

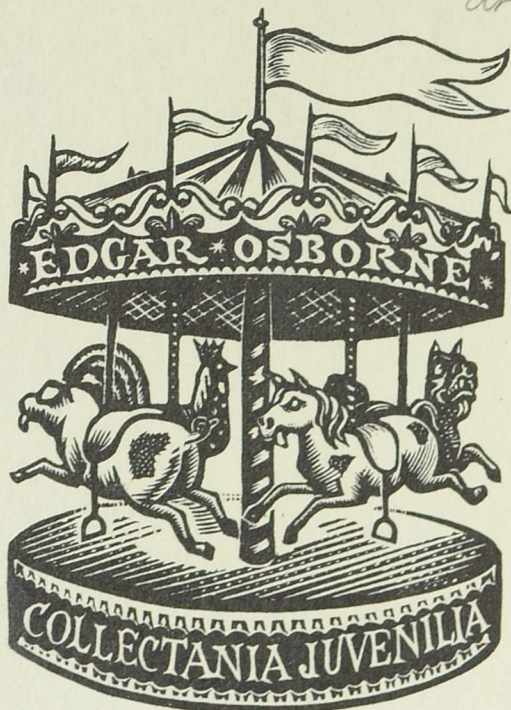
THE MICE,

AND THEIR

PIC NIC

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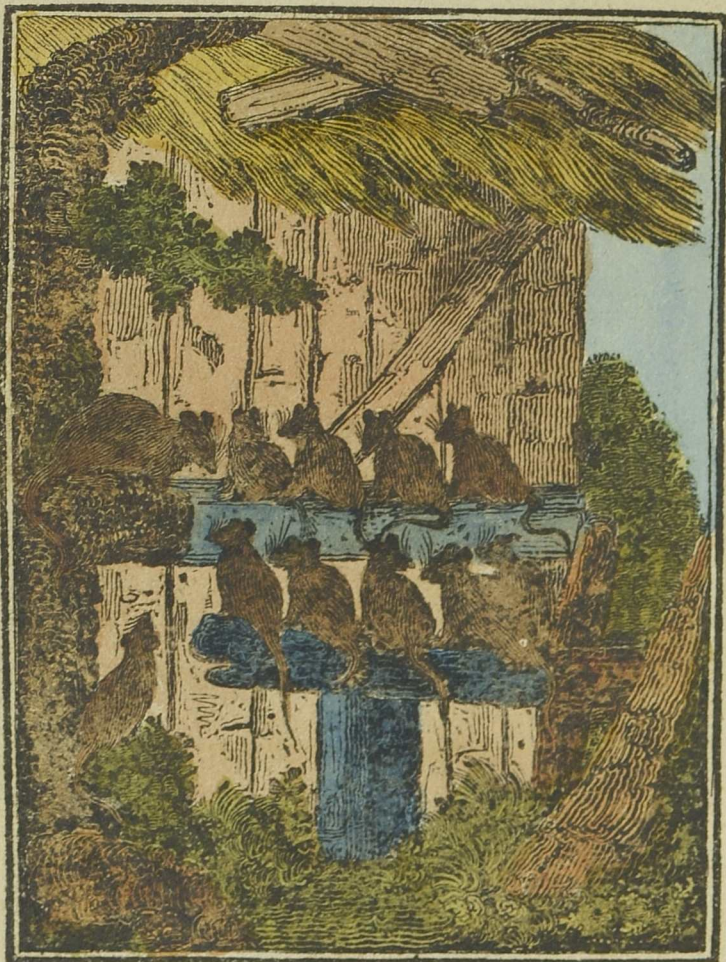
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FRONTISPIECE.



Now how to reach town, was the matter in question,
But a plan was soon form'd at the *town* beau's suggestion.

THE MICE,

AND THEIR

PIC NIC.

A GOOD MORAL TALE,

&c.

BY A LOOKING-GLASS MAKER.

London:

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BY A LOOKING-GLASS MIRROR.

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1813.

