to the charm, because it soon must cease."  
 "No doubt," said George, "the country has its charms!  
 My farm behold! the model for all farms!  
 Look at that land—you find not there a weed, 80  
 We grub the roots, and suffer none to seed.  
 To land like this no botanist will come,  
 To seek the precious ware he hides at home;  
 Pressing the leaves and flowers with effort nice,  
 As if they came from herbs in Paradise;  
 Let them their favourites with my neighbours see,  
 They have no—what?—no *habitat* with me.  
 "Now see my flock, and hear its glory;—none  
 Have that vast body and that slender bone;  
 They are the village boast, the dealer's theme, 90  
 Fleece of such staple! flesh in such esteem!"  
 "Brother," said Richard, "do I hear aright?  
 Does the land truly give so much delight?"  
 "So says my bailiff; sometimes I have tried  
 To catch the joy, but nature has denied;  
 It will not be—the mind has had a store  
 Laid up for life, and will admit no more.  
 Worn out in trials, and about to die,  
 In vain to these we for amusement fly;  
 We farm, we garden, we our poor employ, 100  
 And much command, though little we enjoy;  
 Or, if ambitious, we employ our pen,  
 We plant a desert, or we drain a fen;  
 And—here, behold my medal!—this will show  
 What men may merit when they nothing know."  
 "Yet reason here," said Richard, "joins with pride:—"  
 "I did not ask th' alliance," George replied—  
 "I grant it true, such trifle may induce  
 A dull, proud man to wake and be of use;  
 And there are purer pleasures, that a mind 110  
 Calm and uninjured may in villas find;  
 But, where th' affections have been deeply tried,  
 With other food that mind must be supplied:  
 'Tis not in trees or medals to impart  
 The powerful medicine for an aching heart;  
 The agitation dies, but there is still  
 The backward spirit, the resisting will.  
 Man takes his body to a country seat,  
 But minds, dear Richard, have their own retreat;  
 Oft when the feet are pacing o'er the green 120  
 The mind is gone where never grass was seen,  
 And never thinks of hill, or vale, or plain, }  
 Till want of rest creates a sense of pain, }  
 That calls that wandering mind, and brings it home again. }  
 No more of farms; but here I boast of minds

That make a friend the richer when he finds:  
These shalt thou see;—but, Richard, be it known,  
Who thinks to see must in his turn be shown.—  
But now farewell! to thee will I resign  
Woods, walks, and valleys! take them till we dine.”

130

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The Brothers dined, and with that plenteous fare  
That seldom fails to dissipate our care,  
At least the lighter kind; and oft prevails  
When reason, duty, nay, when kindness fails.  
Yet food and wine, and all that mortals bless,  
Lead them to think of peril and distress—  
Cold, hunger, danger, solitude, and pain,  
That men in life’s adventurous ways sustain.

“Thou hast sail’d far, dear brother,” said the ’squire—  
“Permit me of these unknown lands t’ inquire,  
Lands never till’d, where thou hast wondering been,  
And all the marvels thou hast heard and seen.

140

Do tell me something of the miseries felt  
In climes where travellers freeze, and where they melt;  
And be not nice—we know ’tis not in men  
Who travel far to hold a steady pen.  
Some will, ’tis true, a bolder freedom take,  
And keep our wonder always wide awake;  
We know of those whose dangers far exceed  
Our frail belief, that trembles as we read:  
Such as in deserts burn, and thirst, and die,  
Save a last gasp that they recover by;  
Then, too, their hazard from a tyrant’s arms,  
A tiger’s fury, or a lady’s charms;  
Beside th’ accumulated evils borne  
From the bold outset to the safe return.

150

These men abuse; but thou hast fair pretence  
To modest dealing, and to mild good sense;  
Then let me hear thy struggles and escapes  
In the far lands of crocodiles and apes:

160

Say, hast thou, Bruce-like, knelt upon the bed  
Where the young Nile uplifts his branchy head?  
Or been partaker of th’ unhallow’d feast,  
Where beast-like man devours his fellow beast,  
And churn’d the bleeding life? while each great dame  
And sovereign beauty bade adieu to shame?  
Or did the storm, that thy wreck’d pinnace bore,  
Impel thee gasping on some unknown shore;  
Where, when thy beard and nails were savage grown,  
Some swarthy princess took thee for her own,  
Some danger-dreading Yarico, who, kind,  
Sent thee away, and, prudent, staid behind?

170

“Come—I am ready wonders to receive,  
Prone to assent, and willing to believe.”

Richard replied: “It must be known to you,  
That tales improbable may yet be true;  
And yet it is a foolish thing to tell  
A tale that shall be judged improbable;  
While some impossibilities appear  
So like the truth, that we assenting hear:  
Yet, with your leave, I venture to relate  
A chance-affair, and fact alone will state;  
Though, I confess, it may suspicion breed,  
And you may cry, ‘improbable, indeed!’

180

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“When first I tried the sea, I took a trip,  
But duty none, in a relation’s ship;  
Thus, unengaged, I felt my spirits light,  
Kept care at distance, and put fear to flight;  
Oft this same spirit in my friends prevail’d,  
Buoyant in dangers, rising when assail’d;  
When, as the gale at evening died away—  
And die it will with the retiring day—  
Impatient then, and sick of very ease,  
We loudly whistled for the slumbering breeze.

190

“One eve it came; and, frantic in my joy,  
I rose and danced, as idle as a boy:



The cabin-lights were down, that we might learn  
 A trifling something from the ship astern;  
 The stiffening gale bore up the growing wave,  
 And wilder motion to my madness gave. 200  
 Oft have I since, when thoughtful and at rest,  
 Believed some maddening power my mind possess'd;  
 For, in an instant, as the stern sank low,  
 (How moved I knew not—What can madness know?)  
 Chance that direction to my motion gave,  
 And plunged me headlong in the roaring wave;  
 Swift flew the parting ship,—the fainter light  
 Withdrew,—or horror took them from my sight.  
 "All was confused above, beneath, around;  
 All sounds of terror; no distinguish'd sound 210  
 Could reach me, now on sweeping surges tost,  
 And then between the rising billows lost;  
 An undefined sensation stopp'd my breath;  
 Disorder'd views and threat'ning signs of death  
 Met in one moment, and a terror gave—  
 I cannot paint it—to the moving grave.  
 My thoughts were all distressing, hurried, mix'd,  
 On all things fixing, not a moment fix'd,  
 Vague thoughts of instant danger brought their pain,  
 New hopes of safety banish'd them again; 220  
 Then the swoln billow all these hopes destroy'd,  
 And left me sinking in the mighty void.  
 Weaker I grew, and grew the more dismay'd,  
 Of aid all hopeless, yet in search of aid;  
 Struggling awhile upon the wave to keep,  
 Then, languid, sinking in the yawning deep.  
 So tost, so lost, so sinking in despair,  
 I pray'd in heart an indirected prayer,  
 And then once more I gave my eyes to view  
 The ship now lost, and bade the light adieu! 230  
 From my chill'd frame th' enfeebled spirit fled, }  
 Rose the tall billows round my deep'ning bed, }  
 Cold seized my heart, thought ceased, and I was dead. }  
 "Brother, I have not—man has not, the power  
 To paint the horrors of that life-long hour—  
 Hour!—but of time I knew not—when I found  
 Hope, youth, life, love, and all they promised, drown'd;  
 When all so indistinct, so undefined,  
 So dark and dreadful, overcame the mind;  
 When such confusion on the spirit dwelt, 240  
 That, feeling much, it knew not what it felt.  
 "Can I, my brother—ought I to forget  
 That night of terror? No! it threatens yet.  
 Shall I days, months—nay, years indeed neglect,  
 Who then could feel what moments must effect,  
 Were aught effected? who, in that wild storm,  
 Found there was nothing I could well perform;  
 For what to us are moments, what are hours,  
 If lost our judgment, and confused our powers?  
 "Oft in the times when passion strives to reign, 250  
 When duty feebly holds the slacken'd chain,  
 When reason slumbers, then remembrance draws }  
 This view of death, and folly makes a pause— }  
 The view o'ercomes the vice, the fear the frenzy awes. }  
 "I know there wants not this to make it true,  
 'What danger bids be done, in safety do';  
 Yet such escapes may make our purpose sure;  
 Who slights such warning may be too secure."  
 "But the escape!"—"Whate'er they judged might save  
 Their sinking friend they cast upon the wave; 260  
 Something of these my heaven-directed arm  
 Unconscious seized, and held as by a charm;  
 The crew astern beheld me as I swam,  
 And I am saved—O! let me say I am."

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"Brother," said George, "I have neglected long  
 To think of all thy perils—it was wrong;  
 But do forgive me; for I could not be  
 Than of myself more negligent of thee.  
 Now tell me, Richard, from the boyish years

Of thy young mind, that now so rich appears, 270  
 How was it stored? 'twas told me, thou wert wild,  
 A truant urchin, a neglected child.  
 I heard of this escape, and sat supine  
 Amid the danger that exceeded thine;  
 Thou couldst but die—the waves could but unfold  
 Thy warm, gay heart, and make that bosom cold—  
 While I—but no! Proceed, and give me truth;  
 How past the years of thy unguided youth?  
 Thy father left thee to the care of one  
 Who could not teach, could ill support a son; 280  
 Yet time and trouble feeble minds have stay'd,  
 And fit for long-neglected duties made.  
 I see thee struggling in the world, as late  
 Within the waves, and, with an equal fate,  
 By Heaven preserved—but tell me, whence and how  
 Thy gleanings came?—a dexterous gleaner thou!"  
 "Left by that father, who was known to few,  
 And to that mother, who has not her due  
 Of honest fame," said Richard, "our retreat 290  
 Was a small cottage, for our station meet,  
 On Barford Downs; that mother, fond and poor,  
 There taught some truths, and bade me seek for more,  
 Such as our village-school and books a few  
 Supplied; but such I cared not to pursue.  
 I sought the town, and to the ocean gave  
 My mind and thoughts, as restless as the wave;  
 Where crowds assembled, I was sure to run,  
 Hear[d] what was said, and mused on what was done;  
 Attentive listening in the moving scene,  
 And often wondering what the men could mean. 300  
 "When ships at sea made signals of their need,  
 I watch'd on shore the sailors, and their speed;  
 Mix'd in their act, nor rested till I knew  
 Why they were call'd, and what they were to do.  
 "Whatever business in the port was done,  
 I, without call, was with the busy one;  
 Not daring question, but with open ear  
 And greedy spirit, ever bent to hear.  
 "To me the wives of seamen loved to tell 310  
 What storms endanger'd men esteem'd so well;  
 What wond'rous things in foreign parts they saw,  
 Lands without bounds, and people without law.  
 "No ships were wreck'd upon that fatal beach,  
 But I could give the luckless tale of each;  
 Eager I look'd, till I beheld a face  
 Of one disposed to paint their dismal case;  
 Who gave the sad survivors' doleful tale,  
 From the first brushing of the mighty gale  
 Until they struck; and, suffering in their fate,  
 I long'd the more they should its horrors state; 320  
 While some, the fond of pity, would enjoy  
 The earnest sorrows of the feeling boy.  
 "I sought the men return'd from regions cold,  
 The frozen straits, where icy mountains roll'd;  
 Some I could win to tell me serious tales  
 Of boats uplifted by enormous whales,  
 Or, when harpoon'd, how swiftly through the sea  
 The wounded monsters with the cordage flee.  
 Yet some uneasy thoughts assail'd me then:  
 The monsters warr'd not with, nor wounded, men. 330  
 The smaller fry we take, with scales and fins,  
 Who gasp and die—this adds not to our sins;  
 But so much blood, warm life, and frames so large  
 To strike, to murder—seem'd an heavy charge.  
 "They told of days, where many goes to one—  
 Such days as ours; and how a larger sun,  
 Red, but not flaming, roll'd, with motion slow,  
 On the world's edge, and never dropt below.  
 "There were fond girls, who took me to their side 340  
 To tell the story how their lovers died;  
 They praised my tender heart, and bade me prove  
 Both kind and constant when I came to love.  
 In fact, I lived for many an idle year  
 In fond pursuit of agitations dear;

For ever seeking, ever pleased to find,  
 The food I loved, I thought not of its kind;  
 It gave affliction while it brought delight,  
 And joy and anguish could at once excite.  
 "One gusty day, now stormy and now still,  
 I stood apart upon the western hill, 350  
 And saw a race at sea: a gun was heard,  
 And two contending boats in sail appear'd,  
 Equal awhile; then one was left behind,  
 And for a moment had her chance resign'd,  
 When, in that moment, up a sail they drew—  
 Not used before—their rivals to pursue.  
 Strong was the gale! in hurry now there came  
 Men from the town, their thoughts, their fears the same;  
 And women too! affrighted maids and wives,  
 All deeply feeling for their sailors' lives. 360  
 "The strife continued; in a glass we saw  
 The desperate efforts, and we stood in awe:  
 When the last boat shot suddenly before,  
 Then fill'd, and sank—and could be seen no more!  
 "Then were those piercing shrieks, that frantic flight,  
 All hurried! all in tumult and affright!  
 A gathering crowd from different streets drew near;  
 All ask, all answer—none attend, none hear!  
 "One boat is safe; and see! she backs her sail  
 To save the sinking—Will her care avail? 370  
 "O! how impatient on the sands we tread,  
 And the winds roaring, and the women led,  
 As up and down they pace with frantic air,  
 And scorn a comforter, and will despair;  
 They know not who in either boat is gone,  
 But think the father, husband, lover, one.  
 "And who is she apart? She dares not come  
 To join the crowd, yet cannot rest at home:  
 With what strong interest looks she at the waves,  
 Meeting and clashing o'er the seamen's graves: 380  
 'Tis a poor girl betroth'd—a few hours more,  
 And *he* will lie a corpse upon the shore.  
 "Strange, that a boy could love these scenes, and cry  
 In very pity—but that boy was I.  
 With pain my mother would my tales receive,  
 And say, 'my Richard, do not learn to grieve.'  
 "One wretched hour had past before we knew  
 Whom they had saved! Alas! they were but two,  
 An orphan'd lad and widow'd man—no more!  
 And they unnoticed stood upon the shore, 390  
 With scarce a friend to greet them—widows view'd  
 This man and boy, and then their cries renew'd;—  
 'Twas long before the signs of wo gave place  
 To joy again; grief sat on every face.  
 "Sure of my mother's kindness, and the joy  
 She felt in meeting her rebellious boy,  
 I at my pleasure our new seat forsook,  
 And, undirected, these excursions took:  
 I often rambled to the noisy quay,  
 Strange sounds to hear, and business strange to me; 400  
 Seamen and carmen, and I know not who,  
 A lewd, amphibious, rude, contentious crew—  
 Confused as bees appear about their hive,  
 Yet all alert to keep their work alive.  
 "Here, unobserved as weed upon the wave,  
 My whole attention to the scene I gave;  
 I saw their tasks, their toil, their care, their skill,  
 Led by their own and by a master-will;  
 And, though contending, toiling, tugging on,  
 The purposed business of the day was done. 410  
 "The open shops of craftsmen caught my eye,  
 And there my questions met the kind reply:  
 Men, when alone, will teach; but, in a crowd,  
 The child is silent, or the man is proud;  
 But, by themselves, there is attention paid  
 To a mild boy, so forward, yet afraid.  
 "I made me interest at the inn's fire-side,  
 Amid the scenes to bolder boys denied;  
 For I had patrons there, and I was one,

They judged, who noticed nothing that was done. 420  
 'A quiet lad!' would my protector say;  
 'To him, now, this is better than his play:  
 Boys are as men; some active, shrewd, and keen,  
 They look about if aught is to be seen;  
 And some, like Richard here, have not a mind  
 That takes a notice—but the lad is kind.'  
 "I loved in summer on the heath to walk,  
 And seek the shepherd—shepherds love to talk.  
 His superstition was of ranker kind,  
 And he with tales of wonder stored my mind; 430  
 Wonders that he in many a lonely eve  
 Had seen, himself, and therefore must believe.  
 His boy, his Joe, he said, from duty ran,  
 Took to the sea, and grew a fearless man:  
 'On yonder knoll—the sheep were in the fold—  
 His spirit past me, shivering-like and cold!  
 I felt a fluttering, but I knew not how,  
 And heard him utter, like a whisper, 'now!  
 Soon came a letter from a friend—to tell  
 That he had fallen, and the time he fell.' 440  
 "Even to the smugglers' hut the rocks between,  
 I have, adventurous in my wandering, been.  
 Poor, pious Martha served the lawless tribe,  
 And could their merits and their faults describe;  
 Adding her thoughts; 'I talk, my child, to you,  
 Who little think of what such wretches do.'  
 "I loved to walk where none had walk'd before,  
 About the rocks that ran along the shore;  
 Or far beyond the sight of men to stray,  
 And take my pleasure when I lost my way; 450  
 For then 'twas mine to trace the hilly heath,  
 And all the mossy moor that lies beneath:  
 Here had I favourite stations, where I stood  
 And heard the murmurs of the ocean-flood,  
 With not a sound beside, except when flew  
 Aloft the lapwing, or the gray curlew,  
 Who with wild notes my fancied power defied,  
 And mock'd the dreams of solitary pride.  
 "I loved to stop at every creek and bay  
 Made by the river in its winding way, 460  
 And call to memory—not by marks they bare,  
 But by the thoughts that were created there.  
 "Pleasant it was to view the sea-gulls strive  
 Against the storm, or in the ocean dive,  
 With eager scream, or when they dropping gave  
 Their closing wings to sail upon the wave:  
 Then, as the winds and waters raged around,  
 And breaking billows mix'd their deafening sound,  
 They on the rolling deep securely hung,  
 And calmly rode the restless waves among. 470  
 Nor pleased it less around me to behold,  
 Far up the beach, the yesty sea-foam roll'd;  
 Or, from the shore upborn, to see on high  
 Its frothy flakes in wild confusion fly;  
 While the salt spray that clashing billows form,  
 Gave to the taste a feeling of the storm.  
 "Thus, with my favourite views, for many an hour  
 Have I indulged the dreams of princely power;  
 When the mind, weaned by excursions bold,  
 The fancy jaded, and the bosom cold, 480  
 Or when those wants that will on kings intrude,  
 Or evening-fears, broke in on solitude;  
 When I no more my fancy could employ,     }  
 I left in haste what I could not enjoy,     }  
 And was my gentle mother's welcome boy.     }  
 "But now thy walk,—this soft autumnal gloom  
 Bids no delay—at night I will resume  
 My subject, showing, not how I improved  
 In my strange school, but what the things I loved,  
 My first-born friendships, ties by forms uncheck'd, 490  
 And all that boys acquire whom men neglect."

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK V.

### RUTH.

Richard resumes his Narrative—Visits a Family in a Seaport—The Man and his Wife—Their Dwelling—Books, Number and Kind—The Friendship contracted—Employment there—Hannah, the Wife, her Manner; open Mirth and latent Grief—She gives the Story of Ruth, her Daughter—Of Thomas, a Sailor—Their Affection—A Press-gang—Reflections—Ruth disturbed in Mind—A Teacher sent to comfort her—His Fondness—Her Reception of him—Her Supplication—Is refused—She deliberates—Is decided.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK V.

### RUTH.

Richard would wait till George the tale should ask,  
Nor waited long—He then resumed the task.

“South in the port, and eastward in the street,  
Rose a small dwelling, my beloved retreat,  
Where lived a pair, then old; the sons had fled  
The home they fill’d; a part of them were dead,  
Married a part, while some at sea remain’d,  
And stillness in the seaman’s mansion reign’d;  
Lord of some petty craft, by night and day,  
The man had fish’d each fathom of the bay.

10

“My friend the matron woo’d me, quickly won,  
To fill the station of an absent son  
(Him whom at school I knew, and, Peter known,  
I took his home and mother for my own).

I read, and doubly was I paid to hear  
Events that fell upon no listless ear:

She grieved to say her parents could neglect  
Her education!—’twas a sore defect;  
She, who had ever such a vast delight

To learn, and now could neither read nor write:—  
But hear she could, and from our stores I took,  
Librarian meet! at her desire our book.

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Full twenty volumes—I would not exceed  
The modest truth—were there for me to read;  
These a long shelf contain’d, and they were found  
Books truly speaking, volumes fairly bound;  
The rest—for some of other kinds remain’d,  
And these a board beneath the shelf contain’d—  
Had their deficiencies in part; they lack’d

One side or both, or were no longer back’d;  
But now became degraded from their place,  
And were but pamphlets of a bulkier race.

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Yet had we pamphlets, an inviting store,  
From sixpence downwards—nay, a part were more;  
Learning abundance, and the various kinds  
For relaxation—food for different minds;

A piece of Wingate—thanks for all we have—  
What we of figures needed, fully gave;

Culpepper, new in numbers, cost but thrice  
The ancient volume’s unassuming price,

40

But told what planet o’er each herb had power,  
And how to take it in the lucky hour.

“History we had—wars, treasons, treaties, crimes,  
From Julius Cæsar to the present times;

Questions and answers, teaching what to ask  
And what reply—a kind, laborious task;

A scholar’s book it was, who, giving, swore  
It held the whole he wish’d to know, and more.

“And we had poets, hymns and songs divine;  
The most we read not, but allow’d them fine.

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“Our tracts were manv. on the boldest themes—

We had our metaphysics, spirits, dreams,  
Visions and warnings, and portentous sights  
Seen, though but dimly, in the doleful nights,  
When the good wife her wintry vigil keeps,  
And thinks alone of him at sea, and weeps.

“Add to all these our works in single sheets,  
That our Cassandras sing about the streets.  
These, as I read, the grave good man would say,  
‘Nay, Hannah!’ and she answer’d ‘What is Nay?  
What is there, pray, so hurtful in a song?  
It is our fancy only makes it wrong;  
His purer mind no evil thoughts alarm,  
And innocence protects him like a charm.’  
Then would the matron, when the song had past,  
And her laugh over, ask an hymn at last;  
To the coarse jest she would attention lend,  
And to the pious psalm in reverence bend.  
She gave her every power and all her mind  
As chance directed, or as taste inclined.

“More of our learning I will now omit: }  
We had our Cyclopædias of Wit, }  
And all our works, rare fate, were to our genius fit. }  
“When I had read, and we were weary grown  
Of other minds, the dame disclosed her own;  
And long have I in pleasing terror stay’d }  
To hear of boys trepann’d, and girls betray’d; }  
Ashamed so long to stay, and yet to go afraid. }

“I could perceive, though Hannah bore full well  
The ills of life, that few with her would dwell,  
But pass away, like shadows o’er the plain  
From flying clouds, and leave it fair again;  
Still every evil, be it great or small,  
Would one past sorrow to the mind recal—  
The grand disease of life, to which she turns,  
And common cares and lighter suffering spurns.  
‘O! these are nothing,—they will never heed  
Such idle contests who have fought indeed,  
And have the wounds unclosed.’—I understood  
My hint to speak, and my design pursued,  
Curious the secret of that heart to find, }  
To mirth, to song, to laughter loud inclined, }  
And yet to bear and feel a weight of grief behind. }  
How does she thus her little sunshine throw  
Always before her?—I should like to know.  
My friend perceived, and would no longer hide }  
The bosom’s sorrow—Could she not confide }  
In one who wept, unhurt—in one who felt, untried? }

“Dear child, I show you sins and sufferings strange,  
But you, like Adam, must for knowledge change  
That blissful ignorance: remember, then,  
What now you feel should be a check on men;  
For then your passions no debate allow,  
And therefore lay up resolution now.

‘Tis not enough, that when you can persuade  
A maid to love, you know there’s promise made;  
‘Tis not enough, that you design to keep  
That promise made, nor leave your lass to weep:  
But you must guard yourself against the sin,  
And think it such to draw the party in;  
Nay, the more weak and easy to be won,  
The viler you who have the mischief done.

I am not angry, love; but men should know  
They cannot always pay the debt they owe  
Their plighted honour; they may cause the ill  
They cannot lessen, though they feel a will;  
For *he* had truth with love, but love in youth  
Does wrong, that cannot be repair’d by truth.

Ruth—I may tell, too oft had she been told—  
Was tall and fair, and comely to behold;  
Gentle and simple, in her native place  
Not one compared with her in form or face;  
She was not merry, but she gave our hearth  
A cheerful spirit that was more than mirth.

There was a sailor boy, and people said  
He was, as man, a likeness of the maid;

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But not in this—for he was ever glad,  
 While Ruth was apprehensive, mild, and sad;  
 A quiet spirit hers, and peace would seek  
 In meditation—tender, mild, and meek! 130  
 Her loved the lad most truly; and, in truth,  
 She took an early liking to the youth;  
 To her alone were his attentions paid,  
 And they became the bachelor and maid.  
 He wish'd to marry; but so prudent we  
 And worldly wise, we said it could not be.  
 They took the counsel—may be they approved—  
 But still they grieved and waited, hoped and loved.  
 Now, my young friend, when of such state I speak  
 As one of danger, you will be to seek: 140  
 You know not, Richard, where the danger lies  
 In loving hearts, kind words, and speaking eyes;  
 For lovers speak their wishes with their looks  
 As plainly, love, as you can read your books.  
 Then, too, the meetings and the partings, all  
 The playful quarrels in which lovers fall,  
 Serve to one end—each lover is a child,  
 Quick to resent and to be reconciled;  
 And then their peace brings kindness that remains,  
 And so the lover from the quarrel gains. 150  
 When he has fault that she reproves, his fear  
 And grief assure her she was too severe:  
 And that brings kindness—when he bears an ill, }  
 Or disappointment, and is calm and still, }  
 She feels his own obedient to her will: }  
 And that brings kindness—and what kindness brings  
 I cannot tell you;—these were trying things.  
 They were as children, and they fell at length;  
 The trial, doubtless, is beyond their strength  
 Whom grace supports not; and will grace support 160  
 The too confiding, who their danger court?  
 Then they would marry—but were now too late—  
 All could their fault in sport or malice state;  
 And though the day was fix'd, and now drew on,  
 I could perceive my daughter's peace was gone;  
 She could not bear the bold and laughing eye }  
 That gazed on her—reproach she could not fly; }  
 Her grief she would not show, her shame could not deny; }  
 For some with many virtues come to shame,  
 And some that lose them all preserve their name. 170  
 "Fix'd was the day; but ere that day appear'd,  
 A frightful rumour through the place was heard;  
 War, who had slept awhile, awaked once more,  
 And gangs came pressing till they swept the shore:  
 Our youth was seized and quickly sent away,  
 Nor would the wretches for his marriage stay,  
 But bore him off, in barbarous triumph bore,  
 And left us all our miseries to deplore.  
 There were wives, maids, and mothers on the beach,  
 And some sad story appertain'd to each; 180  
 Most sad to Ruth—to neither could she go!  
 But sat apart, and suffer'd matchless wo!  
 On the vile ship they turn'd their earnest view, }  
 Not one last [look] allow'd,—not one adieu! }  
 They saw the men on deck, but none distinctly knew. }  
 And there she staid, regardless of each eye,  
 With but one hope, a fervent hope to die.  
 Nor cared she now for kindness—all beheld  
 Her, who invited none, and none repell'd;  
 For there are griefs, my child, that sufferers hide, 190  
 And there are griefs that men display with pride;  
 But there are other griefs that, so we feel,  
 We care not to display them nor conceal:  
 Such were our sorrows on that fatal day,  
 More than our lives the spoilers tore away;  
 Nor did we heed their insult—some distress }  
 No form or manner can make more or less, }  
 And this is of that kind—this misery of a press! }  
 They say such things must be—perhaps they must;  
 But, sure, they need not fright us and disgust; 200  
 They need not soul-less crews of ruffians send

At once the ties of humble love to rend.  
 A single day had Thomas stay'd on shore,  
 He might have wedded, and we ask'd no more;  
 And that stern man, who forced the lad away,  
 Might have attended, and have graced the day;  
 His pride and honour might have been at rest,  
 It is no stain to make a couple blest!  
 Blest!—no, alas! it was to ease the heart  
 Of one sore pang, and then to weep and part! 210  
 But this he would not.—English seamen fight  
 For England's gain and glory—it is right;  
 But will that public spirit be so strong,  
 Fill'd, as it must be, with their private wrong?  
 Forbid it, honour, one in all the fleet  
 Should hide in war, or from the foe retreat!  
 But is it just, that he who so defends  
 His country's cause, should hide him from her friends?  
 Sure, if they must upon our children seize,  
 They might prevent such injuries as these; 220  
 Might hours—nay, days—in many a case allow,  
 And soften all the griefs we suffer now.  
 Some laws, some orders might in part redress  
 The licensed insults of a British press,  
 That keeps the honest and the brave in awe,  
 Where might is right, and violence is law.  
 'Be not alarm'd, my child; there's none regard  
 What you and I conceive so cruel-hard:  
 There is compassion, I believe; but still  
 One wants the power to help, and one the will, 230  
 And so from war to war the wrongs remain,  
 While Reason pleads, and Misery sighs, in vain.  
 'Thus my poor Ruth was wretched and undone,  
 Nor had an husband for her only son,  
 Nor had he father; hope she did awhile,  
 And would not weep, although she could not smile;  
 Till news was brought us that the youth was slain,  
 And then, I think, she never smiled again;  
 Or if she did, it was but to express  
 A feeling far, indeed, from happiness! 240  
 Something that her bewilder'd mind conceived,  
 When she inform'd us that she never grieved,  
 But was right merry, then her head was wild,  
 And grief had gain'd possession of my child.  
 Yet, though bewilder'd for a time, and prone  
 To ramble much and speak aloud, alone;  
 Yet did she all that duty ever ask'd  
 And more, her will self-govern'd and untask'd.  
 With meekness bearing all reproach, all joy  
 To her was lost; she wept upon her boy, 250  
 Wish'd for his death, in fear that he might live  
 New sorrow to a burden'd heart to give.  
 'There was a teacher, where my husband went— }  
 Sent, as he told the people—what he meant }  
 You cannot understand, but—he was sent. }  
 This man from meeting came, and strove to win  
 Her mind to peace by drawing off the sin,  
 Or what it was, that, working in her breast,  
 Robb'd it of comfort, confidence, and rest.  
 He came and reason'd, and she seem'd to feel 260  
 The pains he took—her griefs began to heal;  
 She ever answer'd kindly when he spoke,  
 And always thank'd him for the pains he took;  
 So, after three long years, and all the while  
 Wrapt up in grief, she blest us with a smile,  
 And spoke in comfort; but she mix'd no more  
 With younger persons, as she did before.  
 'Still Ruth was pretty; in her person neat;  
 So thought the teacher, when they chanced to meet.  
 He was a weaver by his worldly trade, 270  
 But powerful work in the assemblies made;  
 People came leagues to town to hear him sift  
 The holy text,—he had the grace and gift;  
 Widows and maidens flock'd to hear his voice;  
 Of either kind he might have had his choice;—  
 But he had chosen—we had seen how shy



The girl was getting, my good man and I;  
 That when the weaver came, she kept with us,  
 Where he his points and doctrines might discuss; 280  
 But in our bit of garden, or the room  
 We call our parlour, there he must not come.  
 She loved him not, and though she could attend  
 To his discourses as her guide and friend,  
 Yet now to these she gave a listless ear,  
 As if a friend she would no longer hear;  
 This might he take for woman's art, and cried,  
 'Spouse of my heart, I must not be denied!'—  
 Fearless he spoke, and I had hope to see  
 My girl a wife—but this was not to be.

My husband, thinking of his worldly store, 290  
 And not, frail man, enduring to be poor,  
 Seeing his friend would for his child provide  
 And hers, he grieved to have the man denied;  
 For Ruth, when press'd, rejected him, and grew  
 To her old sorrow, as if that were new.  
 'Who shall support her?' said her father, 'how  
 Can I, infirm and weak as I am now?  
 And here a loving fool'—this gave her pain  
 Severe, indeed, but she would not complain;  
 Nor would consent, although the weaver grew 300  
 More fond, and would the frighten'd girl pursue.

'O! much she begg'd him to forbear, to stand  
 Her soul's kind friend, and not to ask her hand:  
 She could not love him.—'Love me!' he replied,  
 'The love you mean is love unsanctified,  
 An earthly, wicked, sensual, sinful kind,  
 A creature-love, the passion of the blind.'  
 He did not court her, he would have her know,  
 For that poor love that will on beauty grow;  
 No! he would take her as the prophet took 310  
 One of the harlots in the holy book;  
 And then he look'd so ugly and severe!  
 And yet so fond—she could not hide her fear.

This fondness grew her torment; she would fly  
 In woman's terror, if he came but nigh;  
 Nor could I wonder he should odious prove,  
 So like a ghost that left a grave for love.

But still her father lent his cruel aid  
 To the man's hope, and she was more afraid:  
 He said, no more she should his table share, 320  
 But be the parish or the teacher's care.  
 'Three days I give you: see that all be right }  
 On Monday-morning—this is Thursday-night— }  
 Fulfil my wishes, girl! or else forsake my sight!' }

'I see her now; and, she that was so meek  
 It was a chance that she had power to speak,  
 Now spoke in earnest—'Father! I obey,  
 And will remember the appointed day!'  
 'Then came the man: she talk'd with him apart,  
 And, I believe, laid open all her heart; 330  
 But all in vain—she said to me, in tears,  
 'Mother! that man is not what he appears:  
 He talks of heaven, and let him, if he will,  
 But he has earthly purpose to fulfil;  
 Upon my knees I begg'd him to resign  
 The hand he asks—he said, 'it shall be mine.  
 'What! did the holy men of Scripture deign  
 To hear a woman when she said 'refrain?'  
 Of whom they chose they took them wives, and these  
 Made it their study and their wish to please; 340  
 The women then were faithful and afraid,  
 As Sarah Abraham, they their lords obey'd,  
 And so she styled him; 'tis in later days  
 Of foolish love that we our women praise,  
 Fall on the knee, and raise the suppliant hand,  
 And court the favour that we might command.'

O! my dear mother, when this man has power,  
 How will he treat me—first may beasts devour!  
 Or death in every form that I could prove,  
 Except this selfish being's hateful love.' 350  
 I gently blamed her, for I knew how hard

It is to force affection and regard.

Ah! my dear lad, I talk to you as one  
Who knew the misery of an heart undone;  
You know it not; but, dearest boy, when man,  
Do not an ill because you find you can.  
Where is the triumph? when such things men seek,  
They only drive to wickedness the weak.

Weak was poor Ruth, and this good man so hard,  
That to her weakness he had no regard;  
But we had two days peace; he came, and then  
My daughter whisper'd, 'Would there were no men!  
None to admire or scorn us, none to vex  
A simple, trusting, fond, believing sex;  
Who truly love the worth that men profess,  
And think too kindly for their happiness.'

360

Poor Ruth! few heroines in the tragic page  
Felt more than thee in thy contracted stage;  
Fair, fond, and virtuous, they our pity move,  
Impell'd by duty, agonized by love;  
But no Mandane, who in dread has knelt  
On the bare boards, has greater terrors felt,  
Nor been by warring passions more subdued  
Than thou, by this man's groveling wish pursued;  
Doom'd to a parent's judgment, all unjust, }  
Doom'd the chance mercy of the world to trust, }  
Or to wed grossness and conceal disgust. }

370

If Ruth was frail, she had a mind too nice  
To wed with that which she beheld as vice;  
To take a reptile, who, beneath a show  
Of peevish zeal, let carnal wishes grow;  
Proud and yet mean, forbidding and yet full  
Of eager appetites, devout and dull;  
Waiting a legal right that he might seize  
His own, and his impatient spirit ease;  
Who would at once his pride and love indulge,  
His temper humour, and his spite divulge.

