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3926

**Such is life, or,
The
experiences of
a west country
painter**

George Scown

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3926



SUCH IS LIFE!

OR

THE EXPERIENCES

OF

A WEST COUNTRY PAINTER,

BY

GEORGE SCOWN.

CONTAINING

MANY INTERESTING EVENTS AND INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH HIS OWN
HISTORY, IN EXETER, LONDON, WINDSOR, AND OXFORD,
FROM 1836 TO 1876.

It's quite a retrospective view
Of ups and downs he has passed through,
'Mid peace and plenty, pain and strife,
That's why he names it "Such is Life."

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1885

PREFACE.

“SUCH IS LIFE,”

So they say in this world of uncertainties, and I am anxious to write for the amusement of friends and readers, some of the buffetings about I have had in it. But before I proceed further, I beg to express my regret of my want of education, and to hope thereby to escape the severity of criticism that my many blunders may otherwise call forth. What little education I received was at Cocky Stevens's School, St. Mary Arches Street, Exeter, which consisted of reading, spelling, and arithmetic as high as simple multiplication, and for a charity boy like me, it was considered enough too, fifty years ago. From my childhood I always had a notion of rhyming; and amusing myself one day in school with a specimen, was rewarded by Cocky Stevens with a severe birching, for which I had to thank my leather-breeched teacher, who would have winked at my crime could I

PREFACE.

but have closed his mouth with an apple or a lolly pop which alas, I had not got. The birch was Cocky Stevens's chief amusement ; from him, his birch, and leather-breeches, I managed to escape at the age of eleven, when I went out to work from six in the morning till nine at night at the tune of two shillings per week, going to and fro at meal times with my father's apron on, with an air of as much importance as though I was the main stay of the family ; and so I shifted for nearly seven years, from chemistry to grocery, drapery to hop trade, and so on, until I finally decided to be a tradesman of some sort, preferring ten hours a day to fourteen, —went through a mock form of apprenticeship for three years, declared my independence at the end of eleven months, came out in my native city as a full-made journeyman painter, the success of which I have endeavoured to lay before my readers, and by their accepting the will for the deed, I shall feel grateful.

GEO. SCOWN.

Gloucester Green, Oxford,
November, 1876.

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SUCH IS LIFE!

CHAPTER I.

CARELESS DAYS.

My friends will ask, without a doubt,
What all these verses are about ;
The writer, then, will try to shew,
Perhaps, what the readers wish to know.

It is a retrospective view
Of ups and downs I have passed through,
'Mid peace and plenty, pain and strife,
Which makes me name it "Such is Life!"

I, five and twenty years have been,
As by the rate-books may be seen,
In Oxford, and much business done,
And when well doing, favour won.

But Time, which works a mighty change
On all things moving in its range,
Has many raised to power and wealth,
Laid others low, and ill in health.

Among the many, I am one
Whose health and hopes in life are gone ;
Two years with gout lain on the shelf,
That's when I wrote this of myself.

When I was young, I much enjoyed
Good health, and most times was employed ;
I thought of nothing but the present,
Companions jolly, free, and pleasant.

Most evenings had some invitations,
Where I gave songs and recitations ;
So full of fun, my friends delighted,
Of course that's why I was invited.

It often made me feel quite proud
To hear my praises spoke aloud ;
Most free-and-easies I was there,
And often pressed to take the chair.

My pals, who used with me to sing,
Go where we would, did custom bring,
The landlord often stood a pot
Just to secure the jolly lot.

A jolly lot indeed we were,
While all was well, we didn't care ;
Sometimes till midnight out we stayed
Before we toddled home to bed.

Advice at home we heeded not,
Each night enjoyed our pipe and pot ;
When coin ran short we would agree
To take a stroll and have a spree.

Sometimes on mischief were we bent,
When carts into the river went ;
But then no "bobbies" were about,
And so the rogues were not found out.

And such amusements in the dark,
We used to think a jolly lark,
Until one day, upon a board,
Two pounds were offered for reward

To any person who would say
Who 'twas that wheeled the carts away ;
And then we thought 'twas time to stop it,
And from that time resolved to drop it.

Yet still our evenings did enjoy,
And did not other folk anoy ;
The peaceful Citizens could rest,
By our repentance they were blest.

A change of pleasures came at last,
Some to the other sex made fast ;
They said "Our games too high we've carried,"
So settled down, by getting married.

And I was one among the rest
Who thought a married life was best ;
A girl, with whom I used to flirt,
I married—then was out of work.

That very week—it was my lot—
The job was stopped, the sack I got ;
Four months I never earned a shilling,
And yet to work no man more willing.

As a tradesman, I was nothing grand,
I could not fancy-jobs command ;
But when plain painting came a rush,
I soon was busy with the brush.

I made some progress with my tongue,
As in the trade I was but young ;
But understanding colours well,
I, common painters, could excel.

A little foreman I was made,
Although three years not in the trade ;
But thinking I might get on faster,
I set up for a little master.

For a builder then to work I went,
I found labour, he found paint ;
And why I worked with greater pleasure,
Was, because 'twas done by measure.

For a little time things went on well,
Until suspicion on me fell ;
By his disputing what was right,
I, minus was, one payment night.

That made it awkward, let me say,
Because I had a man to pay ;
And often did I pay most willing,
And leave myself without a shilling.

I fancied things were going wrong,
And pressed for payment pretty strong ;
And what I felt no soul can tell,
When I was told to "Go to H—!"

Of course I did return the fire,
Then from his office did retire ;
To get the money I so treasured,
My work was by Surveyor measured.

And when I did present my bill,
My rage it rose much higher still ;
The Builder was in quad for debt,
And not a penny could I get.

With fevered brain, quite in a muddle,
To make it worse, gave way to fuddle ;
I sold my brushes, pots, and paint,
And with two others, tramping went.

CHAPTER II.

ON TRAMP.

'Twas in the spring time of the year
I told my wife she need not fear ;
Much nearer London I should get,
And begged her not for me to fret.

Then with our baskets at our back,
For neither did true courage lack ;
Fond parents for their sons did pray,
As we from Exon marched away.

And as each town we did pass through,
Inquired after work to do ;
In Dorchester I did begin
In "publics" to recite and sing.

My pals had money, I had none,
I said "Don't grizzle, I am not done ;
When I want 'grub,' I'm sure to do
Without my wanting it from you."

So Jack he carried round the hat,
And found how well I did at that ;
I said I told you not to cry,
You both got money—so have I.

So on we travelled, three a breast,
Well shod, were clean, and tidy dressed ;
We looked just like, we did profess—
Three decent tradesmen, nothing less.

We felt lighthearted in our walk,
We laughed to hear each other talk ;
And as the road we smoked along,
By way of change we sang a song.

And when to Blanford town we came,
My means of living was the same ;
My voice was clear and spirits bright,
I sang with great success that night.

To Salisbury we walked next day,
And in that city made a stay ;
In the year eighteen and thirty-two,
I lived there, and so many knew.

What more enabled us to rest,
And to our living gave a zest ;
Some monied swell tried hard in vain
To 'list us for the Queen of Spain.

Of raw recruits he had a lot,
Lord only knows whence they were got ;
Each day the lot this cove would stuff,
And to please him could not eat enough.

He made us sit down with the rest,
And so for three days we were blest ;
That was enough of such enjoyment,
So we walked off to seek employment.

Through Romsey for Southampton bent,
It matters little where we went ;
But there we got, and out of spite,
I would not try to sing that night.

Next morning we were up and dressed,
With search of work was much impressed ;
The first shop where we did apply,
Secured a job for Jack and I.

My other pal, whose name was Ben,
Did call at places, nine or ten ;
And I am very pleased to say
All three got work that very day.

Week after week I went to work,
But did domestic duty shirk ;
Week after week my wages spent,
And nothing home was ever sent.

I drank till I became quite ill,
My swimming brain did terror feel ;
My senses I began to doubt,
And hard I tried to do without.

One evening walking down the street
I did my shopmate chance to meet ;
He said " Upon my soul it's true,
Your wife now waits at home for you."

I had been to the Post to see
If there a letter was for me,
There was, I heard the master say,
And tenpence postage you must pay.

Judge the sensation—rather funny,
“Thank you,” said I, “I’ll fetch the money ;”
’Twas then I met this little dodger,
Who was my mate and fellow lodger.

I said “O Lord, if that be true,
I’ve got no tin—what shall I
Bill, lend me if you can, a shilling,”
He said “I will, my boy, most willing.”

And sure enough my wife was there,
At first I felt most precious queer ;
She was not much inclined to riot,
And so things passed off pretty quiet.

But I had carried on a game
That wont be wise herein to name ;
She told me kindly to sing small,
For of my doings she knew all.

I went to shop to have a draw,
And wondered how she came to know ;
With promising to make amends,
We got a lodging and were friends.

If you don't think it too absurd,
I'll tell you when this thing occurred,
Exact the date I cannot say,
'Twas the opening of the railway.

In the month of August work was slack,
And I, with others, had the sack ;
Nor did I do another stroke,
Until we got to Basingstoke.

Of Winchester a tale could tell,
But perhaps it might be quite as well
To speak not of it here to you,
Because with me 'tis nought to do.

And many bits that I could mention,
To write them here have no intention ;
And many facts I could supply
Which home-spun persons would deny.

In Basingstoke I did engage
For four-and-twenty as my wage,
Without a moment's hesitation,
To grain the work at railway station.

Although a novice, and I knew it,
By perseverance I got through it ;
My working clean, and style of action,
Gave my employers satisfaction.

Then to another job was sent,
And to Old Basing Church I went ;
New Altar-piece, and ceiling too,
I grained and varnished—then withdrew.

But here a something did transpire,
Which all who read it must admire ;
A man and woman came to marry,
She had as much as she could carry.

The Priest behind the Altar rail,
To marry those poor creatures frail ;
But what was strange, I mean to say,
No mortal soul gave her away ;

Besides, it was a woman clerk,
No other soul, let me remark,
Stood in that church to tie the twain,
The parson prayed, she said " Amen."

They left the church and then the twang
Of marrow bones and cleavers bang ;
I thought if that be legal marriage,
Sometimes the Law has a miscarriage.

But that was marriage on the cheap,
To save the parish from the keep
Of kids that sometimes come in batches
From certain poor deluded wretches.

I was offered now a constant shop
In Basingstoke if I would stop,
At Glover's, where they spoke so kind,
But I respectfully declined.

No guinea working wage for me
Said I, so I must London see,
Where I have understood the pay
For painters is a crown a day.

CHAPTER III.

THE QUEEN.

WE took next day a Sunday ride
To Egham, on the coach outside ;
From there we walked across the Green,
To Windsor, where we saw the Queen.

On the Castle Terrace heard the band,
Grand was the sight on every hand ;
Life Guards and Grenadiers so smart,
Their splendid music thrilled my heart.

While we stood gaping at the Queen,
By some slight accident unseen,
Some gravel in her shoe had got,
She took it off upon the spot,

And on the Terrace threw it out
When a lady close by, very stout,
Went to assist, but on she went,
That was the Royal Duchess, Kent.

We marched about for near two hours,
Around the fish pond, and the flowers ;
On pedestals some statues stood
Of men and women, perfect nude.

To look at them, some people blush,
But Kings or Queens care not a rush ;
If questioned, this is their defence,
Honi soit qui mal y pense.

Then back to Egham did we hobble
With blistered feet, but loyal noddle ;
Enough I'd seen in that day's walk
To serve me for a twelvemonth's talk.

Next morning sobered down, and cool,
Walked into London like a fool ;
On some old pals I did depend,
If I ran short, to find a friend.

Through many streets and squares we past,
And found out one old friend at last ;
Who shook us hearty by the hand,
And said, " What are ye going to stand ?

“For ’pon my soul, I’m out of work—
Done nought this month but mope and lurk ;
Or else, my friends, you know this youth
Would soon get something for the tooth.”

What could we do my friend to please,
But send him for some bread and cheese ;
Looked at my wife, who, laughing tried,
But in her heart, could then have cried.

The little money that we had,
To make the best of it was glad ;
We had some bread, some cheese, and beer,
And then I said, “My wife felt queer.”

Besides, we had to look about
To find some furnished lodgings out ;
And as there was no time to spare,
We both shook hands and left him there.

Up Holborn Hill, down Gray’s Inn Road,
We hunted for some neat abode ;
At length succeeded, for the present—
Hired a room near Burton Crescent.

I occupied next day or two
In looking after work to do ;
But in every shop that I did go,
The same sure answer, always " No.

And after walking miles around,
I got a job at Camden Town ;
A fortnight and two days it last,
Then all my future hopes were past.

But here I must a fact advance,
That, perhaps, will read much like romance,
But nothing shall I say to you
But what I vow is strictly true.

I cannot boast of modesty,
Religion, or my honesty ;
At this job each was put on trial,
Temptation strong, and firm denial.

I went to paint a parlour round,
In a certain street, upon the ground ;
A lawyer lived there, named McFar,
Whose office was near Temple Bar.

His wife, a very chatty dame,
Soon found the Painter was the same ;
And fond of gossip, used to pay
A visit to him thrice a day.

But what is more important yet,
A fact I never shall forget ;
A lady visitor, in rooms above,
With me most deeply fell in love.

