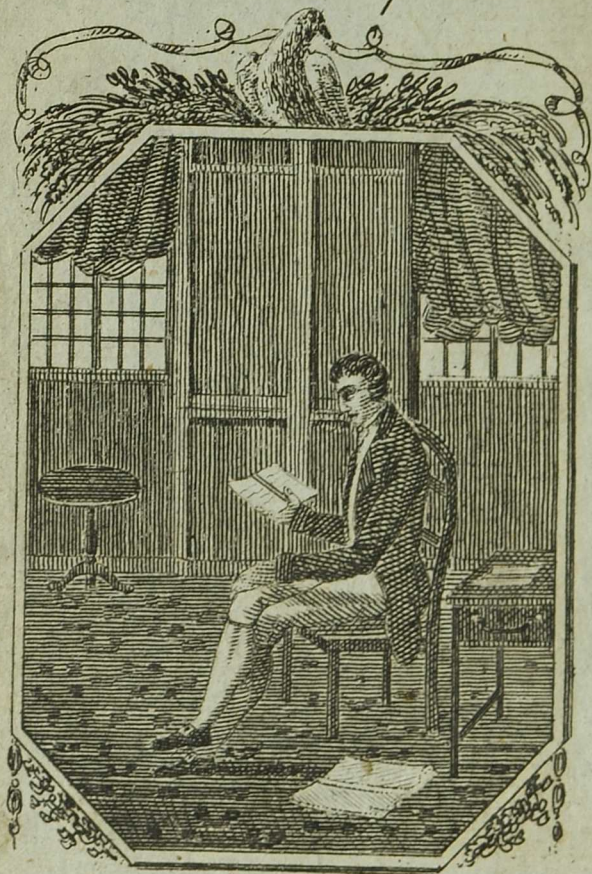


Frontispiece



*The Editor reflecting on the
history of the fly.*

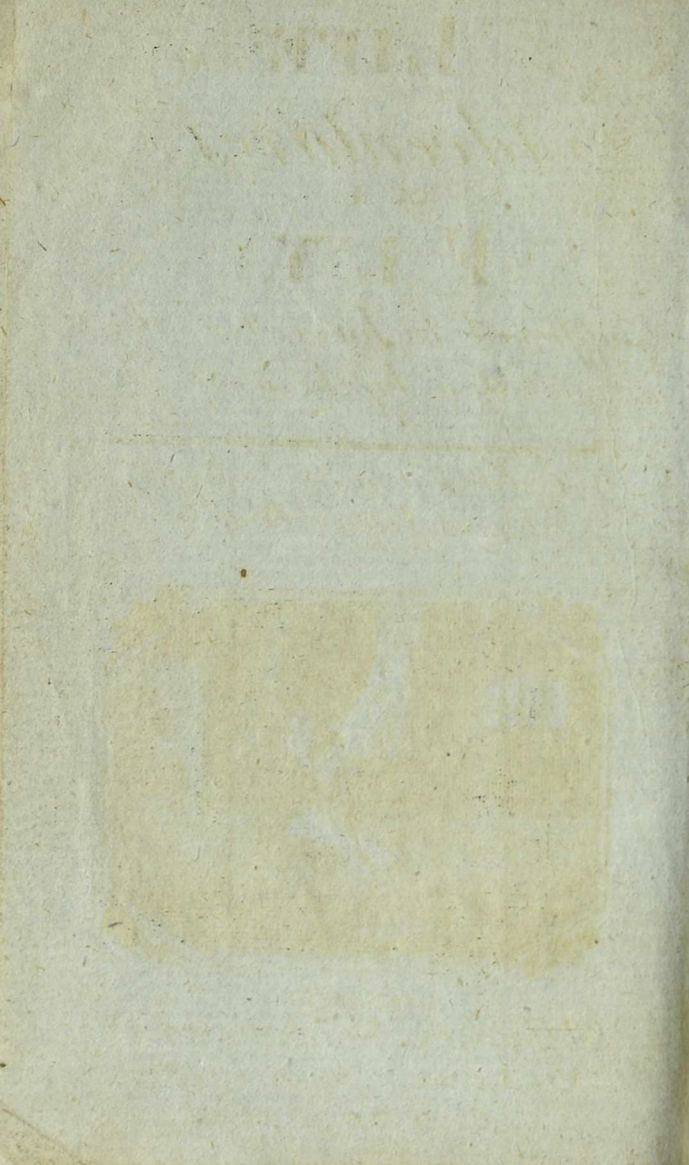
The **LIFE** *and*
Adventures
OF A
FLY

*supposed to have been
written by himself*

*Embellished with eight
elegant Copper Plates.*



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THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF A
FLY.