380

This the poor victim saw—a second time,  
Sighing, she said, 'Shall I commit the crime,  
And now untempted? Can the form or rite  
Make me a wife in my Creator's sight?  
Can I the words without a meaning say?  
Can I pronounce love, honour, or obey?  
And if I cannot, shall I dare to wed,  
And go an harlot to a loathed bed?  
Never, dear mother! my poor boy and I  
Will at the mercy of a parish lie:  
Reproved for wants that vices would remove,  
Reproach'd for vice that I could never love,  
Mix'd with a crew long wedded to disgrace, }  
A Vulgar, forward, equalizing race—} }  
And am I doom'd to beg a dwelling in that place?' }  
Such was her reasoning: many times she weigh'd  
The evils all, and was of each afraid;  
She loath'd the common board, the vulgar seat, }  
Where shame, and want, and vice, and sorrow meet, }  
Where frailty finds allies, where guilt insures retreat. }

390

400

But peace again is fled; the teacher comes,  
And new importance, haughtier air assumes.  
No hapless victim of a tyrant's love  
More keenly felt, or more resisting strove  
Against her fate; she look'd on every side,  
But there were none to help her, none to guide;—  
And he, the man who should have taught the soul,  
Wish'd but the body in his base control.

410

She left her infant on the Sunday morn,  
A creature doom'd to shame! in sorrow born;  
A thing that languished, nor arrived at age  
When the man's thoughts with sin and pain engage—  
She came not home to share our humble meal,  
Her father thinking what his child would feel  
From his hard sentence—still she came not home.  
The night grew dark, and yet she was not come;  
The east-wind roar'd, the sea return'd the sound,  
And the rain fell as if the world were drown'd;  
There were no lights without, and my good man,

420

To kindness frighten'd, with a groan began  
To talk of Ruth, and pray; and then he took  
The Bible down, and read the holy book;  
For he had learning; and when that was done 430  
We sat in silence—whither could we run?  
We said, and then rush'd frighten'd from the door,  
For we could bear our own conceit no more;  
We call'd on neighbours—there she had not been;  
We met some wanderers—ours they had not seen;  
We hurried o'er the beach, both north and south,  
Then join'd, and wander'd to our haven's mouth,  
Where rush'd the falling waters wildly out:  
I scarcely heard the good man's fearful shout,  
Who saw a something on the billow ride, 440  
And 'Heaven have mercy on our sins!' he cried,  
'It is my child!' and to the present hour  
So he believes—and spirits have the power.  
And she was gone! the waters wide and deep  
Roll'd o'er her body as she lay asleep.  
She heard no more the angry waves and wind,  
She heard no more the threatening of mankind;  
Wrapt in dark weeds, the refuse of the storm,  
To the hard rock was borne her comely form!  
But O! what storm was in that mind? what strife, 450  
That could compel her to lay down her life?  
For she was seen within the sea to wade,  
By one at distance, when she first had pray'd;  
Then to a rock within the hither shoal  
Softly and with a fearful step she stole;  
Then, when she gain'd it, on the top she stood  
A moment still—and dropt into the flood!  
The man cried loudly, but he cried in vain—  
She heard not then—she never heard again!  
She had—pray, Heav'n!—she had that world in sight, 460  
Where frailty mercy finds, and wrong has right;  
But, sure, in this her portion such has been,  
Well had it still remain'd a world unseen!  
Thus far the dame: the passions will dispense  
To such a wild and rapid eloquence—  
Will to the weakest mind their strength impart,  
And give the tongue the language of the heart."

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK VI.

### *ADVENTURES OF RICHARD, CONCLUDED.*

Richard relates his Illness and Retirement—A Village Priest and his two Daughters—His peculiar Studies—His Simplicity of Character—Arrival of a third Daughter—Her Zeal in his Conversion— Their Friendship—How terminated—An happy Day—Its Commencement and Progress—A Journey along the Coast—Arrival as a Guest—Company—A Lover's Jealousy—it increases—dies away—An Evening Walk—Suspense— Apprehension—Resolution—Certainty.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK VI.

### *ADVENTURES OF RICHARD, CONCLUDED.*

"This then, dear Richard, was the way you took  
To gain instruction—thine a curious book,  
Containing much of both the false and true;  
But thou hast read it, and with profit too.

"Come, then, my Brother, now thy tale complete—  
I know thy first embarking in the fleet,  
Thy entrance in the army, and thy gain  
Of plenteous laurels in the wars in Spain,  
And what then follow'd; but I wish to know  
When thou that heart hadst courage to bestow, 10  
When to declare it gain'd, and when to stand  
Before the priest, and give the plighted hand;  
So shall I boldness from thy frankness gain  
To paint the frenzy that possessed my brain;  
For rather there than in my heart I found  
Was my disease; a poison, not a wound,  
A madness, Richard—but, I pray thee, tell  
Whom hast thou loved so dearly and so well?"

The younger man his gentle host obey'd,  
For some respect, though not required, was paid; 20  
Perhaps with all that independent pride  
Their different states would to the memory glide;  
Yet was his manner unconstrain'd and free,  
And nothing in it like servility.

Then he began:—"When first I reach'd the land,  
I was so ill that death appear'd at hand;  
And, though the fever left me, yet I grew  
So weak 'twas judged that life would leave me too.  
I sought a village-priest, my mother's friend,  
And I believed with him my days would end: 30  
The man was kind, intelligent, and mild,  
Careless and shrewd, yet simple as the child;  
For of the wisdom of the world his share  
And mine were equal—neither had to spare;  
Else—with his daughters, beautiful and poor—  
He would have kept a sailor from his door.  
Two then were present, who adorn'd his home,  
But ever speaking of a third to come;  
Cheerful they were, not too reserved or free,  
I loved them both, and never wish'd them three. 40

"The vicar's self, still further to describe,  
Was of a simple, but a studious tribe;  
He from the world was distant, not retired,  
Nor of it much possess'd, nor much desired:  
Grave in his purpose, cheerful in his eye,  
And with a look of frank benignity.  
He lost his wife when they together past  
Years of calm love, that triumph'd to the last.  
He much of nature, not of man, had seen, 50  
Yet his remarks were often shrewd and keen;  
Taught not by books t' approve or to condemn,  
He gain'd but little that he knew from them:

He read with reverence and respect the few,  
Whence he his rules and consolations drew;  
But men and beasts, and all that lived or moved,  
Were books to him; he studied them and loved.

“He knew the plants in mountain, wood, or mead;  
He knew the worms that on the foliage feed;  
Knew the small tribes that ’scape the careless eye,  
The plant’s disease that breeds the embryo-fly;  
And the small creatures who on bark or bough  
Enjoy their changes, changed we know not how;  
But now th’ imperfect being scarcely moves,  
And now takes wing and seeks the sky it loves.

60

“He had no system, and forbore to read  
The learned labours of th’ immortal Swede;  
But smiled to hear the creatures he had known  
So long, were now in class and order shown,  
Genus and species—‘is it meet,’ said he,  
‘This creature’s name should one so sounding be?  
Tis but a fly, though first-born of the spring—  
Bombylius majus, dost thou call the thing?  
Majus, indeed! and yet, in fact, ’tis true, }  
We all are majors, all are minors too, }  
Except the first and last—th’ immensely distant two. }  
And here again—what call the learned this?  
Both Hippobosca and Hirundinis?

70

Methinks the creature should be proud to find  
That he employs the talents of mankind;  
And that his sovereign master shrewdly looks,  
Counts all his parts, and puts them in his books.  
Well! go thy way, for I do feel it shame  
To stay a being with so proud a name.’

80

“Such were his daughters, such my quiet friend,  
And pleasant was it thus my days to spend;  
But when Matilda at her home I saw,  
Whom I beheld with anxiousness and awe,  
The ease and quiet that I found before  
At once departed, and return’d no more.  
No more their music soothed me as they play’d,  
But soon her words a strong impression made:  
The sweet enthusiast, so I deem’d her, took  
My mind, and fix’d it to her speech and look;  
My soul, dear girl! she made her constant care, }  
But never whisper’d to my heart ‘beware!’ }  
In love no dangers rise till we are in the snare. }  
Her father sometimes question’d of my creed,  
And seem’d to think it might amendment need;  
But great the difference when the pious maid  
To the same errors her attention paid:

90

Her sole design that I should think aright,  
And my conversion her supreme delight.  
Pure was her mind, and simple her intent,  
Good all she sought, and kindness all she meant.  
Next to religion friendship was our theme,  
Related souls and their refined esteem.  
We talk’d of scenes where this is real found,  
And love subsists without a dart or wound;  
But there intruded thoughts not all serene,  
And wishes not so calm would intervene.”

100

“Saw not her father?”

110

“Yes; but saw no more  
Than he had seen without a fear before:  
He had subsisted by the church and plough,  
And saw no cause for apprehension now.  
We, too, could live; he thought not passion wrong,  
But only wonder’d we delay’d so long.  
More had he wonder’d had he known esteem  
Was all we mention’d, friendship was our theme.—  
Laugh, if you please, I must my tale pursue— }  
This sacred friendship thus in secret grew }  
An intellectual love, most tender, chaste, and true; }  
Unstain’d, we said; nor knew we how it chanced }  
To gain some earthly soil as it advanced;  
But yet my friend, and she alone, could prove  
How much it differ’d from romantic love—  
But this and more I pass—No doubt, at length,

120

We could perceive the weakness of our strength.  
 "O! days remember'd well! remember'd all!  
 The bitter-sweet, the honey and the gall; 130  
 Those garden rambles in the silent night,  
 Those trees so shady, and that moon so bright;  
 That thickset alley, by the arbour closed,  
 That woodbine seat where we at last reposed;  
 And then the hopes that came and then were gone,  
 Quick as the clouds beneath the moon passed on.  
 Now, in this instant, shall my love be shown,  
 I said—O! no, the happy time is flown!  
 "You smile; remember, I was weak and low,  
 And fear'd the passion as I felt it grow: 140  
 Will she, I said, to one so poor attend,  
 Without a prospect, and without a friend?  
 I dared not ask her—till a rival came,  
 But hid the secret, slow-consuming flame.  
 I once had seen him; then familiar, free,  
 More than became a common guest to be;  
 And sure, I said, he has a look of pride  
 And inward joy—a lover satisfied.  
 Can you not, Brother, on adventures past  
 A thought, as on a lively prospect, cast? 150  
 On days of dear remembrance! days that seem,  
 When past—nay, even when present—like a dream?  
 These white and blessed days, that softly shine  
 On few, nor oft on them—have they been thine?"  
 George answer'd, "Yes! dear Richard, through the years  
 Long past, a day so white and mark'd appears.  
 As in the storm that pours destruction round,  
 Is here and there a ship in safety found:  
 So in the storms of life some days appear  
 More blest and bright for the preceding fear. 160  
 These times of pleasure that in life arise,  
 Like spots in deserts, that delight, surprise,  
 And to our wearied senses give the more,  
 For all the waste behind us and before—  
 And thou, dear Richard, hast then had thy share  
 Of those enchanting times that baffle care?"  
 Yes, I have felt this life-refreshing gale  
 That bears us onward when our spirits fail;  
 That gives those spirits vigour and delight—  
 I would describe it, could I do it right. 170  
 Such days have been—a day of days was one  
 When, rising gaily with the rising sun,  
 I took my way to join a happy few,  
 Known not to me, but whom Matilda knew,  
 To whom she went a guest, and message sent:  
 Come thou to us; and as a guest I went.  
 There are two ways to Brandon—by the heath  
 Above the cliff, or on the sand beneath,  
 Where the small pebbles, wetted by the wave,  
 To the new day reflected lustre gave. 180  
 At first above the rocks I made my way,  
 Delighted looking at the spacious bay,  
 And the large fleet that to the northward steer'd  
 Full sail, that glorious in my view appear'd;  
 For where does man evince his full control  
 O'er subject matter, where displays the soul  
 Its mighty energies with more effect  
 Than when her powers that moving mass direct?  
 Than when man guides the ship man's art has made,  
 And makes the winds and waters yield him aid?  
 "Much as I long'd to see the maid I loved, 190  
 Through scenes so glorious I at leisure moved;  
 For there are times when we do not obey  
 The master-passion—when we yet delay—  
 When absence, soon to end, we yet prolong,  
 And dally with our wish although so strong.  
 "High were my joys, but they were sober too,  
 Nor reason spoil'd the pictures fancy drew;  
 I felt—rare feeling in a world like this—  
 The sober certainty of waking bliss;  
 Add too the smaller aids to happy men, 200  
 Convenient helps—these too were present then.

“But what are spirits? light indeed and gay }  
They are, like winter flowers, nor last a day; }  
Comes a rude icy wind—they feel, and fade away. }

“High beat my heart when to the house I came,  
And when the ready servant gave my name;  
But when I enter’d that pernicious room,  
Gloomy it look’d, and painful was the gloom;  
And jealous was the pain, and deep the sigh  
Caused by this gloom, and pain, and jealousy: 210  
For there Matilda sat, and her beside  
That rival soldier, with a soldier’s pride;  
With self-approval in his laughing face,  
His seem’d the leading spirit of the place.  
She was all coldness—yet I thought a look,  
But that corrected, tender welcome spoke:  
It was as lightning which you think you see,  
But doubt, and ask if lightning it could be.

“Confused and quick my introduction pass’d,  
When I, a stranger and on strangers cast, 220  
Beheld the gallant man as he display’d  
Uncheck’d attention to the guilty maid.  
O! how it grieved me that she dared t’ excite  
Those looks in him that show’d so much delight;  
Egregious coxcomb! there—he smiled again,  
As if he sought to aggravate my pain;  
Still she attends—I must approach—and find,  
Or make, a quarrel, to relieve my mind.

“In vain I try—politeness as a shield  
The angry strokes of my contempt repell’d; 230  
Nor must I violate the social law  
That keeps the rash and insolent in awe.  
Once I observed, on hearing my replies,  
The woman’s terror fix’d on me the eyes  
That look’d entreaty; but the guideless rage  
Of jealous minds no softness can assuage.  
But, lo! they rise, and all prepare to take  
The promised pleasure on the neighbouring lake.

“Good heaven! they whisper! Is it come to this?  
Already!—then may I my doubt dismiss: 240  
Could he so soon a timid girl persuade?  
What rapid progress has the coxcomb made!  
And yet how cool her looks, and how demure!  
The falling snow nor lily’s flower so pure—  
What can I do? I must the pair attend,  
And watch this horrid business to its end.

“There, forth they go! He leads her to the shore—  
Nay, I must follow—I can bear no more:  
What can the handsome gipsy have in view  
In trifling thus, as she appears to do? 250  
I, who for months have labour’d to succeed,  
Have only lived her vanity to feed.

“O! you will make me room—’tis very kind,  
And meant for him—it tells him he must mind;  
Must not be careless:—I can serve to draw  
The soldier on, and keep the man in awe.  
O! I did think she had a guileless heart,  
Without deceit, capriciousness, or art;  
And yet a stranger, with a coat of red,  
Has, by an hour’s attention, turn’d her head. 260

“Ah! how delicious was the morning-drive,  
The soul awaken’d, and its hopes alive;  
How dull this scene by trifling minds enjoy’d,  
The heart in trouble and its hope destroy’d.

Well, now we land—And will he yet support  
This part? What favour has he now to court?  
Favour! O, no! He means to quit the fair;  
How strange! how cruel! Will she not despair?

Well! take her hand—no further if you please,  
I cannot suffer fooleries like these:— 270  
How? ‘Love to Julia!’ to his wife?—O! dear }  
And injured creature, how must I appear, }  
Thus haughty in my looks, and in my words severe? }  
Her love to Julia, to the school-day friend  
To whom those letters she has lately penn’d!  
Can she forgive? And now I think again,

The man was neither insolent nor vain;  
 Good humour chiefly would a stranger trace,  
 Were he impartial, in the air or face; 280  
 And I so splenetic the whole way long,  
 And she so patient—it was very wrong.  
 The boat had landed in a shady scene;  
 The grove was in its glory, fresh and green;  
 The showers of late had swell'd the branch and bough,  
 And the sun's fervour made them pleasant now.  
 Hard by, an oak arose in all its pride,  
 And threw its arms along the water's side:  
 Its leafy limbs, that on the glassy lake  
 Stretch far, and all those dancing shadows make. 290  
 And now we walk—now smaller parties seek  
 Or sun or shade as pleases—Shall I speak?  
 Shall I forgiveness ask, and then apply  
 For—O! that vile and intercepting cry!  
 Alas! what mighty ills can trifles make—  
 An hat! the idiot's—fallen in the lake!  
 What serious mischief can such idlers do?  
 I almost wish the head had fallen too.  
 No more they leave us, but will hover round,  
 As if amusement at our cost they found; 300  
 Vex'd and unhappy I indeed had been,  
 Had I not something in my charmer seen  
 Like discontent, that, though corrected, dwelt  
 On that dear face, and told me what she felt.  
 "Now must we cross the lake, and as we cross'd  
 Was my whole soul in sweet emotion lost;  
 Clouds in white volumes roll'd beneath the moon,  
 Softening her light that on the waters shone:  
 This was such bliss! even then it seem'd relief  
 To veil the gladness in a show of grief. 310  
 We sigh'd as we conversed, and said, how deep  
 This lake on which those broad dark shadows sleep;  
 There is between us and a watery grave  
 But a thin plank, and yet our fate we brave.  
 'What if it burst?' 'Matilda, then my care }  
 Would be for thee: all danger I would dare, }  
 And, should my efforts fail, thy fortune would I share.' }  
 'The love of life,' she said, 'would powerful prove!'—  
 'O! not so powerful as the strength of love.'—  
 A look of kindness gave the grateful maid,  
 That had the real effort more than paid. 320  
 "But here we land, and haply now may choose  
 Companions home—our way, too, we may lose:  
 In these drear, dark, inosculating lanes,  
 The very native of his doubt complains;  
 No wonder then that in such lonely ways  
 A stranger, heedless of the country, strays;  
 A stranger, too, whose many thoughts all meet  
 In one design, and none regard his feet.  
 "Is this the path?' the cautious fair one cries; }  
 I answer, 'Yes!'—'We shall our friends surprise,' } 330  
 She added, sighing—I return the sighs. }  
 "Will they not wonder?' 'O! they would, indeed,  
 Could they the secrets of this bosom read,  
 These chilling doubts, these trembling hopes I feel!  
 The faint, fond hopes I can no more conceal—  
 I love thee, dear Matilda!—to confess  
 The fact is dangerous, fatal to suppress.  
 "And now in terror I approach the home  
 Where I may wretched but not doubtful come;  
 Where I must be all ecstasy, or all— 340  
 O! what will you a wretch rejected call?  
 Not man, for I shall lose myself, and be  
 A creature lost to reason, losing thee.  
 "Speak, my Matilda! on the rack of fear  
 Suspend me not—I would my sentence hear,  
 Would learn my fate—Good Heaven! and what portend  
 These tears?—and fall they for thy wretched friend?  
 Or'—but I cease; I cannot paint the bliss,  
 From a confession soft and kind as this;  
 Nor where we walk'd, nor how our friends we met, } 350  
 Or what their wonder—I am wondering yet;}



For he who nothing heeds has nothing to forget.}

“All thought, yet thinking nothing—all delight  
In every thing, but nothing in my sight!  
Nothing I mark or learn, but am possess’d }  
Of joys I cannot paint, and I am bless’d }  
In all that I conceive—whatever is, is best. }  
Ready to aid all beings, I would go  
The world around to succour human wo;  
Yet am so largely happy, that it seems  
There are no woes, and sorrows are but dreams.

360

“There is a college joy, to scholars known,  
When the first honours are proclaim’d their own;  
There is ambition’s joy, when in their race  
A man surpassing rivals gains his place;  
There is a beauty’s joy, amid a crowd  
To have that beauty her first fame allow’d;  
And there’s the conqueror’s joy, when, dubious held  
And long the fight, he sees the foe repell’d.

“But what are these, or what are other joys,  
That charm kings, conquerors, beauteous nymphs and boys,  
Or greater yet, if greater yet be found,  
To that delight when love’s dear hope is crown’d?  
To the first beating of a lover’s heart,  
When the loved maid endeavours to impart,  
Frankly yet faintly, fondly yet in fear,  
The kind confession that he holds so dear?  
Now in the morn of our return how strange  
Was this new feeling, this delicious change;  
That sweet delirium, when I gazed in fear,  
That all would yet be lost and disappear.

370

380

“Such was the blessing that I sought for pain,  
In some degree to be myself again;  
And when we met a shepherd old and lame,  
Cold and diseased, it seem’d my blood to tame;  
And I was thankful for the moral sight,  
That soberized the vast and wild delight.”

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# **TALES OF THE HALL.**

## **BOOK VII.**

### *THE ELDER BROTHER.*

Conversation—Story of the elder Brother—His romantic Views and Habits—The Scene of his Meditations—Their Nature—Interrupted by an Adventure—The Consequences of it—A strong and permanent Passion—Search of its Object—Long ineffectual—How found—The first Interview—The second—End of the Adventure—Retirement.

# **TALES OF THE HALL.**

## **BOOK VII.**

### *THE ELDER BROTHER.*

"Thanks, my dear Richard; and, I pray thee, deign  
To speak the truth—does all this love remain,  
And all this joy? for views and flights sublime,  
Ardent and tender, are subdued by time.  
Speakst thou of her to whom thou madest thy vows,  
Of my fair sister, of thy lawful spouse?  
Or art thou talking some frail love about,  
The rambling fit, before th' abiding gout?"

Nay, spare me, Brother, an adorer spare:  
Love and the gout! thou wouldst not these compare?"

10

"Yea, and correctly; teasing ere they come,  
They then confine their victim to his home:  
In both are previous feints and false attacks,  
Both place the grieving patient on their racks:  
They both are ours, with all they bring, for life,  
'Tis not in us t' expel or gout or wife;  
On man a kind of dignity they shed,  
A sort of gloomy pomp about his bed;  
Then, if he leaves them, go where'er he will,  
They have a claim upon his body still;  
Nay, when they quit him, as they sometimes do,  
What is there left t' enjoy or to pursue?—  
But dost thou love this woman?"

20

"O! beyond  
What I can tell thee of the true and fond:  
Hath she not soothed me, sick, enrich'd me, poor,  
And banish'd death and misery from my door?  
Has she not cherish'd every moment's bliss,  
And made an Eden of a world like this?  
When Care would strive with us his watch to keep,  
Has she not sung the snarling fiend to sleep?  
And when Distress has look'd us in the face,  
Has she not told him, 'thou art not Disgrace?'"

30

"I must behold her, Richard; I must see  
This patient spouse who sweetens misery—  
But didst thou need, and wouldst thou not apply?—  
Nay thou wert right—but then how wrong was I!"  
"My indiscretion was——"

"No more repeat;  
Would I were nothing worse than indiscreet;—  
But still there is a plea that I could bring,  
Had I the courage to describe the thing."

40

"Then, thou too, Brother, couldst of weakness tell;  
Thou, too, hast found the wishes that rebel  
Against the sovereign reason; at some time  
Thou hast been fond, heroic, and sublime;  
Wrote verse, it may be, and for one dear maid  
The sober purposes of life delay'd;  
From year to year the fruitless chase pursued,  
And hung enamour'd o'er the flying good.  
Then, be thy weakness to a Brother shown,  
And give him comfort who displays his own."

50

"Ungenerous youth! dost thou presuming ask  
A man so grave his failings to unmask?  
What if I tell thee of a waste of time,  
That on my spirit presses as a crime,  
Wilt thou despise me?—I, who, soaring, fell }  
So late to rise—Hear then the tale I tell; }  
Who tells what thou shalt hear, esteems his hearer well. }

"Yes, my dear Richard, thou shalt hear me own  
Follies and frailties thou hast never known;  
Thine was a frailty,—folly, if you please—  
But mine a flight, a madness, a disease.

60

"Turn with me to my twentieth year, for then  
The lover's frenzy ruled the poet's pen;  
When virgin reams were soil'd with lays of love,  
The flinty hearts of fancied nymphs to move:  
Then was I pleased in lonely ways to tread,  
And muse on tragic tales of lovers dead;  
For all the merit I could then descry  
In man or woman was for love to die.

"I mused on charmers chaste, who pledged their truth,  
And left no more the once-accepted youth;

70

Though he disloyal, lost, diseased, became,  
The widow'd turtle's was a deathless flame.  
This faith, this feeling, gave my soul delight:  
Truth in the lady, ardour in the knight.

"I built me castles wondrous rich and rare,  
Few castle-builders could with me compare;  
The hall, the palace, rose at my command,  
And these I fill'd with objects great and grand.  
Virtues sublime, that nowhere else would live,  
Glory and pomp, that I alone could give;  
Trophies and thrones, by matchless valour gain'd,  
Faith unreprieved, and chastity unstain'd;  
With all that soothes the sense and charms the soul,  
Came at my call, and were in my control.

80

"And who was I? a slender youth and tall,  
In manner awkward, and with fortune small;  
With visage pale; my motions quick and slow,  
That fall and rising in the spirits show;  
For none could more by outward signs express  
What wise men lock within the mind's recess.  
Had I a mirror set before my view,  
I might have seen what such a form could do;  
Had I within the mirror truth beheld,  
I should have such presuming thoughts repell'd:  
But, awkward as I was, without the grace  
That gives new beauty to a form or face,  
Still I expected friends most true to prove,  
And grateful, tender, warm, assiduous love.

90

"Assured of this, that love's delicious bond  
Would hold me ever faithful, ever fond,  
It seem'd but just that I in love should find  
A kindred heart as constant and as kind.  
Give me, I cried, a beauty: none on earth  
Of higher rank or nobler in her birth;  
Pride of her race, her father's hope and care,  
Yet meek as children of the cottage are;  
Nursed in the court, and there by love pursued,  
But fond of peace, and blest in solitude;  
By rivals honour'd, and by beauties praised,  
Yet all unconscious of the envy raised.  
Suppose her this, and from attendants freed,  
To want my prowess in a time of need,  
When safe and grateful she desires to show  
She feels the debt that she delights to owe,  
And loves the man who saved her in distress—  
So fancy will'd, nor would compound for less.

100

"This was my dream.—In some auspicious hour,  
In some sweet solitude, in some green bower,  
Whither my fate should lead me, there, unseen,  
I should behold my fancy's gracious queen,  
Singing sweet song! that I should hear awhile,  
Then catch the transient glory of a smile;  
Then at her feet with trembling hope should kneel,  
Such as rapt saints and raptured lovers feel:  
To watch the chaste unfoldings of her heart,  
In joy to meet, in agony to part,  
And then in tender song to soothe my grief,  
And hail, in glorious rhyme, my *Lady of the Leaf*.

110

"To dream these dreams I chose a woody scene,  
My guardian-shade, the world and me between;  
A green inclosure, where beside its bound  
A thorny fence beset its beauties round,  
Save where some creature's force had made a way  
For me to pass, and in my kingdom stray.  
Here then I stray'd, then sat me down to call,  
Just as I will'd, my shadowy subjects all!  
Fruits of all minds conceived on every coast—  
Fay, witch, enchanter, devil, demon, ghost;  
And thus with knights and nymphs, in halls and bowers,  
In war and love, I pass'd unnumber'd hours.

120

Gross and substantial beings all forgot, }  
Ideal glories beam'd around the spot, }  
And all that was, with me, of this poor world was not. }  
"Yet in this world there was a single scene,  
That I allow'd with mine to intervene.

130

140

This house, where never yet my feet had stray'd,  
 I with respect and timid awe survey'd;  
 With pleasing wonder I have oft-times stood,  
 To view these turrets rising o'er the wood; 150  
 When fancy to the halls and chambers flew,  
 Large, solemn, silent, that I must not view;  
 The moat was then, and then o'er all the ground  
 Tall elms and ancient oaks stretch'd far around;  
 And where the soil forbad the nobler race,  
 Dwarf trees and humbler shrubs had found their place,  
 Forbidding man in their close hold to go,  
 Haw, gatter, holm, the service and the sloe;  
 With tangling weeds that at the bottom grew,  
 And climbers all above their feathery branches threw. 160  
 Nor path of man or beast was there espied; }  
 But there the birds of darkness loved to hide, }  
 The loathed toad to lodge, and speckled snake to glide. }  
 "To me this hall, thus view'd in part, appear'd  
 A mansion vast. I wonder'd, and I fear'd.  
 There as I wander'd, fancy's forming eye  
 Could gloomy cells and dungeons dark espy;  
 Winding through these, I caught th' appalling sound }  
 Of troubled souls, that guilty minds confound, }  
 Where murder made its way, and mischief stalk'd around. } 171  
 Above the roof were raised the midnight storms,  
 And the wild lights betray'd the shadowy forms.  
 "With all these flights and fancies, then so dear,  
 I reach'd the birth-day of my twentieth year;  
 And in the evening of a day in June  
 Was singing—as I sang—some heavenly tune.  
 My native tone, indeed, was harsh and hoarse,  
 But he who feels such powers can sing of course—  
 Is there a good on earth, or gift divine,  
 That fancy cannot say, behold! 'tis mine? 180  
 "So was I singing, when I saw descend  
 From this old seat a lady and her friend;  
 Downward they came with steady pace and slow,  
 Arm link'd in arm, to bless my world below.  
 I knew not yet if they escaped, or chose  
 Their own free way; if they had friends or foes—  
 But near to my dominion drew the pair,  
 Link'd arm in arm, and walk'd, conversing, there.  
 "I saw them ere they came, myself unseen,  
 My lofty fence and thorny bound between— 190  
 And one alone, one matchless face I saw,  
 And, though at distance, felt delight and awe:  
 Fancy and truth adorn'd her; fancy gave  
 Much, but not all; truth help'd to make their slave.  
 For she was lovely, all was not the vain  
 Or sickly homage of a fever'd brain;  
 No! she had beauty, such as they admire  
 Whose hope is earthly, and whose love desire;  
 Imagination might her aid bestow,  
 But she had charms that only truth could show. 200  
 "Their dress was such as well became the place, }  
 But one superior; hers the air, the grace, }  
 The condescending looks, that spoke the nobler race. }  
 Slender she was and tall; her fairy-feet  
 Bore her right onward to my shady seat;  
 And O! I sigh'd that she would nobly dare  
 To come, nor let her friend th' adventure share;  
 But see how I in my dominion reign,  
 And never wish to view the world again.  
 "Thus was I musing, seeing with my eyes 210  
 These objects, with my mind her fantasies,  
 And chiefly thinking—is this maid, divine  
 As she appears, to be this queen of mine?  
 Have I from henceforth beauty in my view,  
 Not airy all, but tangible and true?  
 Here then I fix, here bound my vagrant views,  
 And here devote my heart, my time, my muse.  
 "She saw not this, though ladies early trace  
 Their beauty's power, the glories of their face;  
 Yet knew not this fair creature—could not know 220  
 That new-born love that I too soon must show!

And I was musing—how shall I begin?  
 How make approach my unknown way to win,  
 And to that heart, as yet untouch'd, make known  
 The wound, the wish, the weakness of my own?  
 Such is my part, but—Mercy! what alarm?  
 Dare aught on earth that sovereign beauty harm?  
 Again—the shrieking charmers—how they rend  
 The gentle air—The shriekers lack a friend—  
 They are my princess and th' attendant maid, 230  
 In so much danger, and so much afraid!—  
 But whence the terror?—Let me haste and see }  
 What has befallen them who cannot flee— }  
 Whence can the peril rise? What can that peril be? }  
 "It soon appear'd, that while this nymph divine  
 Moved on, there met her rude uncivil kine,  
 Who knew her not—the damsel was not there  
 Who kept them—all obedient—in her care;  
 Strangers they thus defied and held in scorn,  
 And stood in threat'ning posture, hoof and horn; 240  
 While Susan—pail in hand—could stand the while  
 And prate with Daniel at a distant stile.  
 "As feeling prompted, to the place I ran,  
 Resolved to save the maids and show the man.  
 Was each a cow like that which challenged Guy, }  
 I had resolved t' attack it, and defy }  
 In mortal combat! to repel or die! }  
 That was no time to parley—or to say,  
 I will protect you—fly in peace away!  
 Lo! yonder stile—but with an air of grace, 250  
 As I supposed, I pointed to the place.  
 "The fair ones took me at my sign, and flew,  
 Each like a dove, and to the stile withdrew;  
 Where safe, at distance, and from terrors free,  
 They turn'd to view my beastly foes and me.  
 "I now had time my business to behold,  
 And did not like it—let the truth be told:  
 The cows, though cowards, yet in numbers strong,  
 Like other mobs, by might defended wrong;  
 In man's own pathway fix'd, they seem'd disposed 260  
 For hostile measure, and in order closed,  
 Then halted near me, as I judged, to treat,  
 Before we came to triumph or defeat.  
 "I was in doubt: 'twas sore disgrace, I knew,  
 To turn my back, and let the cows pursue;  
 And should I rashly mortal strife begin,  
 'Twas all unknown who might the battle win;  
 And yet to wait, and neither fight nor fly,  
 Would mirth create—I could not that deny;  
 It look'd as if for safety I would treat, 270  
 Nay, sue for peace—No! rather come defeat!  
 'Look to me, loveliest of thy sex! and give  
 One cheering glance, and not a cow shall live;  
 For lo! this iron bar, this strenuous arm,  
 And those dear eyes to aid me as a charm.'  
 "Say, goddess! Victory! say, on man or cow  
 Meanest thou now to perch?—On neither now—  
 For, as I ponder'd, on their way appear'd  
 The Amazonian milker of the herd;  
 These, at the wonted signals, made a stand, 280  
 And woo'd the nymph of the relieving hand;  
 Nor heeded now the man, who felt relief  
 Of other kind, and not unmix'd with grief;  
 For now he neither should his courage prove,  
 Nor in his dying moments boast his love.  
 "My sovereign beauty with amazement saw—  
 So she declared—the horrid things in awe;  
 Well pleased, she witness'd what respect was paid  
 By such brute natures—Every cow afraid,  
 And kept at distance by the powers of one, } 290  
 Who had to her a dangerous service done, }  
 That prudence had declined, that valour's self might shun. }  
 "So thought the maid, who now, beyond the stile,  
 Received her champion with a gracious smile;  
 Who now had leisure on those charms to dwell,  
 That he could never from his thought expel.

