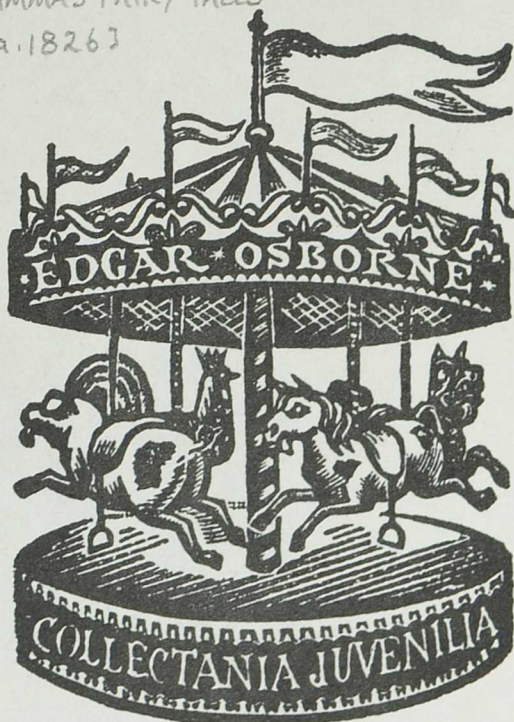
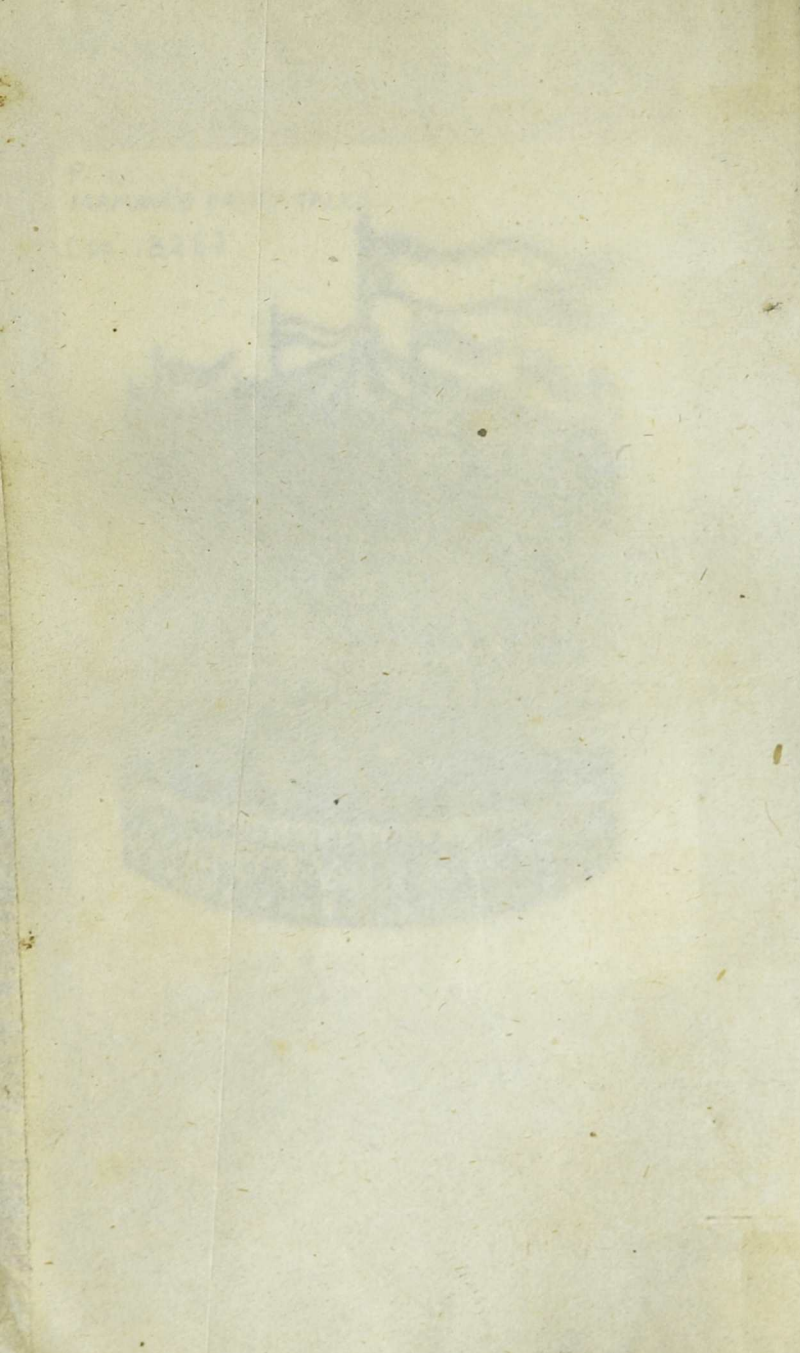
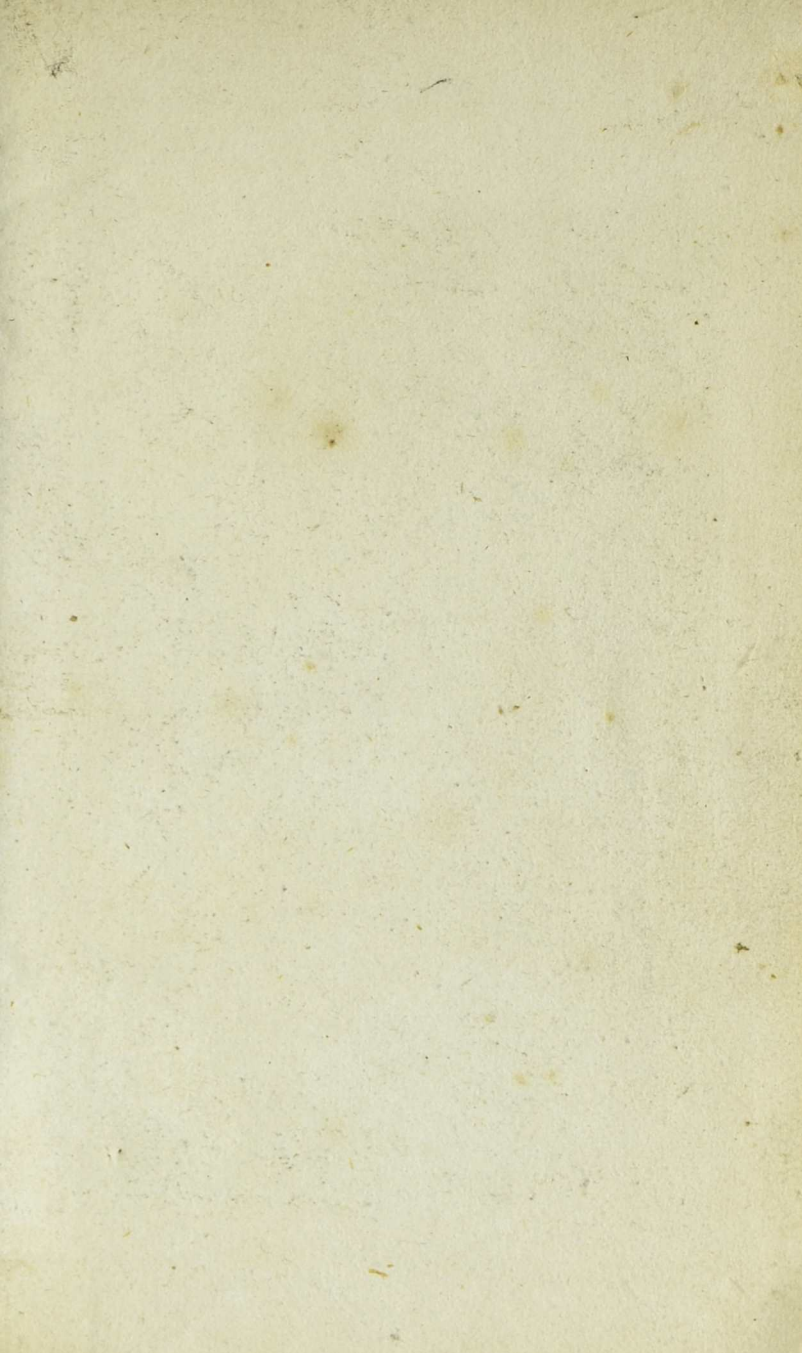


P(1826)
MAMMA'S FAIRY TALES
[ca. 1826]



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FRONTISPIECE.



Prince. Mali in the Lion's den.

MAMMA'S FAIRY TALES,

IN RHYME;

OR,

LESSONS OF MERCY,

FOR

JUVENILE MINDS.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and, when he is old,
he will not depart from it.”

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MAMMA'S FAIRY TALES,

&c. &c.

TIRED with each game, each painted toy,
Close to his mother crept her boy;
And, seated gaily at her feet,
Rais'd his blue eyes her glance to meet,
Then laugh'd in wanton sport to see
Sweet baby smiling on her knee.
But, when she hush'd it to repose,
He wish'd its little eyes would close;
For, when the cradle ceas'd to move,
He, too, should be her little love:
Then, in a plaintive voice, he said,
“ Dear Mother, put the babe to bed,
Or even give it to the maid.”