CHAP. I.

Introduction. Finding myself richer than my neighbours, I become proud; but my pride is soon humbled by a very natural, though an unexpected misfortune.—An Adventure.

IT will, no doubt, appear strange to you, my dear reader, that a fly should either write or talk, or even should understand those who

do; but I hope you will not therefore throw aside my book, which is written solely with a view to your pleasure and profit.

So long as you find yourself entertained with what I shall relate, it does not signify to you, how, or where, or when I learned to write. Perhaps I had a fairy for my friend, who gave me these faculties by touching me with her magic wand.

Since then, we are likely to remain in the dark as to this matter, I shall cease thinking of it, and I desire the reader will do so likewise, while I begin and pursue my history like a learned fly. And why not a learned *fly*, as well as a learned *horse*, a learned *pig*, or a sagacious *goose*?

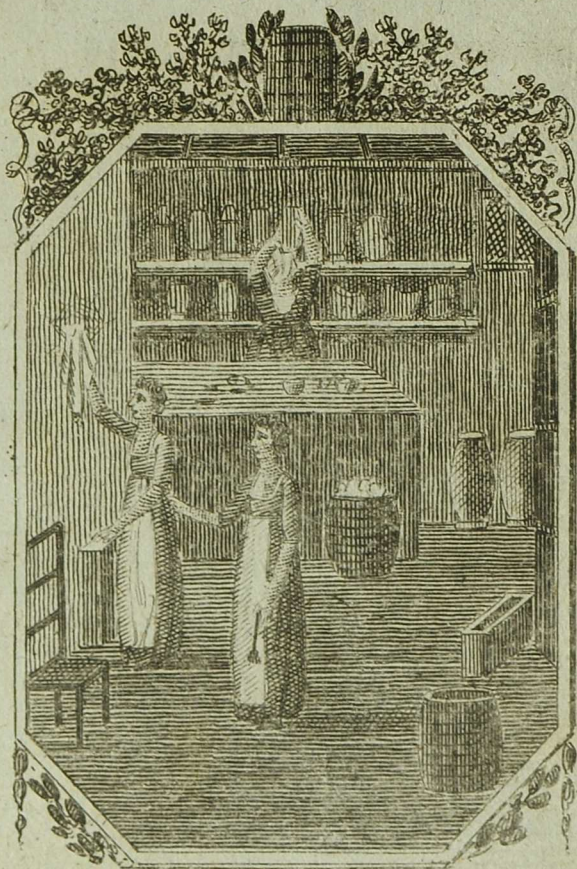
THE first time I remember to have seen the light was in the house of an eminent grocer in Westminster; here I found myself surrounded by sweets, and revelled in luxury, foolishly supposing, that being born to so plentiful an inheritance, I had no need to admit of any restraint upon my actions; that, as it was plain there would be always riches, (that is sugar and other sweets) enough for a thousand such as me, I might safely despise and insult those of my fellow-flies whom I saw confined to hard and scanty fare in the houses of neighbouring turners, ironmongers, and other tradesmen, in whose shops they could rarely find any thing that was eatable.

But I had not lived long in this manner, before I found that riches,

so far from placing me beyond the reach of misfortune, were ordained to be the punishment of my evil disposition.

It happened one morning, that having alighted on a pound of honey, which the grocer was weighing out to a customer, I was so greedily intent upon indulging my intemperate appetite, that I did not perceive, till it was too late, that I was made a close prisoner in the honey-pot, which was covered down with a stubborn piece of brown paper, and that again tied round with packthread.

I now for the first time felt, that though born in affluence, I was just as liable to the accidents of life, and the changes of fortune, as the meanest of those flies, whose poorer birth or harder lot I had affected to pity or to despise.



*The fly rescued from the Gripe of a
Spider by the kind hearted kitty.*

I lamented in very piteous strains the danger to which I was exposed by my imprudence and intemperance; but I lamented in vain; there was no possibility of escaping from the vessel in which I was confined; and here I remained great part of a whole day.