There are, I know, to whom a lover seems,  
 Praising his mistress, to relate his dreams;  
 But, Richard, looks like those, that angel-face  
 Could I no more in sister-angel trace; 300  
 O! it was more than fancy! it was more }  
 Than in my darling views I saw before, }  
 When I my idol made, and my allegiance swore. }  
 "Henceforth 'twas bliss upon that face to dwell,  
 Till every trace became indelible;  
 I bless'd the cause of that alarm, her fright,  
 And all that gave me favour in her sight,  
 Who then was kind and grateful, till my mind,  
 Pleased and exulting, awe awhile resign'd.  
 For in the moment when she feels afraid, } 310  
 How kindly speaks the condescending maid; }  
 She sees her danger near, she wants her lover's aid. }  
 As fire electric, when discharged, will strike  
 All who receive it, and they feel alike,  
 So in the shock of danger and surprise  
 Our minds are struck, and mix, and sympathise.  
 "But danger dies, and distance comes between  
 My state and that of my all glorious queen;  
 Yet much was done—upon my mind a chain  
 Was strongly fix'd, and likely to remain; 320  
 Listening, I grew enamour'd of the sound,  
 And felt to her my very being bound;  
 I bless'd the scene, nor felt a power to move,  
 Lost in the ecstasies of infant-love.  
 "She saw and smiled; the smile delight convey'd,  
 My love encouraged, and my act repaid.  
 In that same smile I read the charmer meant  
 To give her hero chaste encouragement;  
 It spoke, as plainly as a smile can speak,  
 'Seek whom you love, love freely whom you seek.' 330  
 "Thus, when the lovely witch had wrought her charm,  
 She took th' attendant maiden by the arm,  
 And left me fondly gazing, till no more  
 I could the shade of that dear form explore;  
 Then to my secret haunt I turn'd again,  
 Fire in my heart, and fever in my brain;  
 That face of her for ever in my view, }  
 Whom I was henceforth fated to pursue, }  
 To hope I knew not what—small hope in what I knew. } 340  
 "O! my dear Richard, what a waste of time  
 Gave I not thus to lunacy sublime;  
 What days, months, years, (to useful purpose lost)  
 Has not this dire infatuation cost?  
 To this fair vision I, a [bonded] slave,  
 Time, duty, credit, honour, comfort, gave;  
 Gave all—and waited for the glorious things  
 That hope expects, but fortune never brings.  
 Yet let me own, while I my fault reprove,  
 There is one blessing still affix'd to love—  
 To love like mine—for, as my soul it drew 350  
 From reason's path, it shunn'd dishonour's too;  
 It made my taste refined, my feelings nice,  
 And placed an angel in the way of vice.  
 "This angel now, whom I no longer view'd,  
 Far from this scene her destined way pursued;  
 No more that mansion held a form so fair,  
 She was away, and beauty was not there.  
 "Such, my dear Richard, was my early flame,  
 My youthful frenzy—give it either name;  
 It was the withering bane of many a year, 360  
 That past away in causeless hope and fear—  
 The hopes, the fears, that every dream could kill,  
 Or make alive, and lead my passive will.  
 "At length I learnt one name my angel bore,  
 And Rosabella I must now adore:  
 Yet knew but this—and not the favour'd place  
 That held the angel or th' angelic race;  
 Nor where, admired, the sweet enchantress dwelt,  
 But I had lost her—that, indeed, I felt.  
 "Yet, would I say, she will at length be mine! 370  
 Did ever hero hope or love resign?

Though men oppose, and fortune bids despair, }  
She will in time her mischief well repair, }  
And I, at last, shall wed this fairest of the fair! }

“My thrifty uncle, now return’d, began

To stir within me what remain’d of man;  
My powerful frenzy painted to the life,  
And ask’d me if I took a dream to wife?  
Debate ensued, and, though not well content,  
Upon a visit to his house I went.

380

He, the most saving of mankind, had still  
Some kindred feeling; he would guide my will,  
And teach me wisdom—so affection wrought,  
That he to save me from destruction sought:  
To him destruction, the most awful curse  
Of misery’s children, was—an empty purse!  
He his own books approved, and thought the pen  
An useful instrument for trading men;

But judged a quill was never to be slit  
Except to make it for a merchant fit.

390

He, when inform’d how men of taste could write,  
Look’d on his ledger with supreme delight;  
Then would he laugh, and, with insulting joy,  
Tell me aloud, ‘that’s poetry, my boy;

These are your golden numbers—them repeat, }  
The more you have, the more you’ll find them sweet— }  
Their numbers move all hearts—no matter for their feet. }

Sir, when a man composes in this style,  
What is to him a critic’s frown or smile?

What is the puppy’s censure or applause  
To the good man who on his banker draws,  
Buys an estate, and writes upon the grounds,  
‘Pay to A. B. an hundred thousand pounds?’  
Thus, my dear nephew, thus your talents prove;  
Leave verse to poets, and the poor to love.’

400

“Some months I suffered thus, compell’d to sit  
And hear a wealthy kinsman aim at wit;  
Yet there was something in his nature good,  
And he had feeling for the tie of blood.  
So, while I languish’d for my absent maid  
I some observance to my uncle paid.”

410

“Had you inquired?” said Richard.

“I had placed

Inquirers round, but nothing could be traced;  
Of every reasoning creature at this Hall,  
And tenant near it, I applied to all——  
‘Tell me if she’—and I described her well—  
‘Dwelt long a guest, or where retired to dwell?’  
But no! such lady they remember’d not—  
They saw that face, strange beings! and forgot.

Nor was inquiry all; but I pursued  
My soul’s first wish, with hope’s vast strength endured:  
I cross’d the seas, I went where strangers go,  
And gazed on crowds as one who dreads a foe,  
Or seeks a friend; and, when I sought in vain,  
Fled to fresh crowds, and hoped, and gazed again.”

420

“It was a strong possession”—“Strong and strange,  
I felt the evil, yet desired not change.

Years now had flown, nor was the passion cured,  
But hope had life, and so was life endured;  
The mind’s disease, with all its strength, stole on,  
Till youth, and health, and all but love were gone.

430

And there were seasons, Richard, horrid hours  
Of mental suffering! they o’erthrew my powers,  
And made my mind unsteady—I have still,  
At times, a feeling of that nameless ill,  
That is not madness—I could always tell  
My mind was wandering—knew it was not well;  
Felt all my loss of time, the shameful waste  
Of talents perish’d, and of parts disgraced.

But though my mind was sane, there was a void—  
My understanding seem’d in part destroy’d;  
I thought I was not of my species one,  
But unconnected, injured and undone!

440

“While in this state, once more my uncle pray’d  
That I would hear—I heard, and I obey’d;



For I was thankful that a being broke  
 On this my sadness, or an interest took  
 In my poor life—but, at his mansion, rest  
 Came with its halcyon stillness to my breast.

450

Slowly there enter'd in my mind concern  
 For things about me—I would something learn,  
 And to my uncle listen; who, with joy,  
 Found that ev'n yet I could my powers employ,  
 Till I could feel new hopes my mind possess,  
 Of ease at least, if not of happiness;  
 Till, not contented, not in discontent,  
 As my good uncle counsell'd, on I went;  
 Conscious of youth's great error—nay, the crime  
 Of manhood now—a dreary waste of time!  
 Conscious of that account which I must give

460

How life had past with me—I strove to live.  
 "Had I, like others, my first hope attain'd,  
 I must, at least, a certainty have gain'd;  
 Had I, like others, lost the hope of youth,  
 Another hope had promised greater truth;  
 But I in baseless hopes, and groundless views,  
 Was fated time, and peace, and health to lose,  
 Impell'd to seek, for ever doom'd to fail,  
 Is—I distress you—let me end my tale.  
 "Something one day occur'd about a bill

470

That was not drawn with true mercantile skill,  
 And I was ask'd and authorized to go  
 To seek the firm of Clutterbuck and Co.;  
 Their hour was past—but when I urged the case,  
 There was a youth who named a second place;  
 Where, on occasions of important kind,  
 I might the man of occupation find  
 In his retirement, where he found repose  
 From the vexations that in business rose.  
 I found, though not with ease, this private seat

480

Of soothing quiet, wisdom's still retreat.  
 "The house was good, but not so pure and clean  
 As I had houses of retirement seen;  
 Yet men, I knew, of meditation deep,  
 Love not their maidens should their studies sweep;  
 His room I saw, and must acknowledge, there  
 Were not the signs of cleanliness or care:  
 A female servant, void of female grace,  
 Loose in attire, proceeded to the place;  
 She stared intrusive on my slender frame,

490

And boldly ask'd my business and my name.  
 "I gave them both; and, left to be amused,  
 Well as I might, the parlour I perused.  
 The shutters half unclosed, the curtains fell }  
 Half down, and rested on the window-sill, }  
 And thus, confusedly, made the room half visible. }  
 Late as it was, the little parlour bore  
 Some tell-tale tokens of the night before;  
 There were strange sights and scents about the room,  
 Of food high-season'd, and of strong perfume;

500

Two unmatch'd sofas ample rents display'd;  
 Carpet and curtains were alike decay'd;  
 A large old mirror, with once-gilded frame,  
 Reflected prints that I forbear to name,  
 Such as a youth might purchase—but, in truth,  
 Not a sedate or sober-minded youth;  
 The cinders yet were sleeping in the grate, }  
 Warm from the fire, continued large and late, }  
 As left by careless folk in their neglected state; }  
 The chairs in haste seem'd whirl'd about the room, }  
 As when the sons of riot hurry home, }  
 And leave the troubled place to solitude and gloom. }

510

"All this, for I had ample time, I saw,  
 And prudence question'd—should we not withdraw?  
 For he who makes me thus on business wait,  
 Is not for business in a proper state;  
 But man there was not, was not he for whom  
 To this convenient lodging I was come;  
 No! but a lady's voice was heard to call  
 On my attention—and she had it all;

520

For lo! she enters, speaking ere in sight,  
 'Monsieur! I shall not want the chair to-night—  
 Where shall I see him?—This dear hour atones  
 For all affection's hopeless sighs and groans'—  
 Then, turning to me—'Art thou come at last?  
 A thousand welcomes—be forgot the past;  
 Forgotten all the grief that absence brings,  
 Fear that torments, and jealousy that stings—  
 All that is cold, injurious, and unkind,  
 Be it for ever banish'd from the mind; 530  
 And in that mind, and in that heart be now  
 The soft endearment, and the binding vow!  
 "She spoke—and o'er the practised features threw  
 The looks that reason charm, and strength subdue.  
 "Will you not ask, how I beheld that face,  
 Or read that mind, and read it in that place?  
 I have tried, Richard, oft-times, and in vain,  
 To trace my thoughts, and to review their train—  
 If train there were—that meadow, grove, and stile;  
 The fright, th' escape, her sweetness and her smile; 540  
 Years since elapsed, and hope, from year to year,  
 To find her free—and then to find her here!  
 "But is it she?—O! yes; the rose is dead;  
 All beauty, fragrance, freshness, glory fled;  
 But yet 'tis she—the same and not the same—  
 Who to my bower an heavenly being came;  
 Who waked my soul's first thought of real bliss;  
 Whom long I sought; and now I find her—this.  
 "I cannot paint her—something I had seen  
 So pale and slim, and tawdry and unclean; 550  
 With haggard looks, of vice and wo the prey,  
 Laughing in langour, miserably gay.  
 Her face, where face appear'd, was amply spread, }  
 By art's coarse pencil, with ill-chosen red, }  
 The flower's fictitious bloom, the blushing of the dead; }  
 But still the features were the same, and strange  
 My view of both—the sameness and the change,  
 That fix'd me gazing and my eye enchain'd,  
 Although so little of herself remain'd;  
 It is the creature whom I loved, and yet 560  
 Is far unlike her—Would I could forget  
 The angel or her fall! the once adored  
 Or now despised! the worshipp'd or deplored!  
 "'O! Rosabella!' I prepared to say, }  
 'Whom I have loved,' but prudence whisper'd nay, }  
 And folly grew ashamed—discretion had her day. }  
 She gave her hand; which, as I lightly press'd,  
 The cold but ardent grasp my soul oppress'd;  
 The ruin'd girl disturb'd me, and my eyes  
 Look'd, I conceive, both sorrow and surprise. 570  
 "I spoke my business—'He,' she answer'd, 'comes  
 And lodges here—he has the backward rooms—  
 He now is absent, and I chanced to hear  
 Will not before to-morrow eve appear,  
 And may be longer absent—O! the night  
 When you preserved me in that horrid fright;  
 A thousand, thousand times, asleep, awake,  
 I thought of what you ventured for my sake—  
 Now, have you thought—yet tell me so—deceive  
 Your Rosabella, willing to believe! 580  
 O! there is something in love's first-born pain  
 Sweeter than bliss—it never comes again—  
 But has your heart been faithful?'—Here my pride,  
 To anger rising, her attempt defied—  
 'My faith must childish in your sight appear,  
 Who have been faithful—to how many, dear?'  
 "If words had fail'd, a look explain'd their style,  
 She could not blush assent, but she could smile.  
 Good heaven! I thought, have I rejected fame,  
 Credit, and wealth, for one who smiles at shame? 590  
 "She saw me thoughtful—saw it, as I guess'd,  
 With some concern, though nothing she express'd.  
 "Come, my dear friend, discard that look of care,  
 All things were made to be, as all things are;  
 All to seek pleasure as the end design'd,

The only good in matter or in mind;  
So was I taught by one, who gave me all  
That my experienced heart can wisdom call.

“I saw thee young, love’s soft obedient slave,  
And many a sigh to my young lover gave;  
And I had, spite of cowardice or cow,  
Return’d thy passion, and exchanged my vow;  
But, while I thought to bait the amorous hook,  
One set for me my eager fancy took;  
There was a crafty eye, that far could see,  
And through my failings fascinated me:  
Mine was a childish wish, to please my boy;  
His a design, his wishes to enjoy.

600

O! we have both about the world been tost,  
Thy gain I know not—I, they cry, am lost;  
So let the wise ones talk; they talk in vain,  
And are mistaken both in loss and gain;  
’Tis gain to get whatever life affords,  
’Tis loss to spend our time in empty words.

610

“I was a girl, and thou a boy wert then,  
Nor aught of women knew, nor I of men;  
But I have traffick’d in the world, and thou,  
Doubtless, canst boast of thy experience now;  
Let us the knowledge we have gain’d produce,  
And kindly turn it to our common use.’

620

“Thus spoke the siren in voluptuous style, }  
While I stood gazing and perplex’d the while, }  
Chain’d by that voice, confounded by that smile. }  
And then she sang, and changed from grave to gay,  
Till all reproach and anger died away.

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“My Damon was the first to wake  
The gentle flame that cannot die;  
My Damon is the last to take  
The faithful bosom’s softest sigh:  
The life between is nothing worth,  
O! cast it from thy thought away;  
Think of the day that gave it birth,  
And this its sweet returning day.

630

“Buried be all that has been done,  
Or say that naught is done amiss;  
For who the dangerous path can shun  
In such bewildering world as this?  
But love can every fault forgive,  
Or with a tender look reprove;  
And now let naught in memory live,  
But that we meet, and that we love.”

640

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“And then she moved my pity; for she wept,  
And told her miseries till resentment slept;  
For when she saw she could not reason blind,  
She pour’d her heart’s whole sorrows on my mind,  
With features graven on my soul, with sighs  
Seen but not heard, with soft imploring eyes,  
And voice that needed not, but had the aid  
Of powerful words to soften and persuade.

650

O! I repent me of the past; and sure  
Grief and repentance make the bosom pure;  
Yet meet thee not with clean and single heart,  
As on the day we met—and but to part!  
Ere I had drank the cup that to my lip  
Was held, and press’d till I was forced to sip.  
I drank indeed, but never ceased to hate—  
It poison’d, but could not intoxicate.  
T’ excuse my fall I plead not love’s excess,  
But a weak orphan’s need and loneliness.  
I had no parent upon earth—no door  
Was oped to me—young, innocent, and poor,  
Vain, tender, and resentful—and my friend,  
Jealous of one who must on her depend,  
Making life misery—You could witness then  
That I was precious in the eyes of men;

660

So, made by them a goddess, and denied  
 Respect and notice by the women's pride;  
 Here scorn'd, there worshipp'd—will it strange appear,  
 Allured and driven, that I settled here? 670  
 Yet loved it not; and never have I pass'd  
 One day, and wish'd another like the last.  
 There was a fallen angel, I have read,  
 For whom their tears the sister-angels shed,  
 Because, although she ventured to rebel,  
 She was not minded like a child of hell.—  
 Such is my lot! and will it not be given  
 To grief like mine, that I may think of heaven;  
 Behold how there the glorious creatures shine,  
 And all my soul to grief and hope resign?"  
 "I wonder'd, doubting—and, is this a fact, 680  
 I thought, or part thou art disposed to act?  
 "Is it not written, He, who came to save  
 Sinners, the sins of deepest dye forgave;  
 That he his mercy to the sufferers dealt,  
 And pardon'd error when the ill was felt?  
 Yes! I would hope, there is an eye that reads  
 What is within, and sees the heart that bleeds—  
 But who on earth will one so lost deplore,  
 And who will help that lost one to restore?  
 'Who will on trust the sigh of grief receive;  
 And—all things warring with belief—believe?' 690  
 "Soften'd, I said—'Be mine the hand and heart,  
 If with your world you will consent to part.'  
 She would—she tried—Alas! she did not know  
 How deeply rooted evil habits grow:  
 She felt the truth upon her spirits press,  
 But wanted ease, indulgence, show, excess,  
 Voluptuous banquets, pleasures—not refined,  
 But such as soothe to sleep th' opposing mind—  
 She look'd for idle vice, the time to kill, 700  
 And subtle, strong apologies for ill;  
 And thus her yielding, unresisting soul  
 Sank, and let sin confuse her and control:  
 Pleasures that brought disgust yet brought relief,  
 And minds she hated help'd to war with grief."  
 "Thus then she perish'd?"—  
 "Nay—but thus she proved  
 Slave to the vices that she never loved;  
 But, while she thus her better thoughts opposed,  
 And woo'd the world, the world's deceptions closed.—  
 I had long lost her; but I sought in vain 710  
 To banish pity—still she gave me pain;  
 Still I desired to aid her—to direct,  
 And wish'd the world, that won her, to reject;  
 Nor wish'd in vain—there came, at length, request  
 That I would see a wretch with grief oppress'd,  
 By guilt affrighted—and I went to trace  
 Once more the vice-worn features of that face,  
 That sin-wreck'd being! and I saw her laid  
 Where never worldly joy a visit paid,  
 That world receding fast! the world to come 720  
 Conceal'd in terror, ignorance, and gloom,  
 Sins, sorrow, and neglect: with not a spark  
 Of vital hope—all horrible and dark—  
 It frighten'd me!—I thought, and shall not I }  
 Thus feel? thus fear?—this danger can I fly? }  
 Do I so wisely live that I can calmly die? }  
 "The wants I saw I could supply with ease,  
 But there were wants of other kind than these;  
 Th' awakening thought, the hope-inspiring view— }  
 The doctrines awful, grand, alarming, true— } 730  
 Most painful to the soul, and yet most healing too. }  
 Still, I could something offer, and could send  
 For other aid—a more important friend,  
 Whose duty call'd him, and his love no less,  
 To help the grieving spirit in distress;  
 To save in that sad hour the drooping prey,  
 And from its victim drive despair away.  
 All decent comfort[s] round the sick were seen;  
 The female helpers quiet, sober, clean;

Her kind physician with a smile appear'd, 740  
 And zealous love the pious friend endear'd;  
 While I, with mix'd sensations, could inquire,  
 'Hast thou one wish, one unfulfill'd desire?  
 Speak every thought, nor unindulged depart,  
 If I can make thee happier than thou art.'  
 "Yes! there was yet a female friend, an old  
 And grieving nurse! to whom it should be told—  
 I would tell—that she, her child, had fail'd,  
 And turn'd from truth! yet truth at length prevail'd.  
 "'Twas in that chamber, Richard, I began 750  
 To think more deeply of the end of man:  
 Was it to jostle all his fellows by,  
 To run before them, and say, 'here am I,  
 Fall down, and worship?'—Was it, life throughout,  
 With circumspection keen to hunt about,  
 As spaniels for their game, where might be found  
 Abundance more for coffers than abound?  
 Or was it life's enjoyments to prefer,  
 Like this poor girl, and then to die like her? 760  
 No! He, who gave the faculties, design'd  
 Another use for the immortal mind:  
 There is a state in which it will appear  
 With all the good and ill contracted here;  
 With gain and loss, improvement and defect; }  
 And then, my soul! what hast thou to expect }  
 For talents laid aside, life's waste, and time's neglect? }  
 "Still as I went came other change—the frame  
 And features wasted, and yet slowly came  
 The end; and so inaudible the breath,  
 And still the breathing, we exclaim'd—"tis death!" 770  
 But death it was not: when, indeed, she died,  
 I sat and his last gentle stroke espied:  
 When—as it came—or did my fancy trace  
 That lively, lovely flushing o'er the face,  
 Bringing back all that my young heart impress'd?  
 It came—and went!—She sigh'd, and was at rest!  
 "Adieu, I said, fair Frailty! dearly cost  
 The love I bore thee—time and treasure lost;  
 And I have suffer'd many years in vain;  
 Now let me something in my sorrows gain: 780  
 Heaven would not all this wo for man intend  
 If man's existence with his we should end;  
 Heaven would not pain, and grief, and anguish give,  
 If man was not by discipline to live;  
 And for that brighter, better world prepare, }  
 That souls with souls, when purified, shall share, }  
 Those stains all done away that must not enter there. }  
 "Home I return'd, with spirits in that state  
 Of vacant wo I strive not to relate;  
 Nor how, deprived of all her hope and strength, 790  
 My soul turn'd feebly to the world at length.  
 I travell'd then till health again resumed  
 Its former seat—I must not say re-bloom'd;  
 And then I fill'd, not loth, that favourite place  
 That has enrich'd some seniors of our race;  
 Patient and dull I grew; my uncle's praise  
 Was largely dealt me on my better days;  
 A love of money—other love at rest—  
 Came creeping on, and settled in my breast;  
 The force of habit held me to the oar, 800  
 Till I could relish what I scorn'd before:  
 I now could talk and scheme with *men of sense*,  
 Who deal for millions, and who sigh for pence;  
 And grew so like them, that I heard with joy  
 Old Blueskin said I was a pretty boy;  
 For I possess'd the caution, with the zeal,  
 That all true lovers of their interest feel.  
 Exalted praise! and to the creature due  
 Who loves that interest solely to pursue.  
 "But I was sick, and sickness brought disgust; 810  
 My peace I could not to my profits trust:  
 Again some views of brighter kind appear'd,  
 My heart was humbled, and my mind was clear'd;  
 I felt those helps that souls diseased restore,

And that cold frenzy, avarice, raged no more.  
From dreams of boundless wealth I then arose; }  
This place, the scene of infant bliss, I chose; }  
And here I find relief, and here I seek repose. }

“Yet much is lost, and not yet much is found,  
But what remains, I would believe, is sound:  
That first wild passion, that last mean desire,  
Are felt no more; but holier hopes require  
A mind prepared and steady—my reform  
Has fears like his, who, suffering in a storm,  
Is on a rich but unknown country cast,  
The future fearing, while he feels the past;  
But whose more cheerful mind, with hope imbued,  
Sees through receding clouds the rising good.”

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK VIII.

### THE SISTERS.

Morning Walk and Conversation—Visit at a Cottage—Characters of the Sisters—Lucy and Jane—Their Lovers—Their Friend the Banker and his Lady—Their Intimacy—Its Consequence—Different Conduct of the Lovers—The Effect upon the Sisters—Their present State—The Influence of their Fortune upon the Minds of either.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK VIII.

### THE SISTERS.

The morning shone in cloudless beauty bright;  
Richard his letters read with much delight;  
George from his pillow rose in happy tone,  
His bosom's lord sat lightly on his throne.  
They read the morning news—they saw the sky  
Inviting call'd them, and the earth was dry.

"The day invites us, brother," said the 'squire;  
"Come, and I'll show thee something to admire:  
We still may beauty in our prospects trace;  
If not, we have them in both mind and face.

10

"'Tis but two miles—to let such women live  
Unseen of him, what reason can I give?  
Why should not Richard to the girls be known?  
Would I have all their friendship for my own?—  
Brother, there dwell, yon northern hill below,  
Two favourite maidens, whom 'tis good to know;  
Young, but experienced; dwellers in a cot,  
Where they sustain and dignify their lot;  
The best good girls in all our world below—  
O! you must know them—Come! and you shall know.

20

"But lo! the morning wastes—here, Jacob, stir—  
If Phœbe comes, do you attend to her;  
And let not Mary get a chattering press  
Of idle girls to hear of her distress.  
Ask her to wait till my return—and hide  
From her meek mind your plenty and your pride;  
Nor vex a creature, humble, sad, and still,  
By your coarse bounty, and your rude good-will."

This said, the brothers hasten'd on their way,  
With all the foretaste of a pleasant day.  
The morning purpose in the mind had fix'd  
The leading thought, and that with others mix'd.

30

"How well it is," said George, "when we possess  
The strength that bears us up in our distress;  
And need not the resources of our pride,  
Our fall from greatness and our wants to hide;  
But have the spirit and the wish to show,  
We know our wants as well as others know.

'Tis true, the rapid turns of fortune's wheel  
Make even the virtuous and the humble feel:  
They for a time must suffer, and but few  
Can bear their sorrows and our pity too.

40

"Hence all these small expedients, day by day,  
Are used to hide the evils they betray:  
When, if our pity chances to be seen, }  
The wounded pride retorts, with anger keen, }  
And man's insulted grief takes refuge in his spleen. }

"When Timon's board contains a single dish,  
Timon talks much of market-men and fish,  
Forgetful servants, and th' infernal cook,  
Who always spoil'd whate'er she undertook.

50

"But say it tries us from our height to fall,  
Yet is not life itself a trial all?  
And not a virtue in the bosom lives,  
That gives such ready pay as patience gives:

That pure submission to the ruling mind,  
Fix'd, but not forced; obedient, but not blind,  
The will of heaven to make her own she tries,  
Or makes her own to heaven a sacrifice.

“And is there aught on earth so rich or rare,  
Whose pleasures may with virtue's pains compare?  
This fruit of patience, this the pure delight  
That 'tis a trial in her Judge's sight;  
Her part still striving duty to sustain,  
Not spurning pleasure, not defying pain;  
Never in triumph till her race be won,  
And never fainting till her work be done.”

With thoughts like these they reach'd the village brook,  
And saw a lady sitting with her book;  
And so engaged she heard not, till the men  
Were at her side, nor was she frighten'd then;  
But to her friend, the 'squire, his smile return'd,  
Through which the latent sadness he discern'd.  
The stranger-brother at the cottage door  
Was now admitted, and was strange no more;  
Then of an absent sister he was told,  
Whom they were not at present to behold;  
Something was said of nerves, and that disease,  
Whose varying powers on mind and body seize,  
Enfeebling both!—Here chose they to remain  
One hour in peace, and then return'd again.

“I know not why,” said Richard, “but I feel  
The warmest pity on my bosom steal  
For that dear maid! How well her looks express  
For this world's good a cherish'd hopelessness!  
A resignation that is so entire,  
It feels not now the stirrings of desire;  
What now to her is all the world esteems?  
She is awake, and cares not for its dreams;  
But moves while yet on earth, as one above  
Its hopes and fears—it[s] loathing and its love.

“But shall I learn,” said he, “these sisters' fate?”—  
And found his brother willing to relate.

“The girls were orphans early; yet I saw,  
When young, their father—his profession law;  
He left them but a competence, a store  
That made his daughters neither rich nor poor;  
Not rich, compared with some who dwelt around;  
Not poor, for want they neither fear'd nor found;  
Their guardian uncle was both kind and just,  
One whom a parent might in dying trust;  
Who, in their youth, the trusted store improved,  
And, when he ceased to guide them, fondly loved.

“These sister beauties were in fact the grace  
Of yon small town,—it was their native place;  
Like Saul's famed daughters were the lovely twain,  
As Micah, Lucy, and as Merab, Jane:  
For this was tall, with free commanding air,  
And that was mild, and delicate, and fair.

“Jane had an arch delusive smile, that charm'd  
And threaten'd too; alluring, it alarm'd;  
The smile of Lucy her approval told,  
Cheerful, not changing; neither kind nor cold.

“When children, Lucy love alone possess'd,  
Jane was more punished and was more caress'd;  
If told the childish wishes, one bespoke  
A lamb, a bird, a garden, and a brook;  
The other wish'd a joy unknown, a rout  
Or crowded ball, and to be first led out.

“Lucy loved all that grew upon the ground,  
And loveliness in all things living found;  
The gilded fly, the fern upon the wall,  
Were nature's works, and admirable all;  
Pleased with indulgence of so cheap a kind,  
Its cheapness never discomposed her mind.

“Jane had no liking for such things as these,  
Things pleasing her must her superiors please;  
The costly flower was precious in her eyes,



That skill can vary, or that money buys;  
 Her taste was good, but she was still afraid, 130  
 Till fashion sanction'd the remarks she made.  
 "The sisters read, and Jane with some delight,  
 The satires keen that fear or rage excite,  
 That men in power attack, and ladies high,  
 And give broad hints that we may know them by.  
 She was amused when sent to haunted rooms,  
 Or some dark passage where the spirit comes  
 Of one once murder'd! then she laughing read,  
 And felt at once the folly and the dread.  
 As rustic girls to crafty gipsies fly, 140  
 And trust the liar though they fear the lie,  
 Or as a patient, urged by grievous pains,  
 Will fee the daring quack whom he disdains:  
 So Jane was pleased to see the beckoning hand,  
 And trust the magic of the Ratcliffe-wand.  
 "In her religion—for her mind, though light,  
 Was not disposed our better views to slight—  
 Her favourite authors were a solemn kind,  
 Who fill with dark mysterious thoughts the mind;  
 And who with such conceits her fancy plied, 150  
 Became her friend, philosopher, and guide.  
 "She made the Progress of the Pilgrim one  
 To build a thousand pleasant views upon;  
 All that connects us with a world above  
 She loved to fancy, and she long'd to prove;  
 Well would the poet please her, who could lead  
 Her fancy forth, yet keep untouch'd her creed.  
 "Led by an early custom, Lucy spied,  
 When she awaked, the Bible at her side;  
 That, ere she ventured on a world of care, } 160  
 She might for trials, joys or pains prepare, }  
 For every dart a shield, a guard for every snare. }  
 "She read not much of high heroic deeds,  
 Where man the measure of man's power exceeds;  
 But gave to luckless love and fate severe  
 Her tenderest pity and her softest tear.  
 "She mix'd not faith with fable, but she trod  
 Right onward, cautious in the ways of God;  
 Nor did she dare to launch on seas unknown, }  
 In search of truths by some adventurers shown, } 170  
 But her own compass used, and kept a course her own. }  
 "The maidens both their loyalty declared,  
 And in the glory of their country shared;  
 But Jane that glory felt with proud delight,  
 When England's foes were vanquish'd in the fight;  
 While Lucy's feelings for the brave who bled  
 Put all such glorious triumphs from her head.  
 "They both were frugal; Lucy from the fear  
 Of wasting that which want esteems so dear,  
 But finds so scarce, her sister from the pain 180  
 That springs from want, when treated with disdain.  
 "Jane borrow'd maxims from a doubting school,  
 And took for truth the test of ridicule;  
 Lucy saw no such virtue in a jest:  
 Truth was with her of ridicule a test.  
 "They loved each other with the warmth of youth,  
 With ardour, candour, tenderness, and truth;  
 And, though their pleasures were not just the same,  
 Yet both were pleased whenever one became;  
 Nay, each would rather in the act rejoice, 190  
 That was th' adopted, not the native choice.  
 "Each had a friend, and friends to minds so fond  
 And good are soon united in the bond;  
 Each had a lover; but it seem'd that fate  
 Decreed that these should not approximate.  
 Now Lucy's lover was a prudent swain,  
 And thought, in all things, what would be his gain;  
 The younger sister first engaged his view,  
 But with her beauty he her spirit knew;  
 Her face he much admired, 'but, put the case,' 200  
 Said he, 'I marry, what is then a face?  
 At first it pleases to have drawn the lot;  
 He then forgets it, but his wife does not;

Jane too,' he judged, 'would be reserved and nice,  
And many lovers had enhanced her price.'

"Thus thinking much, but hiding what he thought,  
The prudent lover Lucy's favour sought,  
And he succeeded—she was free from art,  
And his appear'd a gentle guileless heart;  
Such she respected; true, her sister found  
His placid face too ruddy and too round,  
Too cold and inexpressive; such a face  
Where you could nothing mark'd or manly trace.

210

"But Lucy found him to his mother kind,  
And saw the Christian meekness of his mind;  
His voice was soft, his temper mild and sweet,  
His mind was easy, and his person neat.

"Jane said he wanted courage; Lucy drew  
No ill from that, though she believed it too;  
'It is religious, Jane, be not severe;'  
'Well, Lucy, then it is religious fear,'  
Nor could the sister, great as was her love,  
A man so lifeless and so cool approve.

220

"Jane had a lover, whom a lady's pride  
Might wish to see attending at her side,  
Young, handsome, sprightly, and with good address,  
Not mark'd for folly, error or excess;  
Yet not entirely from their censure free  
Who judge our failings with severity.

The very care he took to keep his name  
Stainless, with some was evidence of shame.

230

"Jane heard of this, and she replied, 'Enough;  
Prove but the facts, and I resist not proof;  
Nor is my heart so easy as to love  
The man my judgment bids me not approve.'

But yet that heart a secret joy confess'd,  
To find no slander on the youth would rest;  
His was, in fact, such conduct, that a maid  
Might think of marriage, and be not afraid;  
And she was pleased to find a spirit high,  
Free from all fear, that spurn'd hypocrisy.

240

"'What fears my sister?' said the partial fair,  
For Lucy fear'd,—'Why tell me to beware?  
No smooth deceitful varnish can I find; }  
His is a spirit generous, free, and kind; }  
And all his flaws are seen, all floating in his mind. }  
A little boldness in his speech. What then?  
It is the failing of these generous men.

A little vanity, but—O! my dear,  
They all would show it, were they all sincere.

250

"'But come, agreed; we'll lend each other eyes  
To see our favourites, when they wear disguise;  
And all those errors that will then be shown  
Uninfluenced by the workings of our own.'

"Thus lived the sisters, far from power removed,  
And far from need, both loving and beloved.  
Thus grew, as myrtles grow; I grieve at heart  
That I have pain and sorrow to impart.

But so it is, the sweetest herbs that grow  
In the lone vale, where sweetest waters flow,  
Ere drops the blossom, or appears the fruit,  
Feel the vile grub, and perish at the root;  
And, in a quick and premature decay,  
Breathe the pure fragrance of their life away.

260

"A town was near, in which the buildings all  
Were large, but one pre-eminently tall—  
An huge high house. Without there was an air  
Of lavish cost; no littleness was there;  
But room for servants, horses, whiskies, gigs,  
And walls for pines and peaches, grapes and figs;  
Bright on the sloping glass the sunbeams shone,  
And brought the summer of all climates on.

270

"Here wealth its prowess to the eye display'd,  
And here advanced the seasons, there delay'd;  
Bid the due heat each growing sweet refine, }  
Made the sun's light with grosser fire combine, }  
And to the Tropic gave the vigour of the Line. }

"Yet, in the master of this wealth behold

}

A light vain coxcomb taken from his gold, }  
 Whose busy brain was weak, whose boasting heart was cold. } 280  
 O! how he talk'd to that believing town,  
 That he would give it riches and renown;  
 Cause a canal where treasures were to swim,  
 And they should owe their opulence to him!  
 In fact, of riches he insured a crop,  
 So they would give him but a seed to drop.  
 As used the alchymist his boasts to make,  
 'I give you millions for the mite I take.'  
 The mite they never could again behold,  
 The millions all were Eldorado gold. 290

"By this professing man the country round  
 Was search'd to see where money could be found.  
 "The thriven farmer, who had lived to spare,  
 Became an object of especial care;  
 He took the frugal tradesman by the hand,  
 And wish'd him joy of what he might command;  
 And the industrious servant, who had laid  
 His saving by, it was his joy to aid;  
 Large talk, and hints of some productive plan  
 Half named, won all his hearers to a man; 300  
 Uncertain projects drew them wondering on,  
 And avarice listen'd till distrust was gone.  
 But when to these dear girls he found his way,  
 All easy, artless, innocent were they;  
 When he compelled his foolish wife to be  
 At once so great, so humble, and so free;  
 Whom others sought, nor always with success!  
 But they were both her pride and happiness;  
 And she esteem'd them, but attended still  
 To the vile purpose of her husband's will; 310  
 And, when she fix'd his snares about their mind,  
 Respected those whom she essay'd to blind;  
 Nay with esteem she some compassion gave  
 To the fair victims whom she would not save.

