

THE
GRASSHOPPER'S FALL.

BY
LOUISA H. BUDGEN.



THE LITTLE GRASSHOPPER.

LONDON:
DARTON AND CLARK, HOLBORN-HILL.



Drawer 13

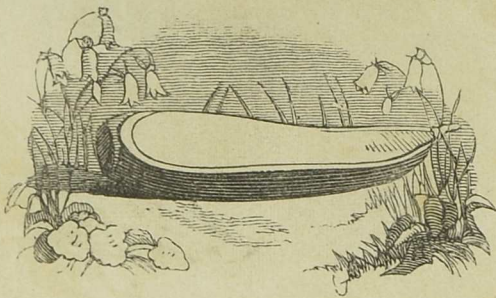
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C.1840

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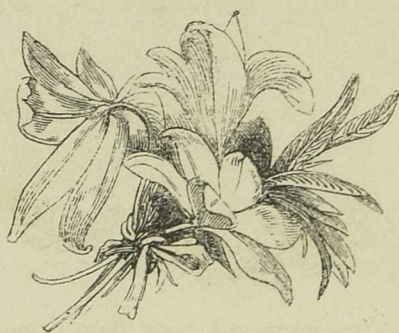


HIC JACET GRYLUS!

LONDON:
DARTON AND CLARK, HOLBORN-HILL.

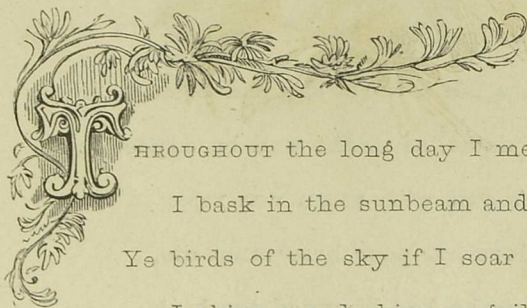


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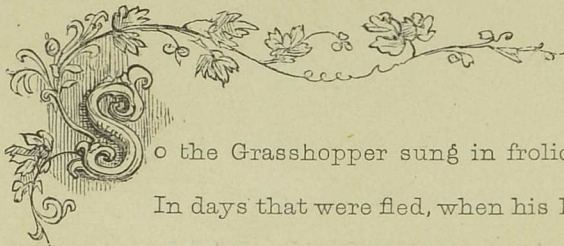
THE GRASSHOPPER'S SONG



THROUGHOUT the long day I merrily play,
I bask in the sunbeam and drink the dew,
Ye birds of the sky if I soar not so high,
I chirrup and chirp as gaily as you.

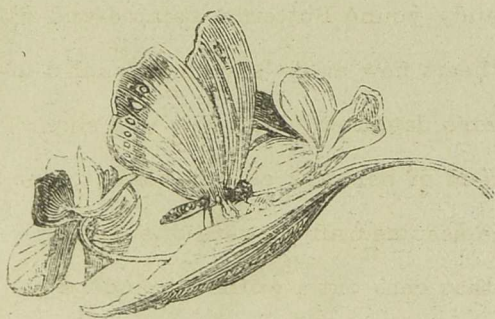
" O'er the blades of grass I boundingly pass,
From morning till evening I dance and sing,
I envy not I one vain painted fly
That fits buzzing past me on gossamer wing."





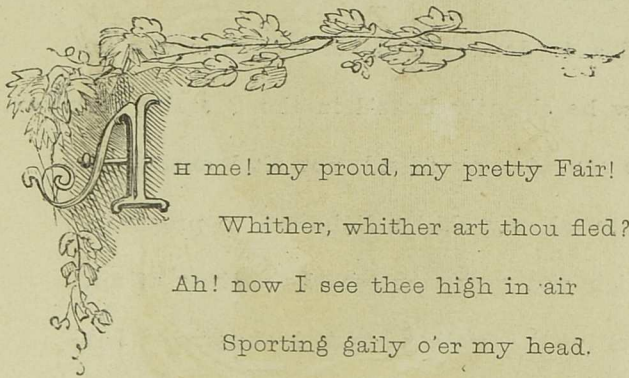
So the Grasshopper sung in frolicksome glee
In days that were fled, when his heart was yet free:
But his note once so shrill had grown faint and low,
And his carol was changed to a dirge of woe,
Since a gaudy young Butterfly, painted and vain,
With his heart flew away, and then laugh'd at his pain.
An Emperor's daughter, a Princess was she,
And as proud of her rank as a Princess might be;
In fact she assumed all the airs of a Queen,
Forgetful that once but a worm she had been.
By this haughty dame, as might well be expected,
The Grasshopper's suit with scorn was rejected.
And now all for love our poor hero must die,
Because in his love he had bounded too high.