His mother, laughing, call'd him simple,
As, sighing deep, he kiss'd each dimple
Of baby's hand, then look'd again,
To see if mother saw his pain;
Then sate in hopeless silence down,
To wish both babe and tea-things gone.

The hearth is swept, the fire burns clear,
And mother in her nice arm-chair;
Sweet baby slept in cradle snug,
And puss was purring on the rug;
And Robert, on his mother's knee,
Was happy as a boy could be.

“ Ah! now,” he cried, “ dear mother tell
Those stories that I love so well.”—

“ First, Robin, tell me what you did
This morning, when your father chid
And call'd you naughty boy; oh, fie!
Pray what had done each hapless fly,
That you should pull their pretty wings
To make you sport?—Poor little things!
How should you like for me to tear
Up by the roots your curling hair,

With cruel blows to mark your flesh,
And, when you wept, to strike afresh?—
Then give this cruel practice o'er,
Nor hurt, because you have the power;
And listen, Robin, whilst I tell
What once a fairy prince befell."

THE FAIRY PRINCE TRANSFORMED TO A FLY.

THERE flows a stream through fairy lands,
O'er sparkling rocks of living gold,
On whose green banks a palace stands,
A thousand fairy ages old:

Prince Mali was as bright a boy
As ever liv'd in Elfin land;
But mischief was his only joy,
And cruel was his dimpled hand.

And, oh ! he had as bright a vest
As ever robed a fairy king ;
Yet mischief lurk'd within his breast,
Though purple was his plumed wing.

Fair wav'd his shining locks of gold,
And brightly shone his eyes so blue ;
But false was every word he told,
Though said by lips of rosy hue :

Nor did he love, like fairy child,
To bathe in drops of morning dew :
Prince Mali he was fierce and wild,
And never yet control he knew.

He lov'd to chase the humble bee
O'er fairy fields from hour to hour ;
His wicked eyes would flash to see
It caught and caged within a flower.

Oh ! he would hide him in a shell
To watch the little fish swim by,
Then out would spring, with impish yell,
And catch and kill the golden fry :

And he would wet his dimpled feet,
And soil with dirt his purple wings,
The glowworms in the dew to meet :
Oh ! then he kill'd those harmless things.

How oft he scratch'd his tender legs,
To climb some thorny forest tree ;
And, when he broke the poor bird's eggs,
No fairy boy so gay as he.

At moonlight hour, when fays resort
To make some toadstool's cap a throne,
He crept beneath, and broke the stalk,
Then laughed to see them tumble down.

He in the lion's den would peep,
And, if the old ones were not there,
Seeing the cubs lie fast asleep,
Stole in and pull'd their silken hair.

His mother griev'd his pranks to see,—
She was a fairy queen of power ;
That such an imp her son should be
Vex'd the poor fairy every hour.

One day Prince Mali he was tired,
And hard it rained—he could not play :
His naughty heart with mischief fired,
He to the palace took his way.

Soon perch'd upon the window-frame,
His hands began to torture flies ;
Each hapless one that near him came
Beneath his cruel fingers dies ;

And still for more he look'd about
To kill; and, when they buzz'd, poor things,
The louder rose his noisy shout,—
He laughed for joy and clapp'd his wings.

“ Buzz, buzz !” he cried, “ you buzz in vain !”
His fairy mother heard that cry,
And, angry, said,—“ Now feel the pain
That you inflict—become a fly !”

She touched him with her fairy hands,
His fairy body pass'd away,—
Among the poor crush'd flies he stands,
No better in his form than they.

“ Now, Robert dear,” his mother said,
“ ’Tis time for you to go to bed.”
“ Ah, dear Mamma! do let me wait,—
The clock is only striking eight;
I’ll sit quite still, I will not cry.
What did Prince Mali when a fly,—
How then he felt—what pranks he play’d ?”
“ Hush, Robin, hush! here comes the maid :
Now kiss Papa, and say your prayers,
Like a good boy, and go up stairs.”
And to rebel, young Robin knew,
Was vain, so, sighing, he withdrew.

The babe was dress’d, the breakfast gone,
And Robin all his tasks had done;
By mother’s side he took his seat,
And begg’d she would her tale complete.

THE FAIRY FLY.

THE first thing that Prince Mali did,
When he was chang'd into a fly,—
He turn'd, and stung the hand that chid,
Which made his fairy mother sigh ;

Then whisk'd his wings, and look'd about :
“ If I'm a fly, what do I care,—
'Tis useless now, I know, to pout,
I'll go and taste the country air.”

Then out into the fields he flew,
With seeming joy, but sad his breast:
The breeze was fresh, the heavens were blue,
The sun was sinking in the west.

He hied him to the shady grove,
His prowess there he wish'd to try,
In airy circles light to move,
And dance like any other fly :

To please himself in vain he tried,
For, tired, he could no longer sing;
Then, perch'd upon a red cow's side,
He deeply drove his little sting;

And, when she flinch'd, it pleas'd him well,
Nor of his fate did Mali dream:—
Angry, she lash'd her tail—he fell,
And tumbl'd headlong in the stream.

In vain he rais'd his feeble cry
For aid,—the waters bore him on;
Those waves that drown a wounded fly
Could not have hurt a fairy's son.

Ah! now he gave himself for lost,
The rolling tide had wet him o'er;
A blade of grass the waters cross'd,
On it he leap'd, and gain'd the shore:

He crept into a cowslip-bell,
And, shielded in its golden vest,
In silent grief his thoughts would swell
On those who once had lov'd him best;

And, as the moonbeams shone so bright,
On fairy steep and lucid flood,
He felt the stillness of the night,
And wish'd he had been ever good :

He heard around the breezes sigh,
The grasshopper in shrill notes sung,
The bat in circles flitted by,
And glowworms gleam'd the dews among.

The fairies rov'd the moonlight glade,
And Mali's heart had almost broke;
He saw them dancing in the shade,
Link'd hand in hand, beneath the oak.

And, when the morning dawn'd at last,
He, sighing, left his dewy cell,
Grieving for all his mischief past—
He sought the garden known so well.

Raising his wings in azure air,
He pass'd a bush—the thicket stirr'd,
Prince Mali shrunk aghast with fear,
For out there flew a speckled bird.

With eager eye and open beak,
And gaping throat, it towards him flew;
Prince Mali strove in vain to speak,
Trembling with grief and terror too.

Just then he saw a curious net,
That floated in a myrtle spray,
Nor knew that such grim spiders set
To catch and then devour their prey.

The bird pursued, and now was near,—
Faster and faster, Mali fled,
And, mute with terror, wild with fear,
He darted in and hid his head;

But, caught within each flimsy fold,
He strove in vain once more to rise,
For, stealing from his secret hold,
A monster came of frightful size:

Black were his horrid horns, and black
His knotted body,—crooked claws;
And, seizing Mali on his back,
Towards his dismal den he draws.

There lay the legs of many a fly.

Ah! useless now their pretty wings,—
Prince Mali thought, with many a sigh,
How he had hurt those harmless things.

Ah! now he felt their bitter pain;
Shrill in his ears their murmurs rang;
He shriek'd, he struggled, buzz'd in vain,
But fell beneath the spider's fang.

Though death he felt—he could not die;
But crept unto his mother's bower:
She wiped her Mali's tearful eye;
He vow'd he'd never grieve her more.

For, when he felt how sharp the pain
That once he gave with cruel hand,
His word he kept, and did remain
The gentlest prince in Fairy Land.

The story ceased; but not a word
Young Robin said—he scarcely stirr'd,
But hid his face in Mother's gown,
Whilst from his eyes the tears stream'd down.

His little bosom swelled with sighs:—
“ Ah, dear Mamma!” he weeping cries,
“ I never more will torture flies!”
His mother kiss'd his tears away,—
“ That's my good boy—now go and play.”

Now Robert's Uncle came from sea,
A sailor, noble, brave, and free;
Who, from beyond the burning line,
For Robin brought a parrot fine:
Green was its back, and red its breast.
His godson thus his joy express'd:—
“ Ah, pretty dear, I love you more
Than all the things I've seen before,—

Would rather hear the words you say,
Than with rude boys at marbles play."
But, when he saw how Poll was fed,
With sugar-cakes and plums, he said,
As on Mamma his glance he threw,
"I wish, sweet Poll, that I was you."—
"And why, my boy?" his Uncle cried,
And caught him on his knee to ride;
"You, who now sit on Uncle's knee,
Must be a man, and go to sea!"
"Ah, Uncle, Poll has pretty wings,
A bright gold cage, and eats nice things;
She laughs and talks with every one,
Is always up to pranks and fun.
Dear Uncle, since I've said the word,
I wish I was that nice green bird."—
"My naughty boy should be content
To keep that form that Heaven has sent;
Then, whilst you sit on Uncle's knee,
Robin, be good, and list to me,"
His mother said; "you shall not fail
To like my pretty little tale."

DISCONTENT; OR, PRINCESS AZA.

IN a fair land, beyond our seas,
There dwelt a mortal king at ease,
Whose fairy queen had changed the isle,
And bade an endless summer smile;
Bade golden fruit the trees adorn,
And turn'd to pearl the dews of morn :
O'er living gems soft waters roll'd,
The palace halls were pav'd with gold ;
Light music through the arches broke,
Without the aid of mortal stroke.
Oh ! never yet did sunbeams fall
Upon so bright an isle or hall.