Much time she daily spent with me,
For why, I did not think, or see ;
I told her, in a tender strain,
Of my first love, which proved in vain.

While telling it, she often sighed,
When I had done, she thus replied :
“Then Painter, think you one in ten,
When served like that, can love again.”

At first, I said I felt it much,
Indeed, my feelings were as such ;
I failed in everything I tried—
I cared not where I lived or died.

To dissipation I gave way,
In spite of all my friends could say ;
At length a mother's helping hand
Restored me to my self-command.

I can't such theory advance,
That mortals never love but once ;
And should young Cupid once more try,
Of his arrows, I should fight more shy.

The lady seemed to be so sad,
To change the subject I was glad ;
I hummed a tune, the lady spoke,
Said " Be not sorrowful, but hope."

Next morn in came the Lawyer's wife,
And said " Oh Painter, 'on my life
I cannot rest till you are told,
But don't you tell, or I am sold.

" Have you not noticed, here each day
A lady great attention pay—
Pretending to arrange the flowers,
While listening to your words for hours ?

"Some tale you told her yesterday,
Has sunk so deep, be what it may,
It occupied her mind so much,
Not a bit of supper could she touch.

"My husband sat in the next seat,
And saw Miss Sally did not eat ;
He said, 'My dear, do you feel ill ?
Whatever makes you sit so still ?'

"We saw her tears begin to rise—
My husband rose in great surprise,
He feared it was the cursed paint
That made Miss Sally ill and faint.

"I went up stairs with her to bed, i
And near an hour with her stayed ;
I said, 'My dear, perhaps I shall find
It's not the body, but the mind ;

"For ever since that Painter came
You walk no further than the lane,
And then directly you come in,
You go at once to chat with him.

“ ‘He certainly has winning ways,
And well advised in what he says ;
Sometimes he thinks I am not in,
And then I love to hear him sing.’

“ To get the secret out I tried,
For I felt fully satisfied ;
And sure as gospel, it is true,
Miss Sally is in love with you.

“ I took her breakfast up to bed,
And these are just the words I said :
‘ Good morning, dear, how do you seem,
I hope you’ve had a happy dream ?’

“ Poor darling, she looked up and wept—
Declared she not a wink had slept ;
Said I, ‘ ’Tis plain as words are written,
You are with that young Painter smitten.’

“ She blushed just like a crimson rose,
Saying, ‘ Why, my dear, should you suppose ?
But if you wish the truth to touch—
I like that Painter very much.’

"Now, Painter, do not notice take,
Nor mention it, for Heaven's sake ;
This afternoon she did agree
You should be asked up stairs to tea."

Thus far the Lawyer's wife had got,
I stammered out "I'd rather not ;
I hope you will not press the case,
For there, I shall be out of place."

"You must," said she, "so let it be—
My husband he would like to see
You in the evening, ere you leave,
To give you something, I believe."

This put me in a precious stew,
I wondered much what I should do ;
To face those ladies I was able,
If better dressed to sit at table.

A long way home I had to run,
To put clean shirt and collar on ;
My wife said, "What, be going pleasuring?"
I said, "No, with master, measuring."

"A measuring, indeed," says she,
"That tale will hardly do for me ;"
"No, nothing seems to do for you,"
I said, "You needn't look so blue."

She had no time to question more,
For I was soon outside the door ;
And had to put on extra power
To be within my dinner hour.

When clean I looked now pretty fair,
I had a nobby head of hair ;
But thought how awkward it would be,
To sit in shirtsleeves, taking tea.

But so it was—the tea-things laid,
And all being ready—tea was made ;
When presently the voice I heard,
Made my heart flutter like a bird.

The Lawyer's lady then came down
So nicely dressed in black silk gown,
And thus politely said to me,
"Please, Painter, walk up stairs to tea."

So up I went, and took a chair—
Miss Sally had her sister there ;
The Lawyer's wife made such a splutter
While handing round the rolls and butter.

She treacle spread upon the same,
And gave it some peculiar name ;
Some compliment to me she paid,
And said, " I hope you're not afraid ?

" So pray draw closer up your chair,
There's room enough, and some to spare ;
Come, sit a little nearer me—
I hope you will enjoy your tea."

I tried, of course, to do the grand,
With all the nerve I could command ;
On me Miss Sally kept her eye,
Which made me feel confounded shy.

Her sister scarcely spoke at all,
Perhaps thought it better to sing small ;
But what I think she thought of me
Was very little, I could see.

Miss Sally seemed quite full of thought,
As now and then a glance I caught ;
Her age, as near as I could guess,
Was thirty-five, perhaps little less.

Complexion sallow, round and dark,
Her searching eyes contained a spark,
That spoke a language most profound ;
The one she loved was sitting round.

I felt, myself, a sense of grief,
And soon withdrew to find relief ;
I knew not what they said or thought—
To this conclusion I was brought.

This little job will soon be done,
And then from here I shall be gone ;
My conscience will not let me stay,
The part of hypocrite to play.

The Lawyer now arriving home,
Invited me, with him alone,
To take a chair, and draw it nigher
Towards a bonny cheerful fire.

And then he rang the parlour bell,
And bade the servant maiden, Nell,
Bring some beer and bread and cheese
For Mr. Painter, if she please.

I thought he cut it rather fat,
If he spoke to every one like that ;
But when he turned to speak to me,
'Twas as respectful as could be.

He said, " I something have in view,
Of great importance, Sir, to you ;
So seriously you will attend
To me, who wish to be your friend."

I said, " Sir, you are very kind,
I should be pleased a friend to find ;
Whatever subject you may mention,
I'll listen to with great attention."

" First, I must tell you, by the way,
I am not authorised to say ;
So you must promise me to keep
The subject secret what I speak.

“The lady on a visit here,
By all that I can see and hear,
Has been so taken up with you—
Leaves little doubt what you could do,

“But what is more surprising still,
I’ve heard her say, she never will,
Her heart or hand be ever giving
To any mortal man that’s living.

“Now all at once, by what I find,
You have so occupied her mind,
That safe as I before you stand,
Her heart and soul’s at your command.

“An independent fortune, too,
Such chances are, in life, but few,
You only say that you will love
And marry that lady in room above,

“I’ll bring my arguments to bear,
And so arrange the whole affair ;
That take Miss Sally for your wife,
A gentleman, you’ll be for life.

“ Her fortune’s eighteen thousand pounds,
Besides a splendid plot of ground,
The interest of that sum itself,
To some would be a mine of wealth.

I said “ It seems a splendid chance,
My future welfare to advance ;
But should I marry without love,
Would such be prospered from above ?

“ Besides, some time I should require
To weigh the feelings you inspire ;
A fortnight’s thought I must employ
Before life’s happiness I destroy.”

“ You fear you could not love enough
To marry—what confounded stuff ;
And you, a common painter’s man,
Refuse to be a gentleman.

“ Time to consider—why you are mad,
A chance where thousands would be glad,
And thank me on their bended knees
For propositions such as these.

“ Well, fourteen days, so let it be,
I’ll wait that time, then I shall see ;
But I’m sorry you are so slow,
But you will come and let me know.”

Next morning, kneeling on the floor,
I saw how gently ope’d the door ;
Miss Sally first the silence broke,
And closed the door before she spoke,

Saying, “ Painter, I must leave you now,”
At which I felt I can’t tell how ;
She took my hand, and said, “ Good-bye ! ”
I bowed, and made some faint reply.

Now just outside I saw a cab,
And little “ Tiger ” dressed in drab ;
With silver buttons on his clothes,
Was waiting ’till Miss Sally goes.

I heard her talking in the hall,
And heard these words, “ If he should call ; ”
I thought, for ever must I part
With that one pure and loving heart.

I said, with little grace, or ease,
"One word, Miss Sally, if you please ;"
Then with a sweet and graceful air,
She answered, "Painter, I'll be there."

And so she was, and closed the door,
And just as gently as before ;
Then came towards me with a smile,
Which put my courage on its trial.

I said, "Miss Sally, pray excuse,
One favour asked, do not refuse ;
To know your name, and home address,
Will be a source of happiness."

"With pleasure, Painter, I will give
My name to you, and where I live ;"
Then from a red morocco case,
Her card she gave, with name, and place.

"And may I ever once presume,
Some morning, eve, or afternoon,
To be permitted to inquire,
For one whose kindness I admire ?"

Her words, in answer were just these,
" Yes, Mr. Painter, if you please ;
Wednesdays' or Sundays' will find me home,
On other days I always roam."

" And now grant me that mortal bliss,
Before we part, a single kiss !
I pressed her hand and drew her nigh,
Stole one sweet kiss, and said, " Good-bye."

I knew the act was very wrong,
But I was young—temptation strong ;
And from that day I did intend,
That course of conduct to amend.

Nor did it strike me at the time,
My secret was a serious crime ;
No one to me the question put,
" Are you a married man, or not ? "

In working life, not two in ten,
Although considered decent men ;
When tools in to a house are carried,
That tell the servants they are married."

And this is just the reason why
Some men their marriage will deny ;
Because their feelings shant be hurt,
By servants passing them like dirt.

But single men, take as a rule,
It matters not how big a fool,
By cook and housemaid so respected,
His share of work is much neglected.

I think it might be quite as well,
For the foreman of a job to tell,
Where men among the servants get,
Who is engaged and who's to let.

The job was finished, I was gone,
My conduct I reflected on ;
No visit did I ever pay,
But let the subject die away.

About six weeks 'twas after that,
I had my basket at my back ;
By the Quadrant stood to gape about,
When a gentleman from a cab jumped out.

He tapped me on the back and says,
“ Iv’e waited more than fourteen days ;
I suppose, young man, you thought no more
About that matter than before? ”

I said, “ Kind Sir, do pardon me,
I thought we should unhappy be ;
Unless I loved without alloy,
I should her happiness destroy.”

“ Oh, silly man—I pity you,
Here’s half-a-crown, and that will do
To get a glass of grog to-night,”
Jumped in the cab, and out of sight.

CHAPTER IV.

HARD UP.

I now pass on to other days,
Of London life, my means and ways ;
With empty pockets, cast adrift,
The next three months I had to shift.

I own I did feel rather vexed,
And wondered what would happen next,
Was out of work—and didn't know
How soon my wife to straw might go.

'Twas then November—very cold,
My wants made me look very old ;
In search of work, can truly say,
I walked near twenty miles a day.

My prospects cloudy did remain—
Day after day I tried in vain,
To get some work so hard I tried,
But everywhere I was denied.

The few things I could call my own,
One after t'other went to pawn ;
And often without food we went
To keep a home and pay the rent.

That winter it was most severe,
My wife's confinement drawing near ;
On Christmas Eve we felt forlorn,
A baby dead that night was born.

Next morning on the Christmas day,
The lifeless child was took away ;
To bury it a friend I found
Who paid, in Spaw Fields Burying Ground.

One shilling he gave me as well,
How happy made me none can tell ;
And as I am a living sinner,
With that I bought our Christmas dinner.

It gave my sick wife much relief,
When I produced a pound of beef ;
Although it was cut off the breast,
'Twas very nice when it was dressed.

Some flour, and plums, and mutton suet,
Some wonder may how I could do it ;
With greens and 'taters, quite enough,
In fact, as much as we could stuff.

Kind Providence to us was good,
For which we felt much gratitude ;
And our condition would have been worse,
Had I not been so good a nurse.

But still our spirits much depressed,
I had no work, and so distressed ;
And to procure the means of life,
I pledged the garments of my wife.

Poor creature, she was very weak,
And none but me, with whom to speak ;
Each day in search of work was I,
While she alone in bed did lie.

The weather—ugh ! was piercing cold,
And all we had was pawned or sold ;
To us, no soul, attention paid,
And cared not, if alive or dead.

Try, gentle reader, to divine,
We neither had committed crime,
Why we should so deserted be
When rogues abound in luxury.

And so could I, if I had tried,
And bid my conscience stand aside ;
To me seemed plain, it mattered not,
If one had money, how 'twas got.

And lucky, perhaps, the chance was past,
Or I might not have been so fast
In nursing conscience quite so much,
If I had thought to suffer such.

So desperate had things become,
My wants were so severe and long,
That seemed my senses to derange,
When curiously there came a change.

'Twas at the " Ship " Inn, Ivy Lane,
A Devonshire house, of noted fame,
I sat one evening, cold and sad,
That day no taste of food had had,

Two country men of mine came in,
'Twas Monday, both had boozing been ;
When one of them by me came nigh,
And quick my presence caught his eye.

“Why, George, my bonny, how d’ye do?
Whoever thought of seeing you ;
Upon my soul, I often think
Of you—here, take this cup and drink.”

He shook me hearty by the hand,
And said, “Of all men in the land
That he respected, it would be
No other countryman but me.”

“Well, where’s the mistress, how is she?
To-day I have been on the spree ;
To-night, was going to the play,
But now, my boy, with you I’ll stay.”

I told him of my wretched state,
“My God !” said he, “it’s not too late ;
Why, George, if I could sing like you,
Not one d—— stitch more work would do.

“ Here, drink again, at once I’ll go,
Whether you consent or no ;
A beefsteak I will get for you,
Some bread, and beer, and ’bacca too.