CONTENT.



“ When harvest, the mansion had fill'd
with her stores,”

See page 7.

The Mice,

AND

THEIR PICNIC.

ETC.

CONTENT.

A MOUSE, of a free, open, generous nature,
By his species esteem'd a right worthy good creature;
In a spacious old barn had resided some years;
Unknown to the world, its delights, and its fears.

When harvest, the mansion had fill'd with her stores,
 To his friends, 'twas his custom to open his doors;
 And in old English style (for he lik'd not new ways),
 He would welcome, and feast them, for several days.
 No high season'd dishes, their appetites cloy'd,
 But plain, wholesome wheat, which they freely enjoy'd.
 Thus year after year, did this gay circle meet,
 And the season was ever consider'd a treat.

A FASHIONABLE VISITOR.

But at length, unexpected, the worst of all foes,
 Madam *Luxury*, suddenly popp'd in her nose;
 There happened at *one* of these feasts to appear
 With an old Mouse, who liv'd at a mill very near,
 A simpering young beau, just arriv'd from the town,
 One who *came* for the *purpose* of quizzing the clown;

His friend (simple mouse) ne'er suspected the truth,
 Introduc'd him to all, as a travelling youth,
 Who had quitted close London, for pure country air,
 One who wish'd in their rural amusements to share.
 The host, with his usual good nature and ease,
 Made him welcome, and hop'd that their efforts to please,
 Would induce his *politeness*, to pass slightly over,
 Those *defects* which a *Mouse* of the town, *must* discover.

HIGH BREEDING.

With the air of a courtier, the other replied,
 " There could ne'er be a want where his *Host* should pre-
 side ;
 The rustic assembly were charm'd with his grace,
 And guess'd *London* to be a most elegant place.

But if this short answer, had tickled their mind,
 How they stared, when in *general* converse he join'd;
 When he spoke of the various *fetes* he had given,
 That a *Mouse* ne'er arriv'd till the clock struck eleven.
 Which sentence bent many bright eyes to the floor,
 For the clock of the *village* had just then struck *four*.
 Then he bragg'd of cold soups, and of sweetmeats so nice,
 Of *Pic Nics* where met, the most elegant mice,
 And that *he* (Mr. Sleek), was deputed by all,
 To manage the *costume* of supper and ball.
 How, at one of their galas, the fall of a screen,
 Had made my Lord Short-tail jump into whip'd cream,
 And that once, Lady Nimble, by vent'ring too far,
 To taste some rare pickles, fell into the jar,
 But that cook, the next day, (being tipsy no doubt)
 Threw the jar from the shelf, so my Lady jump'd out;
 Then again, young Miss Sweetlips, so fond of plumb-cake,
 Mr. Whisker was nearly destroy'd for her sake,

While securing a piece that remain'd on a plate,
 A knife accidentally fell on his pate,
 'Twas with much pain and head-ache he quitted the shelf,
 And from that time had never been rightly himself.

THE EFFECTS OF FASHION.

Thus the fop rattled on with his fashions and wit,
 But the *wise* of the party were not to be bit;
 They *acknowledg'd* the viands he mention'd were good:
 Yet the perils encounter'd in gaining such food,
 Did away all the pleasure a feast could create,
 While each mouthful they took, might, alas! prove a bait
 Such reas'ning evinc'd they were mice of good sense,
 Though the *young ones* believ'd it was all a pretence:

For surely, thought they, “such sweet scenes of delight,
 Would more than make up for all terrors and fright,”
 And they, who so late were content with their fare,
 Now languish’d in Luxuries’ scenes to take share.

THE EPICURE MOUSE.

When the hour had arriv’d for their simple repast,
 Such a look of contempt as the visitor cast,
 When he saw them press forward to nibble the corn,
 While he bless’d his good stars *he* in London was born.
 He requested his host just to give him *one* grain,
 To *attempt* eating *more*, would, he knew, prove but *vain*!
 Nay, still more to humble the poor rustics’ pride,
 He ask’d, which was eaten, the *in*, or *outside*?
 The barn mouse replied, “that which suited his taste;”
 “And with *plenty* before him, he need not heed waste.”