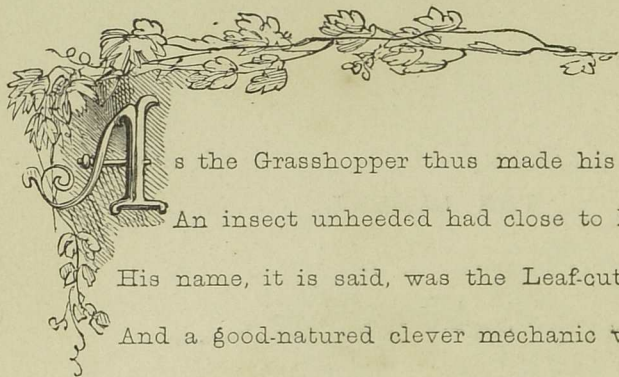
THE LAMENT.

A decorative floral ornament featuring a large, ornate initial 'A' intertwined with a leafy vine and small flowers.

Ah me! my proud, my pretty Fair!
Whither, whither art thou fled?
Ah! now I see thee high in air
Sporting gaily o'er my head.

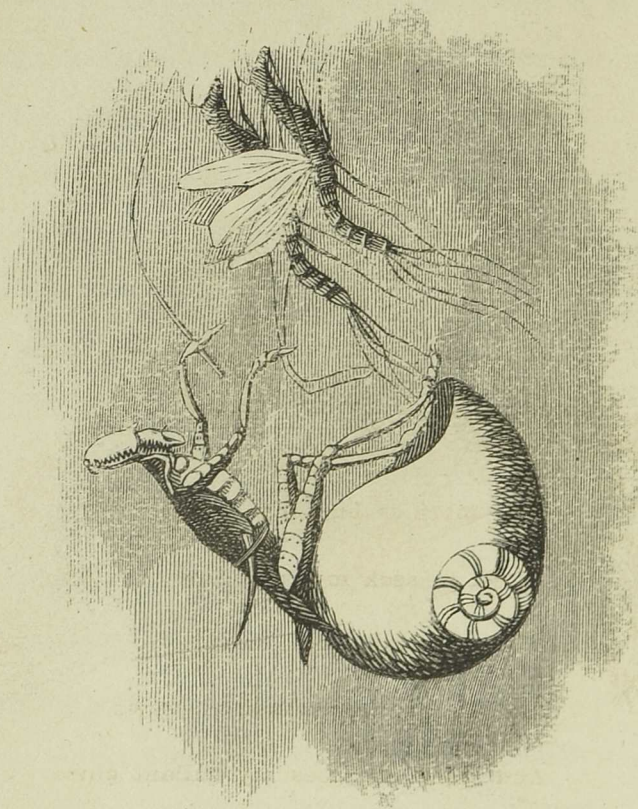
"Had I wings would serve to bear me,
To thy father's court I'd go:
He perchance might deign to hear me,
And thou perhaps would'st not say no."

"But for me who scarce can spring
Over yonder hedge of brier,
How vain to chase thee, cruel thing!
As there thou mountest high and higher."