“ Don’t treat privations quite so cool,
Nor be downhearted like a fool ;
I’ll make you earn, within an hour,
A shilling by your vocal power.

“ If what I say you don’t believe,
I will myself a shilling give,
If you don’t earn one, when you try,
Within the time I specify.

“ It will an honest living bring,
You needn’t starve while you can sing ;
And introduce you, perhaps, I might,
Where you can earn three bob a night.

“ Not all that to the streets descend,
Do it from choice, you may depend ;
There’s many a piteous tale could tell,
That would a Christian bosom swell.

“Don’t preach to me about your nerves—
A man like you, to starve deserves
If he aint pluck enough to live,
By means no one but God can give.

“Look at the thousands passing by,
What care they for you or I ;
It matters not, my friend, believe,
How money’s got, unless you thief.

“You may stand in the street and cry
Aloud to each who passes by ;
One in a thousand wouldn’t stop
To hear what you to say had got.

“Nor hands into their pockets put,
But think your fakement well got up ;
A crowd of boys and blackguards scoff,
And then a Bobby walk you off.

“Then for a time be out of sight,
Perhaps half a day and all that night ;
Next morning, water gruel and bread,
And your name all over England spread.

“ And your poor wife not knowing what
Had happened, or where you had got ;
With fright and worry, I’m afraid,
When you got home, would find her dead.

“ So keep your pecker up and try,
An honest heart should never shy ;
So walk in there, the question pass,
Then sing a song as bold as brass.

“ Go in my boy, and don’t you funk,
If there should be a fellow drunk ;
He wont insult you, don’t you think,
More likely say, ‘ Here, butty, drink.’ ”

So in I went, three men were there,
I trembled, one began to swear ;
He said to me, sharp as a parrot,
“ A song ?—you go and take a carrot.”

Another said, “ Young man, don’t fear,
Here, just you drink this glass of beer ;
Then give us, if you like, a song,
I’ll swear you aint been busking long.”

I, trembling sang, "The Soldier's Tear,"
He gave another glass of beer ;
And then I sang, "The Open Sea,"
And five-pence got betwixt the three.

In one more house I went that night,
I sang, and also did recite ;
Then to my friend said "This will do,
I've fourteen pence, between the two."

"Well done," said he, "my boy, I'm glad,
I felt quite hurt to see you sad ;
Accept my shilling, don't refuse,
And hasten home and tell the news.

"It's all five miles to reach your home,
You've had some grub, your wife had none ;
Poor soul, how happy she will be,
With an egg or two, and cup of tea.

"And nurse yourselves, my boy, by day,
'Till this cold weather has passed away ;
You're sure to get work in the spring,
'Till then, go boldly out and sing.

"You needn't tell a mortal soul
Of what you do, or where you stroll ;
And if 'mong private friends should get,
Say, 'Yes, I did it for a bet.'

"They then would glory in your pluck,
Particularly if crowned with luck,
And swear that four in every seven,
To face the world, for pluck, are Devon.

"Well, now George, you and I must part,
Keep up your spirits, cheer your heart ;
Face your misfortunes like a man,
Get something better when you can."

I promised him that I would try,
Just then a Bobby passed us by ?
And growling said, "Enough of that,
So stop that noisy yelping chat."

I said, "Policeman, you are wrong,"
"Am I," said he, "then move along,
Or else I'll quickly let you know
You wont have very far to go."

To speak again I felt afraid,
My heart was good to punch his head ;
But my companion took to flight,
And kindly wished us both good night.

I thought it wise to go as well,
So homeward went through Clerkenwell ;
And lucky 'twas I had the thought,
Some scraps of mutton there I bought.

'Twas late, I had no time to waste,
I took my apron from my waist ;
As further on my chance was small,
I bought me fourteen pounds of coal.

Some tea, and sugar, 'taters too,
To make next day a tidy stew ;
And wood as well, to light the fire,
And bread, that's all I did require.

The carriage home was far from pleasant,
A good three miles from Burton Crescent ;
But still it gave me much relief,
To have the means of soothing grief.

My wife, despondingly, did say,
"Why have you been so long away ?
I feel so cold, and so alone,
I am so glad you are come home.

"Oh, have you anything for me,
I do so want a cup of tea ;"
I said, "My dear, I'll light the fire
And you shall have what you require."

I filled the kettle from the tap—
She did not see what I was at ;
From the mutton scraps I took the best,
And secretly put by the rest.

The fire soon burnt clear and bright,
The kettle steamed with seeming spite ;
I made the tea, and was so busy,
And then a sound of frypan frizzy.

The meat I had not spoke about,
But by the sound she found it out ;
Raw 'taters with some meat, I fried,
This sumptuous meal I then supplied.

The language of a grateful heart,
We to each other did impart ;
She said, " How nice ! why don't you eat ?
How did you get me such a treat ? "

I rose—was from the table going,
My heart was full to overflowing ;
My friend's voice still in my ears ringing,
I blubbered out, " I've been a singing ? "

I told her all I had gone through,
And what I was resolved to do ;
However painful, must be done,
And so that night I had begun.

It is not right to lie and die,
I every honest means will try ;
And hope the time will soon arrive,
We shall by other means survive.

It was no good the roads to roam,
To seek for work, or find a home ;
And as no other chance remains,
I'll try to exercise my brains.

CHAPTER V.

KIND RELATIONS.

My poor old mother did survive,
Five brothers also, all alive ;
For their assistance I applied,
By each of whom I was denied.

The first, he said, " It served me right ! "
The second, " Pitied my sad plight ! "
The third said, " If his wife was willing,
Would send me, as a loan, five shillings. "

The fourth said, " I'd no business there ! "
The fifth, " Had nothing he could spare, "
And my fond mother was too poor,
So on that footing wrote no more.

A pretty sample, that indeed,
To help a brother, much in need ;
I thought by them to be befriended,
But here, my expectations ended.

I had no single hope in view
On earth, but singing to pursue ;
However weak it may appear,
I could not stop the falling tear.

By all the world I felt deserted,
When my attention was diverted,
By liquid from a window thrown,
Its nature I'm ashamed to own.

I wiped my face and made a splutter,
My hat was then knocked in the gutter ;
Just then I heard some urchin shout
“ Does your poor mother know you're out ? ”

My steps I could not well retract,
I knew not where to go exact ;
But to escape those miseries
I walked into The Minories.

I was not much inclined to sing,
Of Poverty I felt the sting ;
And so downhearted, I confess,
At my sad state of wretchedness.

But at the public-house close by,
I thought I must go in and try ;
A damsel did my passage mar
As I was going through the bar.

I most politely said, " My lass,
Pray will you kindly let me pass ? "
She bawled out, " Devonshire, I'll swear,
What would I give if I was there ?

" Of all the men I do like best,
Are those imported from the West ;
Most Cockney chaps that I have seen,
Are three parts dried with smoke and gin.

" Come, dearest, take a glass with me—
Have what you like, the cost is free ;
There's no mistake in what I say,
Your Mary Jane is sure to pay."

I said, " My dear, I must not drink,
My errand here you little think ;
And much I fear, until the Spring,
I cannot live unless I sing.

“I was going to that parlour there,
If anyone has pence to spare,
I might amuse them, perhaps surprise,
If they hear me ventriloquise.”

She said, “My dear, I never thought
’Twas anything like that you sought ;
What you get there, on me depends,
Because they are my greatest friends.

“First, I’ll go in and speak for you,
And try my best what I can do ;
Then, if you like, recite, or sing,
Instead of pence, may silver bring.”

Then in she went, spoke steadily,
Obtained attention, readily ;
I sang two songs by their request,
In me they felt much interest.

I stood beside the cellar door
That opened from the parlour floor ;
I distinctly gave the door a rap
When a voice inside, said “Who is that?”

I said, "Its me, my worthy friend,
Will you be good enough to lend
My wife to-night a 'tater sack?
To-morrow you shall have it back."

"Don't bother me this time o' night,
Come in the morning, perhaps I might;
I got rheumatics in my head,
Besides undressed and into bed."

"To get it wont take long about,
Then from the window throw it out;
Come, my old woman's just below,
Without it it's no use to go."

"I tell you what it is, my friend,
I don't know that I've one to lend;
To rise from bed, for you I don't,
I'll see you d—— first, then I wont."

A burst of laughter broke the spell,
They said I had amused them well;
Then Mary Jane did them beseech,
For her sake, give me sixpence each.

They responded to her prayer most willing,
Her own subscription was a shilling ;
I drank their health with grateful pride,
With Mary Jane, then walked outside.

She said, " My dear, go home with me,
Have something nice—I'll make you tea ;
I'll get you anything you wish—
~~Rump~~steak, a chop, some ham, or fish.

" A nice room—furnished—all my own,
And plenty clothing—none in pawn,
And all is paid for, fair and square,
Besides a pound or two to spare.

" You need go out no more to sing,
For I can always money bring ;
My captain is for months away,
And he allows me regular pay.

" He knows I have a friend or two,
But them I will discard for you ;
If you will only with me live,
I can you every comfort give.

“To-night, when first I saw your face,
How much I thought you’d suit my taste ;
And when to me you spoke so kind,
At once I loved you, I could find.”

“My Dear,” I said, “You would repent
On me to find your money spent ;
Nor would you be content to live
With me, who nothing had to give.”

“Say you don’t know my darling, come,
A woman’s love is very strong ;
There are some false, I don’t deny,
Not Mary Jane, so come and try.”

“No, not to-night, my dear,” said I,
“But on my honour you rely ;
To-morrow night, about this time,
I will accept, or perhaps decline.”

“Will you, dear, then I’ll be here,
I shall depend you will appear.”
With parting kiss, she seemed content,
Had one more glass, then off I went.

Thinks I this is the second chance
I've had, my comforts to advance ;
The first was Love, confess I must,
To-night's affair was more like Lust

She was a clean and pretty girl—
Made my imaginations whirl ;
I feared if I went there again,
Should be seduced by Mary Jane.

I walked straight home, confused in thought,
Thinks I, to tell my wife I ought ;
So gaily did my spirits flow,
She said, " With her, you'd better go ! "

But in the way those words were spoke,
I knew they were not said in joke ;
So I presumed in language cool,
To tell my wife she was a fool.

" Perhaps I am," said she to me,
" But I can hear as well as see ;
To tell me you are much admired,
No doubt of me you're getting tired."

“ Well, that will do,” said I, “ to-night,
Let what you say be wrong or right ;
But from this time no more from me
Shall you know what I hear or see.

“ Ingratitude’s the worst of crimes,
And that I get from you sometimes ;
And now, because you’re getting strong,
Without me think to get along.

“ This is the worst time you could pick,
For of singing I am nearly sick ;
And well I know, if not for you,
A good deal better I could do.”

I only said that bit to try,
Succeeded well, she soon let fly ;
A volley of stinging words she sent,
And when exhausted tried a faint.

She didn’t well succeed in that,
So, on her chair, reclining back,
Relief she found in gushing tears,
Which overwhelmed me, head and ears.

She knew 'twould lick me in a minute
To see her cry, so did begin it ;
And what I felt, she little heeded,
As long as she, herself, succeeded.

In a minute I was by her side,
And all my soothing language tried—
I wiped her tears, confessed my sin,
She sobbed, and said, “ You did begin.

“ The moment you came in the room,
You said, ‘ Why leave that cursed broom
Always just inside the door,
To throw a fellow on the floor ? ’ ”

“ There, say no more,” said I, “ my dear,
I’ve brought you home a pint of beer ;
I know you have been very bad,
To find you better I am glad.”

“ I know I’m better, but I’m told
To take great care—not catch a cold ;
For if I was to, ten to one,
But what my life would soon be gone.

“You say, four shillings, you have got,
Then do, my dear, take out my frock ;
For this old rag is only fit,
To knock about the house a bit.”

“Well, so I will if you wont blame,
When I speak well of Mary Jane ;
For 'twas through her so much I got,
And my being married she knew not.

“Give me the glass and I will try
To find what 'tis that takes their eye ;
That secret must to you be known,
Because at one time took your own.”

“Don't you believe it, I was young,
And caught by your deceitful tongue,
That always was in my ears dinging,
Professing love by talk or singing.

“If Mary Jane, of whom you speak,
Had you with her a single week,
Would not want spectacles to see
The sloe leaves, that she thought was tea.”

“ A nasty jar, but never mind,
It's just like all you womankind ;
Of her you need not be afraid,
Drink up your beer, and go to bed.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEAT COVER.

For near three months, with little change,
Obliged I was the streets to range ;
In many houses found relief,
In others, looked on like a thief.

One instance I will give to you,
And only one, among the few ;
One night, near Radcliffe Highway, went,
And this is how that night was spent :

In a public room at the passage back,
Two gentlemen at supper sat ;
“ Would you like to hear a song ? ” I said,
One threw a meat cover at my head.

It did not hit me—I stood still,
To return it could with right good will ;
But coolly these few words did say :
“ You owe me nothing, if that’s your pay.”

"Go out," he said, "this instant, go!"
I said "Not yet, Sir, surely, no!
Please hear what I have got to say,
And then I'll quietly walk away."

"My presence here may seem abrupt,
Nor will I stop to interrupt;
But if my judgment don't deceive,
When you have heard me, will relieve."