Disconcerted, the fop took a bite at one end,
 “ An *effort* he made, from respect to his friend ;”
 But his evident scorn had affected the party,
 And some scarce eat a mouthful, who us'd to eat hearty.

AN INVITATION.

At parting, in terms most affectedly nice,
 He invited the present assembly of mice,
 To partake of a *Pic Nic*, at Christmas, in town ;
 When he hop'd neither wit, taste, or fashion could frown.
 The gay and the giddy accepted with pleasure,
 What the *wise* felt assur'd they'd repent of at leisure ;
 And the host, as he bade them adieu, dropp'd a tear,
 As he thought how their number'd be lessen'd next year.

A CONSULTATION.

Now how to reach town, was the matter in question,
 But a plan was soon form'd at the *town* beau's suggestion—
 He advis'd them directly to change their abode,
 For that of my Lord's, at the turn of the road,
 Whose mansion in town was next door to his own,
 And th' family at Christmas was sure to return.
 Now, if they look'd sharp, when the servants were busy
 In packing the wine, it was certainly easy
 To creep 'mong the straw, where, as snug as might be,
 They would travel in safety, besides *carriage free*.
 He confess'd the conveyance to *him* was not new,
 That he meant, in *returning*, the same to pursue;
 The danger was trifling, th' pleasure *immense*,
 And he *fancy'd* few present lack'd *shrewdness or sense*.

HARMONY RESTORED.



“ Soon finish'd his song, with a loud
CLOSING note.”

See page 23.



"Soon finish'd his song with a loud
"closing note."

See pag. 22.

To flatt'ry like this, so *politely* convey'd,
 Not a look of distrust, or a word could be said;—
 All agreed it was easy, and long'd for the trial,
 Or at least, if they wish'd it, none gave a denial.

A JOURNEY.

Thus folly secur'd twenty victims or more,
 But, in reaching my Lord's, the advent'ers lost *four*;
 And when *packing* time came, to their mortification,
 Not more than thirteen gain'd a *good* situation.
 One was crush'd by the weight of the cook's clumsy *foot*,
 Another was kill'd by the heel of John's *Boot*;
 While pretty Miss Softdown, so merry and fat,
 Was discover'd, and eat, by a cruel tom cat.

In the bustle, *three* others were *left* safe behind,
 Who liv'd to thank fortune for being thus kind.
 Of the trav'lers, but *ten* reach'd the place so desir'd,
 For *three*, on the road, of tight packing expir'd;
 Few tears were bestow'd on their untimely doom,
 The survivors thought only of what was to come.

A SEASON IN LONDON.

When the gala night came, they had made in the wall,
 A hole, large enough, to admit one and all;
 No carriage was wanting, by means of this labour
 They could walk from their dwelling, to that of their neigh-
 bour.

What he'd said of *late* hours, they kept in their mind,
 And resolv'd to appear, in this instance, refin'd.

Till the clock had struck *twelve*, most impatient they
waited,

Then made their appearance, with hearts too elated
To heed the sly jest, and the half suppress'd smile,
Which the *town* mice betray'd at their country style:
What was meant by a *Pic Nic*, they could not but wonder,
Yet ventur'd no question for fear of a blunder;
When they *did* understand, how they open'd their eyes,
For the *guests* to bring food, was indeed a surprize,
“ Well, surely,” thought some, our old country ways
Are more gen'rous by far, for with *us*, the *host* pays.
While here, those *invited* subscribe to the treat,
And *visit* their neighbour to eat their *own* meat.

THE SCRAMBLE.