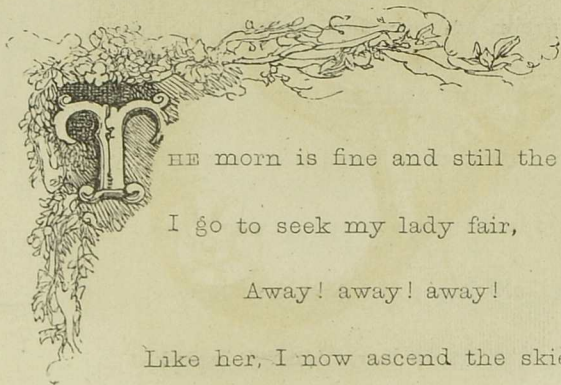


As the Grasshopper thus made his sorrowful moan
An insect unheeded had close to him flown;
His name, it is said, was the Leaf-cutter Bee,
And a good-natured clever mechanic was he.
Now he cheerily buzz'd in the Grasshopper's ear,
"Take courage, my friend, nor sit loitering here!
I'll exert all my skill a light car to prepare,
In which you may traverse the regions of air,
And follow the flight of your high-minded fair."
He straight went to work, and before set of sun
The chariot and harness were both of them done.
A snail-shell of yellow, all pick'd out with white,
He polish'd and wax'd till resplendently bright
With the soft downy leaf of the mullein he lined it,
That the Grasshopper's bride more easy might find it.
The harness of nettles' strong fibres he wrought,
And then for a swift pair of coursers he sought;
For these he selected two Ichneumon Flies,
And here was an equipage fit for the skies.





THE DEPARTURE.



THE morn is fine and still the air,

I go to seek my lady fair,

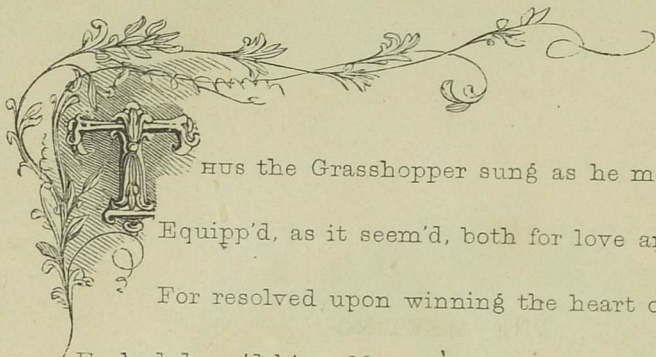
Away! away! away!

Like her, I now ascend the skies,

And when she sees my gallant guise,

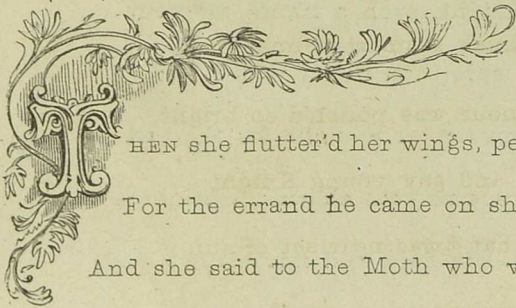
So gay! so gay! so gay!

She'll never have heart to say me nay!"



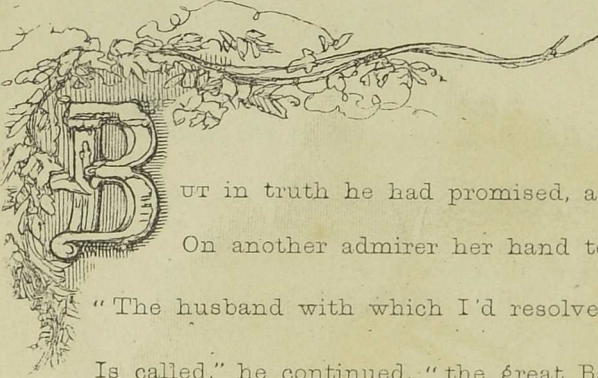
THUS the Grasshopper sung as he mounted his car,
Equipp'd, as it seem'd, both for love and for war;
For resolved upon winning the heart of the fair,
He had dress'd himself out a' la mode militaire.
A leaf of the sword-grass served well for a blade,
While the barley-corn husk a smart helmet made,
And then his green armour was polish'd so bright,
He look'd like a gallant and gay young Knight.
The way was so long, that 'twas near set of sun
Ere our hero's adventurous journey was done.
After wandering all day from flower to flower,
The Princess had gone to her evening bower;
She peep'd through the leaves of her lattice so high,
Nor knew her scorn'd lover until he drew nigh;
But when she did know him she took one glance more,
For she thought he had ne'er look'd so handsome before.