I told my plain and truthful tale,
One said "He thought it rather stale;"
The other said, "Could he believe,
He surely would my wants relieve."

I said, "Kind Sir, will you permit
Me in this very room to sit;
In the bar I'll leave my coat as proof
That what I've said is perfect truth."

"My coat, when sold, the cab will pay,
Send some one off without delay,
And if untrue, give me in charge,
As a rogue, unfit to be at large."

"That's good," said one, "now sit you down,
Just for that bit, here's half-a-crown ;
From the proposition I've just heard,
I believe your statement, every word."

The other said, "I believe it, too,
I'm sorry I insulted you ;
I own my conduct very wrong—
Here's another shilling for a song.'

I sang, they both were satisfied,
They said my temper had been tried ;
What meat was left, as well as bone,
They gave me, then I started home.

To nothing else could I compare
My wretched life and loathsome fare,
But those poor souls we often meet,
Against their will, that walk the street.

Some ignorant people always say,
"Where there's a will, there is a way ;"
None harder than myself could try,
So that I frankly do deny,

Unless 'twas such a life as mine,
And that, some thousands would decline ;
And the asses that such counsel give,
By their own wit could never live.

Go where you will those stupid elves
Gain no position of themselves,
And to hold it long so much depends
Upon the interest of their friends.

And thousands, like them, to be found,
Were you to search old England round,
That act the toady to their face,
Just to keep themselves in place.

Of all mankind they are the scurf,
Of whom I've written quite enough ;
Therefore I will not waste my time,
Of them to write another line,

But pass them by for better bits
More interesting to my wits,
Which I am anxious to diffuse,
And perhaps my readers more amuse.

CHAPTER VII.

ANN, OF GRAY'S INN LANE.

ONE night, so different from the rest,
I, with the best of luck, was blest ;
And extra creature-comforts sought,
So I, a breast of mutton bought.

My route was not always the same,
This night walked home through Gray's Inn Lane ;
The fog, so thick I could not see,
When some faint voice accosted me.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," she said,
"This day I have not tasted bread ;
Nor money can I get to buy,
My empty stomach to supply."

"Poor creature, are you far from home?
This is an awful night to roam ;
It's very little I can give,
What part of London do you live?"

“In a furnished room, not far from here,
I do not from it often stir ;
But from a quarter, I expected,
I'm disappointed and dejected.

“Sir, would you please to come with me,
Then you can judge by what you see ;
There I will tell you little more,
Why I'm so destitute and poor.”

I went, the first thing caught my eyes,
Created pity and surprise ;
The room, like her, looked neat and clean,
But of fire burning not a gleam.

The table spread as though for tea,
One cup and saucer did I see ;
Which proved no paramour was there
But a tabby cat upon a chair.

I said, “Your tale is plainly told,
By the state of things I now behold ;
Together, with the cold and damp,
Convinces me you are in want.”

"I am, indeed," poor soul replied,
"Before you, five or six I tried,
They answered me with cruel scoff,
One told a Bobby, 'Take her off.'

"The Policeman was a feeling man,
Said, 'Right, Sir, I'll take her in hand,
But I must find a better job
Than taking this poor girl to quad.'

"I was in service, Sir," said she,
"From crime and degradation free ;
'Till a villain, under false pretence,
Destroyed my hopes and innocence.

"Such faithful promises he made,
He found me easy to persuade ;
One night he took me to the play,
When to his passions I gave way.

"I still in my good service kept,
And often, when alone, I wept,
I asked my promised husband when
To marry me he did intend.

“I told him just how matters stood,
And hoped to me he would be good ;
The question he no longer parried,
But told me plainly he was married.

“’Twas just inside my master’s door,
I dropt quite senseless on the floor ;
The wretch, that instant from me fled,
My fellow-servants thought me dead.

“For a doctor they sent off in haste,
And thought there was no time to waste ;
The doctor came, and soon he proved
I must be instantly removed.

“Then to the Workhouse I was sent,
Much mental torture underwent ;
In labour, most severely tried,
My life to save, the baby died.

“My father he was made aware
Of my distress and sad affair ;
‘Indeed,’ said he, ‘I was afraid,
From what was said, that you were dead.’

“ He loved me dearly, but ’twas sad,
That through a second wife he had,
However kind he felt disposed,
Her heart was dead against me closed.

“ She had one daughter of her own,
To every neighbour it was known
She kept in indolence and pride,
While I, a shelter was denied.

“ One day my father came and said,
As I lay on my Workhouse bed,
‘ Since your affair has reached my wife,
There’s nothing home but deadly strife.’

“ ‘ I admitted that you had done wrong,
But yet to me you did belong ;
With your disgrace does me upbraid,
And wish you in your grave were laid.’

“ ‘ I hope, dear father, I shall live,
If you will only me forgive ;
Your want of comfort I deplore,
But bid her speak of me no more,

“ ‘The time will come, you may depend,
When her own child may want a friend ;’
And soon she did God’s judgment find—
With small-pox went completely blind.

“ ‘In a month I did the Workhouse leave,
My sad condition made me grieve ;
Resolved I was, if I’d the chance,
My moral welfare to advance.

“ ‘To my late mistress went straightway,
Who did, my wages due, soon pay ;
I humbly begged that she would give
A character, so that I might live.

“ ‘She said, ‘How can you have the face
To ask me, after such disgrace ;
I cannot help your being poor,
I’ve heard enough, and there’s the door.’

“ ‘I trembled, and I felt so weak,
My heart so full, I could not speak ?
I left the house, with torture rent,
I heeded not which way I went.

"Exhausted so I felt at last,
Close by a public-house I passed ;
Some woman said, ' Ann, how are you ? '
'Twas our laundress, so well I knew.

" ' Good God ! ' she said, ' how ill you look,
You aint by all the world forsook ;
Come in with me, do, that's a dear,
Have something warm, some gin and beer.

" ' And then, my dear, go home with me,
I'll get you something nice for tea ;
Don't break your heart, without a doubt,
I'll find you work to set about.

" ' A little, perhaps, you may help me,
Then, in the evening, we shall see ;
In the City I have work to take,
I'll get you then some shirts to make.'

"We went, and quickly did succeed,
They gave me six to make with speed,
No longer then did I despond—
The laundress became my bond.

"The foreman said, 'Don't be too nice,
Because those goods are low in price ;
When I have seen what sort of hand,
Perhaps, better work you may command.'

I made the shirts, and took them home,"
But this time there I went alone ;
I put them on the counter top,
Then for my turn, I had to stop.

"That was not long, the foreman came,
And said, 'Now gal, what is the name ?'
Examined well the shirts I made,
And said, 'Twas very tidy trade.

"Three halfpence, as they're made so nice,
But penny-farthing is the price ;
I'm satisfied, your work will do,
So now a score I'll give to you.'

"I stood just like one thunderstruck,
Saw ninepence on a parcel stuck ;
"Good God ! Sir, do you mean to say,
For that I've worked one night and day.'

"Says he, 'I told you not to be
So over nice with those you see ;
But when you are got used to this,
You'll find your earnings not amiss.'

"This ninepence, Sir, I will put by,
And live by other means will try ;
And tell you plain, I might as well,
This firm's a Nursery for H——.

"Sir, can any human creature live
By labour, with the price you give ?
May all, like your employers, rave,
With a woman's curse, mad to their graves."

"The foreman gave an awful stare,
To interrupt, he didn't dare ;
My last few words I did repeat,
Then walked direct out in the street.

"My feelings were so overcome,
Refreshments, though I wanted none ;
Straight in a coffee shop I went
To give my wretched feelings vent.

“ It gave me some relief to cry,
When, some old lady, sat close by,
In language tender, soft, and clear,
Said, ‘ What’s the matter, my poor dear ?

“ ‘ Can I relieve your trouble, child ?
Your weeping makes you look so wild ;
Do drink your tea while it is warm,
I hope you’re not in fear of harm ?

“ ‘ We all have troubles, more or less,
And many suffer much distress ;
And often those who don’t deserve,
From want of friends are left to starve.

“ ‘ That strictly, mam, applies to me,
And no escape, that I can see ;
I have no friends, though much I need.
And that is why I can’t succeed.’

“ I told her my sad story through,
She said, ‘ My dear, it’s nothing new ;
Come, walk with me a little way,
And hear what I have got to say.

“ ‘ Among my friends, perhaps, can do
A something better, suiting you ;
There’s nothing could my feelings hurt,
So much as that five-farthing shirt.’ ”

“ She stopped outside a gin shop bar,
And said, ‘ She never could walk far
Before the spasms did begin,
So she must have a drop of gin.

“ ‘ And a drop for you, my dear, it might
Cheer up your spirits, make ’em light,
Because you must not pine and fret—
Come, drink, you may be happy yet.’ ”

“ Her real character I never dreamed,
So kind and motherly she seemed ;
We reached the house where she was living,
I even then had no misgiving.

Her daughters, as she said they were,
The supper cold, did soon prepare ;
They said, ‘ Dear mamma, aint you tired ? ’
Their pleasing manners I admired.

“ ‘ Take off your bonnet, there’s a dear,
Feel quite at home, while you are here ;
Pure Charity I’m always teaching,
Does not consist of tracts and preaching.

“ ‘ Sometimes a tract is very well
To remind us of a place like H—— ;
But that alone, in this cold weather,
Wont keep body and soul together.

“ ‘ To do a fellow creature good,
When hungry, give them wholesome food ;
That is, if such lies in your power,
More good than preaching for an hour.’

“ Most heartily I ate and drank,
And gratefully I did her thank ;
I thought ’twas time for me to go,
And timidly I told her so.

“ She said, ‘ My dear, don’t think of going,
Some good for you I think of doing ;
And in the morning you can see,
If with the terms you can agree.’

"The clock upon the stairs struck ten,
When in walked three young gentlemen ;
'My lodgers, these,' she softly said,
'Four nights a week they have a bed.

" 'That's when off duty, don't you see,
They're always on the other three ;
Sometimes they carry on such larks—
But there, it's like Post Office clerks.'

"No sooner said, than they begun
To chaff and carry on their fun ;
One said, 'I was a pretty gal,
The picture of his sister Sal.'

" 'Mamma dear, is this your neice ?
If so; my love, let's have a kiss ;'
I said, 'Sir, pray, do let me go,'
Without a kiss? my darling, no !

"Another bawled out, 'Master Bob,
If you don't stand, you are a snob,
You know your birthday is to-day,
You told me so but yesterday.'

“ ‘ Well, that wont ruin me,’ said he,
‘ Just name it—what is it to be ?
My governor’s got a little wealth,
To-night his friends must drink his health.’

“ The punch was made, then handed round,
To drink a little I was bound ;
I thought whatever would I give,
In such a place to always live.

“ The lady, she sat close to me,
And whispered, ‘ Do be kind and free,
All three belong to wealthy friends,
Who never care how much they spends.’

“ The daughters both sat on their knees,
The young men kissed them when they pleased ;
Awake I could no longer keep,
Inclined my head, and fell asleep.

“ When I awoke, I was in bed,
’Twas dark—I felt a horrid dread ;
I could not leave it, yet I tried,
I felt so ill and stupified.

" I knew I was not there alone,
I thought upon my wretched home ;
Such painful anguish reached my soul,
No human language could control.

" Quite overwhelmed I was with grief,
When gushing tears gave some relief ;
'Twas then, the person, by my side,
To give me consolation tried.

" He said, ' My dear, you may depend,
I swore last night to be your friend ;
By me you have not been defiled,
So on that point be reconciled.

" ' I swear and promise to be still,
I will not move against your will ;
Although the mother down below,
Has told me all, of which you know.

" ' When I say mother, don't believe,
I do not wish you to deceive ;
The secret in its real solution,
That woman lives on prostitution.

“ ‘Those two young ladies walk the Strand,
And bring home all they can command ;
Your figure tall, and pretty face,
These made her bring you to this place.

“ ‘She wanted some young lady tall,
For some old swells that often call ;
That when the other two are out,
She will not then be left without.

“ ‘Before with you I did lay down,
I gave that sinful wretch a crown ;
But if on silence you insist,
From further questions I desist.

“ ‘I’ll dress myself at once and go,
If you insist, it shall be so ;
But if you only condescend,
I swear to be your constant friend.’

“ ‘I thought his words were so sincere,
And poverty and want so near,
I laid my head upon his breast
And yielded to his last request.

“ I thought on me there was a curse,
If I refused I should fare worse ;
With him I might some comfort find,
If he was faithful, true, and kind.

“ He got a furnished room that day,
Then from that house took me away ;
He said his fictitious name, no doubt,
Would puzzle friends to find him out.

“ Three months with him I had enjoyed,
He never seemed with me annoyed ;
Until I told him I had found
He was for South Australia bound.

“ He said, ‘ And much against my will,
A situation I must fill ;
But when I come with you to part,
Dear Ann, ’twill nearly break my heart.’

“ I said, ‘ Then now I know my doom,
I’ll try to find a cheaper room ;’
‘ My dear,’ said he, ‘ do, if you can,’
I did that day, and here I am.

“ Four months, or more, he's been away,
To hear from him I often pray ;
But however anxious I may be,
He must not correspond with me.

“ His cousin sometimes comes to see,
And is of little help to me ;
On him I never can depend—
That's why to-night I want a friend.’