One only child King Zaris bless'd,
A jewel brighter than the rest ;
So faultless was her fairy mien,
A sweeter creature ne'er was seen ;

But never yet Content was known
Her rosy lips to smile upon.
In a dark corner she would get,
And shake her waving curls and fret;
Still by her little comrades found
For ever weeping on the ground:
In every joyous game they vied
To make her laugh, but still she sighed
To be each thing that met her view,
And from their harmless sports withdrew;
Held in disdain their childish play,
And wore in grief her hours away.
And oft the king, with tender fear,
Wip'd from his Aza's eyes the tear.
Willing to chase away her gloom,
He led her through each stately room,
Where, heap'd, ten thousand jewels lay,—
Sapphires and diamonds strew'd the way;
Bright crystal vases held a store
Of ruby stones and golden ore.
With wild delight, the princess gaz'd
One moment on the gems that blaz'd
Around her feet; then turn'd away,
Nor 'mid the costly heaps would stay:

“ Oh, take me hence, my father dear,
I will not stay one moment here !”
The king obeyed the wayward call,
And led the urchin to the hall ;
Yet not one word he said unkind,
Willing to please her changing mind.
He gave her then a car of gold,
Just fit her fairy form to hold,
Drawn by a swan of pure milk white,
With ribands dress'd, and jewels bright,
Whose stately neck, the silver reins,
The princess in the car sustains.

With sudden joy young Aza cried,
“ What ! is this mine—and may I ride ?”
The monarch smiled—“ My Aza dear,
It is your own,—then banish fear ;
As long as you contented prove,
Where'er you wish, the car shall move.”

No more the joyful Aza heard,
For stately mov'd the snow-white bird
Through the gay hall, and gardens wide,
With arched neck and breast of pride.

Around her little comrades drew;
With glad surprise the car they view,
Admire the gold and jewels bright,
And greet the swan with wild delight.

When Aza saw the bird caress'd,
A jealous envy fill'd her breast;
While starting tears half chok'd each word,
She cried,—“ Why was I not this bird ?”
Scarce was the simple wish express'd,
Before white feathers clothed her breast,
Spread into wings her dimpled hands,
And on broad, webbed feet she stands.
She looked around—the swan was gone,
And she must fill its place alone.

Bound to the car, with silver chains,
Fetter'd the princess now remains.
With joyful shout her comrades leap,
To revel in her empty seat;
With noisy laugh and wilder song,
They drive the trembling bird along,
Who, groaning with the heavy weight,
Too late now mourn'd her alter'd state;

And, whilst with rage her bosom burn'd,
With sudden bound the car o'erturn'd,
With all her strength the trammels tore,
And sought with speed the river's shore,
Dash'd in the stream her shame to hide,
And sailed majestic on the tide.

“ Ah, what a fool !” young Robin cried ;
“ Could she not be content to ride,
Drawn by a horse that had nice wings,
But she must crave for other things !
Had I been her, full well I know,
Mother, I never had done so.”

His Uncle said,—“ Oh ! Robin, shame !
This very hour you've done the same ;
Your faults, my boy, you cannot see :
Did not you wish Miss Poll to be ?
But come,—if here we longer talk,
’Twill be too late to take a walk.”

The day was calm, the sun was bright,
The verdant fields with daisies white;
And Spring had spread her flow'ry pride
On all the green lane's mossy side;
The primrose pale, the violet blue,
Bloom'd up the bank and met the view,
In all their modest beauties smil'd,
To tempt the hand of roving child.
Robin ran laughing on before,
With hands quite full, yet wanted more;
To dear Mamma he still would bring
The treasures of the rifled Spring;
And baby's dimpled fingers press'd
The brightest nosegay and the best.

A sparkling rill now cross'd the way,
Where bluebells met the sun's warm ray;
And here to rest the parties stay:
Beneath an aged oak, that spread
Its ample branches o'er each head,
While cowslips bloomed beneath their feet,
They took with glee their verdant seat.
While Uncle made a flute of reed,
Stol'n from the green and marshy mead,

And Annie rock'd the babe to rest,
Young Robin then the wish express'd,
Whilst they all rested by the wood,
His mother would her tale conclude.

The rapid waves the princess bore
Fast from the garden's spicy shore,
Who fainter heard, now far behind,
Her comrades' voices on the wind.
As the light waves beneath her glide,
She envies not the halls of pride,
That, quickly passing from her view,
A fainter line of shadows threw;
And Aza found herself alone—
Playmates and palace, all were gone;
A vale with gay flowers cover'd o'er,
Fring'd with dark groves, stretch'd far before.

Young Aza shook her snowy breast,
And climb'd the bank her form to rest.

Just then a painted butterfly
Soar'd on its glowing wings on high,
Spreading its colours to the sun—
She never saw so bright a one ;
Then watch'd it rove from flower to flower,
Or settle on the woodbine bower ;
Then wish'd with eager glance and sigh,
“ Would that I was a butterfly !”
And the next moment saw her rise
On glowing wings through azure skies.
She saw with joy her colours shine :
No butterfly was ere so fine.
She revelled in the sun's warm beam,
Or hover'd o'er the lucent stream ;
Sipping the sweets from many a flower,
She sported through the noontide hour ;
Nor saw that angry clouds had met,
Till a smart shower her plumage wet ;
Shivering beneath a plantain-leaf,
She watch'd it fall in silent grief.
Then rose a sprightly Antelope,
And bounded o'er the grassy slope,
With slender form of fairy size ;
With silver feet and bright black eyes.

With wings all spoil'd and wet, and cold,
Aza her wish could not withhold,
And, as it bounding met her view,
She thought, " Sweet creature, were I you,"
(Yet scarcely dared to form the hope)
Then rose a bright-eyed Antelope.
Scarce touch'd the mossy turf those feet
That bounded now with step so fleet,
As free she roved the verdant mead,
Or sought the flowery bank to feed;
But Aza still is doomed to know,
In every change, a taste of woe—
'That all the cares that haunt the great
Still on man's humblest vassals wait;
Then, whilst beneath a myrtle's shade,
She careless with her shadow play'd,
The huntsman's horn awoke the blast,
And up she springs; with fear aghast
Away she starts o'er vale and hill,
Yet hears that sound with terror still;
And now the fierce hounds meet her view,—
Again she flies, but they pursue;
She sees the stream before her glide,
Nor stops—but plunges through the tide.

Her sudden flight the hunters foil,
And, spent and weary quite with toil,
She reach'd a glen, o'ercome with pain,
And pants, and weeps, and starts again,
Till night her ample shadows threw,
And moonbeams shone in drops of dew ;
Then mid the fern she hid her breast,
And wept and sigh'd herself to rest.

Bright gleam'd the moon on fell and oak,
When Aza from her fears awoke ;
In silver whiteness shone the glade ;
Deep silence reign'd—no more afraid,
She toss'd her graceful head on high,
As dogs and hunters to defy,
Then, bounding o'er the moonlight ground,
She heard soft music float around,
And voices swell the midnight air,
As fairy elves were singing there.
She stopp'd and gaz'd : before her eyes
She sees a lovely vision rise.
There danc'd, in many a sportive round,
The fairies o'er the moonlight ground ;
And now from cowslip bells they quaff
The sparkling dew, and sing and laugh,

Or join in many a sportive race,
The beetle and blind bat to chase ;
While some from slender branches swing,
Then leap, mid shouts, into the ring ;
While younger elves for glowworms look,
That shine around the glassy brook ;
In acorn-cups they send to glide
The fairy lamps across the tide ;
Then in wide circles antics play,
And revel till the break of day.

Still Aza gaz'd with wild delight,
And marvell'd at the wond'rous sight.
“ Ah ! now,” she cried, “ I hate myself—
I wish I was a Fairy Elf !”

Scarce from her lips the sentence broke,
Before she stands beneath an oak
In her own native form again,
The brightest fairy on the plain.
She rais'd her eyes—there sat the Queen,
The Empress of the moonlight scene :
Her throne a mound of verdant earth,
Where spring the brightest flowers to birth,

O'erarch'd with blushing eglantine,
In which ten thousand dewdrops shine :
Her robe, the forest's tender green ;
Her crown, the pale moon's brightest beam.

O'er Aza's heart what terrors crept ;
She thought on all her faults, and wept ;
For in that moment o'er her soul
A sense of all her errors stole,
And, self-condemn'd, before that throne
She stands mid thousand elves alone.

She rais'd her head—the fairy smil'd—
“ Enough thou hast been tried, my child ;
I am thy mother ; do not fear.
Advance, my elves, and bring her here.”
With sudden bound young Aza sprung,
And round her knees all weeping hung.
“ My fairy mother, oh ! forgive
Thy wayward child, and, while I live,
I vow I never more will crave
Another face or form to have.”
The fairy kiss'd, and fondly press'd
The weeping Aza to her breast ;

With transport view'd the polish'd brow,
That trembled still with recent woe.
“ Say, wilt thou with my elves remain,
And rove a fairy o'er the plain,
Where heaven's fair stars with beauty burn,
Or to thy weeping sire return.
Quickly decide—you have your choice !”
Then Aza cried, with faltering voice,
“ Oh ! take me to my sire again ;
My presence will remove his pain.”
Her mother kiss'd her as she said,
“ Your wish, my lov'd one, is obey'd.”
And, ere a wandering star could fall,
She stood within the palace hall,
And, folded to her father's heart,
She never sought again to part,
While sweet Content laugh'd in her smile,
And blessings crown'd the happy isle.