THE MEETING



WHEN she flutter'd her wings, perhaps her heart flutter'd too,
For the errand he came on she very well knew,
And she said to the Moth who was waiting upon her,
"He's not quite so bad after all, on my honour!"

The Emperor gave him a flattering reception,
Which said nothing, as princes oft stoop to deception;
And when thus encouraged his suit he preferr'd,
The monarch, with grave protestations, averr'd
That nothing on earth would afford him more pleasure
Than to give him his daughter, his greatest treasure.

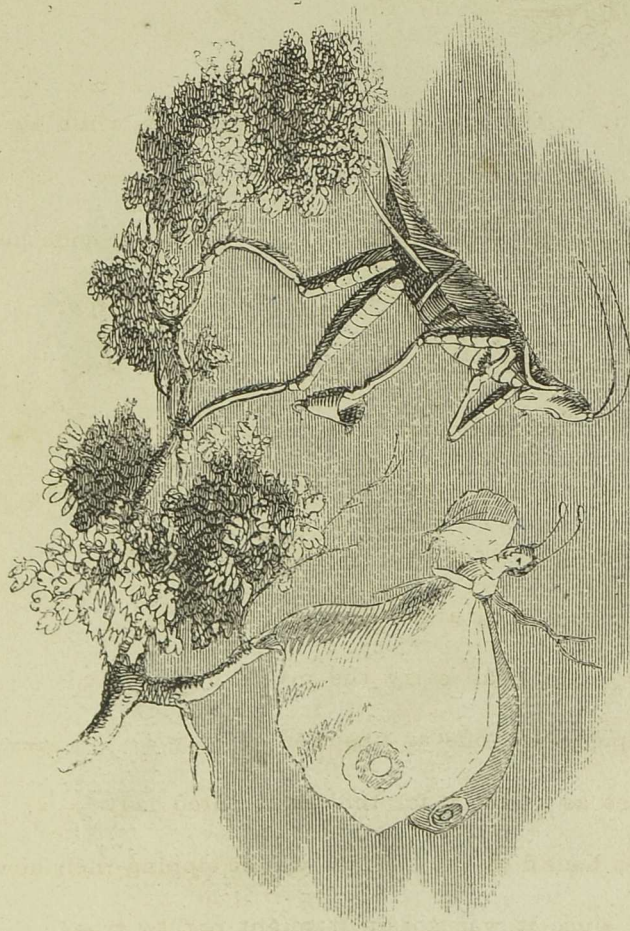


ut in truth he had promised, a long while ago,
On another admirer her hand to bestow.

"The husband with which I'd resolved to provide her
Is called," he continued, "the great Baron Spider:

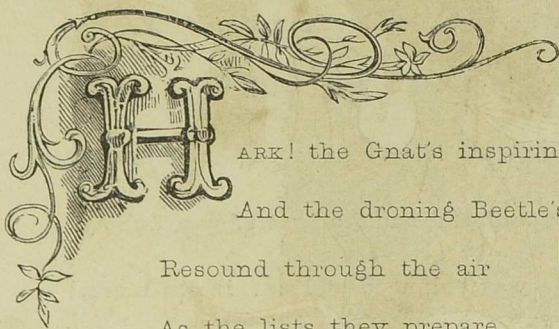
But I've taken, Sir Knight, such a liking for you,
That to further your suit thus much will I do;
If you choose with your rival to fight for the prize,
And by valour win grace in your charmer's bright eyes
I promise you both a fair field and fair play,
And the victor shall carry the princess away."