“ Poor Soul ! ” I said, “ there, say no more,
My heart, like yours, is very sore ;
So live in hopes, and don't despair,
Some day you will much better fare,

“ What little I have got to give,
Your craving hunger will relieve ;
This sixpence, a loaf of bread will buy,
And here's some mutton you can fry.

“ I aint much better off than you,
Your wretchedness will mine subdue ;
To change this life, try all your might,”
I wished her God's speed, and good-night.

Oh what a world is this, I thought,
They say experience must be bought ;
But thousands more, like me, it's clear,
Are paying for it very dear.

I thought on that poor blighted plant,
So like myself, but more in want,
That foggy night did pity crave,
Myself, the instrument, to save.

On me it made a deep impression,
My gladness was beyond expression ;
I thought I saw plain evidence,
Of an All-seeing Providence.

So homewards, happy, trudged along,
And humming to myself a song ;
And was about to give a toast,
When, bang, I went against a post.

I nearly knocked my wind right out,
For fog, I could not see about ;
" Mind the post ! " I loudly bawled,
Then, close to houses, home I crawled.

My wife was also pleased to find
That I spoke lovingly and kind ;
This night's affair I didn't name
Because I thought of Mary Jane.

'Twas very shortly after this,
A chance occurred I didn't miss ;
A laundress, an old friend of mine,
Said, " George, dost know where I could find

" A woman that has got the heart
To work, and do an honest part ;
For really I so want a friend,
To help me both to wash and mend ? "

I told my tale of Gray's Inn Lane,
She said, ' Why George, you are insane ! ' "
I said, " I always understood
God prospered all in doing good.

" Refer to Rowland Hill I can,
Whose coachman was an highway man ;
His housemaid, also, walked the streets,
And asked him one night to stand treat.

“Now, how to them did he behave?
He said, ‘They both had souls to save ;’
Through him their horrid life forsook,
Then both into his service took.

“And thousands more, whose aching heart
Would from a life of sin depart,
If thousands more, like Rowland Hill,
God’s Christian Mission would fulfil.”

That was enough, she took the hint,
And straight to Gray’s Inn Lane she went,
Engaged the girl, through what I said—
Turned out the best she ever had.

CHAPTER VIII.

RUBBING DOWN.

Now of singing I was sick and tired,
Some clothing comforts I required,
And hard enough I had to fight
To average half-a-crown a night.

One night when shuffling through the snow,
I hardly knew which way to go ;
Thinks I, suppose I take a trip
Once more to Ivy Lane—the Ship.

I went, a friend said “ How are you ?
Got nothing yet I s’pose to do ?
If not, my boy, I’ll put you fly
To get a job, if you’ll apply.

“ To the West End I this morning went,
To answer an advertisement ;
Coach painters wanted, but I found
The work was only rubbing down,

“ Which you can do as well as me,
By watching others you will see ;
But I will shew you on this door,
What’s to be done and nothing more.

“ This door’s the carriage, we will say,
Feels very rough, and painted grey ;
Be sure that you have rubbed enough,
When you come on the colour buff.

“ Don’t say a word about the trade,
Or when or where a painter made ;
But with them grumble at the times,
And call the rubbing down hard lines.

“ For many there could earn, I say,
By better work, six bob a day ;
This bitter winter, all must own,
The worst for painters ever known.

“ When you are there you’re sure to find
Enough to occupy your mind ;
Should gossip ever turn on trade,
Then use your wit so ready made.

"By opening a carriage door,
Say, 'Butty, aint you going to work no more,
If you don't pull yourself together,
You'll have a taste of my wet leather.'

"They'll fancy some one is inside,
Asleep, or drunk, gone there to hide ;
Then will commence a little chaffing,
Your bits will set the lot a laughing."

I thanked him for his friendly warning,
And promised I would go next morning ;
And if successful I should be,
He had made a happy man of me.

I seemed to fancy I was right,
My heavy heart at once was light,
No thoughts of home that I could bring,
Would force me out that night to sing.

I gladly sang where I was sitting,
Although I was no money getting ;
On Devonshire, went round the joke,
As we together drank and smoked.

My friend I thought was getting tight,
Said something perhaps that wasn't right ;
But what, I don't remember now,
Be what it may, it caused a row.

Some butcher told him hold his jaw,
Or else he soon would let him know ;
The butcher spoke, then down he went,
From a blow direct by Devon sent.

The tables, then, was pulled aside,
The room, it was not very wide,
They both went at it, hot and strong,
The bloody battle wasn't long.

The butcher, he began to cry,
He stopped the first blow with his eye,
Then, under went, enough to burst,
Which put an end to round the first.

The second round—tremendous scuffle,
Which gave my friend, a sort of snuffle ;
The third, and last, was best of all,
But ended with the butcher's fall

Sharp work—they both began to blow,
Which was best man, I didn't know ;
The butcher, he was big enough,
To kill, if made of proper stuff.

The landlord now rushed on the scene,
Roar'd out, " Pray, what does all this mean ?
If, you don't stop this fight direct,
I'll give you what you don't expect."

Thus quiet was restored at last,
Steer* told my friend he was too fast ;
I did not tell him what I thought,
Or that 'twas me the landlord brought.

The butcher he was took away,
But as he went, this was his say :
" Mark me, my lad, when next we meet,
I'll give it to you hot and sweet."

" My friend," said Cocky, " if you like,
We'll go and have it out to-night ;
For next time you will have it worse,
So don't you come without your nurse."

* Steer, the landlord.

Devon and Cornwall has the knack
Of putting good men on their back ;
On that they mostly do depend
To bring a fight to speedy end.

Crafty fighters often fall
Without the slightest blow at all ;
But once within that Devon grip,
They go down whack, without a slip,

Which sometimes make their daylights dance,
Then Science stands but little chance ;
And heavy falls upon hard ground
Has licked some of the best men found.

My friend soon let the matter drop,
I would no longer with him stop ;
In Newgate Street he called a cab,
To take him home, and I was glad.

I hastened home and went to bed,
This rubbing down so filled my head ;
I thought what pleasure it would bring,
When forced no longer out to sing.

Next morning, gay as any lark,
To the factory went, near Regent's Park,
And to the master I applied,
By whom I was at once employed.

Resolved I was to try my best—
In silence, copied from the rest ;
And on my work was so intent,
When a wet swab in my ear was sent,

At which I felt a little riled,
My buttty looked at me and smiled ;
Said, "Take no notice, man, of that,
But wait your chance to send it back."

'Twas February when I got
Among this somewhat seedy lot,
The weather being so piercing cold,
Made some quite objects to behold.

I had not been there many days
Before accustomed to their ways ;
Although composed of odds and ends,
I soon secured the lot as friends.

I must a line or two devote
To say what brought me into note ;
One day, an argument of length
Induced a few to try their strength.

My days among them were but young,
But in that argument was strung ;
And one, much faster than the rest,
Gave me a challenge to contest.

'Twas Devon this, and Devon that,
They all had got that word so pat ;
One fast cove, standing six feet high,
Invited me with him to try.



He said, " Here, talk of feats of strength,
Can you hold this thing out arm's length ?
With all the strength and pluck, you've got,
You don't do that, I'll bet a pot."

" Bravo ! " said his shopmates all,
You're nation strong as well as tall ;
But I said, " Long un," very cool,
" Do you take Devon for a fool ?

“ You don’t read *Bell’s Life* very much,
Or you wouldn’t talk to me as such ;
I never do advantage take,
Therefore, no bet with you shall make.

“ I like my shopmates very well,
By my good humour they can tell ;
But if any man my pluck deny,
He is welcome any day to try.

“ And, as to my sky rocket friend,
By him, I will a challenge send ;
To every man upon the ground
For strength I’ll back myself a pound.

“ Bring me a fifty-six,” said I,
“ Then, long un, you can have a try ;”
The weight was brought, no wager laid,
I swung it quickly round my head.

I then shewed them my naked calf,
Full fifteen inches and a half ;
And then I said, “ This little lump
Will back himself the highest jump.”

"Damme, six foot," said a chap,
"You're looking precious old at that ;"
"Be gad !" said he, "I now believe,
The easiest thing is to deceive."

Nothing, that appeared absurd,
Throughout the week again occurred,
Unless 'twas now and then a leather,
Wet, we shied at one another.

'Twas Saturday, the men were paid,
An invitation was conveyed,
To go close by the heart to cheer
Behind a pipe and glass of beer.

The foreman, too, a sharpish blade,
But very clever in his trade,
A Cockney to his very soul,
But never could his tongue control.

He swore most every time he spoke,
Whether in anger or in joke ;
Come when he would, my work to see,
A kindly word he had for me.

The foreman, with the men sat down,
All for enjoyment seeming bound,
Nor did we sit there very long
Before 'twas "Order, for a song."

Now all the week I had been dumb,
As far as singing—not a hum ;
When "Order," loud the foreman bawled,
"Devon, for next song is called."

I rose directly on my feet,
This compliment of theirs to meet ;
One of my master songs did sing,
Which made the glasses fairly ring.

They seemed quite taken by surprise,
When I so readily did rise,
And when I finished and sat down,
They encored with a deaf'ning sound.

My voice was in its finest fettle,
I tried my best to sound its mettle ;
With my success I felt excited,
My shopmates all were so delighted.

The foreman and a lot went out,
To breathe fresh air and look about,
And I was anxious home to go,
At which I knew they would say no.

As I was round the corner going,
To do as others had been doing,
Several shopmates I had past,
But Charles, the foreman, was the last.

I heard him say to one or two,
"I never heard, did ever you,
A man with a more pleasing voice,
He made my very heart rejoice."

Just then he caught a glance of me,
Said, "You're the lad I want to see,
You are not going, don't you think,
I'll pay for all you have to drink.

"Upon my soul, I never heard,
If I never speak another word,
A song so true, to the very letter,
No man on earth could sing it better,

“ You shall not go, not yet, I swear,
There’s not a single shopmate there
But what respects you, so to speak,
You have so ’mused them all the week.”

“ I thank you, Charles, for saying so,
And if you wish, I will not go ;
But something seems to say I must
With you a little secret trust.”

“ As sure as I’m a living man,
I’ll help you, Devon, if I can ;
Tell me your secret, and depend
That I will try to be your friend.”

“ Then I will tell you, Charles, most willing,
For four months past not earnt a shilling ;
For work all over London tried,
’Till I came here, I was denied.

“ House painting is my proper trade,
But when I application made,
I did not say so, for I thought
That rubbing down was easy caught.

“ The favour that I ask you now,
Is, when I’m wrong, just tell me how ;
When you come round to take a sight,
If wrong, so kindly set me right.”

“ I’m glad you told me, and I swear,
As long as ever you are there,
I’ll try, by every means I can,
To serve you as an honest man.

“ But keep it dark, and I’ll come round,
And if a little fault is found,
I’ll set you right upon the quiet,
And then there’s safe to be no riot.

“ It’s plain to me you understand
The sort of work you have in hand ;
And truly, if I speak my mind,
I never yet a fault could find.

“ Come in and sing another song,
I will not press you to stop long,
Brandy and water, glasses two,
Be d—— if I don’t pay for you.”

I felt so happy—in I went,
I only had one threepence spent ;
And in my pocket had a pound,
With gratitude I did abound.

Of course, was called on very soon,
To sing when I got in the room,
A comic recitation tried—
Some laughed until they fairly cried.

“Encore,” again was all the roar,
I drank, and gave them one song more ;
My song, by all, was much admired,
I wished them well, and then retired.

I hastened home—my heart was light,
My wife she said that I was tight ;
Tight or slack, make no mistake,
To-morrow’s dinner must we bake.

I’d been a shopping on my way,
And bought the dinner for next day ;
“Now put the fryingpan on the fire—
Here’s meat for supper, you require.

“ For all this week you’ve lived on tea,
To get what meat you could for me ;
I nothing got upon the busk,
Nor nothing have we had on trust.”

My wife much better was in health,
Got many little jobs herself ;
And by her needle, did profess
To bind a boot or make a dress.

Unknowing to the other men,
I told the foreman I could grain ;
“ That’s capital—so help me bob,
I’ll very soon get you a job.”

Next day the master came to me,
And brought a frame for me to see ;
Said, “ If you grain so clean, you may
A lot take home with you to-day.

“ A shilling each I pay for these,
And you can do them at your ease ;
I need not other people pay,
If you can grain as well as they.

“Here come with me in t’other shop,
And see another job I’ve got ;
Those coloured putties round the frame,
Can you do others just the same ?

“Bevelled off neat from the glass,
Enough to let the water pass ;
You seem to be a handy man,”
I said, “With pleasure, Sir, I can.”

“Then Charles, you need not send again
For that glazier out of Boozing Lane,
But let this young man do the lot,
I’m glad we got him in the shop.”

’Twas thus three months I passed away,
And rubbing down day after day ;
The oldest men, and women own,
’Twas the longest winter ever known.

Great Western Carriage Work and me,
Was not for ever to agree ;
As warm the sun began to shine,
To better work I did incline.

CHAPTER IX.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

ONE Monday morning, quite prepared,
Towards New Bond Street I repaired ;
A master eyed my tidy sconce,
And said, " Young man, come on at once."

