

THE MILLER;

OR,

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?



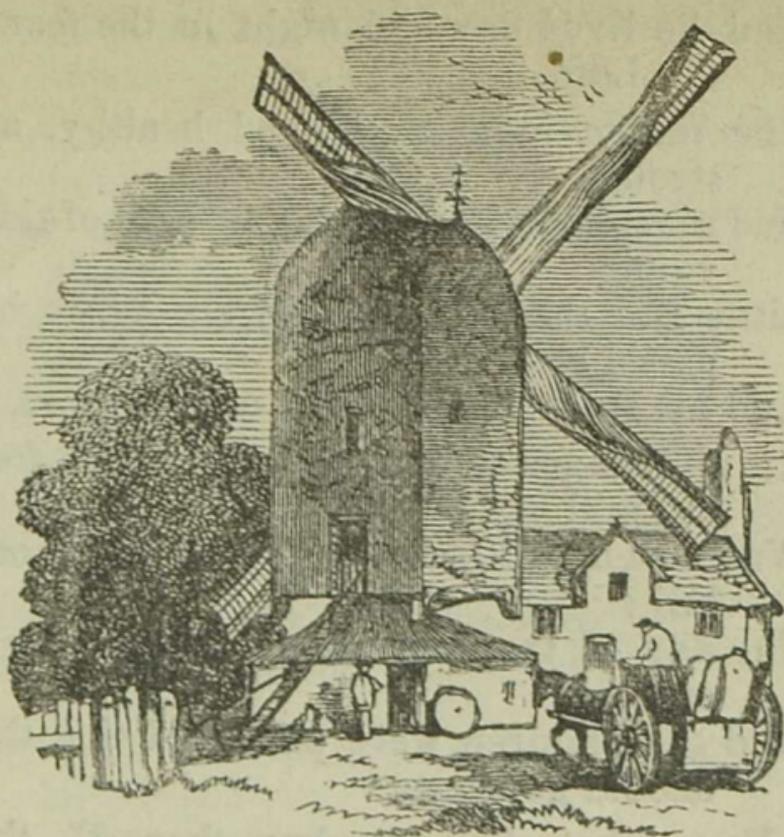
LONDON:

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

56, Paternoster-row ;

SOLD ALSO BY J. NISBET, BERNERS-STREET.

THE MILLER ;
OR,
HOW LONG WILL IT LAST ?



A MILLER there was, and he lived by the
side
Of a stream of clear water that, rapid and
wide,
Reflected the poplars around it that grew :—
When they said he was honest, they said
what was true.

Every day he work'd hard, and the miller
was wise,

For with fervour of spirit he look'd to the
skies :

Both his head and his heart with the Scrip-
ture were stored,

And he lived day and night in the fear of
the Lord.

The miller, industrious, and healthy, and
strong,

Had a son and a daughter, and both of them
young :

Little Bill the last birthday six years had
pass'd o'er,

And his sister Eliza a year or two more.

At a distance of two or three miles from
the mill

Was a snug little town, and it stood on a
hill ;

The day of the market was mild, bright,
and fair,

And the children were promised that they
should go there.

“ Now what shall we buy there ? ” they
both of them cried :—

“ You may buy what you please,” the kind
father replied ;

“ But on whatever plaything your eyes may
be cast,

You must make the inquiry, *How long will
it last ?* ”

'Their hearts were delighted, their clothing
was smart ;

Sure never were children more happy in
heart,

When Betty, drest neat in her new printed
gown,

Set out with them both hand in hand to the
town.

Of sights and fine playthings, with talkative
tongue,

They chatted with Betty, and pull'd her
along,

Impatient for pleasure, both up hill and
down,

Till they join'd in the crowd and the buzz
of the town.

“ Look yonder ! look yonder ! ” cried Bill
with delight,

“ Did ever I see such a beautiful kite,
Cover'd over with stars, and such glittering
things,

And then see, too, how airy and light are
its wings !

“ With a good ball of string, and a tail, it
would fly,

Like a hawk or an eagle, ay ! up to the
sky ! ”

“ That is true, ” said his sister, with look
overcast,

“ It would fly, but, my Billy, *how long will
it last ?* ”

Poor Bill said no more, for he could not but
 know,
 'That when out on the common, a fortnight
 ago,
 His kite by the wind was all tatter'd and
 torn ;
 So he pass'd down the street with a feeling
 forlorn.

“ Oh dear ! ” said Eliza, “ that beautiful face !
 It must be, without doubt, the best doll in
 the place.

There's a cheek that's enough to delight and
 surprise ;
 And then, only look at her pretty blue
 eyes ! ”

“ Yes ! yes ! ” replied Bill, and he held up
 his hands,

“ But remember the doll in the closet that
 stands ;

For, Eliza ! you have not forgot, I sup-
 pose,

When she fell on the floor, that she knock'd
 off her nose.