Young Robin took his Mother's hand,
" Now, dear Mamma, I understand
How naughty Aza was, when she
Wished all those pretty things to be ;
And I as bad as her have been,
Who wish'd to be that parrot green."
His little hand his Uncle shook—
" That's my fine boy, and bravely spoke ;
Live on in peace, and learn to find
Content's the treasure of the mind.
Let no vain wish disturb your rest,
For God does all things for the best."
" Dear Uncle, tell me something more,
For I could sit here for an hour,
To hear around the nice birds sing :
Dear Uncle, how I love the Spring."
" Homewards we now our course must take,
For Mother's tir'd and Kate's awake.
One day, when you behave quite well,
Uncle, perhaps, a tale may tell."

“ Oh ! see how fast the rain comes down,
And must we, mother, stay at home ;
How dull 'twill be all day to sit,—
Dear mother, never mind the wet.”

“ Robert, your tears are all in vain,—
My boy, I cannot help the rain :
Come from the window—do not cry ;
See ! there's blue breaking in the sky ;
The sun again will brightly shine—
The afternoon may yet be fine.”
Poor Robin wip'd his tears away,
And, sighing deeply, went to play.

The rain has ceas'd—the dinner's past,
The warm gay sun comes out at last,
And Robin, as he skipp'd about,
Cried—“ Joy, Mamma, the sun's come out ;
Ah ! now we need no longer stay,—
I'm sure 'twill rain no more to-day.”
“ My dearest boy,” his mother said,
“ May ride with Katey and the maid ;
As I have work at home to do,
Your Uncle James will go with you.”

The donkey-cart was at the door—
They rode, and Uncle walk'd before ;
But, when the donkey would walk slow,
Rob gave it many a cruel blow,
Though Uncle cried in angry tone,
“ Robert, let that poor beast alone ;

How can you use the creature ill ?”
But naughty Robin beat it still,
Then with his hands he strove to hide
The blood that stain'd its shaggy side ;
But, when it caught his Uncle's eye,
Robert set up a dismal cry—
“ Ah, do not tell Mamma ! I pray,—
I will be good another day.”

“ Well may you fear reproof from me,”
His Uncle said, “ your crime I see ;
The cruel cowards ever are—
They only torture when they dare ;
But, as we are arrived at home,
With me into the study come,
And there receive your just reward,
Nor fear that I should strike you hard.”

And soon, between his Uncle's knees,
Stood Robin weeping, ill at ease ;
His usual glance, so frank and bold,
Shrunk as the tale his Uncle told.

THE

PUNISHMENT OF PRINCE HAFID.

IN a fair isle that grac'd the Indian deep,
Where spicy breezes on the billows sleep,
And flowers for ever deck the verdant ground,
And cooling waters pour a freshness round,
Where heaven and earth in glowing tints unite,
To bless the day and crown with peace the
night,—

In ages past here liv'd a favour'd boy,
A nation's heir, a father's fondest joy :

Proud of his birth, his beauty, high estate,
A thousand slaves around his footsteps wait;
Yet oft his haughty mood and glance of fire
Spoke to the trembling train his hasty ire.
Proud and revengeful, coldly cruel still,
All bend before young Hafid's haughty will.
Well could he rein a steed, or hurl a lance,
Or lead the mazes of the Indian dance;
Within the court no brighter form was seen,
For princely port and majesty of mien;
But he'd no friends—for those who sought his
love
Would mourn their rashness, and his hatred
prove.

To him reproof, remonstrance, all was vain,
He joy'd in mischief, and he laugh'd at pain:
Each trembling slave and creature in his power
Felt his wild rage, and mourn'd it every hour.

How griev'd the king to see his worthless son
In such a lengthen'd course of evil run,
Warned him with tears how cruel deeds would
end,
When the fear'd tyrant seeks in vain a friend:

But Hafid laugh'd at all his counsel still,
And followed but his wild and headstrong
will.

At length his birth-day came : throughout the
east

Was spread the banquet, and prepar'd the
feast,

And Hafid rose with bounding heart and gay,
To hail the sports and triumphs of the day ;
And, plac'd on splendid thrones, around him
shine

The titled princes of his noble line.

His costly robes with gold and jewels blaz'd,
The admiring crowd his matchless beauty prais'd ;
With pealing shouts his name to heaven repeat,
And bow the knee their monarch's heir to greet,
Who meets their kindness with a sullen state,
As they were born upon his steps to wait.

The hours in sports and revels wore away,
And pleasure crown'd the scene till closing day.

Tir'd with each sport, Prince Hafid sat alone,
Sullen reclining on his glittering throne.

In ranks on either side around him stand
The peers and nobles of his native land—
A trumpet sounds—the distant echoes ring,
A thousand voices cry—"The king! the king!"
The crowd fall back, to view the monarch
grave,

Whose gentle aspect show'd the truly brave;
His gracious smiles his happy people greet,
Who kiss with tears of joy his honour'd feet.

Two swarthy slaves behind the monarch lead,
Richly adorn'd with gems, a snow-white steed;
Of such rare beauty was the graceful beast,
No court could match him through the spacious
east.

This to his wayward son the king consign'd—
"Let this," he cried, "a gentler usage find."
Upon its back with joy Prince Hafid sprung;
Beneath its hoofs of pride the pavement rung.
Away it starts, with slender limbs, whose
speed

Would far outstrip the swiftest Indian steed;
O'er hill and dale, through gloomy forest
shades

A desperate passage still the courser made.



*Then from that rapid stream a lady rose,
In form more lovely than the day's bright close.*
p. 37.

The Prince, with fear aghast, oft tried in vain
To curb his spirit with a tighter rein.

For now, far distant from the homes of men,
They reach'd at length a wild and rocky glen;
Narrow and steep appear'd each rugged side,
And through it rushed a dark and rapid tide;
Black were the waters—black the barren
ground;

No whisper broke the heavy silence round.
Prince Hafid felt his breast with terror chill,
For here at length the snow-white beast stood
still.

He us'd the lash—with angry force he spurn'd;
Its deadly eye alone in scorn it turn'd
Upon its fearful rider, as it threw
His trembling form amid the noisome dew.

Then, from that rapid stream a lady rose,
In form more lovely than the day's bright close :
A robe of green around her figure hung,
A silver bow across her shoulders slung;
A dewy crown of India's choicest flowers,
That sweetly bloom through spring's refreshing
showers,

Around her waving locks and forehead seen,
Told her to be the fairies' matchless queen.
On Hafid, then, a haughty glance she cast—
“Thy trial, wretch!” she cried, “is not yet
past.”—

Then o'er his shuddering brow and form she
shook

The chill dark waters of that deadly brook ;
A deathlike sleep his heavy eyelids bound,
And left him cold and senseless on the ground.

Cold was the air, and dark the murky shed,
When Hafid rais'd again his spell-bound head.
But, oh! how chang'd that lovely form and
face,

Which now, indeed, disowns the human race ;
Yes, he was chang'd, but not like that fair
beast,—

An ass he rose, the meanest and the least ;
Dark were his shaggy sides, and roughly worn,
His ears and mane close cropp'd or rudely
shorn.

Up from the earth he sprang with angry start,
Rage in his eyes, and sorrow in his heart ;

He strove to speak—the choking words were
drown'd

In hoarse shrill tones, that woke the echoes
round;

He curs'd the fairy who had chang'd his state,
And tried, in vain, in tears to mourn his fate :

“ Must I this wretched beast till death remain,
And bear my own disgrace and life of pain ?

What masters are the sons of men, I know ;

What hope the wretched have from them, but
woe.

Alas ! why did I not my errors see ;

Ne'er did I think they would come home to me.

But why do I grieve ? whose hand detains me
here ?

The world is wide—what have I now to fear ?”

He strove to walk, but found his efforts vain ;

He dragg'd along a lengthen'd heavy chain ;

Then came at last a man, big-bon'd and tall,

Who loos'd the bonds that held him to the wall ;

But, when the wretched Prince refus'd to go,

He gave him many a harsh and bitter blow,

And day by day 'twas his to bear a load

Up rugged hills and o'er a rocky road.

His master was a woodman by his trade,
Who earn'd his living in the forest shade,
And, when small birds their evening concerts
sing,

Hafid a load of wood must homeward bring;
Sometimes a lusty boy would crave to ride,
Who kick'd in wanton sport each weary side,
And, when his tir'd limbs sought that dirty
shed,

Amid the furze to hide his aching head,
Then ragged urchins shouting round him play'd,
Pull'd his cropp'd ears, and vex'd him as he
laid :

His sullen humour only gain'd new blows,
And added deeper suffering to his woes.

Such was the life the wretched Hafid led.
When call'd one morn to leave the sordid shed,
He to the woods must take his usual way ;
Cold blew the winds, and stormy was the day,—
He felt as if that summons was his last,
As up the rocky mountain-side he pass'd,
Down each wide opening chasm cast his eye,
And wish'd his master in their depths to die,

As to the usual spot his load he bore,
Sigh'd to himself—"that he would bear no
more."