In the evening, however, I found I was to be taken out from my uncomfortable situation; but whether the change might be for the better or not, I did not know; but as I was almost suffocated where I was, I naturally thought that no change could be for the worse; and joyful was I when I heard somebody untying the packthread which confined me; but my joy was of short continuance, for when the cover was taken off, and I tried to escape, my legs and wings were

both so clammy, that I could neither walk nor fly ; but was taken out in a spoon by a child, who was looking another way while he did it, and in a moment pop was I in a cup of milk and water ! I cried as loud as I could : but the voice of a poor fly is seldom much regarded, and it was lucky for the reader of this book that the next minute had not hurried me down the throat of *Jackey Lovebook*.—Yes, reader, my good fortune (as it afterwards proved) had introduced me to a young worthy, whose character deserves to be handed down as a pattern to latest posterity.

It happened fortunately for me, that while I was in this spoon, and on the road to my death, he espied me struggling for my liberty and my life. With the sweetest look

of pity and benevolence (I shall never forget it?) he raised me with his pencil-case from a watery (or, to speak more truly, a milk and watery) grave.

Dear, generous boy! 'twas kind of thee; and may'st thou never, never, want a friend to assist thee, if Heaven should think fit to afflict thee!—I thank thee for thy charity.

In this house I lived an agreeable life enough, till one day, having flown into the kitchen, I found the servant maid reading a book at the time when I knew she ought to have been at work; now I was sensible this was wrong, and therefore ventured to give her a gentle hint by flying upon her nose, where I made such a buzzing, and such a tickling, that at last, in a rage, she clapped her hand upon me,

and vowed vengeance. My person was now in greater danger than it had ever been before ; but I trusted in Providence, and she was diverted from her revenge by hearing her mistress on the stairs : in a moment I was thrown one way and the book another ; and before her mistress came into the kitchen, *Betty* was scrubbing away, as busy as a bee.

Though I had been fortunate enough to escape once again from the perils and dangers which are perpetually hanging over us, yet I thought it would not be amiss to quit a place where I knew I had *one* enemy ; and therefore took an opportunity of settling upon the hat of a gentleman who came to the shop upon some business, and, trusting myself to the direction of

chance, resolved to go with him to his house, wherever it might be.

CHAP. II.

I am introduced into the Family of Sir PETER PRIDE, Knight.—A very curious Account of his Son PETER.

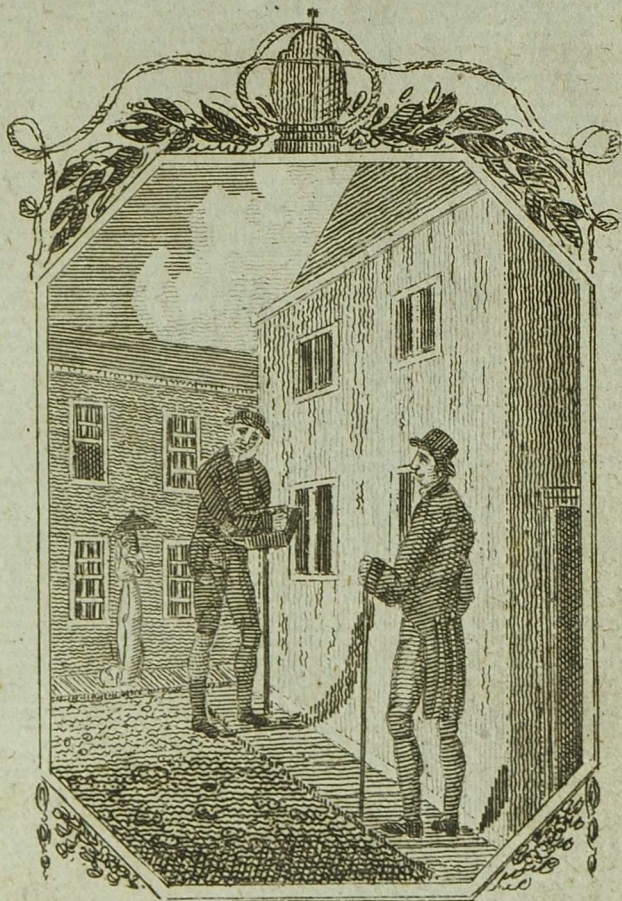
AFTER about a quarter of an hour's journey, I found I was entering the door of a rich man; but this consideration gave me no sort of pride, or extraordinary pleasure; for I had lived long enough to know, that goodness of heart does not always reside with the rich and powerful. It was therefore still a chance how I might be accommodated.