“ One leg, too, is gone, and the other quite
 lame,

And Betty, I'm certain, will tell you the
 same.

You must not buy your playthings so care-
 less and fast,

But, like me, ask the question, *How long
 will they last ?* ”

Eliza pass'd onward without much ado,
 For she felt what her brother had said to
 be true,
 When Betty, determin'd some trifle to buy,
 Look'd around till a necklace of glass caught
 her eye.

“ Now I know,” said poor Betty, “ I had
 one before,
 Which I broke, and the accident troubled
 me sore ;
 But this necklace of blue appears better
 by half.”

Here Bill and Eliza burst into a laugh.

“ Why, Betty ! a doll and a kite, to be
 sure,
 Are not the best things in the world to
 endure ;
 But a necklace is not very likely to pass,
 For what in the world is so brittle as glass ?”
 Betty gave up her necklace, and onward
 they went,
 For, though push'd by the people, they still
 were content
 Through the streets and the market to
 wander along,
 And to see what there was to be seen in the
 throng.
 At last they grew tired and began to com-
 plain,
 For e'en pastime itself will in time turn
 pair .

In our pleasures, we act just like children
at play

With a flow'ret ;—we pluck it,—then cast
it away.

The things that were glittering the brightest
around,

Were the playthings most like to be broken,
they found,

So they bought a good book, and then hur-
ried home fast

After putting the question, *How long will it
last?*

They told the good miller of all they had seen;
The streets up and down where they ramb-
ling had been,

Of the shops that were full of most wonder-
ful things,

They were quite good enough for queens,
princes, and kings.

And then came the tale of the beautiful
things ;

Of the doll, and the kite, with its stars and
its wings ;

And the necklace of glass, and, at last, with
a look

That was full of affection, they show'd him
the book.

“ Now we should,” said Eliza, “ have
bought this and that,

For our hearts at the sight often went pit-
a-pat ;

But the thought from our bosoms of play-
things we cast,
That would shrink from the question, *How
long will it last ?* ”

The miller felt joy in his bosom at this,
And with pleasure he smiled as he gave
them a kiss.

“ When children,” said he, “ act a dutiful
part,
They make a glad father, and lighten his
heart.”

By the hand, with affection, Eliza he took,
And he placed little Bill on his knee with
the book ;

The father and friend were alive in his
breast,

While he gazed on his children and thus
them address'd :—

“ Whate'er be the ills in this world that
betide,

Let the law of the Lord be your guardian
and guide ;

Then your hope shall endure, in the breeze
and the blast,

Undisturb'd by the question, *How long will
it last ?*

“ Too often the trifles that give us delight
Are, at best, but a necklace, a doll, and a
kite ;

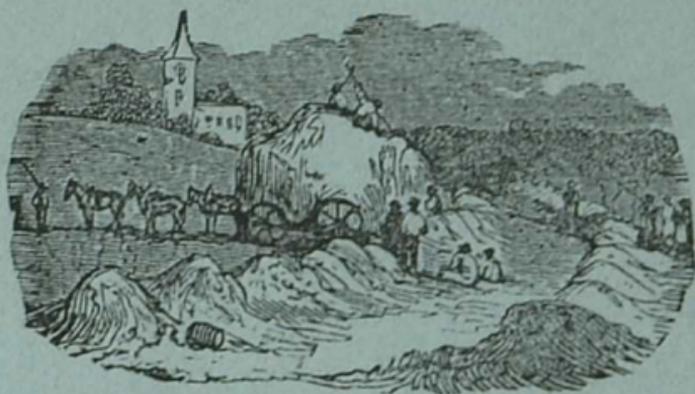
And our faces with shadows may well be
o'ercast,
When we venture the question, *How long
will they last?*

“ What good can we get from the playthings
around
Of to-day, when to-morrow they may not
be found?
The bubble will burst, that to please us has
power,
And the fairest of flow'rets may fade in
an hour.

“ It becomes us, as sinners, to look to the
Lord ;
To implore for his grace ; to depend on his
word ;
Then Jesus will save us, and still prove a
Friend
Whose goodness and faithfulness never will
end.

“ Oh seek then his favour, all treasures
above ;
For his righteousness, wisdom, his power
and his love,
When tried by the future, the present, and
past,
Will reply to the question, *How long will it
last ?* ”

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THE grass and flowers which clothe the
field,
And look so green and gay,
Touch'd by the scythe, defenceless yield,
And fall and fade away.

Fit emblems of our mortal state :
Thus, in the Scripture glass,
The young, the strong, the wise, the
great,

May see themselves but grass.

Lord, help us to obey thy call ;
That, from our sins set free,
When, like the grass, our bodies fall,
Our souls may spring to thee.