'Twas then I had my crown a day,
And a good employer, pleased to say ;
But felt it much against the grain,
In sunshine to prepare for rain.

My thoughts were often on the past,
But were too cloudy long to last ;
Of trouble, I had over measure,
And now, thank God, He gives me pleasure.

Four years I worked there, on and off,
At rubbing down I never scoff ;
Because kind Providence thought best
To give me that when in distress.

As I, to concert rooms aspired,
Some winter nights, to sing, was hired ;
But that was more a crust to bring,
If again compelled to go and sing.

Thank God, that life was not to be,
He provided better things for me ;
My master's work was getting slack,
I knew not who might have the sack.

And a Windsor master was in Town,
A name well known, of much renown ;
He wanted men so very bad,
If I'd make one he would be glad.

I thought that I should like it well,
To go to Windsor for a spell ;
Next morning, with ten others went,
Here follows how that day was spent :

By eight o'clock to Windsor got,
All left our baskets at the shop ;
Some old uns then the young kept nudging
To look about the town for lodging.

We all agreed, if in our power,
To meet again within the hour ;
The place appointed us to meet,
Was Morton's shop in Peascod Street.

The change of air, or perhaps the beer,
Had made some chaps feel rather queer ;
" Which ever 'tis," says Billy Neat,
" I must have summut nice to eat."

Some others said, " And so must I,"
'Till it became the general cry ;
And Paddy Kelly, said, " Be dad,
If I don't eat I shall be bad.

" So come along my boys wid me,
Let's go to Morton's shop and see ;
Some hurdle bunters, sure I saw,
Just suiting Paddy Kelly's jaw.

" Be aisey now, ye spalpeens all,
When on that gintleman we call,
Or faith, he'll think we may contrive
To make a male of him alive."

We laughed at Paddy Kelly's brogue,
Believed him far from being a rogue ;
Sheeps heads and trotters disappeared,
And Morton's window soon was cleared.

"Now, who's for work," cried Billy Neat,
"Here's Carrots laying fast asleep ;
I never yet from duty shrunk."
Said Paddy, who was nearly drunk.

"But by me sowl, I think it best,
I, too, meself, will take a rest ;
For, by the Powers, I mane to say,
I wont be worth a dump to-day."

"Oh that be d——," said Harry Knight,
That some one said had won a fight ;
"By what I see, some bloke must go
To shop and let the gaffer know.

"Come, lads, get up, it's time to say,
One way or t'other, work, or play ;
But, mind, which ever word you pick,
I expect the lot together stick."

I said, "Young man, don't be too fast,
We all know nine o'clock is past,
But make a half a day we might,
Let every man do as he like."

"You snivelling thief, what's that you say?
I see, you will the Judas play;
And if you do not stow your gab,
From me a hot un you will nab."

I said "There's two can play at that,
Walk in the yard, just at the back;
Accommodation you shall find,
And then go back to London blind."

Now, Mr. Morton, had a say,
Said, "Gentleman, I'll clear the way,
I've just sent for the Windsor Pet,
Tom Angello, you wont forget."

"He understands this sort of fun,
I'm very glad you aint begun,
So when he comes, be on your oath,
He'll kindly wait upon you both."

“Och, blood and tunder,” cried out Pat,
“Here’s a boy don’t wait for that ;”
And Carrots, that was fast asleep,
Was instantly upon his feet.

That bit from Morton stopt the riot—
In half a minute all was quiet ;
’Twas now proposed to look around,
To see if lodgings could be found,

But all the lot requested me
To go and make apology ;
And so I did, to pave the way
For sure employment the next day.

Soon after, all were nearly tight,
We strolled about till nearly night ;
Then, in some public house we got,
Sent Carrots for some sheeps heads hot.

At once, to satisfy our wishes,
He bolted off with two blue dishes ;
And not possessing self command,
They both slipped, smashing, from his hand.

A Bobby passing at the time,
Said, "Tommy, were those dishes mine,
I'd ask your mother how you got 'em,
And tell her, well to whip your bottom."

Poor Carrots said, "I'll bottom you,
You dam raw lobster looking blue,"
Which Bobby's feelings did excite,
He locked up Carrots for the night.

We waited long for our supper,
And nothing heard of this grand splutter ;
Some swore they would poor Carrots smash,
For bolting off with his shopmates' cash.

I had some trouble to find out
The lodgings I had seen about ;
That day so much had passed my throttle,
Was put to bed as tight as a bottle.

Most all appeared at shop next morn,
Some looking stupid and forlorn ;
The shillings I had were not many,
But some had not a single penny.

Some were to Windsor Castle sent,
Others to the Duchess Kent ;
At Frogmore, Cooper had decided
This lushing band should be divided.

But where was Carrots? none could tell,
Or what on earth had him befell ;
His butty, with a vacant stare,
Said, " He lodged with me, but aint been there."

At eleven o'clock poor Carrots came—
I heard the foreman call my name ;
Said, " Some one, looking precious blue,
Young man, that wants to speak to you."

Poor Carrots said, " As true as God,
I've been locked up all night in quad ;
The Mayor, this morning, heard the charge,
Said, ' Sergeant, set that man at large.'

" Of course, at once I went to shop
And told the master where I got ;
He said, ' Then, now you can go back,
Such men as you I give the sack.'

“He wouldn’t hear me say no more,
But walked directly to the door ;
And now, whatever shall I do ?
For some advice, I come to you.”

“Meet me,” I said, “at dinner-time,
I will consult those pals of mine,
And then I’ll see what can be done—
On Castle Hill, ’twixt twelve and one.

“You must not here be seen about,
Take my advice, at once go out ;
Some language I will try to find
To make the gaffer change his mind.”

An appeal I to the master made,
And said, “How much it would degrade
A man who always had enjoyed
The faith of masters when employed.

“The men, within the Castle wall,
Desire him again to call ;
Express his sorrow for the past—
His first misfortune, and the last.

All hoping Mr Cooper will
Towards this man in kindness feel ;
Set him to work among the ranks,
The prayer of all, and hearty thanks."

To this, just twenty signed their names,
And brought me also into fame ;
Succeeded well—the man was hired,
And that was all that could be desired.

The Castle work was pushed along,
The painters were one hundred strong ;
Through Parliament this job was carried—
'Twas just before the Queen was married.

The second week that I was there,
For a great event they did prepare ;
With wages all was discontent,
For an advance each man was bent.

Two deputies were then selected,
And I was one, as I expected ;
To open this important matter,
Requiring some one that could patter.

So to the shop we did repair,
Saw Mr. Cooper sitting there ;
But my companion, faint at heart,
Left me to do the talking part.

We took the master by surprise—
Six pence per day demanded rise ;
He said, "Go back, and work in peace,
And you shall have that much increase."

And pleased I was, you may be sure,
As spokesman for a hundred more ;
That night we did rejoice and sing,
And I, as happy as a King.

Soon after that, with a few more,
Virginia Water did explore ;
The Fishing Temple was in hand,
That our assistance did command.

Of course the master had to choose
A few the pencil brush could use,
As the bulk of work about the building
Was lines in pencil work and gilding.

Eight days a week the time we made,
And every painter full of trade ;
No time for spending, that's the reason
I money saved that summer season.

'Twas finished by the Ascot races,
Most men were off to other places ;
In fact, the lot, but four, were gone,
And I, among that four, was one.

'Twas on the Monday afternoon,
Bob Clay said, " We shall finish soon,
And the landlord at the 'Sun,' I think
Should stand a drop for us to drink."

" And so he will, if you go down,
I'll bet a bob, stand glasses round ;
The Potman said, I heard him say,
To send it here would never pay."

" Did Jemmy Wise say that, my man ?
Then we'll reward him, if we can ;
Bring out his jars you got inside,
On royal waters they shall ride.

Four gallon jars, we counted four,
“Bring out the lot, how many more?
Two smaller ones,—drive in the bungs,
Now one good cheer to clear the lungs.

“Quick execution must be done,
Now, in the water cast in one ;
And if you dare to disobey,
Before the jars go in, you may.”

This was the public servant man
To whom we gave this awful stern command :
He knew to throw them in he must,
Or neck and heels he would go first.

“Now, lads, stand back, we’ll have a shy,
Let each man in his turn let fly ;
And this will teach old Wise* the way
To treat men on some future day.

“One pound per day he’s drawn at least,
All through the job, besides the feast,
Upon this spot, among the many,
And not a man owes him a penny.

* Wise, the landlord.

"Take care, my lads, leave me alone,"
Then at the jar he shied a stone,
Which struck it on the shoulder right,
It gobbled, then sank out of sight.

Talk of mischief giving pleasure,
We exulted in it beyond measure ;
Six jars, in shurds, sunk in the slaughter,
To the bottom of Virginia water.

Such conduct, though indulged in then,
I now, most heartily condemn,
Because it's wicked to annoy,
Or out of malice, to destroy.

CHAPTER X.

WINDSOR TOWN.

ONCE more to London I went back,
I found that work was very slack ;
I said, "The country I would brave,
And the money got would try to save,"

So down to Egham I soon started,
And having money felt light hearted ;
Not far from where I worked before,
I worked a month, or little more.

But here, my readers, understand,
I could not thirty bob command ;
That was my wages long before,
But now reduced to twenty four.

But my expenses not so great,
Fresh country air, both pure and sweet ;
After work went where I like,
Or in the garden smoked my pipe.

Another job I quickly found,
Adjoining Ascot racing ground ;
For as my lodging was close by,
I, to the builder did apply.

Bedborough was the master's name,
A Windsor builder of great fame,
At graining there I tried my skill,
And gained their pleasure and good will.

And after that I settled down,
To constant work in Windsor town ;
And very soon was foreman made,
And much respected in the trade.

I often thought upon the past,
And wondered if my luck would last ;
My London life was not lamented,
In Windsor I was quite contented.

A fair day's work being always done,
My employer's confidence I won ;
Most cheerfully did I work by day,
At night I smoked Dull Care away.

Of company, was always fond,
I own, I sometimes went beyond
The bounds of prudence, in a manner
That I could never save a tanner.

A shopmate said to me one day,
"Your heart seems always light and gay,
And also healthy, young, and strong,
Do you to any club belong?"

"I do not, Tom, nor ever thought,
But what you say is right, I ought ;
Odd Fellows, too, I've understood,
It's rules are just and very good."

"To-morrow I will bring my book
Of rules," said he, "then you can look ;
And if you like them, I suppose
You will allow me to propose.

"And as you are so fond of singing,
It will be some amusement bringing ;
And if you join us, you will find
A source of comfort for the mind.

“No man is certain of a day
How soon he may be called away ;
The brightest spirits sure to fade,
If he has no provision made.

“When not wanted, friends call round,
But when they are, but seldom found ;
And thousands, who will never save,
Too often find a pauper's grave.”

“Tom Ogilvy, you've said enough,
Next Monday you shall have the stuff ;
Propose me in your Lodge, you might,
I'll come the following Monday night.”

A man in health must be a ninny
Ever to begrudge a guinea ;
One penny a day provides the rest,
In sickness, keeps him from distress.

It pays for medicine, too, beside,
For that the doctor will provide,
And when no longer you exist,
Your widow and orphans they assist.

Next day I brought my friend the coin,
The "King of England" Lodge to join,
And said, that very night I went,
'Twas the wisest guinea I ever spent.

It was the eighth day of July,
Well I remember, and for why ;
I signed my name, outside the door,
In the year eighteen and forty four.

I was admitted, and was made,
And now I wish I could persuade,
Or like my shopmate, could advise
All men on earth to do likewise.

And whilst I write these very lines,
With me it's sad and painful times ;
Two years, with gout, and fearful pain,
And past all hopes of work again.

What should I do, where should I be,
Had not my friend persuaded me ;
Without the means which sickness crave,
Perhaps, long ago, laid in my grave.

And now I am severely smitten,
I fear, this book, that I have written,
Unless by Providence all kind,
Its way to Press will never find.

Let me continue, and maintain,
That working men have much to gain ;
And in Oddfellowship will find,
Food for the stomach, and the mind.

It occupies the thoughts by day,
And often it has found the way,
Not only to a night's enjoyment,
But many chances of employment.

You are Mr. Someone, got a home,
Not Mr. No-one, on the roam ;
Your wife and children you behold,
Like a faithful shepherd does his fold.

You know you have provision made,
If death or sickness should invade ;
With a peace of conscience you are blest,
And God will surely find the rest.

And should you earn a little more,
Than some, with heavy families, poor,
Don't be offended, when I say,
Friend, put a bob or two away.

To take a retrospective view
Of Life, and what I have gone through,
The greatest cause, I'm led to think,
Of Poverty, and Crime, is *Drink*.

Thank God, a drunkard I am not,
Nor never could be called a sot ;
But I could sit the evening long,
With good companions and a song.

In Windsor, carried on some time,
Much fun in judge and jury line ;
And some, who heard me, could have sworn,
I for a barrister was born.

Most of our high and learned men,
Were First Life Guardsmen, nine or ten,
Who with civilians of the town
Would mount the lappets, wig, and gown.

'Twas in Committee, we cut out
The parts each man must set about ;
The prosecutions and defence,
Was paid out of the public pence,

The Court, so crowded, none could budge,
The last night that I sat as judge ;
In scarlet robe and powdered wig,
And mounted high, looked stern and big.