"The Banker's wealth and kindness were her themes,  
 His generous plans, his patriotic schemes;  
 What he had done for some, a favourite few,  
 What for his favourites still he meant to do;  
 Not that he always listen'd—which was hard—  
 To her, when speaking of her great regard  
 For certain friends—'but you, as I may say,  
 Are his own choice—I am not jealous—nay!' 320  
 "Then came the man himself, and came with speed,  
 As just from business of importance freed;  
 Or just escaping, came with looks of fire,  
 As if he'd just attain'd his full desire;  
 As if Prosperity and he for life  
 Were wed, and he was showing off his wife;  
 Pleased to display his influence, and to prove  
 Himself the object of her partial love; 330  
 Perhaps with this was join'd the latent fear,  
 The time would come when he should not be dear.

"Jane laugh'd at all their visits and parade,  
 And call'd it friendship in an hot-house made;  
 A style of friendship suited to his taste,  
 Brought on, and ripen'd, like his grapes, in haste;  
 She saw the wants that wealth in vain would hide,  
 And all the tricks and littleness of pride;  
 On all the wealth would creep the vulgar stain,  
 And grandeur strove to look itself in vain. 340

"Lucy perceived—but she replied, 'why heed  
 Such small defects?—they're very kind indeed!'  
 And kind they were, and ready to produce  
 Their easy friendship, ever fit for use,  
 Friendship that enters into all affairs,  
 And daily wants, and daily gets, repairs.

"Hence at the cottage of the sisters stood  
 The Banker's steed—he was so very good;  
 Oft through the roads, in weather foul or fair,  
 Their friend's gay carriage bore the gentle pair; 350  
 His grapes and nectarines woo'd the virgins' hand;  
 His books and roses were at their command,  
 And costly flowers—he took upon him shame

That he could purchase what he could not name.

“Lucy was vex’d to have such favours shown,  
And they returning nothing of their own;  
Jane smiled, and begg’d her sister to believe,—  
‘We give at least as much as we receive.’

“Alas! and more; they gave their ears and eyes,  
His splendor oft-times took them by surprise;  
And, if in Jane appear’d a meaning smile,  
She gazed, admired, and paid respect the while;  
Would she had rested there! Deluded maid,  
She saw not yet the fatal price she paid;  
Saw not that wealth, though join’d with folly, grew

In her regard; she smiled, but listened too;  
Nay would be grateful, she would trust her all, }  
Her funded source—to him a matter small; }  
Taken for their sole use, and ever at their call, }  
To be improved—he knew not how indeed, }  
But he had methods—and they must succeed.

“This was so good, that Jane, in very pride,  
To spare him trouble, for a while denied;  
And Lucy’s prudence, though it was alarm’d,  
Was by the splendor of the Banker charm’d;  
What was her paltry thousand pounds to him,  
Who would expend five thousand on a whim?  
And then the portion of his wife was known;  
But not that she reserved it for her own.

“Lucy her lover trusted with the fact,  
And frankly ask’d, ‘if he approved the act?’  
‘It promised well,’ he said; ‘he could not tell  
How it might end, but sure it promised well;  
He had himself a trifle in the Bank,  
And should be sore uneasy if it sank.’

“Jane from her lover had no wish to hide  
Her deed; but was withheld by maiden pride;  
To talk so early—as if one were sure  
Of being his; she could not that endure.

“But when the sisters were apart, and when  
They freely spoke of their affairs and men,  
They thought with pleasure of the sum improved,  
And so presented to the men they loved.

“Things now proceeded in a quiet train;  
No cause appear’d to murmur or complain;  
The monied man, his ever-smiling dame,  
And their young darlings, in their carriage came.  
Jane’s sprightly lover smiled their pomp to see,  
And ate their grapes, with gratitude and glee;  
But with the freedom there was nothing mean,  
Humble, or forward, in his freedom seen;  
His was the frankness of a mind that shows  
It knows itself, nor fears for what it knows.

But Lucy’s ever humble friend was awed  
By the profusion he could not applaud;  
He seem’d indeed reluctant to partake  
Of the collation that he could not make;  
And this was pleasant in the maiden’s view,—  
Was modesty—was moderation too;  
Though Jane esteem’d it meanness; and she saw  
Fear in that prudence, avarice in that awe.

“But both the lovers now to town are gone;  
By business one is call’d, by duty one;  
While rumour rises—whether false or true  
The ladies knew not—it was known to few—  
But fear there was, and on their guardian-friend  
They for advice and comfort would depend  
When rose the day; meantime from Belmont-place  
Came vile report, predicting quick disgrace.

“‘Twas told—the servants, who had met to thank  
Their lord for placing money in his Bank—  
Their kind free master, who such wages gave,  
And then increased whatever they could save—  
They who had heard they should their savings lose,  
Were weeping, swearing, drinking at the news;  
And still the more they drank, the more they wept,  
And swore, and rail’d, and threatened, till they slept.

“The morning truth confirm’d the evening dread;

The Bank was broken, and the Banker fled;  
 But left a promise that his friends should have, 430  
 To the last shilling—what his fortunes gave.  
 “The evil tidings reach’d the sister-pair,  
 And one like Sorrow look’d, and one Despair;  
 They from each other turn’d th’ afflicting look,  
 And loth and late the painful silence broke.  
 “The odious villain!’ Jane in wrath began;  
 In pity Lucy, ‘the unhappy man!  
 When time and reason our affliction heal,  
 How will the author of our sufferings feel?’  
 “And let him feel, my sister—let the woes 440  
 That he creates be bane to his repose!  
 Let them be felt in his expiring hour,  
 When death brings all his dread, and sin its power:  
 Then let the busy foe of mortals state  
 The pangs he caused, his own to aggravate!  
 “Wretch! when our life was glad, our prospers gay,  
 With savage hand to sweep them all away!  
 And he must know it—know when he beguiled  
 His easy victims—how the villain smiled!  
 “Oh! my dear Lucy, could I see him crave 450  
 The food denied, a beggar and a slave,  
 To stony hearts he should with tears apply,  
 And Pity’s self withhold the struggling sigh;  
 Or, if relenting weakness should extend  
 Th’ extorted scrap that justice would not lend,  
 Let it be poison’d by the curses deep  
 Of every wretch whom he compels to weep!’  
 “Nay, my sweet sister, if you thought such pain  
 Were his, your pity would awake again;  
 Your generous heart the wretch’s grief would feel, 460  
 And you would soothe the pangs you could not heal.’  
 “Oh! never, never,—I would still contrive  
 To keep the slave whom I abhorr’d alive;  
 His tortured mind with horrid fears to fill,  
 Disturb his reason, and misguide his will;  
 Heap coals of fire, to lie like melted lead,  
 Heavy and hot, on his accursed head;  
 Not coals that mercy kindles hearts to melt,  
 But he should feel them hot as fires are felt,  
 Corroding ever, and through life the same, 470  
 Strong self-contempt and ever-burning shame;  
 Let him so wretched live that he may fly  
 To desperate thoughts, and be resolved to die—  
 And then let death such frightful visions give,  
 That he may dread th’ attempt, and beg to live!’  
 So spake th’ indignant maid, when Lucy sigh’d,  
 And, waiting softer times, no more replied.  
 “Barlow was then in town; and there he thought  
 Of bliss to come, and bargains to be bought;  
 And was returning homeward—when he found 480  
 The Bank was broken, and his venture drown’d.  
 “Ah! foolish maid,’ he cried, ‘and what wilt thou  
 Say for thy friends and their excesses now?  
 All now is brought completely to an end;  
 What can the spendthrift now afford to spend?  
 Had my advice been—true, I gave consent,  
 The thing was purposed; what could I prevent?  
 “Who will her idle taste for flowers supply— }  
 Who send her grapes and peaches? let her try;— }  
 There’s none will give her, and she cannot buy. } 490  
 “Yet would she not be grateful if she knew  
 What to my faith and generous love was due?  
 Daily to see the man who took her hand,  
 When she had not a sixpence at command;  
 Could I be sure that such a quiet mind  
 Would be for ever grateful, mild, and kind,  
 I might comply—but how will Bloomer act,  
 ‘When he becomes acquainted with the fact?  
 The loss to him is trifling—but the fall  
 From independence, that to her is all; 500  
 Now, should he marry, ‘twill be shame to me  
 To hold myself from my engagement free;  
 And should he not, it will be double grace

To stand alone in such a trying case.

“Come then, my Lucy, to thy faithful heart  
And humble love I will my views impart;  
Will see the grateful tear that softly steals  
Down the fair face and all thy joy reveals;  
And when I say it is a blow severe,  
Then will I add—restrain, my love, the tear,  
And take this heart, so faithful and so fond,  
Still bound to thine; and fear not for that bond.’

510

“He said; and went, with purpose he believed  
Of generous nature—so is man deceived.

“Lucy determined that her lover’s eye  
Should not distress nor supplication spy;  
That in her manner he should nothing find  
To indicate the weakness of her mind.  
He saw no eye that wept, no frame that shook;  
No fond appeal was made by word or look;  
Kindness there was, but join’d with some restraint;  
And traces of the late event were faint.

520

“He look’d for grief deploring, but perceives  
No outward token that she longer grieves;  
He had expected for his efforts praise,  
For he resolved the drooping mind to raise;  
She would, he judged, be humble, and afraid  
That he might blame her rashness and upbraid;  
And lo! he finds her in a quiet state,  
Her spirit easy and her air sedate:

530

As if her loss was not a cause for pain,  
As if assured that he would make it gain,—

“Silent awhile, he told the morning news,  
And what he judged they might expect to lose;  
He thought himself, whatever some might boast,  
The composition would be small at most,  
Some shabby matter; she would see no more  
The tithe of what she held in hand before.

“How did her sister feel? and did she think  
Bloomer was honest, and would never shrink?  
‘But why that smile; is loss like yours so light  
That it can aught like merriment excite?  
Well, he is rich, we know, and can afford  
To please his fancy, and to keep his word;  
To him ’tis nothing; had he now a fear,  
He must the meanest of his sex appear;  
But the true honour, as I judge the case,  
Is both to feel the evil and embrace.’

540

“Here Barlow stopp’d, a little vex’d to see  
No fear or hope, no dread or ecstasy.  
Calmly she spoke—‘Your prospects, sir, and mine  
Are not the same—their union I decline;  
Could I believe the hand for which you strove  
Had yet its value, did you truly love,  
I had with thanks addressed you, and replied,  
Wait till your feelings and my own subside,  
Watch your affections, and, if still they live,  
What pride denies, my gratitude shall give.’  
Ev’n then, in yielding, I had first believed  
That I conferr’d the favour, not received.

550

“You I release—nay, hear me—I impart  
Joy to your soul—I judge not of your heart.  
Think’st thou a being, to whom God has lent  
A feeling mind, will have her bosom rent  
By man’s reproaches? Sorrow will be thine,  
For all thy pity prompts thee to resign!  
Think’st thou that meekness’ self would condescend  
To take the husband when she scorns the friend?  
Forgive the frankness, and rejoice for life  
Thou art not burden’d with so poor a wife.

560

“Go! and be happy—tell, for the applause  
Of hearts like thine, we parted, and the cause  
Give, as it pleases.’ With a foolish look  
That a dull school-boy fixes on his book  
That he resigns, with mingled shame and joy,  
So Barlow went, confounded like the boy.

570

“Jane, while she wept to think her sister’s pain  
Was thus increased, felt infinite disdain;

Bound as she was, and wedded by the ties  
 Of love and hope, that care and craft despise, 580  
 She could but wonder that a man, whose taste  
 And zeal for money had a Jew disgraced,  
 Should love her sister; yet with this surprise,  
 She felt a little exultation rise;  
 Hers was a lover who had always held  
 This man as base, by generous scorn impell'd,  
 And yet, as one, of whom for Lucy's sake  
 He would a civil distant notice take.

"Lucy, with sadden'd heart and temper mild,  
 Bow'd to correction, like an humbled child, 590  
 Who feels the parent's kindness, and who knows  
 Such the correction he who loves bestows.

"Attending always, but attending more  
 When sorrow ask'd his presence than before,  
 Tender and ardent, with the kindest air  
 Came Bloomer, fortune's error to repair;  
 Words sweetly soothing spoke the happy youth,  
 With all the tender earnestness of truth.

"There was no doubt of his intention now—  
 He will his purpose with his love avow; 600  
 So judg'd the maid; yet, waiting, she admired  
 His still delaying what he most desired;  
 Till, from her spirit's agitation free,  
 She might determine when the day should be.  
 With such facility the partial mind  
 Can the best motives for its favourites find.

"Of this he spake not, but he stayed beyond  
 His usual hour—attentive still and fond;—  
 The hand yet firmer to the hand he prest,  
 And the eye rested where it loved to rest; 610  
 Then took he certain freedoms, yet so small  
 That it was prudish so the things to call;  
 Things they were not—'Describe'—that none can do,  
 They had been nothing had they not been new;  
 It was the manner and the look; a maid,  
 Afraid of such, is foolishly afraid;  
 For what could she explain? The piercing eye  
 Of jealous fear could nought amiss descry.

"But some concern now rose; the youth would seek  
 Jane by herself, and then would nothing speak, 610  
 Before not spoken; there was still delay,  
 Vexatious, wearying, wasting, day by day.

"'He does not surely trifle!' Heaven forbid!  
 She now should doubly scorn him if he did.

"Ah! more than this, unlucky girl! is thine;  
 Thou must the fondest views of life resign;  
 And in the very time resign them too,  
 When they were brightening on the eager view.  
 I will be brief,—nor have I heart to dwell  
 On crimes they almost share who paint them well. 630

"There was a moment's softness, and it seem'd  
 Discretion slept, or so the lover dream'd;  
 And, watching long the now confiding maid,  
 He thought her guardless, and grew less afraid;  
 Led to the theme that he had shunn'd before,  
 He used a language he must use no more—  
 For if it answers, there is no more need,  
 And no more trial, should it not succeed.

"Then made he that attempt, in which to fail  
 Is shameful,—still more shameful to prevail. 640

"Then was there lightning in that eye that shed  
 Its beams upon him—and his frenzy fled;  
 Abject and trembling at her feet he laid,  
 Despised and scorn'd by the indignant maid,  
 Whose spirits in their agitation rose,  
 Him, and her own weak pity, to oppose:  
 As liquid silver in the tube mounts high,  
 Then shakes and settles as the storm goes by.

"While yet the lover stay'd, the maid was strong,  
 But when he fled, she droop'd and felt the wrong— 650  
 Felt the alarming chill, the enfeebled breath,  
 Closed the quick eye, and sank in transient death.  
 So Lucy found her; and then first that breast

Knew anger's power, and own'd the stranger guest.

“And is this love? Ungenerous! Has he too  
Been mean and abject? Is no being true?’  
For Lucy judged that, like her prudent swain,  
Bloomer had talk'd of what a man might gain;  
She did not think a man on earth was found,  
A wounded bosom, while it bleeds, to wound;  
Thought not that mortal could be so unjust,  
As to deprive affliction of its trust;

660

Thought not a lover could the hope enjoy,  
That must the peace he should promote destroy;  
Thought not, in fact, that in the world were those,  
Who to their tenderest friends are worse than foes,  
Who win the heart, deprive it of its care,  
Then plant remorse and desolation there.

“Ah! cruel he, who can that heart deprive  
Of all that keeps its energy alive;

670

Can see consign'd to shame the trusting fair,  
And turn confiding fondness to despair;  
To watch that time—a name is not assign'd  
For crime so odious, nor shall learning find.

Now, from that day has Lucy laid aside  
Her proper cares, to be her sister's guide,  
Guard, and protector. At their uncle's farm  
They past the period of their first alarm,  
But soon retired, nor was he grieved to learn  
They made their own affairs their own concern.

680

“I knew not then their worth; and, had I known,  
Could not the kindness of a friend have shown;  
For men they dreaded; they a dwelling sought,  
And there the children of the village taught;  
There, firm and patient, Lucy still depends  
Upon her efforts, not upon her friends;  
She is with persevering strength endued,  
And can be cheerful—for she will be good.

“Jane too will strive the daily tasks to share,  
That so employment may contend with care;

690

Not power, but will, she shows, and looks about }  
On her small people, who come in and out; }  
And seems of what they need, or she can do, in doubt. }

“There sits the chubby crew on seats around,  
While she, all rueful at the sight and sound,  
Shrinks from the free approaches of the tribe,  
Whom she attempts, lamenting to describe;  
With stains the idlers gather'd in their way, }  
The simple stains of mud, and mould, and clay, }

701

And compound of the streets, of what we dare not say; }  
With hair uncomb'd, grimed face, and piteous look,  
Each heavy student takes the odious book,  
And on the lady casts a glance of fear,  
Who draws the garment close as he comes near;  
She then for Lucy's mild forbearance tries,  
And from her pupils turns her brilliant eyes,  
Making new efforts, and with some success,  
To pay attention while the students guess;  
Who to the gentler mistress fain would glide,  
And dread their station at the lady's side.

710

“Such is their fate;—there is a friendly few  
Whom they receive, and there is chance for you;  
Their school, and something gather'd from the wreck  
Of that bad Bank, keeps poverty in check;  
And true respect, and high regard, are theirs,  
The children's profit, and the [parents'] prayers.

“With Lucy rests the one peculiar care, }  
That few must see, and none with her may share; }  
More dear than hope can be, more sweet than pleasures are. }

720

For her sad sister needs the care of love  
That will direct her, that will not reprove,  
But waits to warn: for Jane will walk alone,  
Will sing in low and melancholy tone;  
Will read or write, or to her plants will run,  
To shun her friends,—alas! her thoughts to shun.

“It is not love alone disturbs her rest,  
But loss of all that ever hope possess'd:  
Friends ever kind, life's lively pleasures, ease, }



When her enjoyments could no longer please; }  
 These were her comforts then! she has no more of these. }

“Wrapt in such thoughts, she feels her mind astray, 731  
 But knows 'tis true that she has lost her way;  
 For Lucy's smile will check the sudden flight,  
 And one kind look let in the wonted light.  
 “Fits of long silence she endures, then talks  
 Too much—with too much ardour, as she walks;  
 But still the shrubs that she admires dispense  
 Their balmy freshness to the hurried sense,  
 And she will watch their progress, and attend  
 Her flowering favourites as a guardian friend; 740  
 To sun or shade she will her sweets remove,  
 ‘And here,’ she says, ‘I may with safety love.’  
 “But there are hours when on that bosom steals  
 A rising terror—then indeed she feels—  
 Feels how she loved the promised good, and how  
 She feels the failure of the promise now.  
 “That other spoiler did as robbers do,  
 Made poor our state, but not disgraceful too,  
 This spoiler shames me, and I look within  
 To find some cause that drew him on to sin; 750  
 He and the wretch who could thy worth forsake  
 Are the fork'd adder and the loathsome snake;  
 Thy snake could slip in villain-fear away,  
 But had no fang to fasten on his prey.  
 “Oh! my dear Lucy, I had thought to live  
 With all the comforts easy fortunes give;  
 A wife caressing, and caress'd—a friend,  
 Whom he would guide, advise, consult, defend,  
 And make his equal;—then I fondly thought  
 Among superior creatures to be brought; 760  
 And, while with them, delighted to behold  
 No eye averted, and no bosom cold;—  
 Then at my home, a mother, to embrace }  
 My—Oh! my sister, it was surely base! }

I might forget the wrong; I cannot the disgrace. }

“Oh! when I saw that triumph in his eyes,  
 I felt my spirits with his own arise;  
 I call'd it joy, and said, the generous youth  
 Laughs at my loss—no trial for his truth,  
 It is a trifle he can not lament, 770  
 A sum but equal to his annual rent;  
 And yet that loss, the cause of every ill,  
 Has made me poor, and him—'  
 “O! poorer still;  
 Poorer, my Jane, and far below thee now:  
 The injurer he,—the injured sufferer thou;  
 And shall such loss afflict thee?'—  
 “Lose I not  
 With him what fortune could in life allot?  
 Lose I not hope, life's cordial, and the views }  
 Of an aspiring spirit?—O! I lose }

Whate'er the happy feel, whatever the sanguine choose. }

“Would I could lose this bitter sense of wrong, 781  
 And sleep in peace—but it will not be long!  
 And here is something, Lucy, in my brain—  
 I know not what—it is a cure for pain;  
 But is not death!—no beckoning hand I see,  
 No voice I hear that comes alone to me;  
 It is not death, but change; I am not now  
 As I was once—nor can I tell you how;  
 Nor is it madness—ask, and you shall find  
 In my replies the soundness of my mind: 790  
 O! I should be a trouble all day long;  
 A very torment, if my head were wrong.’  
 “At times there is upon her features seen  
 What moves suspicion—she is too serene.  
 Such is the motion of a drunken man,  
 Who steps sedately, just to show he can.  
 Absent at times she will her mother call,  
 And cry at mid-day, ‘then good night to all.’  
 But most she thinks there will some good ensue  
 From something done, or what she is to do; 800  
 Long wrapt in silence, she will then assume

An air of business, and shake off her gloom;  
Then cry exulting, 'O! it must succeed,  
There are ten thousand readers—all men read:  
There are my writings—you shall never spend  
Our precious moments to so poor an end;  
Our [peasants'] children may be taught by those  
Who have no powers such wonders to compose;  
So let me call them—what the world allows,  
Surely a poet without shame avows; 810  
Come, let us count what numbers we believe  
Will buy our work—Ah! sister, do you grieve?  
You weep; there's something I have said amiss,  
And vex'd my sister—What a world is this!  
And how I wander!—Where has fancy run?  
Is there no poem? Have I nothing done?  
Forgive me, Lucy, I had fix'd my eye,  
And so my mind, on works that cannot die,  
*Marmion* and *Lara* yonder in the case;  
And so I put me in the poet's place. 820

“Still, be not frighten'd; it is but a dream;  
I am not lost, bewilder'd though I seem;  
I will obey thee—but suppress thy fear—  
I am at ease—then why that silly tear?”  
“Jane, as these melancholy fits invade  
The busy fancy, seeks the deepest shade;  
She walks in ceaseless hurry, till her mind  
Will short repose in verse and music find;  
Then her own songs to some soft tune she sings,  
And laughs, and calls them melancholy things; 830  
Not frenzy all; in some her erring Muse  
Will sad, afflicting, tender strains infuse;  
Sometimes on death she will her lines compose,  
Or give her serious page of solemn prose;  
And still those favourite plants her fancy please,  
And give to care and anguish rest and ease.

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“Let me not have this gloomy view,  
About my room, around my bed;  
But morning roses, wet with dew,  
To cool my burning brows instead. 840  
As flow'rs that once in Eden grew,  
Let them their fragrant spirits shed,  
And every day the sweets renew,  
Till I, a fading flower, am dead.

“Oh! let the herbs I loved to rear  
Give to my sense their perfumed breath;  
Let them be placed about my bier,  
And grace the gloomy house of death.  
I'll have my grave beneath an hill,  
Where, only Lucy's self shall know; 850

“Where runs the pure pellucid rill  
Upon its gravelly bed below;  
There violets on the borders blow,  
And insects their soft light display,  
Till, as the morning sunbeams glow,  
The cold phosphoric fires decay.

“That is the grave to Lucy shown,  
The soil a pure and silver sand;  
The green cold moss above it grown,  
Unpluck'd of all but maiden hand: 860  
In virgin earth, till then unturn'd,  
There let my maiden form be laid,  
Nor let my changed clay be spurn'd,  
Nor for new guest that bed be made.

“There will the lark, the lamb, in sport,  
In air, on earth, securely play,  
And Lucy to my grave resort,  
As innocent, but not so gay.  
I will not have the churchyard ground,  
With bones all black and ugly grown, 870

To press my shivering body round,  
Or on my wasted limbs be thrown.

“With ribs and skulls I will not sleep,  
In clammy beds of cold blue clay,  
Through which the ringed earth-worms creep,  
And on the shrouded bosom prey;  
I will not have the bell proclaim  
When those sad marriage rites begin,  
And boys, without regard or shame,  
Press the vile mouldering masses in.

880

“Say not, it is beneath my care;  
I cannot these cold truths allow;  
These thoughts may not afflict me there,  
But, O! they vex and tease me now,  
Raise not a turf, nor set a stone,  
That man a maiden’s grave may trace;  
But thou, my Lucy, come alone,  
And let affection find the place.

“O! take me from a world I hate—  
Men cruel, selfish, sensual, cold;  
And, in some pure and blessed state,  
Let me my sister minds behold:  
From gross and sordid views refined,  
Our heaven of spotless love to share,  
For only generous souls design’d,  
And not a man to meet us there.”

890

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK IX.

### *THE PRECEPTOR HUSBAND.*

The Morning Ride—Conversation—Character of one whom they meet— His early Habits and Mode of Thinking—The Wife whom he would choose—The one chosen—His Attempts to teach—In History—In Botany—The Lady's Proficiency—His Complaint—Her Defence and Triumph—The Trial ends.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK IX.

### *THE PRECEPTOR HUSBAND.*

"Whom pass'd we musing near the woodman's shed,  
Whose horse not only carried him but led,  
That his grave rider might have slept the time,  
Or solved a problem, or composed a rhyme?  
A more abstracted man within my view  
Has never come—He recollected you."

"Yes—he was thoughtful—thinks the whole day long,  
Deeply, and chiefly that he once thought wrong;  
He thought a strong and kindred mind to trace  
In the soft outlines of a trifler's face.

10

"Poor Finch! I knew him when at school—a boy  
Who might be said his labours to enjoy;  
So young a pedant that he always took  
The girl to dance who most admired her book;  
And would the butler and the cook surprise,  
Who listen'd to his Latin exercise;  
The matron's self the praise of Finch avow'd,  
He was so serious, and he read so loud.  
But yet, with all this folly and conceit,  
The lines he wrote were elegant and neat;  
And early promise in his mind appear'd  
Of noble efforts when by reason clear'd.

20

"And when he spoke of wives, the boy would say,  
His should be skill'd in Greek and algebra;  
For who would talk with one to whom his themes,  
And favourite studies, were no more than dreams?  
For this, though courteous, gentle, and humane,  
The boys contemn'd and hated him as vain,  
Stiff and pedantic.—"

"Did the man enjoy,  
In after life, the visions of the boy?"—

30

"At least they form'd his wishes, they were yet  
The favourite views on which his mind was set:  
He quaintly said, how happy must they prove,  
Who, loving, study—or who, studious, love;  
Who feel their minds with sciences imbued,  
And their warm hearts by beauty's force subdued.

"His widow'd mother, who the world had seen,  
And better judge of either sex had been,  
Told him that, just as their affairs were placed,  
In some respects he must forego his taste;  
That every beauty, both of form and mind,  
Must be by him, if unendow'd, resign'd;  
That wealth was wanted for their joint affairs;  
His sisters' portions, and the Hall's repairs.

40

"The son assented—and the wife must bring  
Wealth, learning, beauty, ere he gave the ring;  
But as these merits, when they all unite,  
Are not produced in every soil and site;  
And when produced are not the certain gain  
Of him who would these precious things obtain;  
Our patient student waited many a year,  
Nor saw this phœnix in his walks appear.  
But, as views mended in the joint estate,  
He would a something in his points abate:

50

Give him but learning, beauty, temper, sense,  
And he would then the happy state commence.  
The mother sigh'd, but she at last agreed;  
And now the son was likely to succeed.

Wealth is substantial good the fates allot:  
We know we have it, or we have it not;  
But all those graces which men highly rate  
Their minds themselves imagine and create;  
And therefore Finch was in a way to find  
A good that much depended on his mind.

60

"He look'd around, observing, till he saw  
Augusta Dallas! when he felt an awe  
Of so much beauty and commanding grace,  
That well became the honours of her race.

"This lady never boasted of the trash  
That commerce brings: she never spoke of cash;  
The gentle blood that ran in every vein  
At all such notions blush'd in pure disdain.—

70

"Wealth once relinquished, there was all beside,  
As Finch believed, that could adorn a bride;  
He could not gaze upon the form and air,  
Without concluding all was right and fair;  
Her mild but dignified reserve suppress }  
All free inquiry—but his mind could rest, }  
Assured that all was well, and in that view was blest. }

80

"And now he asked, 'am I the happy man  
Who can deserve her? is there one who can?'  
His mother told him, he possess'd the land  
That puts a man in heart to ask a hand;  
All who possess it feel they bear about  
A spell that puts a speedy end to doubt;  
But Finch was modest—'May it then be thought }  
That she can so be gained?'—'She may be sought.—' }  
'Can love with land be won?'—'By land is beauty bought. }

Do not, dear Charles, with indignation glow,  
All value that the want of which they know;  
Nor do I blame her; none that worth denies;  
But can my son be sure of what he buys?

90

Beauty she has, but with it can you find  
The inquiring spirit, or the studious mind?  
This wilt thou need who art to thinking prone,  
And minds unpair'd had better think alone;  
Then how unhappy will the husband be,  
Whose sole associate spoils his company?'  
This he would try; but all such trials prove  
Too mighty for a man disposed to love;  
He whom the magic of a face enchains  
But little knowledge of the mind obtains;  
If by his tender heart the man is led,  
He finds how erring is the soundest head.

"The lady saw his purpose; she could meet  
The man's inquiry, and his aim defeat;  
She had a studied flattery in her look;  
She could be seen retiring with a book;  
She by attending to his speech could prove  
That she for learning had a fervent love—  
Yet love alone, she modestly declared;  
She must be spared inquiry, and was spared;  
Of her poor studies she was not so weak  
As in his presence, or at all, to speak;  
But to discourse with him who, all agreed,  
[Had] read so much, would be absurd indeed;  
Ask what he might, she was so much a dunce  
She would confess her ignorance at once.

100

110

"All this the man believed not—doom'd to grieve  
For this belief, he this would not believe:  
No! he was quite in raptures to discern  
That love, and that avidity to learn.

120

'Could she have found,' she said, 'a friend, a guide,  
Like him, to study had been all her pride;  
But, doom'd so long to frivolous employ,  
How could she those superior views enjoy?  
The day might come—a happy day for her,  
When she might choose the ways she should prefer.'

"Then too he learn'd in accidental way. }

How much she grieved to lose the given day } 130  
 In dissipation wild, in visitation gay. }  
 Happy, most happy, must the woman prove  
 Who proudly looks on him she vows to love;  
 Who can her humble acquisitions state,  
 That he will praise, at least will tolerate.  
 "Still the cool mother sundry doubts express'd,—  
 'How! is Augusta graver than the rest?  
 There are three others: they are not inclined  
 To feed with precious food the empty mind;  
 Whence this strong relish?' 'It is very strong,' 140  
 Replied the son, 'and has possess'd her long;  
 Increased indeed, I may presume, by views—  
 We may suppose—ah! may she not refuse?'  
 'Fear not!—I see the question must be tried,  
 Nay, is determined—let us to your bride.'  
 "They soon were wedded, and the nymph appear'd  
 By all her promised excellence endear'd:  
 Her words were kind, were cautious, and were few,  
 And she was proud—of what her husband knew.  
 "Weeks pass'd away, some five or six, before, 150  
 Bless'd in the present, Finch could think of more.  
 A month was next upon a journey spent,  
 When to the Lakes the fond companions went;  
 Then the gay town received them, and, at last,  
 Home to their mansion, man and wife, they pass'd.  
 "And now in quiet way they came to live  
 On what their fortune, love, and hopes would give.  
 The honied moon had nought but silver rays,  
 And shone benignly on their early days;  
 The second moon a light less vivid shed, 160  
 And now the silver rays were tinged with lead.  
 They now began to look beyond the Hall,  
 And think what friends would make a morning-call;  
 Their former appetites return'd, and now  
 Both could their wishes and their tastes avow;  
 'Twas now no longer 'just what you approve,'  
 But 'let the wild fowl be to-day, my love.'  
 In fact the senses, drawn aside by force  
 Of a strong passion, sought their usual course.  
 "Now to her music would the wife repair, 170  
 To which he listen'd once with eager air;  
 When there was so much harmony within,  
 That any note was sure its way to win;  
 But now the sweet melodious tones were sent  
 From the struck chords, and none cared where they went.  
 Full well we know that many a favourite air  
 That charms a party fails to charm a pair;  
 And as Augusta play'd she look'd around,  
 To see if one was dying at the sound;  
 But all were gone—a husband, wrapt in gloom, 180  
 Stalk'd careless, listless, up and down the room.  
 "And now 'tis time to fill that ductile mind  
 With knowledge, from his stores of various kind.  
 His mother, in a peevish mood, had ask'd,  
 'Does your Augusta profit? is she task'd?'  
 "Madam!' he cried, offended with her looks,  
 'There's time for all things, and not all for books:  
 Just on one's marriage to sit down, and prate  
 On points of learning, is a thing I hate.—'  
 "'Tis right, my son, and it appears to me, 190  
 If deep your hatred, you must well agree.'  
 "Finch was too angry for a man so wise,  
 And said, 'Insinuation I despise!  
 Nor do I wish to have a mind so full  
 Of learned trash—it makes a woman dull:  
 Let it suffice, that I in her discern  
 An aptitude, and a desire to learn.—'  
 "The matron smiled, but she observed a frown  
 On her son's brow, and calmly sat her down,  
 Leaving the truth to Time, who solves our doubt, 200  
 By bringing his all-glorious daughter out—  
 Truth! for whose beauty all their love profess;  
 And yet how many think it ugliness!  
 "'Augusta, love,' said Finch, 'while you engage

In that embroidery, let me read a page.  
 Suppose it Hume's; indeed he takes a side,  
 But still an author need not be our guide;  
 And, as he writes with elegance and ease,  
 Do now attend—he will be sure to please.  
 Here at the Revolution we commence— 210  
 We date, you know, our liberties from hence.'  
 "Yes, sure,' Augusta answer'd with a smile;  
 'Our teacher always talk'd about his style,  
 When we about the Revolution read,  
 And how the martyrs to the flames were led:  
 The good old bishops, I forget their names,  
 But they were all committed to the flames;  
 Maidens and widows, bachelors and wives—  
 The very babes and sucklings lost their lives.  
 I read it all in Guthrie at the school— 220  
 What now!—I know you took me for a fool;  
 There were five bishops taken from the stall,  
 And twenty widows, I remember all;  
 And by this token, that our teacher tried  
 'To cry for pity, till she howl'd and cried.'  
 "True, true, my love, but you mistake the thing—  
 The Revolution that made William king  
 Is what I mean; the Reformation you,  
 In Edward and Elizabeth.'—"Tis true;  
 But the nice reading is the love between 230  
 The brave Lord Essex and the cruel queen;  
 And how he sent the ring to save his head,  
 Which the false lady kept till he was dead.  
 "That is all true; now read, and I'll attend;  
 But was not she a most deceitful friend?  
 It was a monstrous, vile, and treacherous thing  
 To show no pity, and to keep the ring;  
 But the queen shook her in her dying bed,  
 And 'God forgive you!' was the word she said;  
 'Not I for certain;'—Come, I will attend; 240  
 So read the Revolutions to an end.'  
 "Finch, with a timid, strange, inquiring look,  
 Softly and slowly laid aside the book  
 With sigh inaudible—'Come, never heed,'  
 Said he, recovering; 'now I cannot read.'  
 "They walk'd at leisure through their wood and groves,  
 In fields and lanes, and talk'd of plants and loves,  
 And loves of plants.—Said Finch, 'Augusta, dear,  
 You said you loved to learn,—were you sincere?  
 Do you remember that you told me once 250  
 How much you grieved, and said you were a dunce?  
 That is, you wanted information. Say,  
 What would you learn? I will direct your way.'  
 "Goodness!' said she, 'what meanings you discern  
 In a few words! I said I wish'd to learn,  
 And so I think I did; and you replied,  
 The wish was good: what would you now beside?  
 Did not you say it show'd an ardent mind;  
 And pray what more do you expect to find?'  
 "My dear Augusta, could you wish indeed 260  
 For any knowledge, and not then proceed?  
 That is not wishing—'  
 "Mercy! how you tease!  
 You knew I said it with a view to please;  
 A compliment to you, and quite enough—  
 You would not kill me with that puzzling stuff!  
 Sure I might say I wish'd; but that is still  
 Far from a promise: it is not,—'I will.'  
 "But come, to show you that I will not hide  
 My proper talents, you shall be my guide;  
 And lady Boothby, when we meet, shall cry, 270  
 She's quite as good a botanist as I.'  
 "Right, my Augusta;' and, in manner grave,  
 Finch his first lecture on the science gave;  
 An introduction—and he said, 'My dear,  
 Your thought was happy—let us persevere;  
 And let no trifling cause our work retard.'  
 Agreed the lady, but she fear'd it hard.  
 "Now o'er the grounds they rambled many a mile;

He show'd the flowers, the stamina, the style,  
 Calix and corol, pericarp and fruit, 280  
 And all the plant produces, branch and root;  
 Of these he treated, every varying shape,  
 Till poor Augusta panted to escape.  
 He show'd the various foliage plants produce,  
 Lunate and lyrate, runcinate, retuse;  
 Long were the learned words, and urged with force,  
 Panduriform, pinnatifid, premorse,  
 Latent, and patent, papulous, and plane—  
 'Oh!' said the pupil, 'it will turn my brain.'  
 'Fear not,' he answer'd, and again, intent 290  
 To fill that mind, o'er class and order went;  
 And stopping, 'Now,' said he, 'my love, attend.'  
 'I do,' said she, 'but when will be an end?'—  
 'When we have made some progress—now begin,  
 Which is the stigma, show me with the pin;  
 Come, I have told you, dearest, let me see,  
 Times very many—tell it now to me.'