All day they toil'd, but, when the night drew
nigh,

Wild rag'd the storm and darken'd was the sky;
The pelting showers in sounding torrents pour,
Dash down the rocks that echo to the roar;
The streams are swell'd—the glancing lightnings
play,

And show the horrors of their lonely way.

Revenge is come, and Hafid now must guide
His master down the mountain's slippery side;
But one false step, he thought, thy form lies
drown'd

A hundred fathoms from the upper ground:

"Mine is thy life, but, when releas'd from thee,
Among these rocky passes I am free."

He stopp'd—the man his terrors loudly spoke;
His faltering voice to Heaven in anguish broke,
As Hafid heard the oft-repeated cry:

"God, for thy mercy still this raging sky,

Forgive my sins—vouchsafe to be my guide,
Nor plunge my wretched body in the tide.”
That bitter prayer has woke in Hafid’s breast
A human thought, which triumph’d o’er the
rest—

Something that pleaded for his master’s life,—
“ Yes, I will bear thee to thy babes and wife.”
Thus Hafid thought, and quite forgot his woe,
And bore him safely to the glen below.

Is it the lightning rests upon the stream ?
There is no moon to-night to shed that beam
That brightly shines the rapid torrent o’er.
Sudden a lady rose, he knew before,
In all her beauty ’mid the tempest seen :
August she stood, the fairy’s matchless queen,
Rais’d her fair hand, and still’d the raging storm,
And Hafid rose again a human form.
“ Let this,” she cried, “ an endless lesson
prove ;

Thy form regain, and meet thy father’s love :
Should cruel rage again thy bosom fill,
Think of this hour, and calm each thought of
ill !”

Scarce had she spoke, when in his natal halls,
Before his father's feet, Prince Hafid falls ;
For pardon asks, and tells his sufferings o'er,
And vows he'll never act the tyrant more.
His word he kept—each cruel thought restrain'd ;
A juster king ne'er o'er his people reign'd :
E'en from the chase and cruel games withdrew,
And learn'd to pity and to pardon too.

Robin his head now slowly rais'd,
On Uncle for a moment gaz'd,
Then down upon his knees he slid,
And pardon ask'd for what he did,
In such a humble voice and tone,
That prov'd his sullen fit was flown :
“ Punish me—beat me, Uncle dear,
For I could blows much better bear,
Than hear that story told again ;
For, though unstruck, I feel the pain

I gave to that poor beast to-day.
Oh ! do forgive me, Uncle, pray."

" Forgive yourself—'twas for your good ;
I'm glad my tale you understood :
Then never more poor beasts annoy,
But be your Uncle's own good boy."

PART THE SECOND.

FOR many days young Robin strove
To win again his Uncle's love ;
Studied his lessons, told no lies,
Nor teaz'd the cat, or tortur'd flies.
His Uncle's lessons touch'd his mind—
Gentle to all he was and kind :
Repenting o'er his follies past,
His Mother hop'd they were his last ;
But bad example ever will
Lead the unguarded heart to ill.

Unmindful of his Mother's tales,
Young Robin, through the garden pales,
With two bad boys acquaintance made,
And with them often truant play'd,
Though wicked cruel boys they were,
And did not for their parents care :
And then they said—" If they were he,
They would not rul'd by women be."
They were his age, and went to school,
And then they laugh'd, and call'd him fool.
" We have our sport," would Henry say,
" And lessons learn another day ;
Our master is an aged man,
And he may catch us if he can :
For me, I think it is fine fun
To see the lame old monster run ;
I laugh till I can scarcely stand,
To see him shake his rod and hand.
Come, Bob, get o'er the garden gate,
And go with us—'tis getting late."
But Robert still excuses made—
To go with them he was afraid ;
His Mother's leave he'd go and ask,—
He had not done his evening task.

Then sneeringly his comrades spoke,
And into peals of laughter broke,—
“He dare not come, though well he knows
His Mother will not give him blows.
How like a coward fool he stands,
Twirling his cap in both his hands;
The child wont leave his dolls and toys,
To play with us rude romping boys.
Come o’er the gate, Bob, if you can,
And go with us, and be a man,
Or we will hoot you through the street,
And milksop call you when we meet.”

With blushing cheek and wounded pride,
Young Robin sought the other side;
And, though he felt himself afraid,
He fear’d no more than them, he said;
And he would prove, that very day,
He was as good a man as they.

Now Robin did not courage lack,
Yet still his own heart warn’d him back;
For those in evil paths that roam
Will seldom come unspotted home.

Checking these thoughts, he look'd about,
And join'd his comrades' noisy shout.
His mind on mischief wholly set,
He hail'd each idle boy they met,
And through the streets soon took his way,
As dirty and as rude as they.

When tir'd of all their boyish games,
They join'd in calling people names ;
Then laugh'd, as wicked boys will do,
When dust they rais'd, and stones they threw :
A long tin squirt young Richard got,
With dirty water in a pot ;
He then would in a corner get,
To soil folks' clothes and make them wet ;
And if he met their angry sight,
He boldly ask'd them—" by what right
They said 'twas he : they told a lie,—
The wicked boy had just run by."

Then, whilst they stopp'd the boy to view,
He join'd his own mischievous crew ;
Laughing at all their frolics o'er,
And knocking loudly at each door,

Would mock, in accents shrill and bold,
The threatening servants' angry scold ;
Or, as away they lightly ran,
Would cry out—" Catch us if you can."

And now our Robin, naughty boy,
Felt in these tricks a wicked joy,
And thought such pranks were better far
Than all the stories of Mamma ;
Little expecting, at that time,
That shame and grief still wait on crime ;
And every hour, so idly spent,
Brings with it double punishment.

Now Robin felt, as near him drew
Two ladies that his mother knew,
A secret fear. He heard one say,
" Is not that Master Manners, pray,
Who is with those rude boys that play ?"
" That Robin Manners, whom we see !
Oh ! no ; I'm sure that is not he :
A nobler boy you will not find,
So good, affectionate, and kind.
He would not join with such rude boys,
To roam the streets, and make a noise."

Now Robin felt a conscious shame,
To hear the lady praise his name ;
In secret wish'd he had not come
With these bad boys, so far from home.

He felt his heart within him swell,
And almost long'd the whole to tell
To those good ladies, and entreat
For pardon at his Mother's feet ;
But found, too late, his tongue was tied,
By mingled thoughts of shame and pride.
Pleasure had fled—his guilt he knew,
Yet join'd his comrades' loud holloa.

Now, as they wander'd through the street,
They chanc'd a little boy to meet,
Who from the bakehouse came away,
With four brown loaves upon a tray :
“ Now,” Richard cried, “ I'll have some fun,”
As quickly past the child he run,
And struck his arm : down fell the bread,
Cloth, tray, and all, from off his head ;
And, crush'd and broken in the street,
Was hardly fit for dogs to eat.

A sudden chill o'er Robin crept;
The poor boy wrung his hands and wept—
“ Oh dear! what will my Mother say,—
She has not tasted food to-day.
We now must starve—for all is gone :
Oh dear! I never dare go home.”

“ What do you cry for?” Richard said,
“ Poor boy—who was it spoil'd your bread?
Come dry your tears—what, can't you tell?
I'll thrash the wicked rascal well.”
But the poor child, o'ercome with woe,
Could only sob—“ he did not know :
That bread was their whole week's supply ;
They now must starve—they all must die.”

Robin, repentant, grave, and sad,
A sixpence gave—'twas all he had.
Meanwhile, the gathering crowd around
In Richard had the culprit found,
Who, trusting to his nimble feet,
Fled swiftly down another street.
“ Run, Robin!—if you won't run too,
We'll swear the trick was play'd by you.”

No longer Bob dar'd disobey,
So join'd with them to run away ;
Till out of breath—exhausted all,
They paus'd, beside an apple-stall,
Just at the corner of the street,
Kept by a woman old and neat ;
A dame by all the schoolboys known,
Where the small pence they call'd their own
Were daily spent : there, pil'd on high,
Inviting apples caught the eye ;
Gingerbread-nuts and cakes were there,
And sugar-plums in glasses fair ;
Oranges piled in heaps there lay,
For girls and boys, when tir'd of play,—
Enough to make an urchin sigh,
Who pass'd, without a farthing, by.
Now all the boys old Molly knew,
So near this tempting stall they drew.
“ What do you want, my lads ? ” she said ;
“ Here's oranges and gingerbread,
And lemon-cakes so crisp and dry,—
What will you please, young men, to buy ? ”
A laugh though Hall could scarcely hide,
With seeming gravity replied—

“ No, Molly—thank you—not to-day,
We have no money left to pay ;
But, as the corner now we pass’d,
We met a youngster running fast,
His hat quite full of fruit and cake ;
We came for you the thief to take.”
“ Where is he—where ?” enrag’d she cries,
And casts on all suspicious eyes.

“ There ! there ! look, yonder runs the chap.”
Then, whilst she turn’d, Hall fill’d his cap
With all the sweets that near him lay ;
Then, laughing loudly, ran away :
And, in their haste, they overthrew
The woman’s stall and barrow too ;
But Robin could not run so fast,
Of all the naughty train the last ;
And, though he quite abhorr’d the theft,
Behind he dar’d not now be left.