Baron Spider was one as unsuited as may be
To choose as a match for the gay painted lady;
But 'twas buzz'd by the Gadflies, whilst sipping their dew,
(Though since it was gossip it might not be true,)
That from every gay suitor this Spider would win her,
Because heir to the wealth of his aunt Money Spinner.



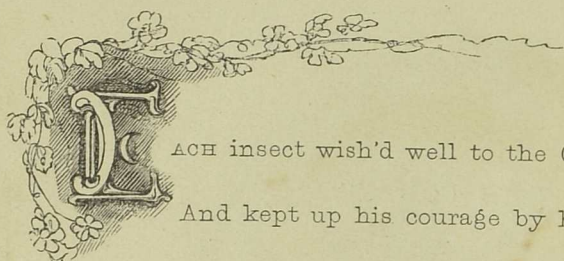


THE COMBAT.



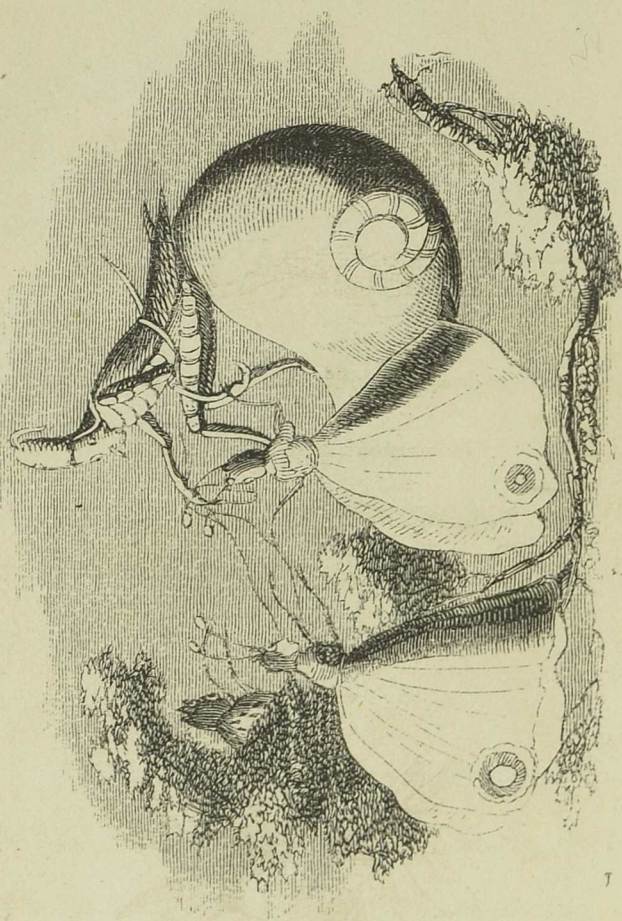
ARK! the Gnat's inspiring hum,
And the droning Beetle's drum,
Resound through the air
As the lists they prepare,
And the Combatants come!



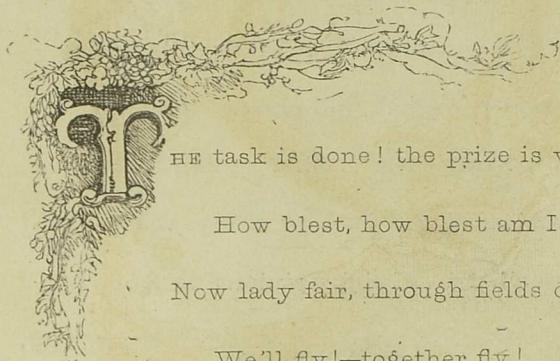


Each insect wish'd well to the Grasshopper's cause,
And kept up his courage by humming applause;
But the Spider he look'd so black and so grim,
Not one creature bestow'd a good wish upon him.
The Green Champion's form was more active and light,
And his armour conferr'd some advantage in fight;
Yet this vantage was balanced at least, if not more,
By the Spider's eight eyes, some behind, some before:
But a murderer he, with a base coward's heart,
And he play'd on that day a right cowardly part.
The encounter was bloodless, and short was the strife,
The Grasshopper vanquish'd, and gave him his life:
On the victor, the Emperor his daughter bestow'd,
And they started forthwith for the bridegroom's abode.