"Stigma! I know,—the things with yellow heads,  
 That shed the dust, and grow upon the threads;  
 You call them wives and husbands, but you know 300  
 That is a joke—here, look, and I will show  
 All I remember.'—Doleful was the look  
 Of the preceptor, when he shut his book—  
 The system brought to aid them in their view,  
 And now with sighs return'd—'It will not do.'  
 "A handsome face first led him to suppose,  
 There must be talent with such looks as those;  
 The want of talent taught him now to find  
 The face less handsome with so poor a mind;  
 And half the beauty faded, when he found 310  
 His cherish'd hopes were falling to the ground.  
 "Finch lost his spirit; but e'en then he sought  
 For fancied powers: she might in time be taught.  
 Sure there was nothing in that mind to fear;  
 The favourite study did not yet appear.—  
 "Once he express'd a doubt if she could look  
 For five succeeding minutes on a book;  
 When, with awaken'd spirit, she replied,  
 'He was mistaken, and she would be tried.'  
 "With this delighted, he new hopes express'd— 320  
 'How do I know?—She may abide the test?  
 Men I have known, and famous in their day,  
 Who were by chance directed in their way.  
 I have been hasty.—Well, Augusta, well,  
 What is your favourite reading? prithee tell;  
 Our different tastes may different books require—  
 Yours I may not peruse, and yet admire:  
 Do then explain.'—'Good Heaven!' said she, in haste,  
 'How do I hate these lectures upon taste!'

"I lecture not, my love; but do declare— 330  
 You read, you say—what your attainments are.'  
 "Oh! you believe,' said she, 'that other things  
 Are read as well as histories of kings,  
 And loves of plants, with all that simple stuff  
 About their sex, of which I know enough.  
 Well, if I must, I will my studies name,  
 Blame if you please—I know you love to blame.  
 When all our childish books were set apart,  
 The first I read was 'Wanderings of the Heart:'  
 It was a story, where was done a deed 340  
 So dreadful, that alone I fear'd to read.  
 "The next was 'The Confessions of a Nun—'  
 'Twas quite a shame such evil should be done;  
 'Nun of—no matter for the creature's name,  
 For there are girls no nunnery can tame.  
 Then was the story of the Haunted Hall,  
 Where the huge picture nodded from the wall  
 When the old lord look'd up with trembling dread,  
 And I grew pale, and shudder'd as I read.  
 Then came the tales of Winters, Summers, Springs, 350  
 At Bath and Brighton,—they were pretty things!  
 No ghosts nor spectres there were heard or seen,  
 But all was love and flight to Gretna-green.



Perhaps your greater learning may despise  
What others like, and there your wisdom lies—  
Well! do not frown—I read the tender tales  
Of lonely cots, retreats in silent vales  
For maids forsaken, and suspected wives,  
Against whose peace some foe his plot contrives;  
With all the hidden schemes that none can clear  
Till the last book, and then the ghosts appear.

360

“I read all plays that on the boards succeed, }  
And all the works that ladies ever read— }  
Shakspeare, and all the rest—I did, indeed,—}  
Ay! you may stare; but, sir, believe it true  
That we can read and learn, as well as you.

“I would not boast,—but I could act a scene  
In any play, before I was fifteen.

“Nor is this all; for many are the times  
I read in Pope and Milton, prose and rhymes;  
They were our lessons, and, at ten years old,  
I could repeat—but now enough is told.  
Sir, I can tell you I my mind applied }  
To all my studies, and was not denied }  
Praise for my progress—Are you satisfied? }

370

“Entirely, madam! else were I possess’d  
By a strong spirit who could never rest.  
Yes! yes, no more I question—here I close  
The theme for ever—let us to repose.”

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# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK X.

### *THE OLD BACHELOR.*

A Friend arrives at the Hall—Old Bachelors and Maids—  
Relation of one—His Parents—The first Courtship—The  
second—The third— Long Interval—Travel—Decline of Life  
—The fourth Lady—Conclusion.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK X.

### *THE OLD BACHELOR.*

Save their kind friend the rector, Richard yet  
Had not a favourite of his brother met;  
Now at the Hall that welcome guest appear'd,  
By trust, by trials, and by time endear'd;  
Of him the grateful 'squire his love profess'd,  
And full regard—he was of friends the best;  
"Yet not to him alone this good I owe,  
This social pleasure that our friends bestow;  
The sex that wrought in earlier life my woes,  
With loss of time who murder'd my repose, 10  
They to my joys administer, nor vex  
Me more; and now I venerate the sex;  
And boast the friendship of a spinster kind,  
Cheerful and pleasant, to her fate resign'd;  
Then by her side my bachelor I place,  
And hold them honours to the human race.  
Yet these are they in tale and song display'd,  
The peevish man, and the repining maid;  
Creatures made up of misery and spite, 20  
Who taste no pleasures, except those they blight;  
From whom th' affrighten'd niece and nephew fly—  
Fear'd while they live, and useless till they die.  
"Not such these friends of mine; they never meant  
That youth should so be lost, or life be spent.  
They had warm passions, tender hopes, desires  
That youth indulges, and that love inspires;  
But fortune frown'd on their designs, displaced  
The views of hope, and love's gay dreams disgraced;  
Took from the soul her sunny views, and spread 30  
A cloud of dark but varying gloom instead.  
And shall we these with ridicule pursue,  
Because they did not what they could not do?  
If they their lot preferr'd, still why the jest  
On those who took the way they judged the best?  
But if they sought a change, and sought in vain,  
'Tis worse than brutal to deride their pain—  
But you will see them; see the man I praise,  
The kind protector in my troubled days,  
Himself in trouble; you shall see him now,  
And learn his worth! and my applause allow." 40  
This friend appear'd, with talents form'd to please,  
And with some looks of sprightliness and ease;  
To him indeed the ills of life were known,  
But misery had not made him all her own.  
They spoke on various themes, and George design'd  
To show his brother this, the favourite mind;  
To lead the friend, by subjects he could choose, }  
To paint himself, his life, and earlier views, }  
What he was bless'd to hope, what he was doom'd to lose. }  
They spoke of marriage, and he understood 50  
Their call on him, and said, "It is not good  
To be alone, although alone to be  
Is freedom; so are men in deserts free;  
Men who unyoked and unattended groan,  
Condemn'd and grieved to walk their way alone.  
Whatever ills a married pair betide,  
Each feels a stav. a comfort. or a guide:

‘Not always comfort,’ will our wits reply.—  
Wits are not judges, nor the cause shall try.

“Have I not seen, when grief his visits paid,  
That they were easier by communion made?  
True, with the quiet times and days serene,  
There have been flying clouds of care and spleen;  
But is not man, the solitary, sick  
Of his existence, sad and splenetic?  
And who will help him, when such evils come,  
To bear the pressure or to clear the gloom?”

“Do you not find, that joy within the breast  
Of the unwedded man is soon suppress’d;  
While, to the bosom of a wife convey’d,  
Increase is by participation made?—  
The lighted lamp that gives another light,  
Say, is it by th’ imparted blaze less bright?  
Are not both gainers when the heart’s distress  
Is so divided that the pain is less?  
And when the tear has stood in either eye,  
Love’s sun shines out, and they are quickly dry.”

He ended here—but would he not confess,  
How came these feelings on his mind to press?  
He would! nor fear’d his weakness to display  
To men like them; their weakness too had they.

Bright shone the fire, wine sparkled, sordid care  
Was banish’d far, at least appear’d not there;  
A kind and social spirit each possess’d,  
And thus began his tale the friendly guest.

“Near to my father’s mansion—but apart,  
I must acknowledge, from my father’s heart—  
Dwelt a keen sportsman, in a pleasant seat;  
Nor met the neighbours as should neighbours meet.

To them revenge appear’d a kind of right,  
A lawful pleasure, an avow’d delight;  
Their neighbours too blew up their passion’s fire,  
And urged the anger of each rival-squire;  
More still their waspish tempers to inflame,  
A party-spirit, friend of anger, came.

Oft would my father cry, ‘that tory-knave,  
That villain-placeman, would the land enslave.’  
Not that his neighbour had indeed a place,  
But would accept one—that was his disgrace;  
Who, in his turn, was sure my father plann’d  
To revolutionize his native land.

He dared the most destructive things advance,  
And even pray’d for liberty to France;  
Had still good hope that Heaven would grant his prayer,  
That he might see a revolution there.

At this the tory-squire was much perplex’d,  
‘Freedom in France!—what will he utter next?  
Sooner should I in Paris look to see  
An English army sent their guard to be.’

“My poor mamma, who had her mind subdued  
By whip-control, and hated every feud,  
Would have her neighbour met with mind serene;  
But fiercer spirit fired the tory-queen.

My parents both had given her high disgust,  
Which she resenting said, ‘Revenge is just;’  
And till th’ offending parties chose to stoop,  
She judged it right to keep resentment up;  
Could she in friendship with a woman live  
Who could the insult of a man forgive?

Did not her husband in a crowded room  
Once call her idiot, and the thing was dumb?  
The man’s attack was brutal to be sure,  
But she no less an idiot to endure.

“This lofty dame, with unrelenting soul,  
Had a fair girl to govern and control;  
The dear Maria!—whom, when first I met,—  
Shame on this weakness! do I feel it yet?”

“The parents’ anger, you will oft-times see,  
Prepares the children’s minds for amity;  
Youth will not enter into such debate,

'Tis not in them to cherish groundless hate;  
Nor can they feel men's quarrels or their cares,  
Of whig or tory, partridges or hares.

"Long ere we loved, this gentle girl and I  
Gave to our parents' discord many a sigh;  
It was not ours—and, when the meeting came,  
It pleased us much to find our thoughts the same;  
But grief and trouble in our minds arose  
From the fierce spirits we could not compose;  
And much it vex'd us that the friends so dear  
To us should foes among themselves appear.

140

"Such was this maid, the angel of her race,  
Whom I had loved in any time and place,  
But in a time and place which chance assign'd,  
When it was almost treason to be kind;  
When we had vast impediments in view,  
Then wonder not that love in terror grew  
With double speed—we look'd, and strove to find  
A kindred spirit in the hostile mind;  
But is it hostile? there appears no sign  
In those dear looks of warfare—none have mine;  
At length I whisper'd—'Would that war might cease  
Between our houses, and that all was peace!'

150

A sweet confusion on her features rose,  
'She could not bear to think of having foes,  
When we might all as friends and neighbours live,  
And for that blessing, O! what would she give!—  
'Then let us try and our endeavours blend,'  
I said, 'to bring these quarrels to an end.'  
Thus, with one purpose in our hearts, we strove,  
And, if no more, increased our secret love:  
Love that, with such impediments in view,  
To meet the growing danger stronger grew;  
And from that time each heart, resolved and sure,  
Grew firm in hope, and patient to endure.

160

"To those who know this season of delight  
I need not strive their feelings to excite;  
To those who know not the delight or pain,  
The best description would be lent in vain;  
And to the grieving, who will no more find  
The bower of bliss, to paint it were unkind.  
I pass it by, to tell that long we tried  
To bring our fathers over to our side;  
'Twas bootless on their wives our skill to try,  
For one would not, and one in vain, comply.

170

"First I began my father's heart to move,  
By boldly saying 'We are born to love;'  
My father answer'd, with an air of ease,  
'Well! very well! be loving if you please!  
Except a man insults us or offends,  
In my opinion we should all be friends.'

180

"This gain'd me nothing; little would accrue  
From clearing points so useless though so true;  
But with some pains I brought him to confess,  
That to forgive our wrongs is to redress.

"It might be so,' he answer'd, yet with doubt  
That it might not; 'but what is this about?'  
I dared not speak directly, but I strove  
To keep my subjects, harmony and love.

"Coolly my father look'd, and much enjoy'd  
The broken eloquence his eye destroy'd;  
Yet less confused, and more resolved at last,  
With bolder effort to my point I past;  
And, fondly speaking of my peerless maid, }  
I call'd her worth and beauty to my aid; }  
'Then make her mine!' I said, and for his favour pray'd. }

190

"My father's look was one I seldom saw;  
It gave no pleasure, nor created awe:  
It was the kind of cool contemptuous smile  
Of witty persons, overcharged with bile;  
At first he spoke not, nor at last to me—

200

"Well now, and what if such a thing could be?  
What, if the boy should his addresses pay  
To the tall girl, would that old tory say?  
I have no hatred to the dog—but, still,

It was some pleasure when I used him ill;  
 This I must lose if we should brethren be,  
 Yet may be not, for brethren disagree;  
 The fool is right—there is no bar in life  
 Against their marriage—let her be his wife.— 210  
 Well, sir, you hear me!—Never man complied,  
 And left a beggar so dissatisfied;  
 Though all was granted, yet was grace refused; }  
 I felt as one indulged, and yet abused; }  
 And yet, although provoked, I was not unamused. }  
 “In a reply like this appear’d to meet  
 All that encourage hope, and that defeat;  
 Consent, though cool, had been for me enough,  
 But this consent had something of reproof;  
 I had prepared my answer to his rage, 220  
 With his contempt I thought not to engage.  
 I, like a hero, would my castle storm,  
 And meet the giant in his proper form;  
 Then, conquering him, would set my princess free:  
 This would a trial and a triumph be—  
 When lo! a sneering menial brings the keys,  
 And cries in scorn, ‘Come, enter, if you please;  
 You’ll find the lady sitting on her bed,  
 And ’tis expected that you woo and wed.’  
 “Yet not so easy was my conquest found; 230  
 I met with trouble ere with triumph crown’d.  
 Triumph, alas!—My father little thought,  
 A king at home, how other minds are wrought;  
 True, his meek neighbour was a gentle squire,  
 And had a soul averse from wrath and ire;  
 He answer’d frankly, when to him I went,  
 ‘I give you little, sir, in my consent.’  
 He and my mother were to us inclined,  
 The powerless party with the peaceful mind;  
 But that meek man was destined to obey 240  
 A sovereign lady’s unremitted sway,  
 Who bore no partial, no divided rule;  
 All were obedient pupils in her school.  
 She had religious zeal, both strong and sour,  
 That gave an active sternness to her power;  
 But few could please her—she herself was one  
 By whom that deed was very seldom done.  
 With such a being, so disposed to feed  
 Contempt and scorn—how was I to succeed?  
 But love commanded, and I made my prayer 250  
 To the stern lady, with an humble air,  
 Said all that lovers hope, all measures tried  
 That love suggested, and bow’d down to pride.  
 “Yes! I have now the tygress in my eye—  
 When I had ceased and waited her reply,  
 A pause ensued; and then she slowly rose,  
 With bitter smile predictive of my woes,  
 A look she saw was plainly understood—  
 “‘Admire my daughter! Sir, you’re very good.  
 The girl is decent, take her all in all— } 260  
 Genteel, we hope—perhaps a thought too tall; }  
 A daughter’s portion hers—you’ll think her fortune small. }  
 Perhaps her uncles, in a cause so good,  
 Would do a little for their flesh and blood;  
 We are not ill allied—and, say we make  
 Her portion decent, whither would you take?  
 Is there some cottage on your father’s ground,  
 Where may a dwelling for the girl be found?  
 Or a small farm—your mother understands  
 How to make useful such a pair of hands. 270  
 “‘But this we drop at present, if you please;  
 We shall have leisure for such things as these;  
 They will be proper ere you fix the day  
 For the poor girl to honour and obey;  
 At present therefore we may put an end  
 To our discourse—Good morrow to you, friend!’  
 “Then, with a solemn curtesy and profound, }  
 Her laughing eye she lifted from the ground, }  
 And left me lost in thought, and gazing idly round.— }  
 “Still we had hope, and, growing bold in time, 280

I would engage the father in our crime;  
But he refused, for, though he wish'd us well,  
He said, 'he must not make his house a hell;'—  
And sure the meaning look that I convey'd  
Did not inform him that the hell was made.

"Still hope existed that a mother's heart  
Would in a daughter's feelings take a part;  
Nor was it vain—for there is found access  
To a hard heart, in time of its distress.

"The mother sicken'd, and the daughter sigh'd,  
And we petition'd till our queen complied;  
She thought of dying, and, if power must cease,  
Better to make, than cause, th' expected peace;  
And sure, this kindness mixing with the blood,  
Its balmy influence caused the body's good;  
For as a charm it work'd upon the frame  
Of the reviving and relenting dame;  
For, when recover'd, she no more opposed  
Her daughter's wishes.—Here contention closed.

"Then bliss ensued, so exquisitely sweet,  
That with it once, once only, we can meet;  
For, though we love again, and though once more  
We feel th' enlivening hope we felt before,  
Still the pure freshness of the joy that cast  
Its sweet around us is for ever past.

O! time to memory precious—ever dear, }  
Though ever painful—this eventful year; }  
What bliss is now in view! and now what woes appear! }

Sweet hours of expectation!—I was gone  
To the vile town to press our business on;  
To urge its formal instruments—and lo!  
Comes with dire looks a messenger of wo,  
With tidings sad as death!—With all my speed  
I reach'd her home!—but that pure soul was freed—

She was no more—for ever shut that eye,  
That look'd all soul, as if it could not die;  
It could not see me—O! the strange distress }  
Of these new feelings!—misery's excess, }

What can describe it? words will not express. }

When I look back upon that dreadful scene,  
I feel renew'd the anguish that has been,  
And reason trembles—Yes! you bid me cease,  
Nor try to think; but I will think in peace.—  
Unbid and unforbidden, to the room

I went, a gloomy wretch amid that gloom;  
And there the lovely being on her bed  
Shrouded and cold was laid—Maria dead!  
There was I left—and I have now no thought  
Remains with me, how fear or fancy wrought;  
I know I gazed upon the marble cheek,  
And pray'd the dear departed girl to speak—  
Further I know not, for, till years were fled,  
All was extinguish'd—all with her was dead.

I had a general terror, dread of all  
That could a thinking, feeling man befall;  
I was desirous from myself to run,  
And something, but I knew not what, to shun.  
There was a blank from this I cannot fill;  
It is a puzzle and a terror still.

Yet did I feel some intervals of bliss,  
Ev'n with the horrors of a fate like this;  
And dreams of wonderful construction paid  
For waking horror—dear angelic maid!

"When peace return'd, unfelt for many a year,  
And hope, discarded flatterer, dared t' appear;  
I heard of my estate, how free from debt,  
And of the comforts life afforded yet;  
Beside that best of comforts in a life  
So sad as mine—a fond and faithful wife.

My gentle mother, now a widow, made  
These strong attempts to guide me or persuade.

"'Much time is lost,' she said, 'but yet my son  
May, in the race of life, have much to run;  
When I am gone, thy life to thee will seem  
Lonely and sad, a melancholy dream;

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Get thee a wife—I will not say to love,  
 But one, a friend in thy distress to prove;  
 One who will kindly help thee to sustain  
 Thy spirit's burden in its hours of pain:  
 Say, will you marry?'—I in haste replied, 360  
 'And who would be the self-devoted bride?  
 There is a melancholy power that reigns  
 Tyrant within me—who would bear his chains,  
 And hear them clicking every wretched hour,  
 With will to aid me, but without the power?  
 But if such one were found with easy mind,  
 Who would not ask for raptures—I'm resign'd.'  
 "'Tis quite enough,' my gentle mother cried;  
 'We leave the raptures, and will find the bride.'  
 "There was a lady near us, quite discreet, 370  
 Whom in our visits 'twas our chance to meet:  
 One grave and civil, who had no desire  
 That men should praise her beauties or admire;  
 She in our walks would sometimes take my arm,  
 But had no foolish fluttering or alarm;  
 She wish'd no heart to wound, no truth to prove,  
 And seem'd, like me, as one estranged from love;  
 My mother praised her, and with so much skill,  
 She gave a certain bias to my will;  
 But calm indeed our courtship; I profess'd 380  
 A due regard—My mother did the rest:  
 Who soon declared that we should love, and grow  
 As fond a couple as the world could show;  
 And talk'd of boys and girls with so much glee,  
 That I began to wish the thing could be.  
 "Still, when the day that soon would come was named,  
 I felt a cold fit, and was half ashamed;  
 But we too far proceeded to revoke,  
 And had been much too serious for a joke;  
 I shook away the fear that man annoys, 390  
 And thought a little of the girls and boys.  
 "A week remain'd—for seven succeeding days  
 Nor man nor woman might control my ways;  
 For seven dear nights I might to rest retire  
 At my own time, and none the cause require;  
 For seven blest days I might go in and out,  
 And none demand, 'Sir, what are you about?'  
 For one whole week I might at will discourse  
 On any subject, with a freeman's force.  
 "Thus while I thought, I utter'd, as men sing 400  
 In under-voice, reciting 'With this ring;  
 That, when the hour should come, I might not dread  
 These, or the words that follow'd, 'I thee wed.'  
 "Such was my state of mind, exulting now  
 And then depress'd—I cannot tell you how—  
 When a poor lady, whom her friends could send  
 On any message, a convenient friend,  
 Who had all feelings of her own o'ercome,  
 And could pronounce to any man his doom;  
 Whose heart indeed was marble, but whose face 410  
 Assumed the look adapted to the case,  
 Enter'd my room, commission'd to assuage  
 What was foreseen, my sorrow and my rage.  
 "It seem'd the lady whom I could prefer,  
 And could my much-loved freedom lose for her,  
 Had bold attempts, but not successful, made,  
 The heart of some rich cousin to invade;  
 Who, half resisting, half complying, kept  
 A cautious distance, and the business slept.  
 "This prudent swain his own importance knew, 420  
 And swore to part the now affianced two.  
 Fill'd with insidious purpose, forth he went,  
 Profess'd his love, and woo'd her to consent.  
 'Ah! were it true!' she sigh'd; he boldly swore  
 His love sincere, and mine was sought no more.  
 "All this the witch at dreadful length reveal'd,  
 And begg'd me calmly to my fate to yield:  
 Much pains she took engagements old to state,  
 And hoped to hear me curse my cruel fate,  
 Threat'ning my luckless life; and thought it strange 430

In me to bear the unexpected change;  
In my calm feelings she beheld disguise,  
And told of some strange wildness in my eyes.

“But there was nothing in the eye amiss,  
And the heart calmly bore a stroke like this.  
Not so my mother; though of gentle kind,  
She could no mercy for the creature find.

“‘Vile plot!’ she said.—‘But, madam, if they plot,  
And you would have revenge, disturb them not.’—

“‘What can we do, my son?’—‘Consult our ease,  
And do just nothing, madam, if you please.’—

“‘What will be said?’—‘We need not that discuss;  
Our friends and neighbours will do that for us.’—

“‘Do you so lightly, son, your loss sustain?’—  
‘Nay, my dear madam, but I count it gain.’—

“‘The world will blame us sure, if we be still.’—  
‘And, if we stir, you may be sure it will.’—

“‘Not to such loss your father had agreed.’—  
‘No, for my father’s had been loss indeed.’

“With gracious smile my mother gave assent,  
And let th’ affair slip by with much content.

“Some old dispute, the lover meant should rise,  
Some point of strife they could not compromise,  
Displeased the squire—he from the field withdrew,  
Not quite conceal’d, not fully placed in view;  
But half advancing, half retreating, kept  
At his old distance, and the business slept.

“Six years had past, and forty ere the six,  
When Time began to play his usual tricks:  
The locks once comely in a virgin’s sight,  
Locks of pure brown, display’d th’ encroaching white;  
The blood once fervid now to cool began,  
And Time’s strong pressure to subdue the man.

I rode or walk’d as I was wont before,  
But now the bounding spirit was no more;  
A moderate pace would now my body heat,  
A walk of moderate length distress my feet.  
I show’d my stranger-guest those hills sublime,  
But said, ‘the view is poor, we need not climb.’

At a friend’s mansion I began to dread  
The cold neat parlour, and the gay glazed bed;  
At home I felt a more decided taste,  
And must have all things in my order placed;  
I ceased to hunt, my horses pleased me less,  
My dinner more; I learn’d to play at chess;  
I took my dog and gun, but saw the brute  
Was disappointed that I did not shoot;  
My morning walks I now could bear to lose,  
And bless’d the shower that gave me not to choose:

In fact, I felt a languor stealing on;  
The active arm, the agile hand were gone;  
Small daily actions into habits grew,  
And new dislike to forms and fashion new;  
I loved my trees in order to dispose,                    }  
I number’d peaches, look’d how stocks arose,                    }  
Told the same story oft—in short, began to prose.                    }

“My books were changed; I now preferred the truth  
To the light reading of unsettled youth;  
Novels grew tedious, but, by choice or chance,  
I still had interest in the wild romance.

There is an age, we know, when tales of love  
Form the sweet pabulum our hearts approve;  
Then as we read we feel, and are indeed,  
We judge, th’ heroic men of whom we read;  
But in our after life these fancies fail;  
We cannot be the heroes of the tale;  
The parts that Cliffords, Mordaunts, Bevilles play  
We cannot—cannot be so smart and gay.

“But all the mighty deeds and matchless powers  
Of errant knights we never fancied ours,  
And thus the prowess of each gifted knight  
Must at all times create the same delight;  
Lovelace a forward youth might hope to seem,  
But Lancelot never—that he could not dream;  
Nothing reminds us in the magic page

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Of old romance, of our declining age.  
 If once our fancy mighty dragons slew,  
 This is no more than fancy now can do;  
 But when the heroes of a novel come,  
 Conquer'd and conquering, to a drawing-room, 510  
 We no more feel the vanity that sees  
 Within ourselves what we admire in these;  
 And so we leave the modern tale, to fly  
 From realm to realm with Tristram or Sir Guy.  
 "Not quite a Quixote, I could not suppose  
 That queens would call me to subdue their foes;  
 But, by a voluntary weakness sway'd,  
 When fancy call'd, I willingly obey'd.  
 "Such I became, and I believed my heart 520  
 Might yet be pierced by some peculiar dart  
 Of right heroic kind, and I could prove  
 Fond of some peerless nymph who deign'd to love,  
 Some high-soul'd virgin, who had spent her time  
 In studies grave, heroic and sublime;  
 Who would not like me less that I had spent  
 Years eight and forty, just the age of Kent—  
 But not with Kent's discretion, for I grew  
 Fond of a creature whom my fancy drew:  
 A kind of beings who are never found 530  
 On middle-earth, but grow on fairy-ground.  
 "These found I not; but I had luck to find  
 A mortal woman of this fairy kind;  
 A thin, tall, upright, serious, slender maid,  
 Who in my own romantic regions stray'd;  
 From the world's glare to this sweet vale retired,  
 To dwell unseen, unsullied, unadmired;  
 In all her virgin excellence, above  
 The gaze of crowds, and hopes of vulgar love.  
 "We spoke of noble deeds in happier times,  
 Of glorious virtues, of debasing crimes. 540  
 Warm was the season, and the subject too,  
 And therefore warm in our discourse we grew.  
 Love made such haste, that ere a month was flown  
 Since first we met, he had us for his own:  
 Riches are trifles in an hero's sight,  
 And lead to questions low and unpolite;  
 I nothing said of money or of land,  
 But bent my knee, and fondly ask'd her hand;  
 And the dear lady, with a grace divine,  
 Gave it, and frankly answer'd, 'it is thine.' 550  
 "Our reading was not to romance confined,  
 But still it gave its colour to the mind;  
 Gave to our studies something of its force,  
 And made profound and tender our discourse;  
 Our subjects all, and our religion, took  
 The grave and solemn spirit of our book;  
 And who had seen us walk, or heard us read,  
 Would say, 'these lovers are sublime indeed.'  
 "I knew not why, but when the day was named 560  
 My ardent wishes felt a little tamed;  
 My mother's sickness then awaked my grief,  
 And yet, to own the truth, was some relief;  
 It left uncertain that decisive time  
 That made my feelings nervous and sublime.  
 "Still all was kindness, and at morn and eve  
 I made a visit, talk'd, and took my leave:  
 Kind were the lady's looks, her eyes were bright,  
 And swam, I thought, in exquisite delight;  
 A lovely red suffused the virgin cheek,  
 And spoke more plainly than the tongue could speak; 570  
 Plainly all seem'd to promise love and joy,  
 Nor fear'd we ought that might our bliss destroy.  
 "Engaged by business, I one morn delay'd  
 My usual call on the accomplish'd maid;  
 But soon, that small impediment removed,  
 I paid the visit that decisive proved;  
 For the fair lady had, with grieving heart,  
 So I believed, retired to sigh apart:  
 I saw her friend, and begg'd her to entreat  
 My gentle nymph her sighing swain to meet. 580

"The gossip gone—What dæmon, in his spite }  
 To love and man, could my frail mind excite, }  
 And lead me curious on, against all sense of right? }  
 There met my eye, unclosed, a closet's door—  
 Shame! how could I the secrets there explore?  
 Pride, honour, friendship, love, condemn'd the deed,  
 And yet, in spite of all, I could proceed!  
 I went, I saw—Shall I describe the hoard  
 Of precious worth in seal'd deposits stored  
 Of sparkling hues? Enough—enough is told, 590  
 'Tis not for man such mysteries to unfold.  
 Thus far I dare—Whene'er those orbits swam  
 In that blue liquid that restrain'd their flame,  
 As showers the sunbeams—when the crimson glow  
 Of the red rose o'erspread those cheeks of snow,  
 I saw, but not the cause—'twas not the red  
 Of transient blush that o'er her face was spread;  
 'Twas not the lighter red, that partly streaks  
 The Catherine pear, that brighten'd o'er her cheeks,  
 Nor scarlet blush of shame—but such disclose 600  
 The velvet petals of the Austrian rose,  
 When first unfolded: warm the glowing hue,  
 Nor cold as rouge, but deep'ning on the view.  
 Such were those cheeks—the causes unexplored  
 Were now detected in that secret hoard;  
 And ever to that rich recess would turn  
 My mind, and cause for such effect discern.  
 Such was my fortune, O! my friends, and such  
 The end of lofty hopes that grasp'd too much.  
 This was, indeed, a trying time in life, 610  
 I lost at once a mother and a wife;  
 Yet compensation came in time for these,  
 And what I lost in joy, I gain'd in ease."—  
 "But," said the squire, "did thus your courtship cease?  
 Resign'd your mistress her betroth'd in peace?"—  
 "Yes; and had sense her feelings to restrain,  
 Nor ask'd me once my conduct to explain;  
 But me she saw those swimming eyes explore,  
 And explanation she required no more.  
 Friend to the last, I left her with regret— 620  
 Nay, leave her not, for we are neighbours yet.  
 "These views extinct, I travell'd, not with taste,  
 But so that time ran wickedly to waste;  
 I penn'd some notes, and might a book have made,  
 But I had no connexion with the trade;  
 Bridges and churches, towers and halls, I saw,  
 Maids and madonnas, and could sketch and draw:  
 Yes, I had made a book, but that my pride  
 In the not making was more gratified.  
 "There was one feeling upon foreign ground, 630  
 That more distressing than the rest was found:  
 That, though with joy I should my country see,  
 There none had pleasure in expecting me.  
 "I now was sixty, but could walk and eat;  
 My food was pleasant, and my slumbers sweet;  
 But what could urge me at a day so late  
 To think of women?—my unlucky fate.  
 It was not sudden; I had no alarms,  
 But was attack'd when resting on my arms;  
 Like the poor soldier: when the battle raged 640  
 The man escaped, though twice or thrice engaged;  
 But, when it ended, in a quiet spot  
 He fell, the victim of a random-shot.  
 "With my good friend the vicar oft I spent  
 The evening hours in quiet, as I meant;  
 He was a friend in whom, although untried  
 By ought severe, I found I could confide;  
 A pleasant, sturdy disputant was he, }  
 Who had a daughter—such the Fates decree, }  
 To prove how weak is man—poor yielding man, like me. }  
 "Time after time the maid went out and in, 651  
 Ere love was yet beginning to begin;  
 The first awakening proof, the early doubt,  
 Rose from observing she went in and out.  
 My friend, though careless, seem'd my mind to explore,

'Why do you look so often at the door?'  
 I then was cautious, but it did no good,  
 For she, at least, my meanings understood;  
 But to the vicar nothing she convey'd  
 Of what she thought—she did not feel afraid. 660

"I must confess, this creature in her mind  
 Nor face had beauty that a man would blind;  
 No poet of her matchless charms would write,  
 Yet sober praise they fairly would excite.  
 She was a creature form'd man's heart to make  
 Serenely happy, not to pierce and shake;  
 If she were tried for breaking human hearts,  
 Men would acquit her—she had not the arts.  
 Yet without art, at first without design,  
 She soon became the arbitress of mine; 670  
 Without pretensions—nay, without pretence,  
 But by a native strange intelligence  
 Women possess when they behold a man  
 Whom they can tease, and are assured they can;  
 Then 'tis their soul's delight and pride to reign }  
 O'er the fond slave, to give him ease or pain, }  
 And stretch and loose by turns the weighty viewless chain, }

"Though much she knew, yet nothing could she prove;  
 I had not yet confess'd the crime of love;  
 But, in an hour when guardian-angels sleep, 680  
 I fail'd the secret of my soul to keep;  
 And then I saw the triumph in those eyes  
 That spoke—'Ay, now you are indeed my prize.'  
 I almost thought I saw compassion, too,  
 For all the cruel things she meant to do.  
 Well I can call to mind the managed air  
 That gave no comfort, that brought no despair,  
 That in a dubious balance held the mind,  
 To each side turning, never much inclined.