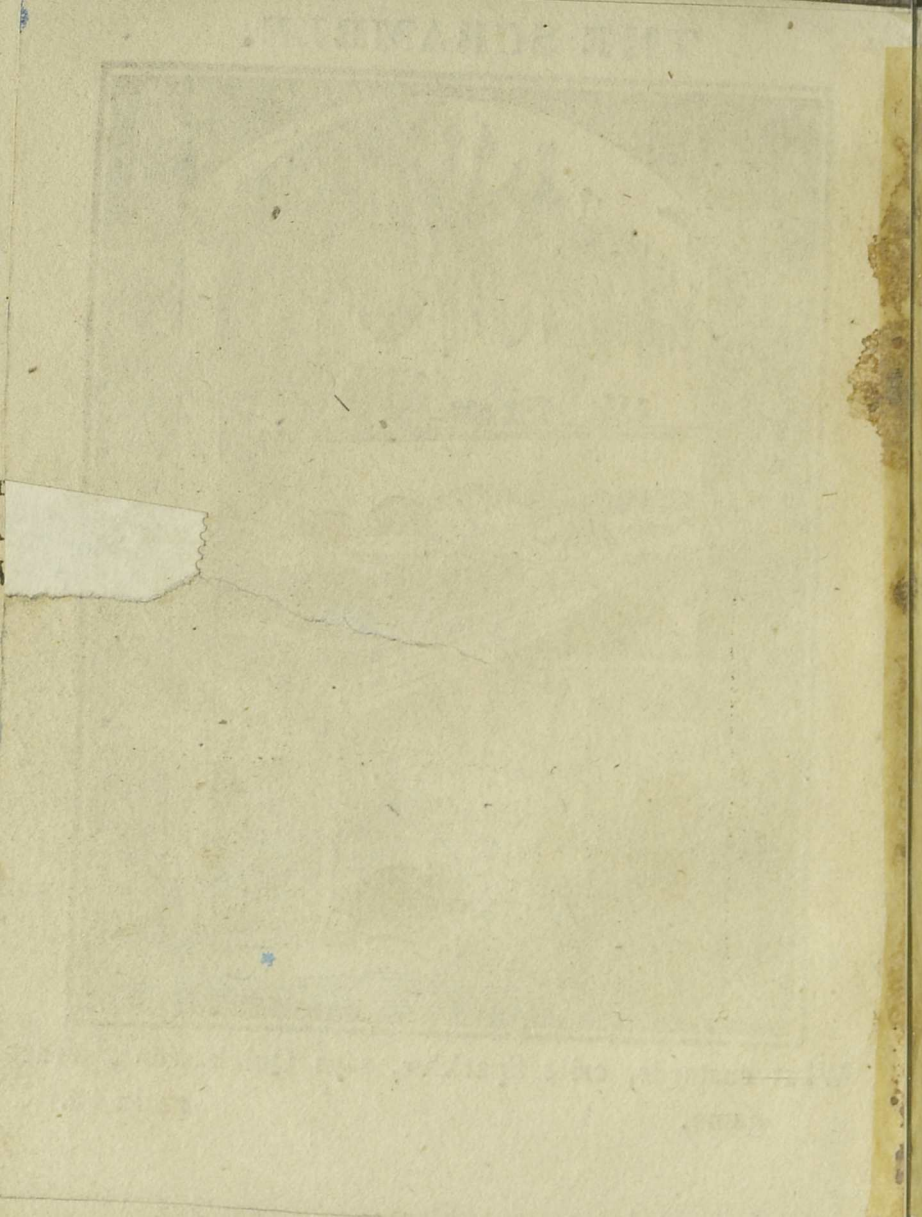
Such victuals, for certain, they never had seen,
 And, in spite of good-breeding, they long'd to begin;
 What custards, cries Sparkler, says Quick-scent, what
 game,
 I protest I could eat all that hare, but for shame;
 Says Lickerish, there's something I see looks divine;
 Hold your tongue, says another, they'll take us for swine.
 And to tell you the truth, though I like what I see,
 I have just heard a tale, throws a damp upon me:
 Count Squeaky, who sits by yon fine Cheshire cheese,
 Was observing, "he ne'er should forget the hard squeeze,
 " That he and his comrades sustain'd in the fright
 " The butler's *cat* gave them, the *last* pic nic night.