Three prisoners now stood at the Bar,
One shorter than the two by far ;
For forgery they were indicted,
Which all their future prospects blighted.

The Prosecution laid it down
In legal terms, strict and profound ;
The crowded audience saw at once,
The prisoners stood but little chance.

Defendant's counsel strained every point,
The Prosecutions to disjoint ;
And prayed the jury hard to save
The prisoners from a felon's grave.

His Lordship's summing up, was brief,
He dwelt upon the points in chief ;
The jury, never once turned round,
But "Guilty !" was the verdict found.

The Judge then put on the black cap,
And silence reigned as there he sat ;
That evening many shed a tear,
His lordship's last few words to hear.

The imitation was so good,
Some really hardly understood,
When they saw one prisoner drop,
Where the man was dead or not.

This sort of thing just suited me,
And hundreds else, by what I see ;
'Twas calculated to amuse,
And useful knowledge to diffuse.

As true as ever you are born,
I took a list one Sunday morn,
Of nineteen men to ask for leave,
Which the Captain kindly did receive.

He then was standing on the lawn,
And said, "Good morning, Brother Scown,
What ever favour you may want,
If possible, I'm sure to grant."

"For nineteen men you ask for leave,
Or do my eyesight me deceive?
Fourteen of whom belong to me,
And all good conduct men, I see.

"A judge and jury supper, eh!
I'll hear what Colonel Reid will say;
You speak so well of them, no doubt,
I'll get the Colonel to let them out.

This Judge and Jury I have heard,
From our best men, is much preferred;
As an evening pastime it supplies
Instructive pleasures, which is wise."

"Pray, Captain,* let me, on the spot,
Thank you most kindly for the lot,
And say in truth, by what I've seen,
Such men's a honour to the Queen."

* Captain Bulkly.

And the nineteen men got leave that night,
Enjoyed themselves, but none were tight ;
If happy feelings were annoyed,
'Twas through the knife and fork employed.

Lawyers and doctors were invited,
And those who went were much delighted ;
The night was spent as all desired—
All happy met, and so retired.

CHAPTER XI.

A CHANGE.

THE time arrived, I had to part
With the greatest pleasure of my heart ;
Lodge meetings, happy, had to leave,
For that alone, I seemed to grieve.

My duties forced me to retire
From Windsor into Oxfordshire ;
For near two years was stationed there—
Of men and matter had the care.

My nephew Ben, for whom I sent,
From Teignmouth, with his uncle went,
To Glympton Park, where he was made
A tradesman in the painting trade.

Such is life, we never know
For certain where we are to go,
Or when or where the chance of life
May lead a man to get his wife.

It's strange, but so it was with Ben,
With his uncle used to ramble when,
In Wootton village, found out how
To love, got married, and lives there now.

Although from Windsor was away,
I sometimes felt a little gay,
At harvest home, or village fair,
Your humble servant he was there.

Just now occurred a family jar,
Which did my Windsor prospects mar ;
Its name fell much in my regard,
I from it drew my travelling card.

What little money I had got,
Just at that time I valued not ;
To speculate was no disgrace,
So I backed the winner in a race.

So good the hit that I had made,
I cared not for the painting trade,
At any rate, as things looked pleasant,
I'd do without it for the present.

In me there was no want of pluck,
I persevered,—again had luck ;
A friend of mine gave me a chance
In public business to advance.

Six hundred pounds I did invest,
In public business thought it best !
That's what I had at my command,
And dropped it very near the Strand.

In eighteen fifty—that's the date,
That threw a damper on my fate ;
I thought the money paid away,
The Exhibition would repay.

Such hopes were doomed with me to fail,
My heavy losses did bewail ;
Yet still had hopes once more to gain
Some other place by work again.

The Exhibition did for me
A little good, which you shall see ;
Some old acquaintance from the West,
Had come to see me, and to rest.

One morning there walked in a lot,
It's true I had a dinner hot?
Perhaps, for my family, quite enough,
But not my visitors to stuff.

Six men and women, all at once—
I took dimensions of their scone ;
Trade's looking up, I do believe,
But still no order did they give.

The leading man spoke out at last,
And said, " Well George, we're here at last,
If this is Exhibition pleasure,
I'd rather be at home at leisure.

We have walked miles here to get,
And Lord, I am in such a sweat ;
A d—— good mind I had to say,
I widden move from here to-day."

Now, one among the half-a-dozen,
Told me he was my second cousin,
Then shaking hands, and how de ye do's,
From Devon I had lots of news,

Another said, "George don't ye know,
When young, we used to play at taw?
And once, for laughing in the church,
How Cocky Stevens did us birch?

"But Lord, aint you got nation big,
And so be I, as fat as a pig;
My mother says there is no knowing
What I shall be when I stop growing."

"Well, surely you are big enough,
If made of proper sort of stuff;
You had better go inside, I think—
What shall I bring you in to drink?"

"Well, that's what I was going to say,
So fill a quart, and lead the way;
We have so much for you enquired,
To speak the truth, I'm nearly tired."

"Here, damn your chatter," cried his mate,
"You're fit for nought but drink and prate;
Just shew us where to get a seat,
For we want something now to eat."

“ Lord, wont ye let a feller speak—
Your stomach must be very weak ;
For twadden long ago, my boy,
We had a penny saveloy.”

“ Well, never mind, I’m hungry now,
So don’t be kicking up a row ;
The women here aint had a smell,
Of course they want some grub as well.

“ I wonder whether the landlord’s got
Some dinner he can sell us hot ?
If so, we needn’t further go—
Let’s ax im whether he has or no.”

I said, “ I had not cooked to-day,
My potman, he would shew the way,
Just round the corner, in the Strand,
Where hot meat was at their command.”

“ Well, what d’ye say, be us to go?
Just say, now, where we be or no ?
Or else the scran you got wi you,
With a loaf and bit o’ cheese will do.”

“Why, to be sure it will,” said they,
“Then in the evening perhaps, we may,
If we aint parted from each other,
Have tea and supper both together.”

My cousin said, upon the quiet,
“Give me the cup, I’ll go and try it.”
He little thought I overheard
The conversation, or the word.

I said, “I’ll fill and bring it in—
Would your friends like a drop o’ gin?
If so, with pleasure, my dear friend,
A pint among you I will send.”

“Why, George, I didden come for that,
I seem to want wi’ you to chat;
And aint he coming in a bit—
Again on earth we may not meet?

“As soon as my wife do come down,
I to the parlour will come round;
And if it is within my power,
I’ll come and chat with you an hour.”

I left him—was not long away,
He, to my barmaid, had a say ;
Said, “ Blessy Miss, why your employer
I knew when he was just no higher—

“ Than this here counter, you may say,—
When boys together, used to play ;
Sometimes, falled out, then at it went—
I’ve whacked him to his heart’s content.

“ But he’s got up so, don’t ye see ?
That’s where he got the best of me ;
His mother lives next door to mine—
As good a soul as you could find.

“ The poor old soul, she cried like rain,
When she was told where I was gwain,
And said, ‘ If she had wings, would fly
To her son George, and with him die.

“ ‘ Do call and give his mother’s love,
Tell him, she prays to God above,
Once more, if so he can contrive,
To see his mother while alive.’

“Don’t tell him what I’ve said to you,
Or else at me he may look blue ;
I may in him, perhaps, find a friend,
If I come again, as I intend.”

As I had promised, so I went,
And quite an hour I with them spent ;
We talked of present days and past,
And this grand subject was the last.

One of the men, being rather tight,
Said, “S’posing we stopt here to-night,
What should ye charge us, Georgee, eh ?
Don’t say no more than we can pay.

“I want a single-bedded room,
To have a snooze this arternoon ;
And my old woman’s short o’ breath,
And walking far, licks her to death.

Three beds in all, will be required—
Two single bedded rooms desired,
One for me, and then another
For them two ladies sleep together.”

“ Well, one-and-sixpence each to-night,
But stop the week, I’ll make it light ;
With every comfort, I am willing,
The six for six and thirty shillings.

“ You wont do better, I am sure,
But mind, to make it quite secure,
I don’t pretend to keep a bed,
If, when engaged, it is not paid.”

That seemed to jar upon the ear,
Of course, they wanted no more beer ;
They said, “ Just let the question be,
Another hour, then we shall see.”

The one, who had the most control,
Proposed the lot should have a stroll ;
And as they walked outside the door,
Thinks I, I shall see you no more.

But Cousin Jack came in next day,
And said, “ I’m vexed we went away ;
I tried to keep ’em here, you know,
But, Bandy Legs had all the jaw.

“He told ’em, when you was gone out,
‘’Twas best to go and look about ;
To pay beforehand, too,’ said he,
‘Be damned if that will do for me.’”

I said, “John, had you come alone,
You might have made my house your home ;
But, for six, at my expense to gorge,
Would never do for Cousin George.”

Says Jack, “We down to Chelsea went,
And twice as much as that we spent ;
At a coffee shop they did us fleece—
For beds, charged half-a-crown a peice.

“And Lord, of all the places, too,
I never should have thought it true ;
But ’pon my soul, the sheets and rugs
Were swarming with infernal bugs.

“Of all the sights you ever seed
A worse, I’m sure, you hadn’t need ;
Their flesh is blistered up so bad,
As though they all the measles had.

“And the cove, that with us went to school,
Said, ‘Perhaps Georgee thought I was a fool,
He’d let you see he wasn’t yet,
And yesterday he shant forget.”

“I don’t care where he does or no,
And when you see him, tell him so ;
If friends half prices cannot pay,
From me they better keep away.

“So now we’ll let that matter drop,
And you are welcome here to stop ;
But John, I must not mince the matter,
Don’t, with my barmaid, too much chatter.

“Perhaps you and I can take a walk,
Then we can have a family talk ;
But who is rich, or who is poor,
In public speak of it no more.

“I look like doing pretty well,
But by appearance, none can tell ;
The class of trade, not worth a rap,
Three parts of it is done on strap.

“On printers mostly it depends,
They chatter, like the best of friends,
Until they deep in debt are got,
And then they slope you of the lot.

“One office owes me sixty pounds,
And I would treat the rascals round,
This very night, if they were willing,
For every pound, give me a shilling.

“And I should also like to stretch
The neck of every swindling wretch
That in newspapers advertise
A daily list of blackest lies,

“Such as public houses doing trade,
Where speedy fortunes must be made ;
And Brokers recommend your going
In what they know is certain ruin.

“It’s true some houses sell a lot,
The sort of trade they tell you not ;
The Broker’s mealy mouth deceives,
And leaves you in a den of thieves.”

I will not on this subject dwell,
But plainly will my readers tell ;
From public life, not four in twenty,
But what retire with pockets empty.

Now, after this, if you insist,
And will in public life enlist ;
To find out what a house is worth,
This is the wisest plan on earth :

Ask Superintendent of Police,
Before the Broker does you fleece,
The character and sort of trade,
If a decent living can be made.

A pleasure he would feel in giving
The truth, and tell you if a living
By honesty could there be got,
If he says no, then take it not.

I know if I had acted wise,
I should have done as I advise ;
But blundered on, as people do,
Brought my six hundred down to two.

With that, and resolutions made
To recommence my painting trade ;
I, of my business, made the best,
And came to Oxford to invest.

For grainers, there was nothing grand,
Hence I a living could command ;
That's why, by me, it was selected,
And I succeeded as expected.

But not exact in private life,
It wasn't suiting to my wife ;
" All right," says I, " So let it be,
About a Public I will see."

In public business, here, shall thrive,
For I can keep the folks alive ;
By day shall work with spirits bright,
And 'muse my customers at night.

CHAPTER XII.

"BELL AND CROWN."

At an Oxford Brewery of renown,
I bargained for the "Bell and Crown,"
In Magdalen Street—a perfect barn,
Was doing neither good nor harm.

And quite unsightly to behold,
But soon it sported paint and gold ;
Its pewter counter, tops, and brass,
And splendid chandeliers of glass.

Double set of spirit fountains,
With polished brass, and pewter mountings ;
Beer engine new, and measures bright,
It looked like sunshine day and night.

The news through Oxford quickly flew,
In Magdalen Street was something new ;
So much the natives did admire,
They flocked, like going to a fire.

On the evening of each Saturday,
All men, who speak the truth, will say,
No man like Scown, did ever try
Such entertainment to supply.

His room, near sixty feet in length,
As bright as day, with gas-light strength ;
Pianoforte, and harp, or flute,
Much pleasure gave, beyond dispute.

No obscene song would I allow,
And if attempted, tell them how
Of such I always disapproved,
And those, persisting, were removed.

Employers met, and men employed,
And praised an evening so enjoyed ;
'Twas suiting father, or his son,
And general approbation won.

I never would my best beer dash,
Or pay myself by selling wash ;
But all was served, and known to be
As pure as it was sent to me.

The reader thinks I should have made
A fortune by this roaring trade ;
But then, my outlays were immense—
I never studied the expense.

It quite a revolution made
In Oxford 'mong the Public trade ;
Most Bars, that in dark places lay,
Were brought to face the light of day.

Some to despair was nearly driven,
I such a change to things had given ;
All my transactions, on the square,
To say it wasn't, no one dare.