"She spoke with kindness—thought the honour high, 690  
 And knew not how to give a fit reply;  
 She could not, would not, dared not, must not deem  
 Such language proof of ought but my esteem;  
 It made her proud—she never could forget  
 My partial thoughts—she felt her much in debt:  
 She who had never in her life indulged  
 The thought of hearing what I now divulged:  
 I, who had seen so many and so much—  
 It was an honour—she would deem it such.

Our different years, indeed, would put an end } 700  
 To other views, but still her father's friend }  
 To her, she humbly hoped, would his regard extend. }  
 Thus, saying nothing, all she meant to say,  
 She play'd the part the sex delights to play;  
 Now by some act of kindness giving scope  
 To the new workings of excited hope,  
 Then by an air of something like disdain,  
 But scarcely seen, repelling it again;  
 Then for a season, neither cold nor kind,  
 She kept a sort of balance in the mind, 710  
 And, as his pole a dancer on the rope,  
 The equal poise on both sides kept me up.

"Is it not strange that man can fairly view  
 Pursuit like this, and yet his point pursue;  
 While he the folly fairly will confess,  
 And even feel the danger of success?  
 But so it is, and nought the Circes care  
 How ill their victims with their poison fare,  
 When thus they trifle, and with quiet soul  
 Mix their ingredients in the maddening bowl: 720  
 Their high regard, the softness of their air,  
 The pitying grief that saddens at a prayer,  
 Their grave petitions for the peace of mind  
 That they determine you shall never find,  
 And all their vain amazement that a man  
 Like you should love—they wonder how you can.

"For months the idler play'd her wicked part,  
 Then fairly gave the secret of her heart.  
 'She hoped'—I now the smiling gipsy view—  
 'Her father's friend would be her lover's too; 730



# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK XI.

### *THE MAID'S STORY.*

A Mother's Advice—Trials for a young Lady—Ancient Lovers—The Mother a Wife—Grandmamma—Genteel Economy—Frederick, a young Collegian—Grandmamma dies—Retreat with Biddy—Comforts of the Poor—Return Home—Death of the Husband—Nervous Disorders—Conversion—Frederick a Teacher—Retreat to Sidmouth—Self-examination—The Mother dies—Frederick a Soldier—Retirement with a Friend—Their Happiness how interrupted—Frederick an Actor—Is dismissed and supported—A last Adventure.

# TALES OF THE HALL.

## BOOK XI.

### *THE MAID'S STORY.*

Three days remain'd their friend, and then again  
The Brothers left themselves to entertain;  
When spake the younger—"It would please me well  
To hear thy spinster-friend her story tell;  
And our attention would be nobly paid  
Thus to compare the Bachelor and Maid."

"Frank as she is," replied the squire, "nor one  
Is more disposed to show what she has done  
With time, or time with her: yet all her care  
And every trial she might not declare 10  
To one a stranger; but to me, her friend,  
She has the story of those trials penn'd;  
These shalt thou hear, for well the maid I know,  
And will her efforts and her conquests show.  
Jacques is abroad, and we alone shall dine,  
And then to give this lady's tale be mine;  
Thou wilt attend to this good spinster's life,  
And grieve and wonder she is not a wife;  
But if we judge by either words or looks,  
Her mode of life, her morals, or her books, 20  
Her pure devotion, unaffected sense,  
Her placid air, her mild benevolence,  
Her gay good humour, and her manners free,  
She is as happy as a maid can be;  
If as a wife, I know not, and decline  
Question like this, till I can judge of thine."

Then from a secret hoard drew forth the squire }  
His tale, and said, "Attention I require— }  
My verse you may condemn, my theme you must admire." }

I to your kindness speak, let that prevail, 30  
And of my frailty judge as beings frail.—

My father, dying, to my mother left  
An infant charge, of all things else bereft;  
Poor, but experienced in the world, she knew  
What others did, and judged what she could do;  
Beauty she justly weigh'd, was never blind  
To her own interest, and she read mankind:  
She view'd my person with approving glance,  
And judged the way my fortune to advance;  
Taught me betimes that person to improve, 40  
And make a lawful merchandize of love;  
Bade me my temper in subjection keep,  
And not permit my vigilance to sleep;  
I was not one, a miss, who might presume  
Now to be crazed by mirth, now sunk in gloom;  
Nor to be fretful, vapourish, or give way  
To spleen and anger, as the wealthy may;  
But I must please, and all I felt of pride,  
Contempt, and hatred, I must cast aside.

"Have not one friend," my mother cried, "not one; 50  
 That bane of our romantic triflers shun;  
 Suppose her true, can she afford you aid?  
 Suppose her false, your purpose is betray'd;  
 And then in dubious points, and matters nice,  
 How can you profit by a child's advice?  
 While you are writing on from post to post,  
 Your hour is over, and a man is lost;  
 Girls of their hearts are scribbling, their desires,  
 And what the folly of the heart requires, 60  
 Dupes to their dreams—but I the truth impart,  
 You cannot, child, afford to have a heart.  
 Think nothing of it; to yourself be true,  
 And keep life's first great business in your view—  
 Take it, dear Martha, for a useful rule,  
 She who is poor is ugly or a fool;  
 Or, worse than either, has a bosom fill'd  
 With soft emotions, and with raptures thrill'd.  
 "Read not too much, nor write in verse or prose,  
 For then you make the dull and foolish foes;  
 Yet those who do deride not nor condemn, 70  
 It is not safe to raise up foes in them;  
 For though they harm you not, as blockheads do,  
 There is some malice in the scribbling crew."  
 Such her advice; full hard with her had dealt  
 The world, and she the usage keenly felt.  
 "Keep your good name," she said, "and that to keep  
 You must not suffer vigilance to sleep.  
 Some have, perhaps, the name of chaste retain'd,  
 When nought of chastity itself remain'd;  
 But there is danger—few have means to blind 80  
 The keen-eyed world, and none to make it kind.  
 "And one thing more—to free yourself from foes  
 Never a secret to your friend disclose;  
 Secrets with girls, like loaded guns with boys,  
 Are never valued till they make a noise;  
 To show how trusted, they their power display;  
 To show how worthy, they the trust betray;  
 Like pence in children's pockets secrets lie  
 In female bosoms—they must burn or fly.  
 "Let not your heart be soften'd; if it be, 90  
 Let not the man his softening influence see;  
 For the most fond will sometimes tyrants prove,  
 And wound the bosom where they trace the love.  
 But to your fortune look, on that depend }  
 For your life's comfort; comforts that attend }  
 On wealth alone—wealth gone, they have their end." }  
 Such were my mother's cares to mend my lot,  
 And such her pupil they succeeded not.  
 It was conceived the person I had then  
 Might lead to serious thoughts some wealthy men, 100  
 Who, having none their purpose to oppose,  
 Would soon be won their wishes to disclose.  
 My mother thought I was the very child  
 By whom the old and amorous are beguiled:  
 So mildly gay, so ignorantly fair,  
 And pure, no doubt, as sleeping infants are;  
 Then I had lessons how to look and move,  
 And, I repeat, make merchandize of love.  
 Thrice it was tried if one so young could bring 110  
 Old wary men to buy the binding ring;  
 And on the taper finger, to whose tip  
 The fond old swain would press his withering lip,  
 Place the strong charm:—and one would win my heart  
 By re-assuming youth—a trying part;  
 Girls, he supposed, all knew the young were bold,  
 And he would show that spirit in the old;  
 In boys they loved to hear the rattling tongue,  
 And he would talk as idly as the young;  
 He knew the vices our Lotharios boast,  
 And he would show of every vice the ghost, 120  
 The evil's self, without disguise or dress,  
 Vice in its own pure native ugliness:  
 Not, as the drunkenness of slaves, to prove  
 Vice hateful, but that seeing, I might love.



Now were her nerves disorder'd; she was weak, 200  
 And must the help of a physician seek:  
 A Scotch physician, who had just began  
 To settle near us, quite a graceful man,  
 And very clever, with a soft address,  
 That would his meaning tenderly express.  
 Sick as my mother seem'd, when he inquired  
 If she was ill, he found her well attired;  
 She purchased wares so showy and so fine,  
 The venders all believed th' indulgence mine;—  
 But I, who thrice was woo'd, had lovers three, 210  
 Must now again a very infant be;  
 While the good lady, twenty years a wife,  
 Was to decide the colour of his life:  
 And she decided. She was wont t' appear  
 To these unequal marriages severe;  
 Her thoughts of such with energy she told,  
 And was repulsive, dignified, and cold;  
 But now, like monarchs weary of a throne,  
 She would no longer reign—at least alone.  
 She gave her pulse, and, with a manner sweet, 220  
 Wish'd him to feel how kindly they could beat;  
 And 'tis a thing quite wonderful to tell  
 How soon he understood them, and how well.  
 Now, when she married, I from home was sent,  
 With grandmamma to keep perpetual Lent;  
 For she would take me on conditions cheap,  
 For what we scarcely could a parrot keep:  
 A trifle added to the daily fare  
 Would feed a maiden who must learn to spare.  
 With grandmamma I lived in perfect ease; 230  
 Consent to starve, and I was sure to please.  
 Full well I knew the painful shifts we made }  
 Expenses all to lessen or evade, }  
 And tradesmen's flinty hearts to soften and persuade. }  
 Poor grandmamma among the gentry dwelt  
 Of a small town, and all the honour felt;  
 Shrinking from all approaches to disgrace  
 That might be mark'd in so genteel a place;  
 Where every daily deed, as soon as done, }  
 Ran through the town as fast as it could run— }  
 At dinners what appear'd—at cards who lost or won. } 240  
 Our good appearance through the town was known,  
 Hunger and thirst were matters of our own;  
 And you would judge that she in scandal dealt  
 Who told on what we fed, or how we felt.  
 We had a little maid, some four feet high,  
 Who was employ'd our household stores to buy;  
 For she would weary every man in trade,  
 And tease t' assent whom she could not persuade.  
 Methinks I see her, with her pigmy light, 250  
 Precede her mistress in a moonless night;  
 From the small lantern throwing through the street  
 The dimm'd effulgence at her lady's feet;  
 What time she went to prove her well-known skill  
 With rival friends at their beloved quadrille.  
 "And how's your pain?" inquired the gentle maid,  
 For that was asking if with luck she play'd;  
 And this she answer'd as the cards decreed,  
 "O Biddy! ask not—very bad indeed;"  
 Or, in more cheerful tone, from spirit light, 260  
 "Why, thank you, Biddy, pretty well to-night."  
 The good old lady often thought me vain,  
 And of my dress would tenderly complain;  
 But liked my taste in food of every kind,  
 As from all grossness, like her own, refined.  
 Yet when she hinted that on herbs and bread  
 Girls of my age and spirit should be fed,  
 Whate'er my age had borne, my flesh and blood,  
 Spirit and strength, the interdict withstood;  
 But, though I might the frugal soul offend 270  
 Of the good matron, now my only friend,  
 And though her purse suggested rules so strict,  
 Her love could not the punishment inflict;  
 She sometimes watch'd the morsel with a frown,



And sigh'd to see, but let it still go down.

Our butcher's bill, to me a monstrous sum,  
Was such that, summon'd, he forbore to come:  
Proud man was he, and when the bill was paid,  
He put the money in his bag and play'd,  
Jerking it up, and catching it again,  
And poisoning in his hand in pure disdain;  
While the good lady, awed by man so proud,  
And yet disposed to have her claims allow'd,  
Balanced between humility and pride,  
Stood a fall'n empress at the butcher's side,  
Praising his meat as delicate and nice—  
"Yes, madam, yes! if people pay the price."

280

So lived the lady, and so murmur'd I,  
In all the grief of pride and poverty.  
Twice in the year there came a note to tell  
How well mamma, who hoped the child was well;  
It was not then a pleasure to be styled,  
By a mamma of such experience, 'Child!'  
But I suppressed the feelings of my pride,  
Or other feelings set them all aside.

290

There was a youth from college, just the one  
I judged mamma would value as a son;  
He was to me good, handsome, learn'd, genteel,  
I cannot now what then I thought reveal;  
But, in a word, he was the very youth  
Who told me what I judged the very truth,  
That love like his and charms like mine agreed,  
For all description they must both exceed.  
Yet scarcely can I throw a smile on things  
So painful, but that Time his comfort brings,  
Or rather throws oblivion on the mind,  
For we are more forgetful than resign'd.

300

We both were young, had heard of love and read,  
And could see nothing in the thing to dread,  
But like a simple pair our time employ'd  
In pleasant views to be in time enjoy'd.  
When Frederick came, the kind old lady smiled  
To see the youth so taken with her child;  
A nice young man, who came with unsoil'd feet  
In her best room, and neither drank nor eat.  
Alas! he planted in a vacant breast  
The hopes and fears that robb'd it of its rest.

310

All now appear'd so right, so fair, so just,  
We surely might the lovely prospect trust;  
Alas! poor Frederick and his charmer found  
That they were standing on fallacious ground:  
All that the father of the youth could do  
Was done—and now he must himself pursue  
Success in life; and, honest truth to state,  
He was not fitted for a candidate.

320

I, too, had nothing in this world below,  
Save what a Scotch physician could bestow,  
Who for a pittance took my mother's hand;  
And, if disposed, what had they to command?

But these were after fears, nor came t' annoy  
The tender children in their dreams of joy;  
Who talk'd of glebe and garden, tithe and rent,  
And how a fancied income should be spent;  
What friends, what social parties we should see,  
And live with what genteel economy;  
In fact, we gave our hearts as children give,  
And thought of living as our neighbours live.

330

Now, when assured ourselves that all was well,  
'Twas right our friends of these designs to tell;  
For this we parted.—Grandmamma, amazed,  
Upon her child with fond compassion gazed;  
Then pious tears appear'd, but not a word  
In aid of weeping till she cried, "Good Lord!"  
She then, with hurried motion, sought the stairs,  
And, calling Biddy, bade her come to prayers.

340

Yet the good lady early in her life  
Was call'd to vow the duties of a wife;  
She sought the altar by her friends' advice,  
No free-will offering, but a sacrifice;

But here a forward girl and eager boy 350  
 Dared talk of life, and turn their heads with joy!  
 To my mamma I wrote in just the way  
 I felt, and said what dreaming lasses say:  
 How handsome Frederick was, by all confess'd,  
 How well he look'd, how very well he dress'd;  
 With learning much, that would for both provide,  
 His mother's darling, and his father's pride;  
 'And then he loves me more than mind can guess,  
 Than heart conceive, or eloquence express.'  
 No letter came a doubtful mind to ease, 360  
 And, what was worse, no Frederick came to please;  
 To college gone—so thought our little maid—  
 But not to see me! I was much afraid;  
 I walk'd the garden round, and deeply sigh'd,  
 When grandmamma grew faint! and dropt, and died:  
 A fate so awful and so sudden drove  
 All else away, and half extinguish'd love.  
 Strange people came; they search'd the house around,  
 And, vulgar wretches! sold whate'er they found:  
 The secret hoards that in the drawers were kept, 370  
 The silver toys that with the tokens slept,  
 The precious beads, the corals with their bells,  
 That laid secure, lock'd up in secret cells,  
 The costly silk, the tabby, the brocade,  
 The very garment for the wedding made,  
 Were brought to sale, with many a jest thereon!  
 "Going—a bridal dress—for—Going!—Gone."  
 That ring, dear pledge of early love and true, }  
 That to the wedded finger almost grew, }  
 Was sold for six and ten-pence to a Jew! } 380  
 Great was the fancied worth; but ah! how small  
 The sum thus made, and yet how valued all!  
 But all that to the shameful service went  
 Just paid the bills, the burial, and the rent;  
 And I and Biddy, poor deserted maids!  
 Were turn'd adrift to seek for other aids.  
 Now left by all the world, as I believed,  
 I wonder'd much that I so little grieved;  
 Yet I was frighten'd at the painful view  
 Of shiftless want, and saw not what to do. 390  
 In times like this the poor have little dread,  
 They can but work, and they shall then be fed;  
 And Biddy cheer'd me with such thoughts as this,  
 "You'll find the poor have their enjoyments, Miss!"  
 Indeed I saw, for Biddy took me home  
 To a forsaken hovel's cold and gloom;  
 And while my tears in plenteous flow were shed,  
 With her own hands she placed her proper bed,  
 Reserved for need. A fire was quickly made,  
 And food, the purchase for the day, display'd; 400  
 She let in air to make the damp retire,  
 Then placed her sad companion at her fire;  
 She then began her wonted peace to feel,  
 She [brought] her wool, and sought her favourite wheel;  
 That as she turn'd, she sang with sober glee,  
 "Begone, dull Care! I'll have no more with thee";  
 Then turn'd to me, and bade me weep no more,  
 But try and taste the pleasures of the poor.  
 When dinner came, on table brown and bare  
 Were placed the humblest forms of earthen ware, 410  
 With one blue dish, on which our food was placed,  
 For appetite provided, not for taste.  
 I look'd disgusted, having lately seen  
 All so minutely delicate and clean;  
 Yet, as I sate, I found to my surprise  
 A vulgar kind of inclination rise,  
 And near my humble friend, and nearer, drew,  
 Tried the strange food, and was partaker too.  
 I walk'd at eve, but not where I was seen,  
 And thought, with sorrow, what can Frederick mean? 420  
 I must not write, I said, for I am poor;  
 And then I wept till I could weep no more.  
 Kind-hearted Biddy tried my griefs to heal,  
 This is a nothing to what others feel;

Life has a thousand sorrows worse than this,  
A lover lost is not a fortune, Miss!  
One goes, another comes, and which is best  
There is no telling—set your heart at rest.”

At night we pray'd—I dare not say a word  
Of our devotion, it was so absurd; 430  
And very pious upon Biddy's part,  
But mine were all effusions of the heart;  
While she her angels call'd their peace to shed,  
And bless the corners of our little bed.

All was a dream! I said, is this indeed }  
To be my life? and thus to lodge and feed, }  
To pay for what I have, and work for what I need? }  
Must I be poor? and Frederick, if we meet,  
Would not so much as know me in the street?  
Or, as he walk'd with ladies, he would try 440  
To be engaged as we were passing by—  
And then I wept to think that I should grow  
Like them whom he would be ashamed to know.

On the third day, while striving with my fate,  
And hearing Biddy all its comforts state,  
Talking of all her neighbours, all her schemes,  
Her stories, merry jests, and warning dreams,  
With tales of mirth and murder—O! the nights  
Past, said the maiden, in such dear delights,  
And I was thinking, can the time arrive 450  
When I shall thus be humbled, and survive?—  
Then I beheld a horse and handsome gig,  
With the good air, tall form, and comely wig  
Of Doctor Mackey—I in fear began  
To say, Good heaven, preserve me from the man!  
But fears ill reason—heaven to such a mind  
Had lent a heart compassionate and kind.

From him I learnt that one had call'd to know  
What with my hand my parents could bestow;  
And when he learn'd the truth, in high disdain 460  
He told my fate, and home return'd again.

“Nay, be not grieved, my lovely girl; but few  
Wed the first love, however kind and true;  
Something there comes to break the strongest vow,  
Or mine had been my gentle Mattie now.  
When the good lady died—but let me leave  
All gloomy subjects—'tis not good to grieve.”

Thus the kind Scotchman soothed me; he sustain'd  
A father's part, and my submission gain'd,  
Then my affection; and he often told 470  
My sterner parent that her heart was cold.  
He grew in honour—he obtain'd a name—  
And now a favourite with the place became;  
To me most gentle, he would condescend  
To read and reason, be the guide and friend;  
He taught me knowledge of the wholesome kind,  
And fill'd with many a useful truth my mind.  
Life's common burden daily lighter grew;  
And even Frederick lessen'd in my view.

Cold and repulsive as he once appear'd, 480  
He was by every generous act endear'd;  
And, above all, that he with ardour fill'd  
My soul for truth—a love by him instill'd;  
Till my mamma grew jealous of a maid  
To whom an husband such attention paid:  
Not grossly jealous, but it gave her pain,  
And she observed, “He made her daughter vain;  
And what his help to one who must not look  
To gain her bread by poring on a book?”

This was distress; but this, and all beside, 490  
Was lost in grief—my kinder parent died;  
When praised and loved, when joy and health he gave,  
He sank lamented to an early grave;  
Then love and we the parent and the child,  
Lost in one grief, allied and reconciled.

Yet soon a will, that left me half his worth,  
To the same spirit gave a second birth;  
But 'twas a mother's spleen; and she indeed  
Was sick, and sad, and had of comfort need.

I watch'd the way her anxious spirit took, 500  
 And often found her musing o'er a book;  
 She changed her dress, her church, her priest, her prayer,  
 Join'd a new sect, and sought her comforts there.  
 Some strange, coarse people came, and were so free  
 In their addresses, they offended me;  
 But my mamma threw all her pride away—  
 More humble she as more assuming they.  
 "And what," they said, as having power, "are now  
 The inward conflicts? do you strive? and how?"  
 Themselves confessing thoughts so new and wild, 510  
 I thought them like the visions of a child.  
 "Could we," they ask, "our best good deeds condemn? }  
 And did we long to touch the garment's hem? }  
 And was it so with us? for so it was with them." }  
 A younger few assumed a softer part,  
 And tried to shake the fortress of my heart;  
 To this my pliant mother lent her aid,  
 And wish'd the winning of her erring maid.  
 I was constrain'd her female friends to hear;  
 But suffer'd not a bearded convert near; 520  
 Though more than one attempted, with their whine.  
 And "Sister! sister! how that heart of thine?"  
 But this was freedom I for ever check'd:  
 Mine was a heart no brother could affect.  
 But, "would I hear the preacher, and receive  
 The dropping dew of his discourse at eve?  
 The soft, sweet words?" I gave two precious hours  
 To hear of gifts and graces, helps and powers;  
 When a pale youth, who should dismiss the flock,  
 Gave to my bosom an electric shock. 530  
 While in that act, he look'd upon my face  
 As one in that all-equalizing place;  
 Nor, though he sought me, would he lay aside  
 Their cold, dead freedom, or their dull, sad pride.  
 Of his conversion he with triumph spoke,  
 Before he orders from a bishop took;  
 Then how his father's anger he had braved,  
 And, safe himself, his erring neighbours saved.  
 Me he rejoiced a sister to behold  
 Among the members of his favourite fold; 540  
 He had not sought me; the availing call  
 Demanded all his love, and had it all;  
 But, now thus met, it must be heaven's design.—  
 Indeed! I thought; it never shall be mine!—  
 Yes, we must wed. He was not rich: and I  
 Had of the earthly good a mean supply;  
 But it sufficed. Of his conversion then  
 He told, and labours in converting men;  
 For he was chosen all their bands among—  
 Another Daniel! honour'd, though so young. 550  
 He call'd me sister; show'd me that he knew  
 What I possess'd; and told what it would do;  
 My looks, I judge, express'd my full disdain; }  
 But it was given to the man in vain: }  
 They preach till they are proud, and pride disturbs the brain. }  
 Is this the youth once timid, mild, polite?  
 How odious now, and sick'ning to the sight!  
 Proud that he sees, and yet so truly blind,  
 With all this blight and mildew on the mind!  
 Amazed, the solemn creature heard me vow 560  
 That I was not disposed to take him now.  
 "Then, art thou changed, fair maiden? changed thy heart?"  
 I answered, "No; but I perceive thou art."  
 Still was my mother sad, her nerves relax'd,  
 And our small income for advice was tax'd;  
 When I, who long'd for change and freedom, cried,  
 'Let sea and Sidmouth's balmy air be tried.'  
 And so they were, and every neighbouring scene,  
 That make the bosom, like the clime, serene;  
 Yet were her teachers loth to yield assent; 570  
 And not without the warning voice we went;  
 And there was secret counsel all unknown  
 To me—but I had counsel of my own.  
 And now there pass'd a portion of my time

In ease delicious, and in joy sublime—  
With friends endear'd by kindness—with delight  
In all that could the feeling mind excite,  
Or please, excited; walks in every place  
Where we could pleasure find and beauty trace,  
Or views at night, where on the rocky steep  
Shines the full moon, or glitters on the deep. 580

Yes, they were happy days; but they are fled!  
All now are parted—part are with the dead!  
Still it is pleasure, though 'tis mix'd with pain,  
To think of joys that cannot live again—  
Here cannot live; but they excite desire  
Of purer kind, and heavenly thoughts inspire!

And now my mother, weaken'd in her mind,  
Her will, subdued before, to me resign'd.  
Wean'd from her late directors, by degrees 590  
She sank resign'd, and only sought for ease.  
In a small town upon the coast we fix'd,  
Nor in amusement with associates mix'd.  
My years—but other mode will I pursue,  
And count my time by what I sought to do.

And was that mind at ease? could I avow  
That no once leading thoughts engaged me now?  
Was I convinced th' enthusiastic man  
Had ruin'd what the loving boy began?

I answer doubting—I could still detect 600  
Feelings too soft—yet him I could reject:  
Feelings that came when I had least employ—  
When common pleasures I could least enjoy—  
When I was pacing lonely in the rays  
Of a full moon, in lonely walks and ways—  
When I was sighing o'er a tale's distress,  
And paid attention to my Bible less.

These found, I sought my remedies for these;  
I suffer'd common things my mind to please,  
And common pleasures; seldom walk'd alone, 610  
Nor when the moon upon the waters shone;  
But then my candles lit, my window closed,  
My needle took, and with my neighbours prosed;  
And in one year—nay, ere the end of one,  
My labour ended, and my love was done.

My heart at rest, I boldly look'd within,  
And dared to ask it of its secret sin;  
Alas! with pride it answer'd, "Look around,  
And tell me where a better heart is found."  
And then I traced my virtues; O! how few, 620  
In fact, they were, and yet how vain I grew;  
Thought of my kindness, condescension, ease,  
My will, my wishes, nay, my power to please;  
I judged me prudent, rational, discreet,  
And void of folly, falsehood and deceit;  
I read, not lightly, as I some had known,  
But made an author's meaning all my own;  
In short, what lady could a poet choose  
As a superior subject for his muse?

So said my heart; and Conscience straight replied— }  
"I say the matter is not fairly tried: }  
I am offended, hurt, dissatisfied. } 631

First of the Christian graces, let me see  
What thy pretensions to humility?  
Art thou prepared for trial? Wilt thou say  
'I am this being,' and for judgment pray?  
And, with the gallant Frenchman, wilt thou cry,  
When to thy judge presented, 'thus am I—  
Thus was I formed—these talents I possess'd—  
So I employed them—and thou know'st the rest?" 640

Thus Conscience; and she then a picture drew,  
And bade me think and tremble at the view.  
One I beheld—a wife, a mother—go  
To gloomy scenes of wickedness and wo;  
She sought her way through all things vile and base,  
And made a prison a religious place;  
Fighting her way—the way that angels fight  
With powers of darkness—to let in the light.  
Tell me, my heart, hast thou such victory won

As this, a sinner of thy sex, has done, 650  
 And calls herself a sinner? What art thou?  
 And where thy praise and exaltation now?  
 Yet is she tender, delicate, and nice,  
 And shrinks from all depravity and vice;  
 Shrinks from the ruffian gaze, the savage gloom,  
 That reign where guilt and misery find an home—  
 Guilt chain'd, and misery purchased; and with them  
 All we abhor, abominate, condemn—  
 The look of scorn, the scowl, th' insulting leer  
 Of shame, all fix'd on her who ventures here. 660  
 Yet all she braved! she kept her stedfast eye  
 On the dear cause, and brush'd the baseness by.  
 So would a mother press her darling child  
 Close to her breast, with tainted rags defiled.  
 But thou hast talents truly! say, the ten:  
 Come, let us look at their improvement then.  
 What hast thou done to aid thy suffering kind,  
 To help the sick, the deaf, the lame, the blind?  
 Hast thou not spent thy intellectual force  
 On books abstruse, in critical discourse? 670  
 Wasting in useless energy thy days,  
 And idly listening to their common praise,  
 Who can a kind of transient fame dispense,  
 And say—"a woman of exceeding sense."  
 Thus tried, and failing, the suggestions fled,  
 And a corrected spirit reign'd instead.  
 My mother yet was living; but the flame  
 Of life now flash'd, and fainter then became;  
 I made it pleasant, and was pleased to see  
 A parent looking as a child to me. 680  
 And now our humble place grew wond'rous gay; }  
 Came gallant persons in their red array: }  
 All strangers welcome there, extremely welcome they. }  
 When in the church I saw inquiring eyes  
 Fix'd on my face with pleasure and surprise;  
 And soon a knocking at my door was heard;  
 And soon the lover of my youth appear'd—  
 Frederick, in all his glory, glad to meet,  
 And say, "his happiness was now complete."  
 He told his flight from superstitious zeal; 690  
 But first what torments he was doom'd to feel:  
 The tender tears he saw from women fall—  
 The strong persuasions of the brethren all—  
 The threats of crazed enthusiasts, bound to keep  
 The struggling mind, and awe the straying sheep—  
 From these, their love, their curses, and their creed,  
 Was I by reason and exertion freed.  
 Then, like a man who often had been told  
 And was convinced success attends the bold,  
 His former purpose he renew'd, and swore 700  
 He never loved me half so well before:  
 Before he felt a something to divide  
 The heart, that now had not a love beside.  
 In earlier times had I myself amused,  
 And first my swain perplex'd, and then refused—  
 Cure for conceit; but now in purpose grave,  
 Strong and decisive the reply I gave.  
 Still he would come, and talk as idlers do,  
 Both of his old associates and his new;  
 Those who their dreams and reveries receive 710  
 For facts, and those who would not facts believe.  
 He now conceived that truth was hidden, placed  
 He knew not where, she never could be traced;  
 But that in every place, the world around,  
 Might some resemblance of the nymph be found.  
 Yet wise men knew these shadows to be vain,  
 Such as our true philosophers disdain—  
 "They laugh to see what vulgar minds pursue— }  
 Truth, as a mistress, never in their view— }  
 But there the shadow flies, and that, they cry, is true." }  
 Thus, at the college and the meeting train'd, 721  
 My lover seem'd his acmè to have gain'd;  
 With some compassion I essay'd a cure:  
 "If truth be hidden, why art thou so sure?"

This he mistook for tenderness, and cried,  
 "If sure of thee, I care not what beside!"  
 Compelled to silence, I, in pure disdain,  
 Withdrew from one so insolent and vain;  
 He then retired; and, I was kindly told,  
 In pure compassion grew estranged and cold. 730

My mother died; but, in my grief, drew near  
 A bosom friend, who dried the useless tear;  
 We lived together: we combined our shares  
 Of the world's good, and learn'd to brave its cares.  
 We were the ladies of the place, and found  
 Protection and respect the country round;  
 We gave, and largely, for we wish'd to live  
 In good repute—for this 'tis good to give;  
 Our annual present to the priest convey'd  
 Was kindly taken—we in comfort pray'd. 740

There none molested in the crimson pew  
 The worthy ladies, whom the vicar knew;  
 And we began to think that life might be—  
 Not happy all, but innocently free.  
 My friend in early life was bound to one  
 Of gentle kindred, but a younger son.  
 He fortune's smile with perseverance woo'd,  
 And wealth beneath the burning sun pursued.  
 There, urged by love and youthful hope, he went,  
 Loth; but 'twas all his fortune could present. 750

From hence he wrote; and, with a lover's fears,  
 And gloomy fondness, talk'd of future years;  
 To her devoted, his Priscilla found  
 His faithful heart still suffering with its wound,  
 That would not heal. A second time she heard;  
 And then no more; nor lover since appear'd.  
 Year after year the country's fleet arrived,  
 Confirm'd her fear, and yet her love survived;  
 It still was living; yet her hope was dead,  
 And youthful dreams, nay, youth itself, was fled; 760

And he was lost: so urged her friends, so she  
 At length believed, and thus retired with me.  
 She would a dedicated vestal prove,  
 And give her virgin vows to heaven and love;  
 She dwelt with fond regret on pleasures past,  
 With ardent hope on those that ever last;  
 Pious and tender, every day she view'd  
 With solemn joy our perfect solitude;  
 Her reading, that which most delighted her,  
 That soothed the passions, yet would gently stir; 770

The tender, softening, melancholy strain,        }  
 That caused not pleasure, but that vanquished pain,        }  
 In tears she read, and wept, and long'd to read again.        }  
 But other worlds were her supreme delight,  
 And there, it seem'd, she long'd to take her flight;  
 Yet patient, pensive, arm'd by thoughts sublime,  
 She watch'd the tardy steps of lingering time.  
 My friend, with face that most would handsome call,  
 Possess'd the charm that wins the heart of all;  
 And, thrice entreated by a lover's prayer, 780

She thrice refused him with determined air.  
 "No! had the world one monarch, and was he  
 All that the heart could wish its lord to be—  
 Lovely and loving, generous, brave, and true—  
 Vain were his hopes to waken hers anew!"  
 For she was wedded to ideal views,  
 And fancy's prospects, that she would not lose,  
 Would not forego to be a mortal's wife,  
 And wed the poor realities of life.

There was a day, ere yet the autumn closed, 790  
 When, ere her wintry wars, the earth reposed;  
 When from the yellow weed the feathery crown,  
 Light as the curling smoke, fell slowly down;  
 When the wing'd insect settled in our sight,  
 And waited wind to recommence her flight;  
 When the wide river was a silver sheet,  
 And on the ocean slept th' unanchor'd fleet;  
 When from our garden, as we look'd above,  
 There was no cloud, and nothing seem'd to move;

Then was my friend in ecstasies—she cried, 800  
 “There is, I feel there is, a world beside!  
 Martha, dear Martha! we shall hear not then  
 Of hearts distress’d by good or evil men,  
 But all will constant, tender, faithful be—  
 So had I been, and so had one with me;  
 But in this world the fondest and the best  
 Are the most tried, most troubled, and distress’d:  
 This is the place for trial, here we prove,  
 And there enjoy, the faithfulness of love.

“Nay, were he here in all the pride of youth, 810  
 With honour, valour, tenderness, and truth,  
 Entirely mine, yet what could I secure,  
 Or who one day of comfort could insure?  
 “No! all is closed on earth, and there is now  
 Nothing to break th’ indissoluble vow;  
 But in that world will be th’ abiding bliss,  
 That pays for every tear and sigh in this.”

Such her discourse, and more refined it grew,  
 Till she had all her glorious dream in view;  
 And she would further in that dream proceed 820  
 Than I dare go, who doubtfully agreed.  
 Smiling I ask’d, again to draw the soul  
 From flight so high, and fancy to control,  
 “If this be truth, the lover’s happier way  
 Is distant still to keep the purposed day;  
 The real bliss would mar the fancied joy,  
 And marriage all the dream of love destroy.”

She softly smiled, and, as we gravely talk’d,  
 We saw a man who up the gravel walk’d— 830  
 Not quite erect, nor quite by age depress’d;  
 A travell’d man, and as a merchant dress’d.  
 Large chain of gold upon his watch he wore,  
 Small golden buckles on his feet he bore;  
 A head of gold his costly cane display’d,  
 And all about him love of gold betray’d.