THE SCRAMBLE.



What custards, cries Sparkler, says Quick-scent, what game.

PAGE 16.



- “ The conflict was dreadful, a vast number fell,
 “ And how *he* escap'd, he can now scarcely tell.”
 What think you, my friends, of the Count's awful story?
 My *fears* on the subject, are great I assure you,
 “ Leave croaking,” cries Sparkler, “ we came to be
 treated,
 “ If to doubt you give way, all our pleasure's defeated.”

A HERO.

Captain Frisk, to the joy of the fair, now appear'd,
 And when chided for being so late, he declar'd,
 “ He had spent half the ev'ning in *drilling* his corps;”
 ’Twas his duty for certain, but oh! such a bore.

“ Yet soldiers, dear ladies, must keep to their post.”
 Major Dareall here stopp'd Captain Frisk in his boast.
 ‘Pshaw! what should *you* know of real warfare and strife,
 You, who ne'er went *three* cupboards from *home* in your
 life.

Through the *key-hole*, perhaps have survey'd our great foe,
 But when did you venture your person to show?
 Did you e'er pass a night in a trap, without fear?
 Or taste a nice dish when the *coast* was not *clear*?
 Nay, remember when Short-tail fell into the cream,
 You took to your heels, and jump'd over a beam,
 Though your dear Lady Soft-paw was fainting away,
 And your poor crippled mother implor'd you to stay.
 If such sugared beau's were our heroes, I fear
 The cats might eat thousands, each day in the year.

ETIQUETTE.

The captain pretended to take this in jest,
But his secret vexation was poorly suppress'd ;
The *country* mice thought he look'd foolish enough,
While the *dashers* declar'd 'twas ridiculous stuff,
To hear two *such* heroes on courage debate,
When the tables were spread and the hour so late.
Mr. Sleek call'd for silence, and then, with town grace,
Arrang'd all his guests in due order and place.
With affected grimace, which he meant should confuse,
He requested to know, " what Miss Roundhead would
 chuse ?"
Who, quite unacquainted with half that she saw,
Made choice of cold bacon, while Lady Soft-paw

Loudly tittering whispered, “ the mere country elf
“ Prefers eating *hog*, because most like herself.”
The Sparkler partook of a white fricasee,
While Lickerish tasted of *all*, with high glee.
Young Nibble requested a small chicken bone,
And Grabble, soon made a nice cheese-cake his own.
In short, all were pleas’d with their share of the treat,
And determin’d for this time, enough they would eat.
The *Pic Nics* themselves seem’d to know what was nice.
Nay, among them, ’tis said, were some *epicure* mice.

AN ALARM.

No matter, their failings, their pleasure was short,
 For just in the midst of their revel and sport,
 Mr. Sleek cock'd his ears, from his mouth dropp'd a bone,
 And declar'd, in a low, squeaking, terrified tone---

“ He heard, at that moment, the heart-rending sound,

“ Which the enemy makes, with his nose to the ground.”

“ All nonsense,” cries Dareall, “ nay Sleek, I protest

“ You're a coward, like Frisk, and would frighten the

“ rest;

“ Do but look, how your poor country friends you have

“ scar'd,”

“ For myself, let the enemy come, I'm prepar'd.”

“ Ah, major, for shame! pray this vaunting give o’er,
 “ Hush, hush, sure I heard a key turn in the door,
 “ Any how, it is best we should be on our guard;
 “ Dear Squeaky, I pray do not nibble so hard;
 “ And, Frisk, I entreat, leave Miss Bounce to herself,
 “ Your romping and giggling quite shakes the whole shelf
 “ I am sorry my Dorsetshire friends to alarm,
 “ But a little fore-thought may secure us from harm.”

HARMONY RESTORED.