He thought rage lent the woman wings,
To rescue back her stolen things ;
But him alone of all she took,
And fiercely struck, and rudely shook.

“ This little wretch !” she cried—“ shall pay
For all the cakes I’ve lost to-day.”

Oh, no ! that’s Master Manners,” cried
Another woman by her side ;

“ You are mistaken—let him go ;

A thing like this he would not do.”

“ *Manners !*—he’s better fed than taught.

I’m glad the wicked thief I caught ;

Him to his Mother I will take,

To pay for all my fruit and cake.”

“ Oh ! pray !—pray don’t !” poor Robin cried,
And wept imploring at her side.

“ I never yet, at any time,
Took any thing that was not mine.

I never stole your cakes, I know,—

So pray, good woman, let me go.”

“ My lad, this will not gain belief,—

I caught you running with the thief ;

So come along—’tis vain to cry,

For those that steal will also lie.”

Weeping with rage, and stung with pain,
Resistance Robin found was vain.

As Molly dragg'd him weeping on,
She stopp'd to tell a friend her wrong;
When, in the middle of her tale,
He felt her grasp a moment fail.
His hand from her's he quickly drew,
Like lightning down the street he flew,
And, panting, join'd his ragged crew.

Now far behind the town they left,
And on a bank enjoy'd their theft.
“Come, Bob, my boy—why don't you eat?”
Cried Hall, “Look! here's a glorious treat;
We never had such famous fun—
Oh! dear, how fast the old hag run.
Come, cheer up, Robin; never fear,—
The witch will never find us here.”
Now Robin felt his proud heart swell:
“I'm sure we have not acted well;
And you may eat the cakes yourself—
I will not join in such mean pelf:
What grief my poor Mamma would feel,
To think that I could join to steal
A poor old woman's things away.
I never more will truant play.”

“ Well ! stand to that,” bold Richard said ;
I knew the coward was afraid.

Yon noisy hag has scar’d him so,
The poor child knows not what to do.
Come, Robin, eat ; don’t make a fuss,
Or there will more be left for us.”

Now, stung by their insulting jeers,
Bob strove in vain to hide his tears,
And mourn’d, too late, that he had come
With these bad boys ; nor dar’d go home,
To meet the punishment he knew
That to such deeds must still accrue.
Not yet content with doing ill,
His comrades, bent on mischief still,
Their wicked pranks began again,
And he the bravest of the train
Who most could torture or give pain
To any hapless beast they met :
On wanton mischief wholly set,
Blew dust into the passers’ eyes,
Or loos’d the pigs from farmers’ sties ;
Then, fearful lest they should not stray,
They drove them full a mile away ;

And, when enraged the master swore,
They only laugh'd and mock'd the more—
Till, tir'd with this mischievous sport,
They shouting to the woods resort,
And Robin, hurt and vex'd in mind,
Now follow'd slowly far behind.

The sun was sinking on the plain,
A stormy evening threaten'd rain,
And, thick and dark, a heavy cloud
Hung o'er the woods in sable shroud,
And o'er the tempest's angry hue
The day its parting glories threw,
Enough the noisy train to warn,
And bid them to their homes return ;
But these mischievous boys had found
A pony lying on the ground :
The beast determin'd to annoy,
They all set up a shout of joy,
And kick'd and beat on every side—
Upon his back they all would ride ;
E'en Robin, in temptation caught,
Forgot the tale his Uncle taught,

O'er which he wept the other day,
And kick'd and beat as much as they.
Thus, heedless through the wood they stray'd,
Unheeded,—deeper grew the shade.
Poor pony, tir'd, refus'd to go,
In spite of threat'ning word or blow ;
Then to his tale and mane they tied
The brambles that the hedge supplied ;
And laugh'd to see him madly spurn,
And round and round in anguish turn,
Till a stern voice behind them spoke,
And through the mantling bushes broke
A tall dark figure, rude and wild,
Whose very face might scare a child.

“ You little rascals,” loud he cried,
“ How dare you on that pony ride ?
Come, give your wanton frolics o'er,—
Such pranks as these you play no more :
It is the gipsies !” Dreaded word,
A name aghast by children heard,
And, quickly springing from their steed,
They darted now with headlong speed
Through the lone woods—some madly cry,
“ Run for your lives, boys—run or die !”

Robin leap'd forward, wild with dread,
But in the action struck his head
Against a far projecting bough,
And sunk down senseless with the blow.

The sun had sunk—the night was dark,
And oft the distant watch-dogs bark
Is heard upon the tempest's swell,
That rushes through each woodland dell;
And, pattering through the leaves, the rain
Now fell in torrents on the plain,
When Robin woke, with startling scream,
Believing all he saw a dream.
In giddy whirls, before his sight,
Swam the strange vision of the night:
Rude was the hut, whose rush-bound roof
Was scarcely from the tempest proof;
The furze and broom their aid supplied,
To fence it round on either side;
And, piled in rows, the turfy peat
Supplied each rugged guest a seat;

And in the midst a blazing fire
Spread high in many a wavy spire,
Gleaming on many a savage face
Of that mysterious wandering race.
Seated in groups around the hearth,
They join'd in boisterous peals of mirth;
Some shouted, danc'd, or lounged along,
Whilst others join'd in uncouth song.
Poor Robin, couch'd in dirty straw,
With wonder thought on all he saw;
Unnotic'd, watch'd, with mute surprise,
Their dangling elf-locks, keen black eyes,
Whose features brown and savage gaze
Look'd wilder in the roaring blaze.
To speak his falt'ring tongue denied,
By deadly fear and horror tied,
Whilst o'er his trembling bosom came
The terrors of the gipsy's name
The tales that Ann his cradle taught,
Of hapless babes by gipsies caught,
Whilst heedless, near the woods, at play,
Stolen from their poor Mammas away,
Whose prayers, entreaties, all were vain,—
They ne'er beheld their home again.

Thus Robin thought, and ponder'd o'er
These things, till he dared think no more ;
But, bursting into heartfelt tears,
In bitter cries expressed his fears ;
Then to his side a matron came,
Her features ruddy with the flame
That, soaring bright and glowing, shed
A swarthy gleam across his bed ;
And deeper yet its shadows threw
On the torn cloak of scarlet hue,
That wrapp'd the figure, dark and wild,
That came to sooth the affrighted child.
“ Why do you cry ?” she kindly said,
“ There, go to sleep—don't be afraid,
My pretty boy—you need not fear ;
No living thing shall hurt you here.”

Like lightning, up young Robin sprung,
And, weeping, to her cloak he hung ;
With anguish shook his little frame.—
He strove to lisp his Mother's name,
But giddy pains oppress'd his head,—
He sunk down moaning on the bed ;

The gipsy raised him up and smiled,—
“Come, speak to me,—what ails thee,
child?”

Then, casting round a timid look,
And gathering courage, Robin spoke:—
“Oh! to my dearest Mother take
Her naughty boy, and for his sake
She will repay you o’er and o’er
With gold, till you shall ask no more.”—
“A simple child,” the gipsy said,—
This fever sure has turned his head;
I am your Mother; do not fear,
You have no other parents here.”—
“My Mother! oh, you are not she.”
My Mother is not dark, like thee;
Oh, no! no! no! she’s smart and fine,
Not clothed in filthy rags like thine.
Oh, dear! oh, dear! what shall I do?
I never, never, can love you!
And all your ugly folks I hate,—
Oh, send me back to sister Kate,
And Uncle James, and Mother dear:—
I hate you all—I won’t live here.

Oh ! had I never left my home,
To this vile place I ne'er had come."

His voice was choked with bursting tears,
But sleep reliev'd his childish fears ;
And, ere his rosy cheek was dry,
Deep slumbers closed each tearful eye.

The lark's shrill note is heard on high,
And calm the air—the bright blue sky
Now smiled on all—the midnight storm
Has vanish'd from the rosy morn ;
And sunbeams glisten brightly through
The lucid drops of pearly dew ;
And, forth from every bush and brake,
Small birds their daily concerts wake ;
And every tree and every flower
Smelt sweet from night's refreshing shower :
When Robin, on a donkey tied,
With two brown urchins by his side,

Slow through the woods, by break of day,
With the wild horde resumed his way.
In filthy rags now meanly dress'd,
No handsome clothes his rank confess'd:
A tattered cap his head upon,
To guard him from the noonday sun;
With unwash'd hands and uncomb'd hair,
And sorrowful dejected air;
With sullen scowl and head bent down,
And brow contracted to a frown;
With eyes that scorn'd his fallen state,—
Supine and wretched, Robin sat
On panniers swung at donkeys' side,
With a stout gipsy for his guide,
Who beat the lagging beasts along,
Until the open road they won.

Whilst Robin journey'd with the train
Of gipsy vagrants o'er the plain,
His poor Mamma, all wild with fear,
Beheld the shades of twilight near,

And her lov'd Robin was not found
In meadow, grove, or garden-ground ;
His name resounded through the air ;
No answer spoke—he was not there.
No more with little rake or spade,
Across his boyish shoulders laid,
He to that well-known voice had sprung,
And, laughing, round her garments hung.

Then came old Molly to the door,
And told her heavy grievance o'er,—
How Master Manners had o'erthrown,
With other boys, her stall, and strewn
The dirty street with cakes and toys :
She sought redress of such rude boys,
And their Mammams, she said, should pay
For all their wicked pranks that day.