THE REWARD.

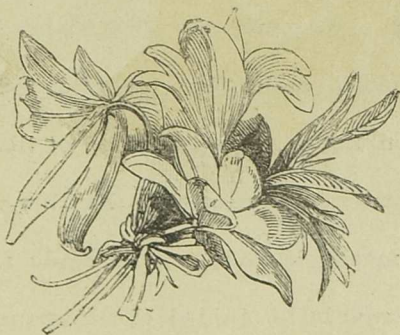


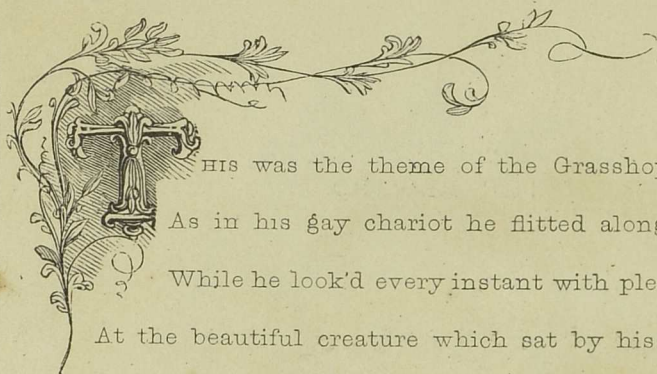
THE task is done! the prize is won!

How blest, how blest am I!

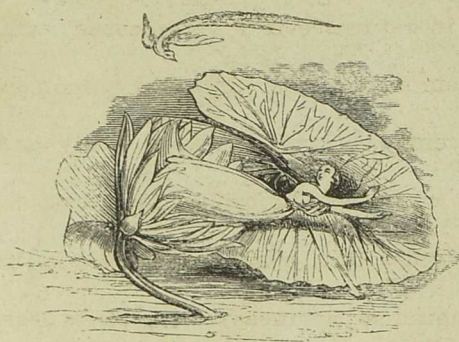
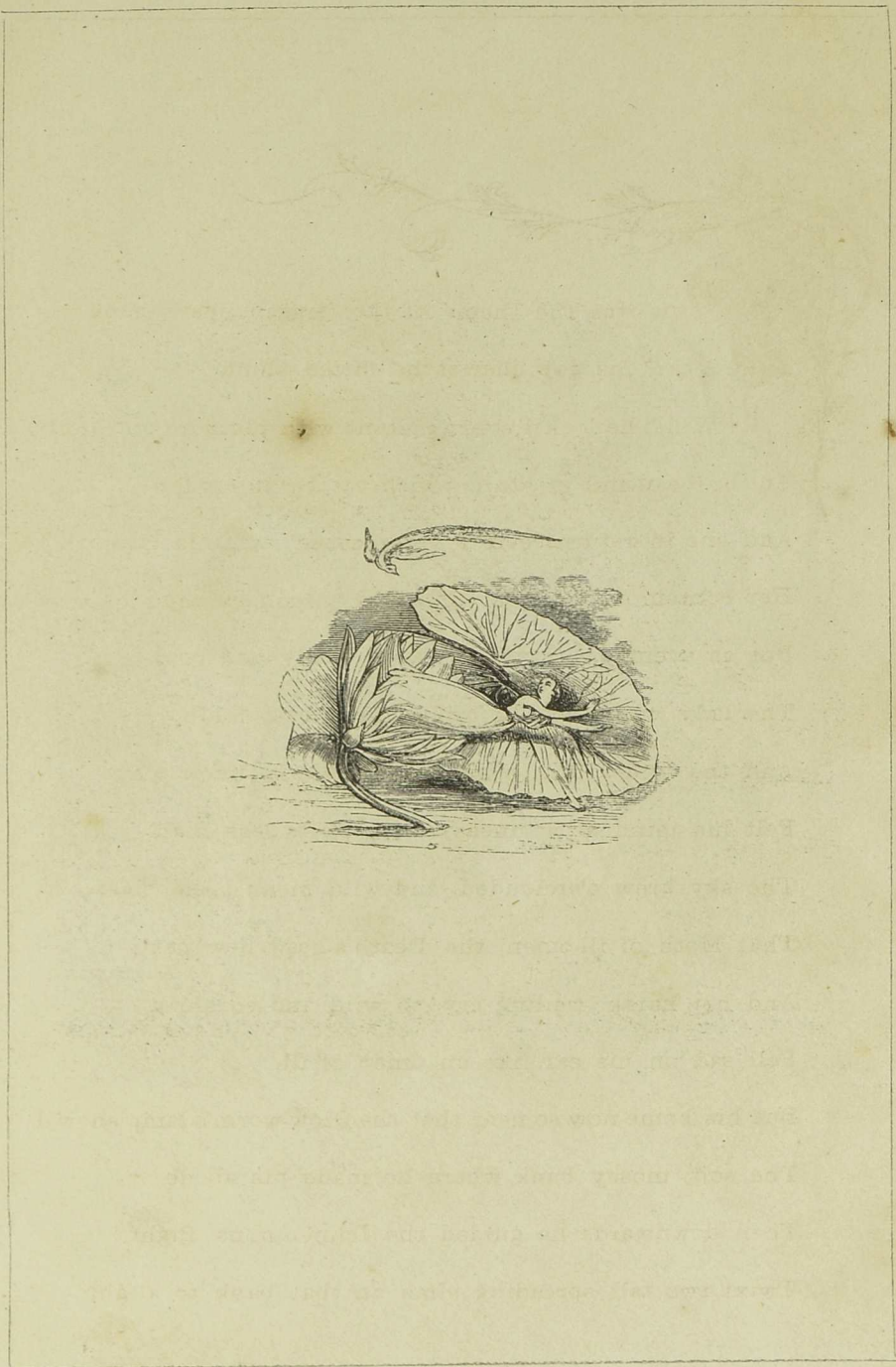
Now lady fair, through fields of air