No answer was made by his Dorsetshire friends,
 Who, like the old saying, “ were at their wits ends.”
 They attempted to speak, but the effort was vain,
 How they sigh’d to be safe in the old barn again;

Mr. Sleek now endeavour'd to throw off his fears,
 But he could not help now and then stretching his ears,
 which Dareall *perceiving*, declar'd right or wrong,
 They should not depart without the Count's song.
 This, at *first*, was declined, but, with pressing, consented,
 And sure, never song was more sorely repented,
 For scarce had he warbled a stanza or two,
 When sudden the cupboard door wide open flew,
 And in rush'd a fierce-looking, large tabby cat
 Who advanc'd, with huge strides, where the frighten'd
 Count sat,
 And placing a paw on his musical throat,
 Soon finish'd his song, with a loud *closing* note.

FURTHER DISASTERS.

Mr. Sleek, and Beau Frisk, her prey next became,
 But Dareall resolv'd not to suffer so tame ;
 A long, *bold* resistance, he made with the foe :
 And which, though it ended in *his* overthrow,
 Sav'd the lives of a few, who escap'd in mean while,
 Running o'er one another, regardless of style.
 Of those who fell victims, we grieve to relate,
 All but *four* of our Dorsetshire friends shar'd his fate ;
 And they, quite exhausted, retir'd through the hole,
 Where they listen'd with fears which they could not control,
 When their ears were assail'd with their friends dying
 groans,
 And the *noise* which the enemy made with their bones.

A JOURNEY.



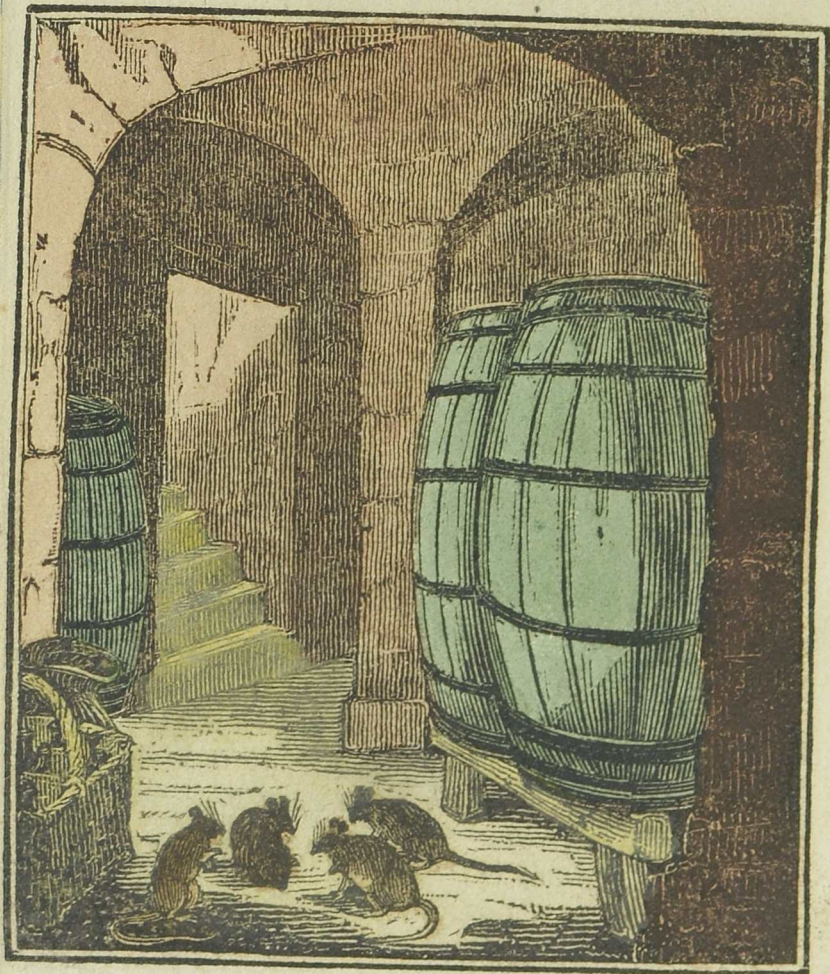
“ One was crush'd by the weight of the
Cook's clumsy foot.”