Police and Magistrates would say
I was as open as the day ;
And if to injure, either tried,
By me was openly defied.

I strict enquiry would invite,
They always found me in the right ;
In wrong I never was detected,
That's why I am by them respected.

For near twelve years was doing well,
'Till sickness and misfortune fell ;
Three different places, mischief brewing,
Which did my future prospects ruin.

The first, my landlord's failing health,
A man of magnitude and wealth ;
Whose good opinions I enjoyed,
At which some persons felt annoyed.

One of whom sprang from the South,
With a very soft and mealy mouth,
Who paid a trifle in the pound,
Soon after was in Oxford found.

And soon a situation got,
But how, to me, it matters not ;
He soon got mounted into power,
Which made all merry faces sour.

All labouring men, upon the ground,
Were strictly by his orders bound ;
Among the rest, one very big—
Thou shalt not keep a fowl or pig.

The worthy master, on the Hill,
Towards the grave drew nearer still ;
To save his life, all means were tried,
But all was hopeless, then he died.

No sooner was he gone to rest,
Than many tenants were oppressed ;
And by the powers, that some asserted,
Their master's wishes were perverted.

And I was one, I'll tell you how,
As far as these lines will allow ;
So on its truths, I beg reliance,
To say it's not, I bid defiance.

Three months before this, I received
A three months' notice—I must leave
Because some Nobs, to cut a swell,
Was going to build a large Hotel.

The Lawyer told me not to grieve
About my notice here to leave,
For Mr. Morrell said so kind,
“ Be sure, for Scown, a good house find.”

On that I rested quite content,
To enquire further never went ;
But a week or two before I left,
Poor Morrell was of life bereft.

Immediately I had this thought,
I shant get treated as I ought ;
By letter then I soon inquired
For information I required.

My letter said, " I want to know
When from the ' Bell and Crown ' I go ?
In town or country have you got
A house for me, or have you not ?

" And also please to me reply,
Do these Shareholders mean to buy
My goods and fixtures on the ground ?
I think in justice they are bound."

In answer, this I did receive,
" By Law, Directors don't believe ;
That fixtures they are bound to take,
Or any proposition make.

Nor have we got a house for you,"
Then what on earth was I to do?
I saw quite plain my fate was sealed,
Which, after usage, soon revealed.

That letter I have by me still,
And if required, shew it will ;
Directors they can certify,
That written answer was a lie.

The custom is throughout the nation,
Take public house by valuation ;
That's how I took the " Bell and Crown,"
And so ought those who pulled it down.

Had right and justice taken place,
But such, I swear, was not the case ;
By an honest valuation made,
Was worth four hundred pounds in trade.

On the premises, I had laid out
Three hundred pounds, or thereabout,
Before the new adopted dodge,
Of three months' notice to dislodge.

My brewery friends, so very knowing,
Pressed me for balance that was owing
Upon a little bill of sale,
But too ashamed to tell the tale.

This was at the eleventh hour,
They knew I was within their power,
So put in force that vile oppression,
Which put the "Randolph" in possession.

Not a single penny did they pay,
My goods were sold and took away,
For scarce one fifth of what they cost,
By that injustice I was lost.

The average sum I paid for beer,
Was near five hundred pounds a year ;
Twelve years I kept it, and at last,
Like a dog, into the streets was cast.

I never had provision made
For dirty treatment from the trade ;
My best friend, Morrell, good and kind,
Knew not the sample left behind.

The wretched treatment I received,
Not one in forty have believed ;
But those who wish to know the truth,
Must come to me for ample proof.

I prayed to God, that I might live,
And see the day that I might give
An honest statement of my wrongs,
And grateful thanks, where they belong.

I live ! and facts I here relate,
I fully can substantiate ;
And the authors of my troubles past,
Are drifted off the firm at last.

For a time it was the public talk,
How sudden some had got to walk ;
And certain too, no tenant cried,
For either one who lived or died.

But neither one can now restore
What I was wronged of years before ;
And some time longer I must live,
To take that pill,—forget, forgive.

Though "Such is Life," I name my book,
Do not suppose I overlook,
While I such faults in others find
That to my own I can be blind.

In many things I may be wrong,
And as my time may not be long,
My creditors, so very few,
I wish to pay just what is due.

It matters not what they may think,
Or what they say with pen and ink ;
If there's an error on my part,
'Tis in the head and not the heart.

If any man should feel annoyed,
That I the printer have employed,
The truths I've written sure to stand—
More I can furnish on demand.

But truth to some may not be pleasant,
So I will write no more at present ;
My balance sheet of life, I trust
Will not be far from being just.

In Oxford I am bound to stay,
And while I live, must have a say,
On what concerns me, and of those
Who on the helpless do impose.

Nor shall I righteous men abuse,
Just certain parties to amuse ;
But what is past, has done for some,
Perhaps what may caution those to come.

Position lost, I could not fight,
From want of means, to claim my right ;
With shattered constitution tried,
By work to keep my wants supplied.

The principles that I profess,
Is, live and let live—nothing less ;
And when of means I had possession,
I acted up to my profession.

To despondency did not give away,
Though what I owed, I could not pay ;
Some London Merchant thought I could,
And make me pay, he said he would.

So a copy of a writ he sent,
Of course I soon to prison went ;
My schedule filed while I was there ;
And Bankruptcy made matters square.

No man on earth did me oppose,
Nor any mortal once suppose
That I a payment had delayed,
Had I the money to have payed.

My feelings when within the walls,
As friends would make their daily calls ;
Saying, " George be cheerful, if you can,
We know you are an honest man."

I could not see in justice why,
I should to such a course apply ;
Had I been treated in an honest way,
My debts, but small, could easy pay.

And then, three hundred pounds to spare,
Of that, my friends are well aware ;
That's why I always do feel grieved
At the gross injustice I received.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "RANDOLPH."

IN Magdalen Street I sometimes stand,
To view that building, mighty grand,
And think how little did they care
Who put that splendid building there.

What others suffered by the speck,
Whose homes were made a perfect wreck,
Thus making good the saying, "That might
Too often overcomes the right."

A splendid building, too, I grant,
But such as Oxford seldom want ;
Brought some to grief, as well it might,
And many say, it serves 'em right.

No doubt they thought their fortunes made,
Should they secure the cream of trade ;
But soon found out, to their surprise,
All fish don't in fresh water rise.

And those that do, sometimes the bait,
If it's not thrown divinely straight,
However anxious be the wish,
Will seldom land the primest fish.

And all the bait that they can find,
Will never change the public mind ;
Because 'tis plain they meant to carve
To feed themselves, if others starve.

Who would suppose, retired swells
Would think of building large hotels ?
To take the tradesman's only chance,
By his exertions to advance.

But such is life, and will be so,
Whether the thing is right or no ;
Unless such crafty men are made
To write their names on place of trade.

We then should know, perhaps, how to meet
With whom in trade we do compete ;
And many, perhaps, it may amuse,
To know whose tools it is they use.

When it was built, the men employed,
Felt at the finish much annoyed ;
They thought Directors ought to meet,
And to the workmen give a treat.

But they did nothing of the kind,
One man said, " D—— it, never mind ;
Shareholders, perhaps, are short of pence—
Let's have it at our own expense."

So each man for his supper paid,
At Mrs. Vize's, " Druid's Head ;"
They sang and drank to some about,
But Randolph Owners were left out.

Your humble servant took the chair,
By the wish of every workman there,
All honours given where 'twas due,
Which were confined to very few.

The general feeling that prevailed,
By no usurper was assailed ;
They had no toast to drink, at least,
To any founders of the feast.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

A FEW words now I beg to say
On landlords of the present day ;
Particularly in Oxford City,
Because there's many I can pity.

It's those who rush in public trade,
Before they have inquiry made,
As to who, and how, and what
Sort of treatment others got.

It perhaps may put them on their guard,
Then they wont find it quite so hard,
Nor carelessly lay money out
On houses where they have a doubt

How long their tenancy may last,
Because experience of the past
Has proved, that one complaint alone,
May turn them out of house and home.

For men of character and respect,
That take their houses do expect,
That brewers, or their agents may
Consider them as good as they.

When Brewers cease to have regard
For their tenants, let them close their yard,
And in so doing, perhaps, may save
Some tenants from an early grave.

In Exeter they brew their own,
And better beer is nowhere known ;
Subjected to no brewers' fetter,
A penny cheaper, twopence better.

I sometimes grieve, I do, indeed,
When families do so cross the breed
As to lessen much the righteous fame
Belonging to a family name.

No longer will I tax my brains
With brewers, barrels, hops, or grains,
But tell my readers plainly that
Makes no one but the Brewer fat.

And as I'm drawing to a close,
I must a little say to those
Who read my history of the past,
How such are reckoned up at last.

Why, just as I have said before,
If you are old and very poor,
Some, when you die, will say so cool,
"There ends another clever fool."

Could the dead man hear those words when said,
Would from his coffin poke his head,
And say, "Don't trouble, friend, if true,
It's more than they will say of you."

So let them say when I am dead,
To speak the truth I'm not afraid ;
One half the living must confess
They practice not what they profess.

An emblem hangs against the wall,
That memories of the past recall ;
And one more lasting than all others,
What I was taught to think of Brothers.

A volume also on the shelf,
Once so connected with myself ;
To disregard I never can,
My promise made to God and man.

But understand me when I say,
Was not supposed to give away
What means I wisely might possess,
To every one who pleads distress.

Nor is it honest to expect
That those who suffer from neglect,
Because they bear the name of Brothers,
A burden are to be on others.

But when we rightly understand
That sore affliction stays the hand
That ever worked with honest pride,
Assistance should not be denied.

No matter where a Brother's made,
If he can prove, and you persuade ;
He is a Brother, free and accepted,
In want, should never be neglected.

But such is life, bear well in mind,
With few exceptions, you will find,
If you are poor and getting old,
You're like fat mutton when it's cold.

Work hard a lifetime, just the same,
No fear of your attaining fame,
For those who mostly hold the reins,
Throw by the tools, and use their brains.

And such is life, say what you will,
Once lose position, soon you feel
The warmth of friendship pass away,
Like sunshine with declining day.

Therefore, I think the wisest plan,
Is making money while you can ;
Those who make most, without a doubt,
Are such as hard work, do without.

But what is written, few believe,
That as they give, they shall receive ;
And where the poor are not indebted,
The rich die always unregretted.

The only friends I can command,
Are those, Odd Fellows can demand ;
But, short of that, if you are poor,
Your Brothers think of you no more.

In my afflictions, I have thought
On days gone by, perhaps, when I ought
Some careless pounds to put away,
For what they call a rainy day.

But, sometimes now, I feel inclined,
However strong a man in mind
May be to follow out a plan
Against his nature, never can.

He's like a plant within a pot
That through the summer flowers not ;
And yet, close by, another tree,
Is full of blossom, as can be.

Or like some birds, with pure delight,
Will sweetly sing from morn 'till night ;
Some other birds will screech, or squall,
And some wont try to sing at all.

By that same rule, I do believe,
A merry heart will seldom grieve ;
And a lib'ral soul will seldom try ;
By meanness, to put money by.

A miser makes a God of wealth,
Begrudges natural means of health :
Drags out a useless life, to save,
Goes unlamented to his grave.

Extremes, in anything, are sad,
It's a disease drives many mad ;
Such are not fit to hold the reins,
Who have a rumbling set of brains.

Perhaps that was part of my complaint,
When first from Exeter I went ;
And if I had the means, would try
To see it once more ere I die.

My poor old mother used to say,
Thee'st find it out some future day,
But like the rest, you wont be taught,
But have experience dearly bought.

I have bought all, and dearly paid,
And the receipts before you laid ;
And now my duty try to do,
By giving some advice to you,

Which shall be plain and wholesome truth :
To those in blooming health and youth,
Who nightly will their health abuse,
Just other people to amuse ;

Whose witty brains and charming tongues,
Jolly hearts and healthy lungs,
Unite too readily to pave
The pathway to an early grave.

Avoid companions, who will be,
Night after night upon the spree ;
A healthy life, and long to live,
By such means, God will never give.

My dear young reader, do reflect,
If you should wish, or perhaps expect,
To thrive, you must this counsel keep,
“That what you sow, you’re sure to reap.”

Commence at once, make up your mind,
Not fifty vague excuses find ;
Some little cash do put away,
As salve, for sores, some future day.

By no means live a miser's life—
Enjoy life's comforts with your wife ;
Do not stint yourselves in food,
All things in season, must be good.

If single, wisely do prepare
For wedded life, and do your share ;
Its welfare, and its peace enjoy,
Which dissipation does destroy.

Your darling children, in their youth,
Instruct in friendship, love, and truth ;
Obedience claim, without the rod,
They then will love you, and their God.

Encourage them in youthful plays,
Amusement give in many ways ;
And as they grow, some lessons give ;
By useful labour, how to live.

You will be happy in your mind,
If they should live, and you should find
Those blessed morals, you had planted,
Were yielding fruit when it was wanted.

'Twill comfort you in every way,
Perhaps when your hair, with age is grey,
To know by them, your duty done,
And all their pure affection won.

And when arrives the final day,
That we from earth must pass away,
May we with peace of mind be blest,
And safely find eternal rest.

FINIS.





