

ALFRED & THOMAS ;

To which is added,



THE BLACKSMITH.

Price Threepence.

FRONTISPIECE.



Blacksmith and Gentleman.

THE HISTORY
OF
ALFRED AND THOMAS;

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(Price Threepence.)

THE HISTORY

OF

THE EMANCIPATION

OF

(Price 10s. 6d.)

THE HISTORY
OF
ALFRED & THOMAS.



ALFRED and THOMAS were nearly of the same age, and loved each other from their earliest infancy. As their parents were close neighbours, they had opportunities of



being together every day. Mr. Chambers, the father of Alfred, had a place under government, the profits of which were immense ; but the father of Thomas, Mr. Marvel, possessed a moderate fortune, on which, however, he lived content, and all his views aimed at making his son happy, by the advantages of a well-directed education, since he had it not in his power to leave him great riches. To obtain this end, he made choice of means the most worthy of his prudence.



Thomas, at nine years of age, was formed to all the exercises of the body, and his understanding enriched with many useful acquirements. Being constantly in exercise and motion, he was healthy and robust. Always contented, and happy in the affection of his parents, he enjoyed a mild cheerfulness, which communicated its influence to those who had the happiness of being in his company. His little neighbour, Alfred, was one who



felt this happiness ; for the moment that Thomas left him, he would be quite at a loss for amusement. That his time might not hang wearisome, he was continually eating without being hungry, drinking without being dry, and dozing without being



sleepy ; so that scarcely a day passed but he was troubled with qualms of the stomach, or violent headaches. Alfred from the cradle had been bred up with the utmost delicacy ; he had always a servant behind him, to hand him a chair whenever he had a mind to change his seat, and was drest and undrest as if he had not the use of his hands. It seemed as if all those about him only breathed for him, and that he could not help himself to live.



While Thomas, in a thin linen jacket, was helping his father to cultivate a little garden for his amusement, Alfred, in a fine scarlet coat, was lolling in a chariot, paying morning visits with his mamma. If ever he went to take the country air, and alighted



out of the carriage but for a moment, they took particular care to put his great coat on, and an handkerchief round his head, for fear he should catch cold. Accustomed as he was to be humoured in his slightest fancies, he wished for every thing that he



saw ; but this wish lasted only for a moment ; and the more troublesome it was to procure him what he wished, the sooner he was tired of it. To spare him the least subject of ill-humour, his mother had ordered all the servants to respect even his follies. This ill-judged indulgence made him so whimsical and imperious, that every body in the house hated and despised him. Besides his parents, Thomas was the only person that loved him, and could patiently put up with his hu-



mours. He knew how to manage his temper, and could make him even good-humoured like himself.

‘How do you contrive to be always so merry,’ said Mr. Chambers to him one day. ‘I do not well know, Sir,’ answered he. ‘It comes of itself. But my papa tells me, that one is never perfectly happy without mixing a little work with one’s play. And I have observed it, too, whenever any strangers



come to our house, and we quit our work to entertain them; I never find my time hang heavy but on such days. I fear neither the winds, nor the rain, neither the heat of the day, nor the cold of the evening; and I have almost dug up a whole plat in my garden, before poor Alfred quits his

bed of a morning.' Mr. Chambers heaved a sigh ; and that very day he went to consult Mr. Marvel how he should act, in order to make his son as healthy and cheerful as Thomas. Mr. Marvel took pleasure in answering his questions, and laid before him the plan that he had followed. 'The powers of the body and mind,' said he, 'should be equally kept in exercise, unless they are meant to be unserviceable, as money buried in the ground

would be, even to its owner. Nothing can be imagined more prejudicial to the health and happiness of children, than to give them a pusillanimous turn, by using them to excessive delicacy; and, from a pernicious complaisance, to give way to their whimsical and obstinate humours. To what vexatious disappointments will not a man be exposed, who has been accustomed from his childhood to see even his own follies flattered! since of all the warmest wishes of his heart, he

may happen to see scarcely one accomplished, and thus be led basely to murmur against his destiny, when he should for the most part thank Heaven for rejecting his infatuated vows.' He added, with tokens of heart-felt satisfaction, that Thomas would certainly never be that unhappy person. Mr. Chambers was struck with this discourse, and resolved to conduct his son to happiness by the same way. Alas! it was too late. Alfred now was fourteen years old, and



his mind, so long enervated, could not bear any exertion, though ever so little fatiguing. His mother, as weak as himself, entreated her husband not to tease their darling. Her husband, wearied out with these entreaties, dropped the sensible



design that he had formed, and the darling sunk more and more into habits of pernicious effeminacy. Thus the strength of his body declined, in proportion as his mind was degraded by ignorance.