Poor Mrs. Manners heard with grief,
And scarce could give the tale belief ;
But Uncle James, enraged, swore
To beat the culprits o'er and o'er,
And, snatching up his hat and cane,
He sought them through each dirty lane
And public street, but sought in vain.

His Mother, with increasing fright,
Beheld the deep'ning shades of night,
That brought the fearful tempest on,
But not to her fond arms her son.

'Twas then a friend the tidings brought,
That Rob was by the gipsies caught;
And Uncle James, by break of day,
With horse and chaise pursued his way,
And swore not once to look behind,
Till he the truant boy should find.

The noonday sun all warmly shone
The gipsy cavalcade upon,
When Uncle James the train o'ertook,
And, casting round a piercing look,
In rags and dirt his godson spied,
Upon a shabby donkey tied.
Like lightning from his seat he sprung,
His arms around the culprit flung;

Another moment served to raise
And place him safely in the chaise.
In spite of oaths and curses round,
He followed with one active bound ;
Then, sailor like, his nephew cheer'd—
His whip a ready passage clear'd ;
Without one word or more ado,
Dash'd boldly past the opposing crew.

Unconscious of his alter'd state,
Listless with pain poor Robin sat ;
Unheeded fell his Uncle's cheer
Upon his dull and heavy ear.
When Uncle sought his head to raise,
And met the vacant senseless gaze
That fell on his, with sudden start
He clasped the sufferer to his heart,
And saw, with grief, that heaven had sent
His disobedience punishment.
Soon stretch'd upon a restless bed,
Both days and weeks unheeded fled ;
And every moment, as it pass'd,
To his fond Mother seemed his last,

Who, trembling, fear'd each hard-drawn
breath

Would leave him cold and pale in death :

When hope once more upon her broke,

A favouring turn the crisis took ;

No more his cheek with fever burn'd,

As slowly health and sense return'd.

Now wrapp'd in flannel round, with care,

And seated in an easy chair,

With giddy head and grieved mind,

Sad and repentant Rob reclined ;

Meanwhile his Mother, at his side,

To cheer the weary moments tried,

Whilst he, attentive, bent to hear,

Repeated to his list'ning ear—

THE STORY OF PRINCE LIRIS AND HIS COMPANIONS.

THE eastern hills are tipp'd with light
In fairy lands, that gently rise,
And, bursting from the shades of night,
The rosy morning hies,
To shed its soft and tranquil beam,—
To bless that lovely shore ;
Revealing every silver stream,
Expanding every flower.
To greet the heavens' unclouded blue,
Gay birds their carols sing ;
And butterflies of glorious hue
Expand the purple wing,
To revel in the blossoms fair
Of flowers that never die ;
For all is soft and verdant there,
And shines eternally.

Oh ! beauteous are the forms that stray
Those waving woods among ;
That hail the glorious car of day,
Or float the stream along.
Nor far from hence a land appears,
For ever dark with gloom ;
It looks more like a vale of tears
That spreads beyond the tomb.
Dark rocks and precipices rise
Between this and the fairy shore,
Where never glorious sunbeam flies,
To gleam the doleful landscape o'er ;
But twilight ever spreads around
A heavy misty shade :
No flower upon the sterile ground
Its beauties e'er display'd ;
No moon its silver lustre brings
To gild the dismal scene ;
No bird its early matin sings,—
But shrieks are heard between
The hiss of snakes, the hoot of owls,
That swell the foggy air,
Whilst often yells and dismal howls
At midnight echo there.

The fays and fairies list with fear,
And seek each mossy cell,
When they those doleful accents hear,
Which there are known so well;
For goblin sprites at eve resort
In that unhallow'd shade;
Wild mischief is their only sport,
And pranks on mortals play'd.
There's Nimble Nip, their Elfin king,
And many a wicked sprite,
Who terror to the fairies bring,
And work them all despite!
And if a fairy child they saw,
Near Elfin land, at play,
They tried with every art to draw
And lure him far away :
Her child each fairy Mother taught
Far from these rocks to roam,
For, if the imps unguarded caught,
They dragg'd him to their home.

Prince Liris was the monarch's child,

A fay of high degree,

But he was daring, fierce, and wild,

And longed their pranks to see ;

And to the stream he often hied,

At midnight's solemn hour,

To watch them from the rushing tide

That parted either shore.

He knew his father's awful voice

Had charged him not to go ;

But follow'd still his headstrong choice,

Nor feared impending woe.

He saw their shadows in the stream,

Their elfin forms beheld,

As, sporting in the moon's pale beam,

They impish revels held ;

But not like spirits soft and fair,

In witching beauties dress'd :

A wild, grotesque, and monkey air,

Hobgoblin fiends confess'd.

Long dangling elf-lock deck'd each head,
Where asses' ears arise ;
Like bats, from either shoulder spread
Their wings of monstrous size.

With cloven hoofs and pig-like leer,
Long fur their bodies hide ;
With grinning mouths, from ear to ear,
And claws like cats' beside ;

With beards like goats, and whisking tails,
They caper o'er the ground,
Whilst peals of mirth or doleful wails
Among the rocks resound.

Prince Liris watch'd, with secret joy,
Their wild unhallow'd glee,
And, oh ! he was a naughty boy,
To wish like them to be.

The thought scarce form'd—with desperate leap
He sprang into the tide,
And, back the opposing billows beat,
Gain'd safe the other side.

With impish yell and joyful shout
The sprites around him spring,—
A chain his neck they throw about,
To drag him to their king.

Some pinch'd his dimpled hands—some tore
The ringlets of his hair,
As if a fiendish spite they bore
Those golden tresses fair.

With breathless speed they hurried on;
Some kicks and buffets gave :
The ignus fatuus bluely shone,
And led them to a cave.

On a toadstool of monstrous size,
Reclined in mimic state,
To the young fairy's mute surprise,
The Elfin monarch sat.

His misty robes all bluely shone,
A belt of flame his body braced,
His dark misshapen head a crown
Of marshy meteors graced.

And there he sat, whilst round him stream'd
Pale vapours and phosphoric light,
That through the dismal cavern gleam'd,
And gave the fiend to sight.

The dauntless fairy stood awhile
Before the Elfin throne,
And met with gay unclouded smile
The monarch's angry frown.

“ Bold fay,” he cried, “ what brought thee here,
Our Elfin land to roam ?
The sprite may tremble well with fear
Who hither dares to come.”

With that, his eyes Prince Liris raised,
And cast all dread aside ;
He boldly on the monarch gazed,
And dauntlessly replied—

“ I watch'd your revels from the shore,
I joyed your sport to see,
And I have swam yon torrent o'er,
To come and dwell with thee.”

He ceased ; the rocks with shouts resound ;

His limbs they now unchain ;

'Midst peals of mirth, his brows are crowned ;

They lead him o'er the plain,

In their wild land with them to dwell,

Their impish pranks to play :

Then louder rose their fiendish yell,—

They hurry now away,

The leather-winged bat to ride ;

The shrieking owls to scare ;

To send poor hedgehogs down the tide ;

To start the timid hare.

They rob the nimble squirrel's hoard,

His winter store to crack ;

In sleeping spaniels' ears they roar'd,

Or rode the wild goat's back ;

And, still to wanton mischief led,

Poor dormice they surprise,

Remorseless dragg'd from mossy bed,

To ope their drowsy eyes.

And if a sleek fair puss they saw
With mouse or bird at play,
Snatched from her angry outstretch'd paw,
They flung it far away.

Shouting, they chased the humble bee,
To steal its honied store ;
Then laugh'd with unrepressed glee,
When stings from wasps they tore.

To the grim spider's cunning net
Poor trembling flies they drove,
And lime for simple birds they set
Within the leafy grove.

In all their pranks, the foremost still,
Liris, alas ! was seen ;
Oh ! you would think no thought of ill
Could dwell with such a mien :

Such ease, such harmony and grace,
On every feature smiled,
That those who saw his blooming face
Would bless the princely child ;

But bad example ever will
The unguarded heart deceive,
And those who joy in doing ill
Will one day wake to grieve.

The imps and Liris, not content
Through woods and wilds to stray,
To mortal shores their course now bent,
More wanton pranks to play.

The trembling air their pinions bore,
As link'd now hand-in-hand
They pass'd o'er many a sea and shore,
Then paused on Albion's land ;

And there, 'midst boisterous peals of mirth,
O'er moonlight fields they bound ;
Their wild hoofs spurn the flowery earth,
And dash the dew's around.

To the lone churchyard now they hie,
The sexton to affright,
And, crouch'd beside a tombstone nigh,
Look hideous in the night.

“ He comes ! he comes ! with lantern now
Across the churchyard stile ;”
And there they chatter, mouth, and mow,
And grin and howl the while.

Struck wild with fright, his lantern falls ;
Trembling with fear, he flies ;
They, whilst for help he madly calls,
Pursue with impish cries :

Or, when a grave he digs with care,
With sudden bounce they start
In forms grotesque, the wretch to scare ;
Then, laughing loud, depart.

Now whisking o’er an old dame’s hearth,
Her worsted balls they hide ;
Then, bursting into peals of mirth,
They shout to hear her chide.