In two minutes after we had got in, the hat on which I was laid as snug as could be, was hung on a

brass hook pretty high in the room. From this exalted station, I had a perfect view of what was going forward.

My new landlord, I found, was Sir *Peter Pride*, knight; and his family consisted of a son and daughter, the latter of whom was at a boarding-school; his lady was not living. Upon these two children, of whom he was fond to an excess, Sir *Peter* lavished many pounds more than were necessary, and which ought rather to have relieved the hard lot of the neighbouring poor. The son of this gentleman was named *Peter*, after his papa, and was truly what the world call a spoiled child. He possessed hardly one quality that was laudable.

That *Peter* might at least appear to receive the education of a gen-



*The bricklayers Labourer leaning
on His hod of mortar.*



tleman, his father had engaged masters in the different branches of science to attend him at home; for he thought it beneath his son to mingle in the company of tradesmen's sons at a common school. Now you shall hear how much *Peter* learned in the week when he first began Latin.

On MONDAY, about eleven o'clock, the Latin master came, punctually to the time at which he was ordered to attend. *Peter*, however, had set up late on the Sunday night, and therefore he was not out of bed. The gentleman who was to teach him Latin was requested to come again. He came accordingly, but *Peter* was at dinner, and could not speak to him. A third time he came in the afternoon, but *Peter* was riding on his rocking-horse, and desired the

gentleman to be so good to come again to-morrow. So passed MONDAY.

TUESDAY morning, when his master came, *Peter* was catching flies; but this business (though it was one in which he took great delight) he was prevailed on to leave, and Mr. *Sermo* was introduced to him. As that gentleman entered the room, *Peter*, in a very impertinent manner, surveyed him from head to foot, then staring him full in the face, suddenly burst into a laugh. Rude as this behaviour appeared, Mr. *Sermo* was kind enough to impute it to a lively, humorous disposition in his pupil; but he did not then know so much of him as I did.

They both sat down, and, after a little talk by way of encouraging *Peter*, the gentleman gave him a

short lesson, beginning, “ *A noun* “ *is the name of a thing.*” *Peter*, who longed more for an opportunity of raising a foolish laugh than of profiting by the lessons of his instructor, mumbled the line several times over, and at last, with an impudent air, said, “ What “ thing, Sir!—Pray is a noun the “ name of a wig?”—The good-natured *Mr. Sermo*, tho’ rather displeased at the liberty his pupil took with him, yet overlooked it once more, in hopes of his amendment; but just as he was intreating him to be a little serious with his lesson, the servant came into the room, and said the dancing-master was below. “ Oh, oh,” said *Peter*, “ send him up, send him “ up; I’ll be whipt if I don’t ask “ *Mr. Lightfoot* if he knows what

“ sort of a thing a noun is ? ” The dancing-master no sooner entered the room, than *Peter* jumped up, and calling for his dancing pumps, told Mr. *Sermo*, that he believed he had better defer the Latin till to-morrow. “ And then,” added he, “ I will attack the noun fresh and fasting.” Away went Mr. *Sermo* ; and so passed TUESDAY.

The next morning, when Mr. *Sermo* came, he was told that Master *Peter* expected company, and, as they were to stay to dinner, perhaps it would be as well to let alone the Latin that day. Thus went WEDNESDAY.

Half the week was now gone, and nothing was done. However, Mr. *Sermo* attended on THURSDAY, and again they sat down to the table. *Peter* began again with that unfortunate lesson, “ *A noun is*

“ *the name of a thing* ; and all might have gone on very well, and *Peter* in five minutes might have been wiser than he was before ; but it appeared as if fortune had determined to tire out the patience of this tutor. Sir *Peter*, it seems, had promised his son, that he should go that day with him to see some fine sight—what it was I never could learn. Just as *Peter* had settled himself a little at his book, he unfortunately recollected, that he had not put on his silk stockings in the morning ; “ and that,” said he, “ Mr. *Sermo*, you know, “ is not to be neglected on any account ; but it will not take me “ three minutes just to change my “ stockings, and then I’ll be with “ you again.” Mr. *Sermo* waited a full hour, expecting the return

of his scholar; and there he might have waited till night, if he had not ventured to ring a bell which hung in the room for calling the servants, and being informed by the person who came up, that Master *Peter* and his papa had both been gone out for some time. Away went Mr. *Sermo*, and so went THURSDAY.