At length, when he had gained the age of seventeen, his parents sent him to the university, intending him afterwards for the study of the law. Thomas being destined for the same profession, accompanied his young friend.



I had forgot to mention that Thomas, in his different studies and acquirements, had never any other instructor than his father. Alfred had as many masters as there are different accomplishments to acquire; and he remembered a few of the terms used by each of them tolerably well. This was all the fruit of his studies. The understanding of Thomas, on the contrary, was like a garden, whose airy situation every where admits the kindly rays of the sun, and in



which every seed, by a judicious cultivation, comes rapidly to the growth. Already well instructed, he earnestly desired fresh knowledge. His diligence and good behaviour afforded a pattern for imitation to his companions. His mild temper, his lively apprehension, and joyous humour, made his company very attracting. Every body loved him, and wished to be his friend. Alfred at first was happy to be in the same lodging with him ; but very soon his pride, mortified by



the esteem that Thomas had acquired, would not suffer him to be longer a witness to it. He therefore separated from him upon a frivolous pretence. Being now left to himself, and his own vitiated taste, he sighed for pleasure, and thoughtlessly snatched at whatever seemed to offer her deceitful image to his view. I shall not attempt to describe to you how often he blushed for himself, and how from one imprudence to another, he fell at last into the grossest irregulari-



ties. It will suffice to inform you that he returned to his father's house with the seeds of a mortal distemper in his bosom ; that he languished six months on a bed of pain, and expired in the severest agonies.



Thomas came home to his parents, regretted both by his teachers and companions, and enriched with a treasure of learning and prudence. With what transports of joy was he received by his family ! Oh children, how sweet a thing it is to make ourselves beloved by all who know us, and at the same time to feel ourselves worthy of this universal affection ! His mother thought herself the happiest of women ; and tears of joy filled his father's eyes whenever he beheld him.



A considerable employment in his profession was conferred on him with the unanimous approbation of all who knew his character, and enabled him to gratify his ardent desire of promoting the happiness of his friends ; and he enjoyed their happiness as much as they did themselves. His parents shared the same generous sentiments, and lived in affluence to a good old age. He took pleasure in repaying them with interest the attentions which



they had shewed for him. A wife endowed with beauty and virtue, and children resembling himself, made his happiness complete.

Whenever, therefore, any man was mentioned as being both



happy and worthy to be so, the name of Thomas always occurred first to the thoughts of those who knew him.

The End of Alfred and Thomas.

THE BLACKSMITH.



A GENTLEMAN of fortune passing very late one night before a blacksmith's habitation, was surprised to see him busy at his forge, when every other person in the neighbourhood was gone to rest; as if twelve hours labour in the day would not



suffice him to provide subsistence for his family. ‘I do not work for myself,’ replied the blacksmith, ‘but for a neighbour here of mine, who has unfortunately been burnt out. Thus I work every day four hours extra, which amounts to two days in the course of a week, and the earnings of those two days I can yield to him.’ ‘This is very generous, my good friend, on your part,’ said the gentleman, ‘as I suppose your neighbour never will be able to repay your kind-



ness.’ ‘Truly, Sir, I fear he will not; but it is on his own account alone, not mine.’ At these words, the gentleman, not wishing to intrude upon the blacksmith any longer, wished him a good night, and went away. Upon the morrow, having put into his purse a twenty pound note, which he could well afford to give away, he meant to leave it with the blacksmith. But what was his surprise, when the blacksmith bade him take his money back again! ‘I cannot



lay it out,' said he, 'because I have not earned it. But you may make a better use, Sir, of this money, if you lend it, free of interest, to my unhappy neighbour. He might then recover his affairs, and I sleep out my bellyful.' The gentleman, with all his rhetoric, not being able to prevail upon the blacksmith to accept his offer, followed the advice that he gave him.

THE END.