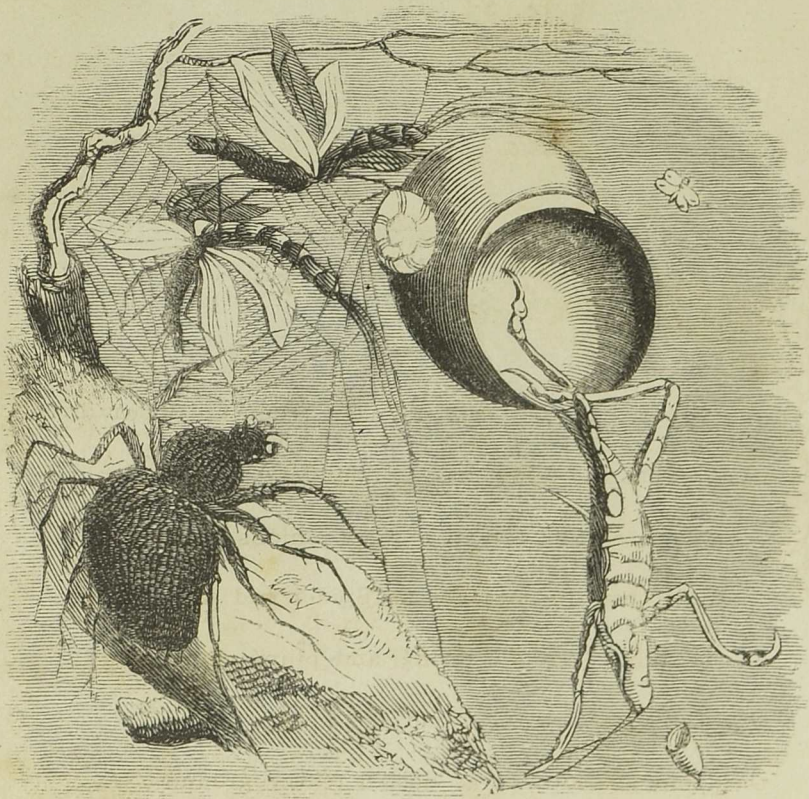
We'll fly!—together fly!