This comely man moved onward, and a pair  
 Of comely maidens met with serious air;  
 Till one exclaim’d, and wildly look’d around,  
 “O heav’n, ’tis Paul!” and dropt upon the ground;  
 But she recover’d soon, and you must guess 840  
 What then ensued, and how much happiness.  
 They parted lovers, both distress’d to part;  
 They met as neighbours, heal’d, and whole of heart.  
 She in his absence look’d to heaven for bliss;  
 He was contented with a world like this:  
 And she prepared in some new state to meet  
 The man now seeking for some snug retreat.  
 He kindly told her he was firm and true,  
 Nor doubted her, and bade her then adieu!

“What shall I do?” the sighing maid began, 850  
 “How lost the lover! O, how gross the man!”  
 For the plain dealer had his wish declared,  
 Nor she, devoted victim! could be spared.  
 He spoke as one decided; she as one  
 Who fear’d the love, and would the lover shun.

“O Martha, sister of my soul! how dies  
 Each lovely view! for can I truth disguise,  
 That this is he? No! nothing shall persuade:  
 This is a man the naughty world has made,  
 An eating, drinking, buying, bargaining man— 860  
 And can I love him? No! I never can.  
 What once he was, what fancy gave beside,  
 Full well I know, my love was then my pride;  
 What time has done, what trade and travel wrought,  
 You see! and yet your sorrowing friend is sought;  
 But can I take him?”—“Take him not,” I cried,  
 “If so averse—but why so soon decide?”

Meantime a daily guest the man appear’d,  
 Set all his sail, and for his purpose steer’d;  
 Loud and familiar, loving, fierce and free, 870  
 He overpower’d her soft timidity:  
 Who, weak and vain, and grateful to behold  
 The man was hers, and hers would be the gold—  
 Thus sundry motives, more than I can name,



Leagued on his part, and she a wife became.

A home was offer'd, but I knew too well  
What comfort was with married friends to dwell;  
I was resign'd, and had I felt distress,  
Again a lover offer'd some redress.  
Behold, a hero of the buskin hears  
My loss, and with consoling love appears.

880

Frederick was now a hero on the stage,  
In all its glories, rhapsody, and rage;  
Again himself he offer'd, offer'd all  
That his an hero of the kind can call:  
He for my sake would hope of fame resign,  
And leave the applause of all the world for mine.  
Hard fate was Frederick's never to succeed,  
Yet ever try—but so it was decreed.

890

His mind was weakened; he would laugh and weep,  
And swore profusely I had murder'd sleep,  
Had quite unmann'd him, cleft his heart in twain,  
And he should never be himself again.

He *was* himself: weak, nervous, kind, and poor,  
Ill dress'd and idle, he besieged my door;  
Borrow'd,—or, worse; made verses on my charms,  
And did his best to fill me with alarms.

I had some pity, and I sought the price  
Of my repose—my hero was not nice:  
There was a loan, and promise I should be }  
From all the efforts of his fondness free, }  
From hunger's future claims, or those of vanity. }  
"Yet," said he, bowing, "do to study take!  
O! what a Desdemona wouldst thou make!"  
Thus was my lover lost; yet even now  
He claims one thought, and this we will allow.

900

His father lived to an extreme old age,  
But never kind!—his son had left the stage,  
And gain'd some office, but an humble place,  
And that he lost! Want sharpen'd his disgrace,  
Urged him to seek his father—but too late:  
His jealous brothers watch'd and barr'd the gate.

910

The old man died; but there is one who pays  
A moderate pension for his latter days;  
Who, though assured inquiries will offend,  
Is ever asking for this unknown friend:  
Some partial lady, whom he hopes to find  
As to his wants so to his wishes kind.

"Be still," a cool adviser sometimes writes—  
"Nay, but," says he, "the gentle maid invites—  
Do, let me know the young! the soft! the fair!"

920

"Old man," 'tis answer'd, "take thyself to prayer!  
Be clean, be sober, to thy priest apply,  
And—dead to all around thee—learn to die!"

Now had I rest from life's strong hopes and fears,  
And no disturbance mark'd the flying years;  
So on in quiet might those years have past,  
But for a light adventure, and a last.

A handsome boy, from school-day bondage free,  
Came with mamma to gaze upon the sea;  
With soft blue eye he look'd upon the waves,  
And talk'd of treacherous rocks, and seamen's graves.  
There was much sweetness in his boyish smile,  
And signs of feelings frank, that knew not guile.

930

The partial mother, of her darling proud,  
Besought my friendship, and her own avow'd;  
She praised her Rupert's person, spirit, ease,  
How fond of study, yet how form'd to please.  
In our discourse he often bore a part,  
And talk'd, heaven bless him, of his feeling heart;  
He spoke of pleasures souls like his enjoy,  
And hated Lovelace like a virtuous boy;

940

He felt for Clementina's holy strife,  
And was Sir Charles as large and true as life;  
For Virtue's heroines was his soul distress'd;  
True love and guileless honour fill'd his breast,  
When, as the subjects drew the frequent sigh, }  
The tear stood trembling in his large blue eye, }  
And softly he exclaim'd, "Sweet, sweetest sympathy!" }

When thus I heard the handsome stripling speak, 950  
 I smiled assent, and thought to pat his cheek;  
 But when I saw the feelings blushing there,  
 Signs of emotions strong, they said—forbear!  
 The youth would speak of his intent to live  
 On that estate which heaven was pleased to give—  
 There with the partner of his joys to dwell,  
 And nurse the virtues that he loved so well;  
 The humble good of happy swains to share,  
 And from the cottage drive distress and care; 960  
 To the dear infants make some pleasures known,  
 And teach, he gravely said, the virtues to his own.  
 He loved to read in verse, and verse-like prose,  
 The softest tales of love-inflicted woes;  
 When, looking fondly, he would smile and cry,  
 “Is there not bliss in sensibility?”  
 We walk’d together, and it seem’d not harm  
 In linking thought with thought, and arm with arm;  
 Till the dear boy would talk too much of bliss,  
 And indistinctly murmur—“such as this.” 970  
 When no maternal wish her heart beguiled,  
 The lady call’d her son “her darling child;”  
 When with some nearer view her speech began,  
 She changed her phrase, and said, “the good young man!”  
 And lost, when hinting of some future bride,  
 The woman’s prudence in the mother’s pride.  
 Still decent fear and conscious folly strove  
 With fond presumption and aspiring love;  
 But now too plain to me the strife appear’d,  
 And what he sought I knew, and what he fear’d: 980  
 The trembling hand and frequent sigh disclosed  
 The wish that prudence, care, and time opposed.  
 Was I not pleased, will you demand?—Amused  
 By boyish love, that woman’s pride refused?  
 This I acknowledge, and from day to day  
 Resolved no longer at such game to play;  
 Yet I forbore, though to my purpose true,  
 And firmly fix’d to bid the youth adieu.  
 There was a moonlight eve, serenely cool,  
 When the vast ocean seem’d a mighty pool;  
 Save the small rippling waves that gently beat, 990  
 We scarcely heard them falling, at our feet.  
 His mother absent, absent every sound  
 And every sight that could the youth confound;  
 The arm, fast lock’d in mine, his fear betray’d,  
 And, when he spoke not, his designs convey’d;  
 He oft-times gasp’d for breath, he tried to speak,  
 And studying words, at last had words to seek.  
 Silent the boy, by silence more betray’d,  
 And fearing lest he should appear afraid,  
 He knelt abruptly, and his speech began— 1000  
 “Pity the pangs of an unhappy man.”  
 “Be sure,” I answer’d, “and relieve them too—  
 But why that posture? What the woes to you?  
 To feel for others’ sorrows is humane,  
 But too much feeling is our virtue’s bane.  
 “Come, my dear Rupert! now your tale disclose,  
 That I may know the sufferer and his woes.  
 Know, there is pain that wilful man endures,  
 That our reproof and not our pity cures;  
 For though for such assumed distress we grieve, 1010  
 Since they themselves as well as us deceive,  
 Yet we assist not.”—The unhappy youth,  
 Unhappy then, beheld not all the truth.  
 “O! what is this?” exclaim’d the dubious boy;  
 “Words that confuse the being they destroy?  
 So have I read the gods to madness drive  
 The man condemn’d with adverse fate to strive.  
 O! make thy victim, though by misery, sure,  
 And let me know the pangs I must endure;  
 For, like the Grecian warrior, I can pray, 1020  
 Falling, to perish in the face of day.”  
 “Pretty, my Rupert; and it proves the use  
 Of all that learning which the schools produce.  
 But come, your arm—no trembling, but attend

To sober truth, and a maternal friend.

"You ask for pity?"—"O! indeed I do."

"Well then, you have it, and assistance too:

Suppose us married!"—"O! the heavenly thought!"

"Nay—nay, my friend, be you by wisdom taught;

For wisdom tells you, love would soon subside,

1030

Fall, and make room for penitence and pride;

Then would you meet the public eye, and blame

Your private taste, and be o'erwhelm'd with shame:

How must it then your bosom's peace destroy

To hear it said, 'The mother and her boy!'

And then to show the sneering world it lies,

You would assume the man, and tyrannize;

Ev'n Time, Care's general soother, would augment

Your self-reproaching, growing discontent.

"Add twenty years to my precarious life,

1040

And lo! your aged, feeble, wailing wife;

Displeased, displeasing, discontented, blamed;

Both, and with cause, ashaming and ashamed.

When I shall bend beneath a press of time,

Thou wilt be all erect in manhood's prime;

Then wilt thou fly to younger minds t' assuage }

Thy bosom's pain, and I in jealous age }

Shall move contempt, if still; if active, rage; }

And, though in anguish all my days are past,

Yet far beyond thy wishes they may last—

1050

May last till thou, thy better prospects fled,

Shall have no comfort when thy wife is dead.

"Then thou in turn, though none will call thee old,

[Wilt] feel thy spirit fled, thy bosom cold;

No strong or eager wish to make the will,

Life will appear to stagnate and be still,

As now with me it slumbers: O! rejoice

That I attend not to that pleading voice;

So will new hopes this troubled dream succeed,

And one will gladly hear my Rupert plead."

1060

Ask you, while thus I could the youth deny

Was I unmoved?—Inexorable I,

Fix'd and determined; thrice he made his prayer,

With looks of sadness first, and then despair;

Thrice doom'd to bear refusal, not exempt,

At the last effort, from a slight contempt.

"Did his distress, his pains, your joy excite?—"

No; but I fear'd his perseverance might.

Was there no danger in the moon's soft rays,

To hear the handsome stripling's earnest praise?

1070

Was there no fear that while my words reprov'd

The eager youth, I might myself be mov'd?

Not for his sake alone I cried "persist

No more," and with a frown the cause dismiss'd.

Seek you th' event?—I scarcely need reply:

Love, unreturn'd, will languish, pine, and die.

We lived awhile in friendship; and with joy

I saw depart in peace the amorous boy.

We met some ten years after, and he then

Was married, and as cool as married men;

1080

He talk'd of war and taxes, trade and farms,

And thought no more of me, or of my charms.

We spoke; and when, alluding to the past,

Something of meaning in my look I cast,

He, who could never thought or wish disguise,

Look'd in my face with trouble and surprise.

To kill reserve, I seized his arm, and cried,

"Know me, my lord!" when laughing, he replied,

Wonder'd again, and look'd upon my face,

And seem'd unwilling marks of time to trace;

1090

But soon I brought him fairly to confess,

That boys in love judge ill of happiness.

Love had his day—to graver subjects led,

My will is govern'd, and my mind is fed;

And to more vacant bosoms I resign

The hopes and fears that once affected mine.

# ERRATA.

## VOL. II.

[The lines cited from the several poems are those of the poems; those cited from title-pages containing mottoes are the lines of the pages.]

PAGE 6 l. 21 for *or* read *but*. p. 13 l. 5 for *With* read *In*. *ib.* l. 13 for 2 read 1. *ib.* l. 17 for *Act II. Scene 7* read *Act IV. Scene 2*. p. 27 l. 5 several lines omitted after *and such*. *ib.* l. 9 for 4 read 3. *ib.* l. 12 for *o'er* read *in*. *ib.* l. 14 for *Egean* read *Ægean*. *ib.* l. 15 for *Emilia* read *Æmilia*. *ib.* l. 16 for 5 read 1. *ib.* l. 18 for *she bad* read *he bade*. *ib.* l. 21 for *th' insolent* read *the insolent*. *ib.* l. 24 for *fate* read *state*. *ib.* l. 25 for *you* read *ye*. p. 28 l. 13 for *Pain* read *Pains*. p. 41 l. 3 for *then* read *there ....* *ib.* l. 11 for 3 read 1. p. 47 l. 204 for *Chesterfield* read '*Chesterfield*.' p. 56 l. 4 for *ever true and humble* read *a true and humble wife*. *ib.* l. 10 for *The fatal time* read *The leisure and the fearful time*. *ib.* l. 11 for *all ceremonies and* read *the ceremonious*. *ib.* l. 18 for *impiety, thou impious* read *impiety and impious*. *ib.* l. 20 for 2 read 1. p. 67 l. 4 for *peculiar* read *particular*. *ib.* l. 5 for *she* read *he*. *ib.* l. 6 for *her* read *his*. *ib.* l. 7 for *her* read *his*. *ib.* l. 16 for *Tempest* read *The Tempest*. p. 69 l. 50 for *Marcus* read '*Marcus*.' p. 76 l. 344 for *divine!* read '*divine!*'. p. 87 l. 3 for *make a curtsy* read *make curtsy*. *ib.* l. 4 for *but for* read *but yet for*. *ib.* l. 11 for *amble, you nick-name* read *you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name*. *ib.* l. 15 for *Am I contemn'd* read *Stand I condemn'd*. *ib.* l. 16 for *II.* read *III.* p. 92 l. 166 '*Chaste, sober, solemn' and 'devout.*' Not in inverted commas. p. 93 l. 197 for *what woman* read *that woman*. p. 95 l. 265 for *than* read *then*. p. 101 l. 4 for *Or* read *Could*. *ib.* a line omitted after ll. 6, 7 and 8 respectively. p. 103 l. 46 for *Lea* read *lea*. p. 113 l. 8 for *As You Like It* read *Much Ado about Nothing, Act II. Scene 1*. *ib.* l. 11 *Act IV. Scene 3* omitted. *ib.* l. 14 for *hence* read *home*. *ib.* ll. 16-20 '*Be the Sweet Helen's Knell*' is printed as immediately preceding the rest of these lines, instead of following them 28 lines later. For *He left a wife* read *He lost a wife*. In the Shakspearean text these words form the latter part of a line, and are followed by a line and a half here omitted. p. 116 l. 75 for *beauty bless'd* read *beauty-bless'd*. p. 124 after line 3 a line omitted. *ib.* l. 9 for *sometimes* read *something*. *ib.* l. 13 for *Measure for Measure, Act II. Scene 4* read *Much Ado about Nothing, Act III. Scene 1*. p. 134 l. 3 for *heavens* read *heaven*. p. 145 l. 11 for *with purged* read *in purged*. p. 159 l. 13 for *upon* read *of*. *ib.* l. 16 for *pitiable* read *pitiful and*. *ib.* l. 17 for *But thou art* read *Thou stern*. p. 185 l. 13 for *for it* read *for 't*. p. 194 l. 311 for *dosed* read *dozed*. p. 211 l. 8 for *in thee* read *of thee*. *ib.* l. 12 for *but tyrannous* read *but it is tyrannous*. p. 228 ll. 3 and 6 *She* and *Her* are substituted for *He* and *His* in the original passage. *ib.* l. 9 for *there is* read *there's*. p. 242 l. 4 for *Taming the Shrew* read *Taming of the Shrew*. *ib.* l. 7 for *Act V. Scene 2* read *Act II. Scene 1*. p. 249 l. 233 for *has* read *had*. p. 251 l. 6 for *with my troll-my-dames* read *with troll-my-dames*. *ib.* l. 7 for *Scene 2* read *Scene 3*. *ib.* l. 9 for *holding* read *hiding*. p. 253 l. 31 for *of as* read *as of*. p. 259 l. 272 for *seems* read *seemed*. p. 261 l. 372 for *I boy* read *I a boy*. p. 264 l. 6 for *practice may* read *practices*. *ib.* l. 8 for *with hinds* read *with his hinds*. *ib.* l. 12 for *being what* read *being the thing*. p. 276 l. 10 for *He has* read *He is*. p. 308 l. 200 for *know* read *knew*. p. 341 l. 298 for *hear* read *heard*. p. 351 l. 184 for *look'd* read *look*. p. 381 l. 344 for *bounded* read *bonded*. p. 391 l. 738 for *comfort* read *comforts*. p. 397 l. 91 for *it* read *its*. p. 409 ll. 556-8 three inverted commas, instead of four, prefixed to each line, and no single inverted comma at the end of l. 558. p. 413 l. 716 for *parent's* read *parents'*. p. 415 l. 807 for *peasant's* read *peasants'*. p. 423 l. 116 for *Has* read *Had*. p. 449 l. 731 no inverted comma before and after the words *But why delay so long?* p. 461 ll. 358-9 no inverted commas prefixed to these lines, and no inverted comma at the end of l. 359. p. 462 l. 404 for *bought* read *brought*. p. 466 l. 567 no inverted comma at beginning or end of this line. p. 468 l. 636 no third inverted comma before and after the words *I am this being*. *ib.* ll. 638-40 no third inverted comma before the word *thus* in l. 638 or before ll. 639 and 640 or at the end of l. 640. p. 469 ll. 692-7 two inverted commas before each of these lines and at the close of l. 697. p. 470 ll. 714-7 two inverted commas before each of these lines and at the end of l. 717. p. 478 l. 1054 for *will* read *wilt*.

## VARIANTS.

**TALES.** Variants in edition of 1812 (first edition), and 'Original MS.' readings given as footnotes in *Life and Poems* (1834). These latter are distinguished as 'O.M.'

Preface: p. 5, l. 1. present Volume. p. 10, l. 22. Ahitophel. l. 23. Ogg. pp. 10-11. *instead of* l. 30-l. 5:

It has been asked, if Pope was a poet? No one, I conceive, will accuse me of vanity in bringing forward this query, or suppose me capable of comparing myself with a man so eminent: but persons very unlike in other respects may, in one particular, admit of comparison, or rather the same question may be applied to both. Now, who will complain that a definition of poetry, which excludes a great part of the writings of Pope, will shut out him? I do not lightly take up the idea, but I conceive that by that kind of definition, one half of our most agreeable English versification (most generally held, by general readers, to be

agreeable and good) will be excluded, and an equal quantity, at least of very moderate, or, to say truly, of very wretched composition, will be taken in. (O.M.)

**Tale 1.** *The edition of 1834 contains the following note to the Quotations:* These mottoes are many, because there is a reference in them not only to the characters, but frequently to the incidents also; and they are all taken from Shakspeare, because I could more readily find them in his scenes, than in the works of any other poet to whom I could have recourse. (O.M.)

l. 310. tyger. l. 371. skulks.

**Tale 2.** Second Quotation. Hath written. Third Quotation. fire and flood. *instead of* ll. 191-4:

In a clear eve the lover sail'd, and one  
As clear and bright on aged Allen shone:  
On the spot sanction'd by the last embrace  
The old man stood! and sigh'd upon the place. (O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 253-274:

Oft to his children had the father told  
Where he resided in the years of old;  
When, without thought, his feeling and his pride  
The native town adorn'd and magnified;  
The streets, the markets, and the quays were all  
Spacious and grand, and every building tall:  
The tower and church were sea-marks leagues from land—  
Men were amazed to see them look so grand!  
His father's house was then in Allen's eyes,  
But far increased in beauty and in size;  
And their small area where the schoolboys play'd,  
Room for an army had his fancy made:  
But now the dark and feeble mind debased,  
Contracted, sullied all that fancy graced,  
All spaces dwindled—streets but alleys seem'd:  
Then dreamt he now, or absent had he dream'd?  
The church itself, the lofty tower, the scene  
Of so much glory, was debased and mean:  
The mind each object in dull clothing dress'd,  
And its own sadness on each scene impress'd. (O.M.)

**Tale 3.** l. 57. expence. l. 92. indure. *instead of* ll. 105-7:

Because in beaten ways we ever tread,  
And man by man, as sheep by sheep, is led,  
None start aside, but in the paths proceed, (O.M.)

l. 377. controul. l. 398. controul. l. 502. conns. l. 514. controul.

**Tale 4.** Third Quotation, sundred. l. 32. teasing.

**Tale 5.** l. 334. expence. l. 348. extacy. l. 492. teaz'd. l. 662. controuling. l. 703. curt'sy'd.

**Tale 6.** First Quotation. curtesy ... curtesy. Third Quotation. gig. l. 226. doat.

**Tale 7.** l. 46. besprinkled. l. 162. rustics. l. 370. needs.

**Tale 8.** First Quotation. pityless. l. 36. teaze. l. 39. saught. l. 256. controul. l. 325. intranc'd.

**Tale 9.** l. 15. mamas. l. 32. Montague. l. 55. to his failings blind. l. 56. the mind. l. 57. pourtray'd. l. 187. we knew not—'twas her fate.

**Tale 10.** Third Quotation. this spring. l. 106. dykes. l. 116, note. Laver. l. 148. Trav'ler. l. 162. Trav'ler's. l. 211. teiz'd. l. 288. Trav'ler. l. 321. Trav'ler. l. 349. dykes. l. 354. Trav'ler.

**Tale 11.** l. 15. Sampson. l. 42. was dignity. l. 127. Africk's. l. 233, arbor's. l. 297. bad.

**Tale 13.** l. 307. Colin.

**Tale 14.** Fourth Quotation. rooted sinew. l. 89. Who knows?—or build. l. 352. teaze. l. 377. controul. l. 495, wo.

**Tale 15.** l. 10. earthy. l. 158. controul. l. 164. conceiving that the coming day. l. 248. are these sinners. l. 406. temptations.

**Tale 16.** l. 499. secresy. l. 581. æra.

**Tale 17.** Third Quotation, l. 3. act of our necessities. l. 139. controul. l. 299. paniers. l. 409. smoaky.

**Tale 18.** l. 196. controul.

**Tale 19.** l. 154. controul. l. 180. controul.

**Tale 20.** l. 119. expence. l. 132. expence. l. 204. teaz'd. l. 212. t'excuse it as a woman's way.

**Tale 21.** l. 47. teaze. l. 50. controul. l. 53. uncontroul'd. l. 186. tenour.

**TALES OF THE HALL.** Variants in edition of 1819 (first edition).

'**Original MS.**' readings given as footnotes in *Life and Poems* (1834). These are distinguished as 'O.M.'

**Variants in Crabbe MSS.** in the possession of the Cambridge University Press. These are distinguished as 'U.P.'

**Variants in Crabbe MSS.** in the possession of Mrs Mackay. These are distinguished as 'M.'

### **Book I.**

l. 151. inforce.

### **Book II.**

*Instead of* ll. 15-20:

Yet with this difference might observers find  
Some kindred powers and features of the mind.  
A love of honour in both spirits ruled,  
But here by temper, there by trouble cool'd;  
Their favourite objects, studies, themes, pursuits,  
Had various beauties, merits, ends, and fruits.

(O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 63-70:

Joel nor time nor seasons could command,  
He took his comforts as they came to hand;  
Nor came they often, nor delay'd so long,  
That they were habits either weak or strong;  
What seem'd habitual was the urgent force  
Of stern necessity that shaped his course.

(O.M.)

### **Book III.**

*Instead of* ll. 7-14:

"Oh! there's a wicked little world in schools,  
Where mischief suffers and oppression rules;  
Where mild, quiescent children oft endure  
What a long placid life shall fail to cure;  
Where virtuous boys, who shrink from early sin,  
Meet guilty rogues, who love to draw them in,  
Who take a pleasure at their just surprise,  
Who make them wicked, and proclaim them wise."

(O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 23-34:

"Behold him now, without the least pretence  
To such command—behold him five years hence;  
Mix'd in the world, his interest in his sight,  
How smooth he looks, his language how polite,  
No signs of anger, insult, scorn are seen;  
The address is mild, the temper is serene;  
His fiery passions are resign'd and still,  
They yield to reason, or obey his will.  
But are they dead?—Not so: should he attain  
The wish'd-for fortune, they will live again;  
Then shall the Tyrant be once more obey'd,  
And all be Fags, whom he can make afraid."

(O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 90-7:

"But when he sits in judgment, and decrees  
What men should rule us, and what books should please,  
And thus the merit of a critic gains,  
Only for blowing out a Frenchman's brains,

I must demur, and in my mind retrace  
The accountant Hector, and his rueful face;  
But on he blunders! thinking he is wise,  
Who has much strength, no matter where it lies."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 192-7:*

"Again was made the offer, and again,  
With threats, with noble promises, in vain.  
When my Lord saw that nothing could be done,  
He nobly cried,—'I'll fit him as my son;  
Sir, will you go?' As meekly as a saint,  
Charles humbly begg'd to stay on land and paint."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 204-29:*

"Stubborn though mild, and fearing to offend,  
He gain'd his freedom, and he lost his friend:  
My Lord appeal'd to all the world, and cried,—  
'There never breathed such stubbornness and pride;  
Do what you please, Sir, I am justified.'  
So said my Lord; for he was grieved to find  
Such vile ingratitude in base mankind.

"The boy then wrote for bread. I saw him thrice;  
His passions placid, he without a vice:  
He sometimes painted, but was uninspired  
By genius, unprotected, unadmired;  
But pensive, sober, diligent, employ'd }  
His every hour, his life without a void, }  
He sought for little, nothing he enjoy'd. }  
I fear he thought himself, because distress'd,  
An injured genius, by the world oppress'd."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 253-60:*

"Years past away; I think some twenty-five,  
Again I saw him, and but just alive,  
And still forbidding, silent, sullen, proud,  
As one whose claims were just, and not allow'd.  
He saw me, saw my sympathy with pain, }  
Received my humble offers with disdain, }  
And sternly told me not to come again." }

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 296-301:*

"Thou, Charles! unaided by a noble friend,  
Hadst spent a careful life, as others spend;  
But when thy patron's vanity and thine  
Were made by cruel fortune to combine,  
'Twas then th' unhappy wretch was lifted high  
On golden stilts, and seem'd to touch the sky;  
But when the tempter hand withdraws the props,  
The vision closes, and the victim drops."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 362-87:*

"The boy was tall, but with a mincing air,  
Blue, languid eyes, pale cheek, and flaxen hair;  
His temper fretful, but his spirits mild, }  
Loved by mamma, by all her maidens styled }  
The wittiest darling, and the sweetest child. }  
In those dear times, when that mamma had rule,  
There was much play, few lessons, and no school;  
But, oh! misfortune—when the lady died,  
No second wife her honour'd place supplied,  
But one dishonour'd; and she quickly sent  
All who had grief to grieve in banishment:  
No longer now was there the rush of joy,  
The flood of fondness o'er the happy boy;  
No more indulgence by the maidens shown,  
For master's pleasure, purchase of their own;  
But they as spies were to new service sent,  
And the sad boy to school and banishment."

(O.M.)

#### Book IV.

*Instead of ll. 3-22:*

"Brother," said George, "when I beheld you last,  
 The time how distant!—Well! the time is past—  
 I had not then these comforts you behold,  
 Things that amuse us when we're getting old.  
 These Pictures now! experienced men will say,  
 They're genuine all, and so perhaps they may;  
 They cost the money, that I'm sure is true,  
 And therefore, Richard, I will say it too.  
 Music you find; for hither ladies come;  
 They make infernal uproar in the room.  
 I bear it. Why? because I must expect  
 To pay for honour, and I fear neglect.  
 And if attraction from your person flies,  
 You must some pleasure from your purse devise:  
 But this apart—the triflers should not know  
 That they can comfort or regret bestow."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 76-7:*

"That gun itself, that breaks upon the ear,  
 Has something suited to the dying year."  
 "The dying partridge!" cried, with much disdain,  
 Th' offended 'Squire—"Our laws are made in vain:  
 The country, Richard, would not be amiss,  
 But for these plagues, and villanies like this;  
 Wealth breeds the curse that fixes on the land,  
 And strife and heritage go hand in hand."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 88-130:*

They walk'd along, through mead and shaded wood,  
 And stubble ground, where late abundance stood,  
 And in the vale, where winter waters glide,  
 O'er pastures stretching up the mountain side.  
 With a shrewd smile, but mix'd with look severe,  
 The landlord view'd the promise of the year.  
 "See! that unrivall'd flock! they, they alone  
 Have the vast body on the slender bone;  
 They are the village boast, the country's theme,  
 Fleece of such staple! flesh in such esteem!"  
 Richard gave praise, but not in rapturous style;  
 He chose his words, and spoke them with a smile:  
 "Brother," said he, "and if I take you right,  
 I am full glad—these things are your delight;  
 I see you proud, but,"—speaking half aside—  
 "Is, now, the pleasure equal to the pride?"  
 A transient flush on George's face appear'd,  
 Cloudy he look'd, and then his looks were cleared:  
 "Look at yon hind!" said he,— "in very deed,  
 His is the pride and pleasure in the breed;  
 He has delight, he judges—I the name,  
 And the whole praise—I speak it to my shame.  
 Oh! Richard, Richard, tell me, if you can,  
 What will engage and fix the mind of man?"  
 "Suppose," said he, "we look about the green, }  
 In yonder cots some objects may be seen, }  
 T' excite our pity, or relieve our spleen," }  
 "Oh! they are thieves and blockheads," George replied,  
 "Unjust, ungrateful, and unsatisfied;  
 To grasp at all, their study, thought, and care,  
 All would be thieves and plunderers, if they dare;  
 His envious nature not a clown conceals,  
 But bluntly shows the insolence he feels."  
 "And whence," said Richard, "should the vice proceed,  
 But from their want of knowledge, and their need?  
 Let them know more, or let them better feel,  
 And I'll engage they'll neither threat nor steal."  
 "Brother," said George, "your pity makes you blind  
 To all that's vile and odious in mankind;  
 'T is true your notions may appear divine,  
 But for their justice—let us go and dine."

(O.M.)

### Book V.



## Book VI.

*The Book opens:*

The evening came: "My Brother, what employs  
Thy mind?" said Richard; "what disturbs thy joys?  
Hast thou not all the good the world can give,  
And liv'st a life that kings might sigh to live?  
Can nothing please thee? Thou wert wont to seize  
On passing themes, and make the trifles please.  
Thy Muse has many a pleasant fancy bred,  
And clothed in lively manner!—is she dead?"

"Not dead but sick, and I too weary grow  
Of reaping nothing from the things I sow.  
What is the pleasure—thou perhaps canst say—  
Of playing tunes, if none can hear thee play?  
Timid and proud, the world I cannot court,  
Nor show my labours for the critic's sport.  
Hast thou the courage, Richard? hast thou tried  
An Author's perils? hast thou felt his pride?  
For vain the efforts, and they quickly tire,  
If we alone our precious things admire."

"Not so," said Richard, and acquired a look  
That some expression from his feelings took;  
"Oh! my dear Brother, if this Muse of mine,  
Who prompts the idle thought, the trifling line,  
If she who calmly looks around, nor more  
Muse of the Mad, the Foolish, and the Poor,  
If she can pleasure—and she can—impart,  
Can wing the fancy, can enlarge the heart;  
What must a Muse of strength, of force, of fire,  
In the true Poet's ample mind inspire?  
What must he feel, who can the soul express  
Of saint or hero?—he must be no less.  
Nor less of evil minds he knows the pain,  
But quickly lost the anguish and the stain,  
While with the wisest, happiest, purest, best,  
His soul assimilates and loves to rest.  
Crowns would I spurn, and empires would I lose,  
For inspiration from the sacred Muse."

"A song," said George, "and I my secret store,  
Confined in dust and darkness, will explore.  
Poet with poet, bard and critic too,  
We fear no censure, and dread no review.  
A judge so placed must be to errors kind,  
And yield the mercy that he hopes to find;  
Begin then, Richard, put thy fears aside;        }  
Shall I condemn, who must myself be tried?       }  
In me at least my Brother may confide.        }  
In hope of wearing, I shall yield the bays,  
And my self-love shall give my rival praise."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 18-30:*

"Wilt thou explain? I shall not grieve to share  
A lover's sorrow, or a husband's care?"

Kindness like this had moved a sterner man,  
Richard much more. He smiled, and thus began:—  
"No more I loved the sea; that plunge had tamed  
My blood, by youth in idleness inflamed:  
To my affairs I forced my mind t' attend,  
And sought the town to counsel with a friend.  
Much we debated—Could I now resign  
My earthly views, and look to things divine?  
Could I to merchandise my mind persuade,  
And wait in patience for the gain of trade?  
Or if I could not early habits quit,  
Had I a stock, and could subsist on wit?

"Measures like these became my daily themes,  
My airy castles, my projector's dreams.  
But health, so long neglected, now became  
No more the blessing of my failing frame:  
A fever seized it, of that dangerous kind,  
That while it taints the blood, infects the mind.  
I traced her flight as Reason slowly fled,  
And her last act assured me Hope was dead:

But Reason err'd, and when she came again  
 To aid the senses and direct the brain,  
 She found a body weak, but well disposed  
 For life's enjoyments, and the grave was closed.  
 But danger past, and my recovery slow, }  
 I sought the health that mountain gales bestow, }  
 And quiet walks where peace and violets grow. }

"Now, my dear Brother, when the languid frame  
 Has this repose, and when the blood is tame,  
 Yet strength increasing, and when every hour  
 Gives some increase of pleasure and of power,  
 When every sense partakes of fresh delight,  
 And every object wakes an appetite;  
 When the mind rests not, but for ever roves  
 On all around, and as it meets approves;  
 Then feels the heart its bliss, that season then is love.

"Think of me thus disposed, and think me then  
 Retired from crowded streets and busy men,  
 In a neat cottage, by the sweetest stream  
 That ever warbled in a poet's dream;  
 An ancient wood behold, so vast, so deep,  
 That hostile armies might in safety sleep,  
 Where loving pairs had no observers near,  
 And fearing not themselves, had none to fear;  
 There to fair walks, fresh meadows, and clear skies,  
 I fled as flee the weary and the wise."

(O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 174-5:

"With whom she tarried, a delighted guest!  
 Delightful ever! blessing still and bless'd."

(O.M.)

l. 359. woe.

### Book VII.

*Instead of* ll. 533-4:

And thus she said, and with an air designed  
 To look and be affectionate and kind.

(U.P.)

l. 551. woe. *instead of* ll. 593-8:

Come, my dear Friend, discard that Brow of Care:  
 What was at first intended all things are;  
 All by the mighty Cause for bliss designed  
 The only good of Matter and in Mind.  
 So was I taught by one who taught me all  
 That I the first and only good can call!

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 601-2;

I meant again, in spite of every Vow,  
 To pass that way and hear my Shepherd's Vow.

(U.P.)

*after* l. 625:

When the sun is descended the moon will arise;  
 And sweeter her softer and mellow Ray,  
 When the blossom no longer is fair in our Eyes,  
 The Fruit will enlarge and our losses repay;  
 And when from the cheek the young Roses decay,  
 Tis a Sign that the Fire is collected within:  
 No longer for Boys the light flower to display,  
 But manly Affections to wake and to win.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 626-41:

My Damon was the first to wake  
 The Flame that slept but cannot die;  
 My Damon is the last to take  
 The best the truest softest Sigh.