FRIDAY came, and with it came the learned Mr. *Sermo*. *Peter* made a sort of an apology (but it was a very lame one) for having left his master in the lurch the day before; but concluded with saying, “Sir, my papa is of opinion, that, as I have a sort of a head-ache to-day, it may hurt me to study; and so he has given me leave to amuse myself by painting and cutting out little pictures. See, Sir, I’ll shew



*M^{rs} Jones instructing
Miss Sukey.*



“ them all to *you*. Pray, Sir, are
 “ you any hand at cutting out ?”
 The tutor smiled at his folly ; but
 seeing very plainly that it would
 be in vain to say any thing in con-
 tradiction to his intentions, he went
 away. Thus passed FRIDAY.

When Mr. *Sermo* came the next
 day, he found that the servants
 were busy in cleaning the house ;
 and not being able to get to the
 room, for pails of water, and
 mops, and brushes, he asked to
 see Sir *Peter*. Sir *Peter* saw him
 and told him, as SATURDAY was
 but an odd day, and that every
 schoolboy had a half holiday on a
 SATURDAY, he thought they might
 postpone the Latin till MONDAY.

Mr. *Sermo*, finding that Master
Peter was not likely to do him
 much credit as a scholar, begged

leave to decline the office of instructing him, and took his leave, and, perching upon the hat which I knew covered a wise head, away I went, heartily displeased with the family of the *Prides*!

CHAP. III.

Characters in humble life delineated.

MR. *Sermo* now went home to his own house, where, when we arrived, as I saw that there were no children, I thought I should have few opportunities for observation: and as it was not my wish to lead an useless idle life, I flew upon the shoulder of a woman who had been employed in assisting the servant that day; and by this conveyance I was carried to a neighbouring chandler's shop, where hearing the

voice of children, I determined to take up my abode. Accordingly, winging my flight into a back-room, I lighted on a chimney piece. Here I remained to learn the dispositions of the younger part of the family, consisting of two little girls, as opposite in their tempers as good is from bad.

Sally, the elder, was a pert, saucy, indolent, untoward girl, and often provoked her poor mother to wish she had never been born. Indeed, it has been thought, that she would have been the means of breaking the good woman's heart, had not her affliction been in a great measure alleviated by the dutiful, diligent, and engaging behaviour of the younger, who was called *Kitty*; and who was sometimes serviceable in checking the designs of *Sally*, over whom it is

but justice to say, she had more influence than any body else. This I had soon occasion to be convinced was the case; and as I owe my life to the circumstance, I cannot pass over the matter very slightly. It happened as follows:

I had been among them two days, during which time, though I had the whole range of the shop, and have often been present at the opening of the barley sugar, and other such articles of temptation, yet I kept myself honest, in every sense of the word, subsisting merely upon the crumbs which lay about the counter and the floor. On the third day, while I was seriously attentive in making remarks on these two little folks, I was suddenly seized in the relentless gripe of a spider, the declared foe to all our race. The kind-





*The reward of
Learning & Virtue.*

hearted *Kitty* saw the transaction, and instantly set me free.

At this moment I found myself happily restored to liberty; and after humming a tune of gratitude around my charming deliverer, I flew away from the house.

CHAP. V.

Absolutely necessary to be read by all who say their prayers regularly as they ought; and who wish to be informed why they do so.

It was not many minutes before I found means to obtain footing in a new family. This was Mr. Jones's family, which was pretty large; but as I designed this work chiefly for the perusal and benefit of the *smaller* part of the world, I was most particular in my atten-

“ who made the world, and every
 “ thing that is in the world ; who,
 “ by the greatness of his power,
 “ continually supports it, and with-
 “ out whose support it would fall
 “ to pieces, and be then crumbled
 “ in dust. So great is his *power*.