To love-lorn damsels’ beds they creep,
Where charms and spells are laid,
With spectres dire they haunt their sleep,
Or pinch the affrighted maid.

And now they rove the marshy mead,
A restless wandering fire,
Benighted travellers to mislead,
Then leave them in the mire.

Sometimes in lonely lanes they shriek
For help, and murder call ;
And when the spot the neighbours seek,
They find naught there at all.

Or, if returning late at night,
Through dreary paths, to home and sleep,
The trembling peasant they affright,
When forth from hollow trees they peep :

Then, frisking in the gay moonshine,
They caper in his way :
Like hogs they grunt, like dogs they whine,
And lead him far astray.

Thus on a lovely starry night
These imps their gambols play'd ;
Prince Liris paused with wild affright,—
An arm his course delay'd :

In vain he desperate upward springs,—
The fairy holds him fast;
The imps and Liris, chain'd, he brings
To Fairy Land at last.

Before his father's awful throne,
Fetter'd, the culprits stand;
They shrink before his angry frown,
And wait his dread command.

“ Liris !” the fairy monarch cried,
“ My most unworthy son,
Well may you seek your face to hide,
For all your mischiefs done;

My voice you dared to disobey,
With these vile sprites to roam;
Let all your beauty pass away;
Like them in form become.”

In vain the prince, imploring, wept:
Through all his fairy frame
The chilling mandate slowly crept,
And hideous he became.

“ Meet punishment your pranks shall have :
My fairy elves away ;
In yonder gloomy yawning cave,
Immerse them from the day.”

The mandate is obey'd ; and now,
In utter darkness hid,
'Midst bitter wails and shrieks of woe,
They mourn o'er what they did ;

And in that dreary loathsome place
Whole days and months they pass'd,
Before the fairy monarch's grace
Their freedom gave at last.

Prince Liris, when releas'd again,
For pardon now implored :
The monarch, to relieve his pain,
His fairy form restored ;

Yet bade him never more to stray
With wicked sprites from home,
For those with evil friends who play
Will bad as them become.

His Mother paused ; young Robin sighed,

Then meekly to her tale replied—

“ Ah ! well may you such stories tell ;

Mamma, I have not acted well :

Should Heaven restore me health again,

I never more will give you pain.”

THE END.

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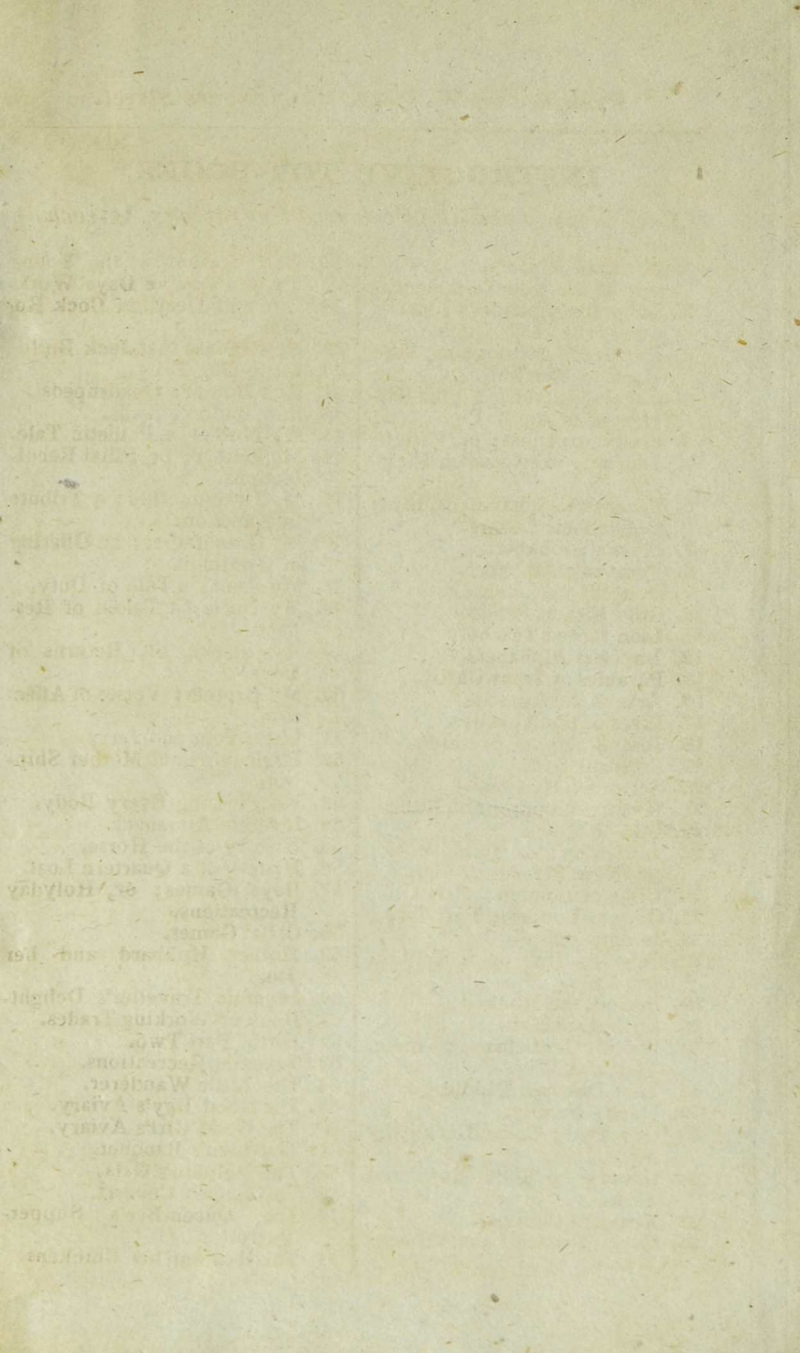
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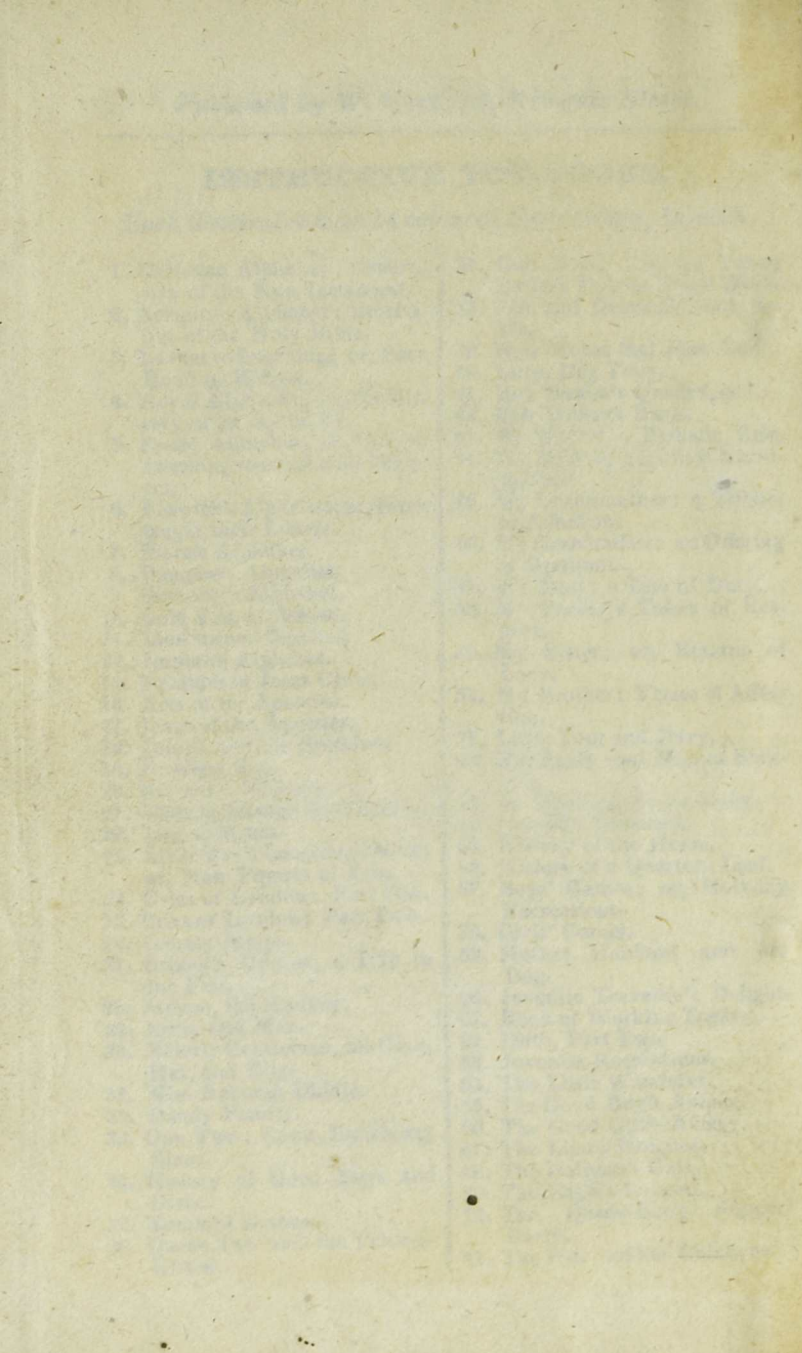
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