See page 18.



One was created by the weight of the
Cook's chimney that,

A GENERAL MUSTER.



“ But, on turning his back, they perceived
he'd no TAIL.”

See page 25.

A GENERAL MUSTER.

Though smarting with wounds, near an hour pass'd o'er,
 Ere they knew what they'd lost, or had yet to endure;
 Young Nibble, alas! in his quaking and fear,
 Was unconscious that he was depriv'd of an ear.
 One of Swift-foot's fore legs was broke short at the knee,
 While with but *one* eye could poor Lickerish see;
 Friend Grabble, at first, declar'd he'd no ail,
 But, on turning his back, they perceiv'd he'd no *tail*.
 Yet main'd as they were, how rejoic'd did they feel,
 That *their* wond'rous escape had lessen'd *tab's* meal.
 Many month's had elaps'd ere their health was restor'd,
 But of lameness and blindness they could not be curd.

How tedious and long did the winter appear,
And how fervent their joy when the summer drew near,
They resolv'd to return in the *way* that they came,
And though fickle fortune should not prove the same,
It were better to die on the road going down,
Than remain in the murderous regions of town.

THE RETURN.

But, alas! in mean time how distressing their case,
For they dar'd not peep out from their lone dwelling place;
And cook kept the cupboard, in general so bare,
That their skeleton forms soon betray'd their hard fare.
Yet such hardships seem'd trifles compared to the past,
They car'd not for ought so they reach'd *home* at last.

Fate prov'd, in this instance, uncommonly kind,
 For each of the four got a *place* to their mind;
 And in less than a week, from the day they left town,
 At my Lord's country-seat they in safety sat down;
 But in this fine mansion they staid not a night,
 Wealth and splendour appear'd in a different light.
 To partake of gay revels they own'd no desire,
 And most sorely repented they ever look'd higher.

AN OLD FRIEND.

In the dusk of the ev'ning they crept through the lane,
 Poor Nibble and Swift-foot, with sorrow and pain;
 When they reach'd the old barn where they once were so
 gay,
 The latter, with pleasure, quite fainted away;

The *barn* mouse ran out when he heard their sad cries,
 But no words can express his dismay and surprise,
 When he saw in the cripples, who lay at his door,
 The *remains* of a party, at least twenty-four.

“ And where are the rest of our friends ? ” he exclaimed,
 All dead (answer'd Sparkler), except us four maim'd,
 And that we have return'd, even lame as you see,
 Is a blessing I never expected would be.

A VISIT OF CONDOLENCE.

The news was soon spread of the travellers return,
 All flock'd to friend Wheat-ears, their adventures to learn;
 But how many sad hearts did their story send home,
 And how many were *check'd* in their *wishes* to roam;

For although too gen'rous their comrades to jeer,
 The blind eye, limping leg, short tail, and *one* ear
 By no means their *outward* appearance improv'd,
 Nay, were proofs of *disgrace* to the friends whom they
 lov'd.

“ What is past,” said the barn mouse, “ we cannot recal,
 “ But, alas! from the first, I foresaw your downfall;
 “ And wonder'd, in spite of Sleek's silly parade,
 “ That *mice*, of your genius, should heed what *he* said;
 “ However he's gone, so no more of his folly,
 “ The result has, to us, prov'd indeed melancholy.
 “ I'm assur'd as for *man*, so for *mice*, there's a station,
 “ That seldom is chang'd but for mortification.
 “ And if we but look round the world, we shall see,
 “ No species, from evils entirely free,
 “ For happiness not to the rich is confin'd,
 “ But chiefly depends on the *worth* of the mind;
 “ No matter how poor if the *heart* is content,
 “ Let *us* live to be better--- but ne'er to repent.”

The company listen'd with reverence profound,
While their whiskers aubmissively bent to the ground ;
And then, with a joy they ne'er strove to conceal,
Partook of a wholesome and undisturb'd meal.

Finis.

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