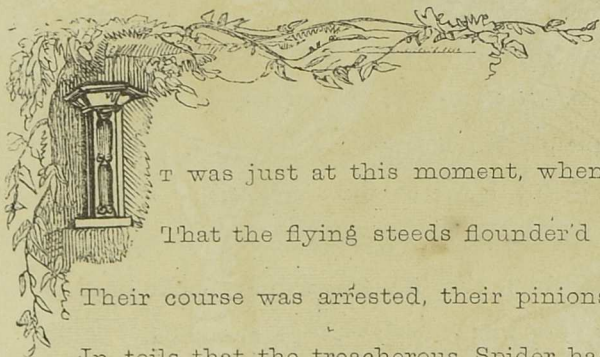


HIS was the theme of the Grasshopper's song,
As in his gay chariot he flitted along,
While he look'd every instant with pleasure and pride
At the beautiful creature which sat by his side;
And she in return seem'd well-pleased with his lay,
Her contempt, it appear'd, having vanish'd away;
But as evening advanced it grew chilly and cold,
The lady was glad her bright pinions to fold;
And the bridegroom himself, he scarcely knew why,
Felt his mind grow uneasy, his spirits less high.
The sky grew o'erclouded, and wild moan'd the blast,
That Moth of ill-omen, the Death's-head flew past,
And her harsh, wailing cry, so wild and so shrill,
Fell sad on his ear like an omen of ill.
But his home now so near that the Glow-worm's lamp show'd
The soft, mossy bank where he made his abode;
Then downwards he guided the Ichneumons' flight,
Twixt two tall spreading elms on that bank to alight;





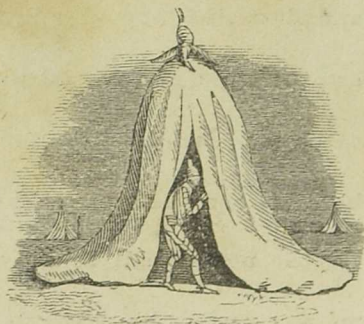
THE FALL.



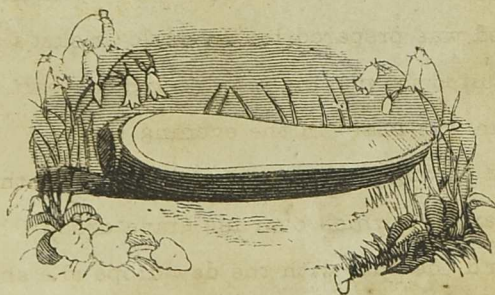
It was just at this moment, when all appear'd well,
That the flying steeds flounder'd and suddenly fell.
Their course was arrested, their pinions were caught
In toils that the treacherous Spider had wrought.
As struggling, and fluttering, and plunging they lay,
The car was o'erturned, and ah! woeful to say!
Our bold charioteer was dash'd to the ground
On the spot where his song had oft echo'd around,
But where his blythe notes shall be waken'd no more,
For his last song was ended, his gambols were o'er.

For the Lady we blush, but truth bids us to own
That on danger approaching, away she had flown,
And left the green knight all deserted to die

Who for her sake alone had aspired too high.
Though forsaken by her, there was many a friend
To grieve and lament o'er the Grasshopper's end.
In an acorn-shell coffin his relics they laid,
When wrapp'd in a shroud that the Silk-worm had made;
His last bed was prepared by the Mole-Cricket's art,
One well suited for playing a grave-digger's part,
His requiem was heard in the evening breeze,
As it sigh'd through the grass, or moan'd thro' the trees;
And the Hare-bell which over his grave droop'd her head,
Often water'd the spot with the dew-drops she shed.



HIC JACET GRYLUS



COLLACHRYMATE, O PAPILIONES!