The Life between is nothing worth:  
 O! cast it all as vile away.  
 Save the sweet Day that gave it Birth,  
 And this a fonder happier Day.

O tell me not what I have done,  
When there is so much done amiss;  
For who can fate and madness shun  
In such bewildering World as this?

Love can a thousand Faults forgive,  
Or with a tender Smile reprove;  
And now let nought in Memory live,  
But that we meet and that we love.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 664-7:

Were you not Witness how I blossomed then,  
Blushing and blooming in the Eyes of Men;  
Made by one sex a Goddess, and denied  
Respect and notice by the other's Pride?

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 682-91:

Is it not written, he who came to save  
The adultress [ ] of her Crime forgave;  
Would the lost sheep all graciously restore,  
And bade the weeping Sinner sin no more?  
Yes, this is true, but where the Eye that reads  
The broken Spirit or the Heart that bleeds?  
But where the Heart that could the Deed deplore,  
And where the Hand that would the Mind restore;  
That could the sinful Soul on trust receive  
And, tho' all urged against Belief, believe?

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 702-9:

With Spirits low and ill-directed Mind  
She soon her [ ] of penitence resigned;  
And rushed again into the World, prepar'd  
To do whatever thoughtless Frenzy dared.  
And so she perished!  
Nay! while yet disposed  
T' enjoy the world, the world's adventures closed.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 736-7:

To save from sin the long expected pay,  
And call hence Souls whose bodies waste away.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 742-3:

And I a fellow sinner! who enquired  
If ought beside the feeble Heart required  
Was by, to watch the Dawn of Hope, to cheer  
The drooping Spirit, and to prove how dear  
The [Loving] Soul may be whose Turning is sincere.

(U.P.)

*instead of* l. 751:

To think for what was formed this Creature Man!

(U.P.)

*instead of* l. 757:

Gold, to enlarge the Treasures that abound.

(U.P.)

*after* l. 766:

I shuddered, R[ichard], at the general View—  
The Work undone—What yet I had to do!

(U.P.)

l. 781. woe. l. 782. woe. l. 789. woe.

### Book VIII.

*Variant of* ll. 33-67:

The Brothers' Subject on their Morning Ride  
Was, as it chanced, the Misery of Pride!

[illegible attempts.]

The very Virtues suffer! and but few

Altho' unshamed bear Want and pity too.  
This is the Serpent Poverty that Stings!  
And Wealth, thus flying, certain misery brings.

---

The Wretched then the common fate deplore  
And mourn Enjoyments that return no more.  
They who so dearly loved in happier times  
Doubt the tried Worth; their Sorrows are their Crimes.  
They spoil the Temper; they disturb the rest;  
Men fly the Scold, the Comforter, the Guest.

(M.)

*instead of ll. 48-53:*

"Oh! that we had the virtuous pride to show  
We know ourselves what all about us know;  
Nor, when our board contains a single dish,  
Tell lying tales of market-men and fish!  
We know 'tis hard from higher views to fall—  
What is not hard when life is trial all?"

(O.M.)

*after l. 67:*

"But I digress, dear Richard, who despise  
Tellers of tales, who stop and moralize;  
As some good editors of Esop used  
Their privilege, and readers' sense abused:  
Who half a page to write their fable took,  
And just a page and half to swell their book.  
But to that gentle being I return,  
And, as I treat of patience, let me learn."

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 106-7:*

"Like Saul's fair daughters, as by Cowley sung;  
Not from a monarch, but a yeoman sprung."

(O.M.)

*after l. 113:*

Who gazed at Jane saw Wonder and Delight;  
Who looked on Lucy blest the pleasing Sight.

---

The Air of Lucy her Admirers held  
In pleasing Bondage; that of Jane repell'd.

(M.)

*after l. 119:*

Lucy not often could those Looks command,  
But had the sober praise and offered Hand;  
For those who breathed for Jane those Sighs of fire  
Asked not their Reason, What do I desire?  
While Lucy's Lovers felt the Wishes rise  
And could explain the purport of their Sighs.  
In future day one spake how Friendships please,  
And one, a Lover, whom we charm and teize;  
And then began the speech of Jane to raise  
Men's awe, and Lucy's to obtain their praise.

(M.)

*instead of ll. 196-207:*

Now Lucy's Lover was a plain good Man,  
Who meant to marry on a saving Plan.  
Jane is perhaps the prettier one to view,  
He judged; but [has] the Keener Judgment too;  
And, if her Eye be more than Lucy's bright,  
And beams upon you with a fiercer Light,  
A face may be admired; but, put the Case  
A Man shall marry, what avails a face?  
A Wife that['s] pretty her Conditions makes;  
A Wife that['s] prudent rather gives than takes.  
Beauty will cost require and Wealth command,  
But there is Safety in a closing Hand;  
And what if Lucy to the needy sends  
Too great a portion and the deed defends,  
That 'tis her own; there's prudence in the Words  
That will preserve the Good that is her Lord's.

Besides, there's not a Virtue we possess  
So soon restrain'd as giving to distress;  
And, then, a rival makes a woman nice,  
And Jane's admirer will enhance her price.  
Thus, thinking but concealing what he thought,  
This cautious Lover Lucy's favour sought.

(M.)

*after* l. 231:

Or why the Fear? and all that seemed so good  
Was only Slyness rightly understood;  
Then, too, his father living held the Son  
From the sad Course he was disposed to run.

(M.)

*instead of* ll. 255-8:

"Near to the village, where they now abide,  
In their own style—the vulgar call it pride—  
Dwelt the fair sisters: good they were and kind,  
That prying scandal scarce could error find—  
And candour none—they spent, they spared, they gave  
Just as they ought to give, to spare, to save;  
Like two queen-myrtles in an arbour's side,  
So they abode, and so might still abide,  
But for a blight! it wounds me at the heart,  
That I have grief and anguish to impart."

(O.M.)

l. 287. alchemist. *after* l. 419:

"Thus fill'd with fear, that evening they attend  
To his last home an ancient village-friend;  
And they, reflecting on the old man's days,  
Who living had their love, and now their praise—  
That good old man, with so much native sense,  
Such health and ease, such hope with competence:  
They could but own, if such should be their lot,  
They should be thankful!—It, alas! was not."

(O.M.)

l. 550. ecstasy. *after* l. 824:

"I read your looks, my Brother, you would give  
Largely to these—they should in comfort live,  
Nor labour thus; but you would find it hard  
To gain assent: professions they regard  
As their experience bids them, and they run  
From ready love, as they would treachery shun;  
Yet have I woo'd them long, and they attend  
With growing trust—they treat me as a friend,  
And talk of my probation; but, afraid,  
They take my counsel, but refuse my aid."

(O.M.)

### Book IX.

*Instead of* ll. 150-5:

"The weeks fled smoothly, five or six, before,  
Bless'd in the present, he could think of more.  
Two months beside were at his villa spent,        }  
Where first enraptured, he became content;        }  
Then went to town, scarce knowing why he went.    }  
His lady with him, as a wife should be—  
Talk of a moon of honey! there were three."

(O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 176-7:

"For pairs not loving, cannot music find,  
And loving pairs have music in the mind."

(O.M.)

### Book XI.

*The Book opens:*

That gentle Spinster, whom our Squire approved  
So well, they judged aright who said he loved;  
Though, when they thought to what the love would lead,  
They err'd—for neither would so far proceed.  
This Maiden Lady, to her promise just,  
Gave them her story.—She could safely trust

Her neighbours both: the one she long had known,  
The other kindness and respect had shown.  
Frankly not fearless, from her early youth,  
She gave her tale, nor would disguise a truth;  
Timid in places, and with some restraint,  
But still resolved the very facts to paint,  
With plaintive smile she prefaced what she spoke,  
And the Friends listen'd with attentive look.

(O.M.)

*after* l. 67:

"Think not of love! it is a chance indeed,  
When love and prudence side by side proceed.  
Nay, when they do, I doubtfully approve—  
Love baffles prudence—Oh! beware of love."

(O.M.)

*variant of* ll. 109-32:

He knew that Girls had heard that youth is bold,  
And he would show how youthful were the old.

---

He knew the Vices that the youthful boast,  
And he desired to show the form and Ghost  
Of naked Evil, rob'd of every Grace  
That could our Anger or Contempt displace—  
Not as the drunken Slave to make me think  
How odious Vice, but hoping I should drink.

---

Repelled awhile, he answered, Did you drive  
A Charge so precious, fear would be alive.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 150-1:

He said that Beauty now would scarcely sell;  
The drug was plenteous, and the Market fell.

(U.P.)

*after* l. 163:

And the weak side of woman—but he spied,  
So it appeared to me, the viler side.

(U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 164-5:

And all that this superior knowledge meant  
Was to delude the weak and innocent.

(U.P.)

*variant of* ll. 190-221:

My Mother too seemed now disposed to try  
A Life of Reason and Tranquillity;  
She had till lately health and Spirits kept;  
She ate in Comfort, and in Quiet slept.  
But our late Subject was a kind that fills  
The Mind, and poison in the Heart instills.  
For five and forty years my Mother bore  
Her Placid Looks, and Dress becoming wore;  
She would a Compliment with pleasure take  
That no undue Impression seemed to make;  
But now her Nerves became disturbed and weak,  
And we must Aid from a Physician seek:  
A Scotch Physician, who had just began  
To settle here—a very handsome Man,  
And very wise, for I with Lovers twain  
Was in his eye a very Child again;  
While my dear Mother, twenty years a Wife,  
Was to decide the Fortune of his life;  
And she decided— In a general way  
Mama her power was willing to display.

---

But now like Monarch weary of a Throne  
She would no longer reign, at least alone!  
She held her pulse, and with a Look so sweet  
Gave him to feel how softly they could beat.

(U.P.)

*after* l. 227:

It was reported, nay it was believed  
That both the wary parties were deceived;  
For both had learnt the wicked world to cheat  
And be a match for all its vile Deceit. (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 323-5:

Was just his present purpose to pursue,  
Send him to college and there let him learn  
To live, and to his numerous brothers turn! (U.P.)

*variant of* ll. 336-7:

In fact our hearts we gave as Lovers give  
Before we asked if we as Men could live.  
I lov'd the Youth, nor had I doubts that he }  
Had tender thoughts and faithful Hopes like me, }  
And, as our Love was now, so would it ever be. } (U.P.)

*instead of* l. 410:

Were placed our yellow plates of Stafford Ware. (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 433-4:

While Biddy slept, upon a Bed so hard  
And coarse, I laid and was of Sleep debarred. (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 508-14:

And what, as armed with right and power they asked,  
Are your Soul's Contests? and their own unmasked.  
Confessing thoughts so strange and views so wild  
I thought them Dreams, or fancies of a Child  
Could she, they ask, her best attempts condemn, }  
And did she long to touch the Garment's hem, }  
And was it so with her, for so it was with them? } (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 517-26:

My Mother kindly lent her teachers Aid  
To win the Soul of her deluded maid;  
I was compelled her female friends to hear,  
But suffer'd not one bearded teacher near;  
Tho' more than one attempted with their whine  
And 'Sister! Sister!' turn to love divine;  
But my contending Spirit to direct  
Was what I vow'd no Brother should effect;  
But O! their Preacher, would I could receive  
His precious dropping of the Dew at Eve! (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 533-6:

But soon appear'd and spoke in mode correct,  
With all the cold dead freedom of the Sect;  
Of his Conversion with conceit he spoke  
Before he orders from his Bishop took. (U.P.)

*after* l. 548:

He then with self-applause his valour told  
And how his boyish Love for me grew cold. (U.P.)

*instead of* ll. 566-9:

On Sidmouth terrace pace at morn and noon,  
Or view from Dawlish rocks the full-orb'd moon,  
At Exmouth beacon the far bay explore, }  
Or quiet sit at Teignmouth's pebbly shore; }  
These scenes are lovely all, and will your peace restore. } (O.M.)

*instead of* ll. 574-87:

Dear scenes of social comfort, friendly ease,  
The power of pleasing, the delight to please;  
When friends agreed the views around t' explore,

When sympathising minds exchanged their store;  
 When fear was banish'd, and no form desired,  
 But such as decency and sense required;  
 When each in meeting wore the looks that make  
 Such strong impression, and preclude mistake;  
 When looks, and words, and manner all declare  
 What hearts, and thoughts, and dispositions are—  
 In fact, when we in various modes express }  
 That we are happy all! all answer yes! }  
 This is indeed approach to perfect happiness. }

Dear objects! scatter'd in the world around,  
 Whom do ye gladden? where may ye be found?  
 Ye who excited joy by day, by night,  
 Ye who delighted to dispense delight,  
 Ye who to please the sadden'd temper strove,  
 Who, when ye loved not, show'd the effect of love,  
 Ye who are blessings wheresoe'er ye dwell,  
 Accept the wishes of a long farewell!

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 600-1:*

"No, I confess, there was a proneness yet  
 To think with foolish fondness and regret."

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 620-38:*

Are we not good, benevolent and just;  
 Must not all love us? We are sure they must.  
 Are we not read in works of every kind;  
 Are we not prudent, rational, refined;  
 Are not our thoughts correct, our words discreet, }  
 And our Life void of folly, fraud, deceit; }  
 And where can we on Earth a purer Spirit meet? }  
 Here the Heart ceased; I answer'd to the Heart:  
 A vile Deceiver, and a vain, thou art.  
 First, thy Religion I can plainly see  
 Wants the first requisite—Humility.  
 We are so pure, the humble mind's [resource],  
 Truth and Repentance, we may drop of course,  
 And with the gallant Frenchman at the Cry  
 Of the last Day say boldly, here am I!

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 649-52:*

What is the good that thy whole life has done  
 Compared with her one day, a single one?

(O.M.)

*variant of ll. 692-7:*

The tears of tender Souls which for him fell, }  
 And strong Persuasion, Brother! all is well. }  
 Tarry, and Heav'n is thine; depart, and there is hell.— }  
 So I from frenzy's Zeal and folly's Creed  
 Was by Exertion and Discretion freed.

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 712-20:*

Still he would come, and talk as idlers do }  
 Both of his old opinions and his new; }  
 For now he was convinced that nothing could be true. }  
 Barriers so strong against all Truth were placed  
 That by the wise no Tenet was embraced.  
 This was religion here that there was spurned;  
 Then how could Truth be anywhere discerned?  
 Her as a mistress Men indeed pursue }  
 In Chace for ever, never in their view; }  
 And who shall dare affirm that anything is true? }

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 816-27:*

But in that world the faithful Youth shall view  
 One like himself, as generous and as true.  
 Such our Discourse; but, growing more refin'd,  
 And suited only to a Soul resigned—  
 For she would far in her fair View proceed  
 And as I could, I doubted or agreed—



I asked if Lovers took the wiser Way  
Who to their Death their Union would delay,  
For fear that Marriage should the Vision spoil  
And the pure pleasure of the fancy soil?

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 834-49:*

And all betrayed a Man who had of Gold a store.  
The comely Man moved, onward, and a pair  
Of comely Maidens waited, with an Air  
Of Doubt, till one exclaim'd with Voice profound,  
And, O! 'tis Henry, dropt upon the Ground.  
But she recovered, and, I pray you, guess  
What then ensued and how much Happiness.  
Just as the Lover chanc'd his Home to find,  
The Lady fixed on other home her Mind;  
They parted Lovers who were grieved to part;  
They met as Neighbours! heal'd was either heart.  
Each on the others Looks could raptured dwell,  
They now could say, You look extremely well.  
She had prepared in some blessed world to meet;  
The Knight, of purchasing a snug Retreat,  
In this and there in good Regard to live:  
Among their Friends 'twas all it now could give.

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 864-75:*

What Time has done, gross food and vulgar Trade  
Has all impaired that Love and Nature made.  
I cannot take him—I my Friend approved,  
Who dare refuse when she no longer loved.  
But he was loud and loving, fierce and free,  
And weak and timid vain and grateful She.  
Thus sundry motives more than I can name  
Rose on his side, and she a Wife became.

(U.P.)

*instead of ll. 890-3:*

Yet his the Comfort of an Heart that feels  
A single day, and that the morrow heals;  
And yet he grieved a while, and he would weep,  
And swear profusely I had murdered sleep;  
Had quite unman'd him for heroic Vein,  
And he could only murmur and complain.

(U.P.)

*variant of ll. 903-4:*

Yet e'er we parted he his Prayer renewed,  
And urged me "Do not live in Solitude!  
Wert thou my Lady to the Study take  
O! what a Desdemona wouldst thou make."

(U.P.)

*after l. 904:*

And then he spouted—till I cried, Is he  
The man I loved? Oh! that could never be.  
No! time upon the outward beauty preys,  
And the mind's beauty in its vice decays.

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 910-2:*

But that he lost, and with a wither'd hand.  
Stood at his father's gate, as beggars stand;  
But his were jealous brethren, and they kept  
Their dying father from him, till he slept.

(O.M.)

*instead of ll. 926-8:*

And no Adventure marked the waste of Years;  
I thought me past them, but I met with one,  
A call to Folly e'er the pasts were done.

(U.P.)

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## VARIANTS. VOL. I. ADDENDA.

Where can the wretched lose their cares, and hide  
The tears of sorrow from the eyes of pride?  
Can they in silent shades a refuge find  
From all the scorn and malice of mankind?  
From wit's disdain, and wealth's provoking sneer, }  
From folly's grin, and humour's stupid leer, }  
And clamour's iron tongue, censorious and severe? }  
There can they see the scenes of nature gay,  
And shake the gloomy dreams of life away?  
Without a sigh, the hope of youth give o'er,  
And with aspiring honour climb no more.

Alas! we fly to peaceful shades in vain;  
Peace dwells within, or all without is pain:  
No storm-tost sailor sighs for slumbering seas—  
He dreads a tempest, but desires a breeze.  
The placid waves with silent swell disclose  
A clearer view, and but reflect his woes.  
So life has calms, in which we only see  
A fuller prospect of our misery.

When the sick heart, by no design employ'd,  
Throbs o'er the past, or suffer'd, or enjoy'd,  
In former pleasures finding no relief,  
And pain'd anew in every former grief.  
Can friends console us when our cares distress,  
Smile on our woes, and make misfortunes less?  
Alas! like winter'd leaves, they fall away,  
Or more disgrace our prospects by delay;  
The genial warmth, the fostering sap is past,  
That kept them faithful, and that held them fast.

Where shall we fly?—to yonder still retreat,  
The haunt of Genius and the Muses' seat,  
Where all our griefs in others' strains rehearse,  
Speak with old Time, and with the dead converse;  
Till Fancy, far in distant regions flown,  
Adopts a thousand schemes, and quits her own;  
Skims every scene, and plans with each design,  
Towers in each thought, and lives in every line;  
From clime to clime with rapid motion flies,  
Weeps without woe, and without sorrow sighs;  
To all things yielding, and by all things sway'd,  
To all obedient, and by all obey'd;  
The source of pleasures, noble and refined,  
And the great empress of the Poet's mind.

Here led by thee, fair Fancy, I behold  
The mighty heroes, and the bards of old!  
For here the Muses sacred vigils keep,  
And all the busy cares of being sleep;  
No monarch covets war, nor dreams of fame,  
No subject bleeds to raise his tyrant's name,  
No proud great man, or man that would be great,  
Drives modest merit from its proper state,  
Nor rapine reaps the good by labour sown,  
Nor envy blasts a laurel, but her own.

Yet Contemplation, silent goddess, here,  
In her vast eye, makes all mankind appear,  
All Nature's treasures, all the stores of Art,  
That fire the fancy, or engage the heart,  
The world's vast views, the fancy's wild domain,  
And all the motley objects of the brain:  
Here mountains hurl'd on mountains proudly rise,  
Far, far o'er Nature's dull realities;  
Eternal verdure decks a sacred clime,  
Eternal spring for ever blooms in rhyme,  
And heroes honour'd for imputed deeds,  
And saints adored for visionary creeds,  
Legends and tales, and solitude and sighs,  
Poor doating dreams, and miserable lies,  
The empty bubbles of a pensive mind,  
And Spleen's sad effort to debase mankind.

Here Wonder gapes at Story's dreadful page,  
And Valour mounts by true poetic rage,  
And Pity weeps to hear the mourning maid,  
And Envy saddens at the praise convey'd.

Devotion kindles at the pious strain,  
 And mocks the madness of the fool's disdain:  
 Here gentle Delicacy turns her eye  
 From the loose page, and blushes her reply,  
 Alone, unheeded, calls her soul to arms,  
 Fears every thought, and flies from all alarms.  
 Pale Study here, to one great point resign'd;  
 Derides the various follies of mankind;  
 As distant objects sees their several cares,  
 And with his own their trifling work compares;  
 But still forgets like him men take their view,  
 And near their own, his works are trifling too:—  
 So suns and planets scarcely fill the eye  
 When earth's poor hills and man's poor huts are nigh;  
 But, were the eye in airy regions tost,  
 The world would lessen, and her hills be lost;  
 And were the mighty orbs above us known,  
 No world would seem so trifling as our own.

Here looking back, the wond'ring soul surveys  
 The sacred relics of departed days,  
 Where grace, and truth, and excellence reside,  
 To claim our praise, and mortify our pride;  
 Favour'd by fate, our mighty fathers found  
 The virgin Muse, with every beauty crown'd:  
 They woo'd and won; and, banish'd their embrace,  
 She comes a harlot to their feebl' race:  
 Deck'd in false taste, with gaudy shows of art  
 She charms the eye, but touches not the heart;  
 By thousands courted, but by few caress'd,  
 False when pursued, and fatal when possess'd.

From hence we rove, with Fancy for our guide,  
 O'er this wide world, and other worlds more wide,  
 Where other suns their vital power display,  
 And round revolving planets dart the day;  
 Where comets blaze, by mortals unsurvey'd,  
 And stray where Galileo never stray'd;  
 Where God himself conducts each vast machine,  
 Uncensured by mankind, because unseen.

Here, too, we trace the varied scenes of life,  
 The tyrant husband, the retorting wife,  
 The hero fearful to appear afraid,  
 The thoughts of the deliberating maid;  
 The snares for virtue, and the turns of fate,  
 The lie of trade, and madness of debate;  
 Here force deals death around, while fools applaud,  
 And caution watches o'er the lips of fraud;  
 Whate'er the world can show, here scorn derides,  
 And here suspicion whispers what it hides—  
 The secret thought, the counsel of the breast,  
 The coming news, and the expected jest....  
 High panegyric, in exalted style,  
 That smiles for ever, and provokes a smile,  
 And Satire, with her fav'rite handmaids by—  
 Here loud abuse, there simpering irony....  
 All now display'd, without a mask are known,  
 And every vice in nature, but our own.

Yet Pleasure too, and Virtue, still more fair,  
 To this blest seat with mutual speed repair;  
 The social sweets in life's securer road,  
 Its bliss unenvied, its substantial good,  
 The happy thought that conscious virtue gives,  
 And all that ought to live, and all that lives.

*after* l. 104:

Maxims I glean, of mighty pith and force,  
 And moral themes to shine in a discourse,  
 But, tired with these, I take a lighter train,  
 Tuned to the times, impertinent and vain.  
 The tarts which wits provide for taste decay'd,  
 And syllabubs by frothy wittings made,  
 An easy, idle, thoughtless, graceless throng,  
 Pun, jest, and quibble, epigram and song,  
 Trifles to which declining genius bends,  
 And steps by which aspiring wit ascends.

Now sad and slow, with cautious step I tread,  
And view around the venerable dead;  
For where in all her walks shall study seize  
Such monuments of human state as these?

*after* l. 430:

“Ah! happy age,” the youthful poet cries,  
“Ere laws arose—ere tyrants bade them rise;  
No land-marks then the happy swain beheld,  
Nor lords walk’d proudly o’er the furrow’d field;  
Nor through distorted ways did Avarice roam,  
To fetch delights for Luxury at home:  
But mutual joy the friends of Nature proved,  
And swains were faithful to the nymphs they loved.”  
“Mistaken bards! all nations first were rude;  
Man! proud, unsocial, prone to solitude:  
O’er hills, or vales, or floods, was fond to roam—  
The mead his garden, and the rock his home:  
For flying prey he searched a savage coast—  
Want was his spur, and liberty his boast.”

*after* l. 570:

Ah! lost, for ever lost, to me these charms,  
These lofty notions and divine alarms,  
Too dearly bought—maturer judgment calls  
My pensive soul from tales and madrigals—  
For who so blest or who so great as I,  
Wing’d round the globe with Rowland or Sir Guy?  
Alas! no more I see my queen repair  
To balmy bowers that blossom in the air,  
Where on their rosy beds the Graces rest,  
And not a care lies heavy on the breast.  
No more the hermit’s mossy cave I choose,  
Nor o’er the babbling brook delight to muse;  
My doughty giants all are slain or fled,  
And all my knights—blue, green, and yellow—dead!  
Magicians cease to charm me with their art,  
And not a griffin flies to glad my heart.  
No more the midnight fairy tribe I view,  
All in the merry moonshine tipping dew.  
The easy joys that charm’d my sportive youth,  
Fly Reason’s power, and shun the voice of Truth.  
Maturer thoughts severer taste prepares,  
And baffles every spell that charm’d my cares.  
Can Fiction, then, the noblest bliss supply,  
Or joy reside in inconsistency?

*after* l. 594:

But who are these, a tribe that soar above,  
And tell more tender tales of modern love?  
A NOVEL train! the brood of old Romance,  
Conceived by Folly on the coast of France,  
That now with lighter thought, and gentler fire,  
Usurp the honours of their drooping sire;  
And still fantastic, vain, and trifling, sing  
Of many a soft and inconsistent thing,—  
Of rakes repenting, clogg’d in Hymen’s chain—  
Of nymph reclined by unassuming swain—  
Of captains, colonels, lords, and amorous knights,  
That find in humbler nymphs such chaste delights,  
Such heavenly charms, so gentle, yet so gay,  
That all their former follies fly away.  
Honour springs up, where’er their looks impart  
A moment’s sunshine to the harden’d heart—  
A virtue, just before the rover’s jest,  
Grows like a mushroom in his melting breast.  
Much, too, they tell of cottages and shades,  
Of balls, and routs, and midnight masquerades,  
Where dangerous men and dangerous mirth reside,  
And Virtue goes—on purpose to be tried.  
These are the tales that wake the soul to life,  
That charm the sprightly niece and forward wife,  
That form the manners of a polish’d age,

And each pure easy moral of the Stage.

Thus to her friend the ever-faithful she—  
The tender Delia—writes, securely free—  
Delia from school was lately bold to rove,  
Where yet Lucinda meditated love.

“Oh thou, the partner of my pensive breast,  
And, but for one! its most delightful guest,  
But for that one of whom 'twas joy to talk,  
When the chaste moon gleam'd o'er our ev'ning walk,  
And cooing fondly in the neighbouring groves  
The pretty songsters all enjoy'd their loves;  
Receive! as witness all ye powers! I send,  
With melting heart, this token of thy friend.

“Calm was the night! and every breeze was low;  
Swift ran the stream—but, ah! the moments slow!  
Fly swift, ye moments! slowly run, thou stream,  
And on thy margin let a maiden dream.

“Methought he came, my Harry, young and gay,  
The very youth that stole my heart away.  
I wake. Surprise! yet guess how blest was I!  
With looks of love—the very youth was by.  
'Whose is that form my Delia's bosom hides?  
What youth divinely blest within presides?'  
He spoke and sigh'd. His sighs my fear suppress,  
He seized his angel form, and actions spoke the rest.

“Oh, Virtue! brighter than the noon-tide ray!  
Still guide my steps, and guide them nature's way;  
With sacred precepts fill the youthful mind,  
Soothe all its cares, and force it to be kind.”

Thus, gentle passions warm the generous maid,  
No more reluctant, and no more afraid;  
Thus Virtue shines, and in her loveliest dress  
Not over nice, nor Virtue to excess.

Near these I look, and lo! a reptile race,  
In goodly vests conceal the want of grace;  
The brood of Humour, Fancy, Frolic, Fun,  
The tale obscene, the miserable pun;  
The jest that Laughter loves, he knows not why,  
And Whim tells quaintly with distorted eye.  
Here Languor, yawning, pays his first devoirs,  
And skims sedately o'er his dear Memoirs;  
Here tries his tedious moments to employ,  
And, palsied by enjoyment, dreams of joy;  
From all the tribe his little knowledge steals,  
From dull “Torpedoes,” and “Electric Eels;”  
And every trifle of a trifling age,  
That shames the closet, or degrades the Stage.

*after* l. 602:

Here as I stand, of sovereign power possess'd,  
A vast ambition fires my swelling breast;  
I deal destruction round, and, all severe,  
Damn with a dash, and censure with a sneer;  
Or from the Critic wrest a sinking cause,  
Rejudge his justice, and repeal his laws;  
Now half by judgment guided, half by whim,  
I grasp disputed power, and tyrannise like him;  
Food for the mind I seek; but who shall find  
The food that satisfies the craving mind?  
Like fire it rages; and its fatal rage  
What pains can deaden, and what care assuage?  
Choked by its fuel, though it clouded lies,  
It soon eats through, and craves for new supplies;  
Now here, now there, with sudden fury breaks  
And to its substance turns whate'er it takes.  
To weighty themes I fly with eager haste,  
And skim their treasures like the man of taste;  
From a few pages learn the whole design, }  
And damn a book for one suspicious line, }  
Or steal its sentiments, and call them mine! }

*Instead of ll. 1-9:*

Muse of my Spenser, who so well could sing  
The Passions, and the sources whence they spring;  
Who taught the birth, the bearings, and the ties,  
The strong connections, nice dependencies,  
Of these the Foes of Virtue and the Friends,  
With whom she rises and with whom descends—  
A Syren's birth, a Syren's power I trace,  
Aid me, oh! Herald of the Fairy-race;  
Say whence she sprang, to what strange fortune born,  
And why we love and hate, desire and scorn.

*instead of ll. 29-40:*

From whom she sprang, not one around her knew,  
Nor why she came, nor what she had in view,  
Labour she loved not, had no wealth in store,  
Pursued no calling, yet was never poor,  
A thousand gifts her various arts repaid,  
And bounteous fairies blest the thriving maid;  
For she had secret means of easy gains,  
And Cunning was her name among the swains.

**SIR EUSTACE GREY.** 'Original MS.' readings given as footnotes in *Life and Poems* (1834).

*Instead of ll. 29-32:*

The worthy doctor, and a friend.  
'Tis more than kind to visit one  
Who has not now to spare or spend.

*instead of l. 75:*

Worms, doctor, worms, and so are we.

*instead of ll. 100-7:*

Madman! shall He who made this all,  
The parts that form the whole reject?  
Is aught with him so great or small,  
He cannot punish or protect?  
Man's folly may his crimes neglect,  
And hope the eye of God to shun;  
But there's of all the account correct—  
Not one omitted—no, not one.

*instead of ll. 144-7:*

Nay, frown not—chide not—but allow  
Pity to one so sorely tried:  
But I am calm—to fate I bow  
And all the storms of life abide.

*instead of ll. 260-7:*

Ills that no medicines can heal,  
And griefs that no man can forget;  
Whatever cares the mind can fret,  
The spirits wear, the bosom gall—  
Pain, hunger, prison, duns, and debt  
Foul-fiends and fear,—I've felt ye all.

**THE HALL OF JUSTICE.** 'Original MS.' readings given as footnotes in *Life and Poems* (1834).

Part I.

*Instead of ll. 9-12:*

What is my crime? a deed of love;  
I fed my child with pilfer'd food:  
Your laws will not the act approve,  
The law of Nature deems it good.

*instead of ll. 43-6:*

My years, indeed, are sad and few,  
Though weak these limbs, and shrunk this frame:  
For Grief has done what Time should do;  
And I am old in care and shame.

Part II.

*instead of ll. 29-34:*

Compell'd to feast in full delight  
When I was sad and wanted power,  
Can I forget that dismal night?  
Ah! how did I survive the hour?

*instead of ll. 39-41:*

And there my father-husband stood—  
I felt no words can tell you how—  
As he was wont in angry mood,  
And thus he cried, "Will God allow,

Preface: p. 92, l. 21. *The following footnote to the words, His Dedication, was omitted in Vol. I:* Neither of these were adopted. The author had written, about that time, some verses to the memory of Lord Robert Manners, brother to the late Duke of Rutland; and these, by a junction, it is presumed, not forced or unnatural, form the concluding part of "The Village."

END OF VOL. II.

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## Footnotes

- [1] Midsummer Night's Dream, Act V. Scene 1.
- [2] The reader will perceive in these and the preceding verses allusions to the state of France, as that country was circumstanced some years since, rather than as it appears to be in the present date; several years elapsing between the alarm of the loyal magistrate on the occasion now related, and a subsequent event that farther illustrates the remark with which the narrative commences.
- [3] Allusion is here made, not to the well-known species of *sumach*, called the poison-oak, or *toxicodendron*, but to the *upas*, or poison-tree of Java; whether it be real or imaginary, this is no proper place for inquiry.
- [4] This appellation is here used not ironically, nor with malignity; but it is taken merely to designate a morosely devout people, with peculiar austerity of manners.
- [5] As the author's purpose in this Tale may be mistaken, he wishes to observe, that conduct like that of the lady's here described must be meritorious or censurable just as the motives to it are pure or selfish; that these motives may in a great measure be concealed from the mind of the agent; and that we often take credit to our virtue for actions which spring originally from our tempers, inclinations, or our indifference. It cannot therefore be improper, much less immoral, to give an instance of such self-deception.
- [6] The ditches of a fen so near the ocean are lined with irregular patches of a coarse and stained lava; a muddy sediment rests on the horse-tail and other perennial herbs, which in part conceal the shallowness of the stream; a fat-leaved pale-flowering scurvy-grass appears early in the year, and the razor-edged bull-rush in the summer and autumn. The fen itself has a dark and saline herbage; there are rushes and *arrow-head*, and in a few patches the flakes of the cotton-grass are seen, but more commonly the *sea-aster*; the dullest of that numerous and hardy genus; a *thrift*, blue in flower, but withering and remaining withered till the winter scatters it; the *saltwort*, both simple and shrubby; a few kinds of grass changed by their soil and atmosphere, and low plants of two or three denominations undistinguished in a general view of the scenery;—such is the vegetation of the fen when it is at a small distance from the ocean; and in this case there arise from it effluvia strong and peculiar, half-saline, half-putrid, which would be considered by most people as offensive, and by some as dangerous; but there are others to whom singularity of taste or association of ideas has rendered it agreeable and pleasant.
- [7] Fasil was a rebel chief, and Michael the general of the royal army in Abyssinia, when Mr. Bruce visited that country. In all other respects their characters were nearly similar. They are both represented as cruel and treacherous; and even the apparently strong distinction of loyal and rebellious is in a great measure set aside, when we are informed that Fasil was an open enemy, and Michael an insolent and ambitious controller of the royal person and family.
- [8] The sovereign here meant is the Haroun Alraschid, or Harun al Rashid, who died early in the ninth century; he is often the hearer, and sometimes the hero, of a tale in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

## Transcriber's Notes:

Antiquated spellings have been preserved.

Typographical errors have been silently corrected but other variations in spelling and punctuation remain unaltered.

Where double quotes have been repeated at the beginnings of consecutive stanzas, they have been omitted for clarity.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GEORGE CRABBE: POEMS, VOLUME 2  
(OF 3) \*\*\*

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