“ The *wisdom* of God is no less
 “ astonishing than what I have told
 “ you of his *power*. As he sits
 “ upon his throne in Heaven, he
 “ can see at one moment all the
 “ inhabitants of the world ; nay,
 “ what is still more wonderful,
 “ though not less true, at the same
 “ time he sees their persons, he
 “ sees also their very hearts, and
 “ knows the most secret thoughts
 “ that pass in their minds. The
 “ good thoughts and actions of
 “ men he will reward gloriously
 “ after they die, and the bad will
 “ assuredly meet with his anger

“ and punishment. When we know
 “ this, and at the same time know
 “ the greatness of his *power*, how
 “ shall we dare to do a naughty
 “ action, or even to think an evil
 “ thought?

“ That the world might not do
 “ evil through ignorance of right
 “ or wrong, he caused a book to
 “ be written soon after the world
 “ was made, which every one
 “ should be able to read, and by
 “ reading should know what they
 “ must do to gain his favour, and
 “ what they ought not to do, for
 “ fear of incurring his dreadful
 “ anger.

“ This book is called the HOLY
 “ BIBLE—Holy, as being the gift
 “ of God to instruct the inhabi-
 “ tants of the earth. In this ex-
 “ cellent and entertaining book

“ you shall read, my dear, as soon
 “ as you are a little further ad-
 “ vanced at school.

By such discourse in a few short minutes did Mrs. Jones acquaint her young daughter with a matter of the highest importance in life ; and by enlarging upon it at different times, as she found her little capacity increase, she formed her mind to such a habit of goodness, as will, I doubt not, render her ever happy in herself, and beloved by her friends and acquaintance as long as she lives.

CHAP. VI.

Some Account of a Breaking-up.

I HAD seen, as the reader knows, many very different characters in the course of my past life ; but (as will always be the





*The officer of Justice dragging the
Poor Man to Gaol.*

case of folks who are desirous of becoming wise (thetmore I learned, still the more did I wish to learn, and to increase my stock of knowledge.

Again winging my flight, in a few minutes I perched on the shoulder of Master *Matthew Marvel*, who, with his friend and school-fellow, *Jackey Jumper*, I found were proceeding to school, full dressed, and in high glee, to celebrate a breaking-up for the holidays.

When we came within a few yards of the school, we were saluted, not by a volley of vulgar huzzas, but in a modest and respectful, yet cheerful manner, by a young gentleman, who, as I afterwards found, was at the head of the school in learning, though not

indeed in age, for there were many silly dunces older by some years than Master *Merit*. He appeared dressed in a suit of scarlet, with a handsome blue satin riband over his shoulder, which crossed his breast; from the middle of this riband hung a silver medal, which he had obtained from Mr. *Wiseman*, his school-master, as a prize for his extraordinary diligence and attention to his learning. On his head he wore a superb crown; this was a plume of the mingled feathers of a peacock and those of an ostrich, enclosed in a circular rim of gold wire, finely wrought, having a silver plate in front, on which was engraven this motto:

§ THE HONOURABLE REWARD OF §
§ LEARNING AND VIRTUE. §
§

In his hand he carried a wand of ebony tipt with silver, which it seems was intended to denote him master of the ceremonies.

Such was the dress and such the character of Master *Merit*; and many of my readers will, no doubt, regret that they did not belong to a school where merit received so amply its reward.

By this young gentleman we were introduced to the assembly, where my companions received the congratulations of Mr. *Wiseman*, who presented them with a slice of plum-cake and a glass of wine.

When the company was seated, some young ladies, who were present as visitors, sang sweetly to the music of a flute played by Master *Lovewell*; after this, Master *Airy*, a young gentleman of

only seven years of age, danced a hornpipe, to the admiration of all who were present.

After this, I left this little happy company to themselves, and in search of new adventures flew away. * * * *

CHAP. VII.

Conclusion by the Editor in a Dream.

WITH the foregoing Words, the Life and Adventures of our Fly conclude.

Having carefully and attentively perused the history which the reader has now gone through, I sat down seriously to reflect on the different matters recorded in it.

In doing this, however, I was overtaken with a heaviness, which

soon and insensibly threw me into a slumber. Those things which had so long occupied my waking thoughts, now presented themselves, in various and strong lights, to my mind in a *Dream*; which dream, though it had some of those extravagancies which commonly make up dreams, and for which philosophers have never been able satisfactorily to account; yet, as it seemed to have some connection with the subjects which have been treated on in the foregoing pages, I must yield to the impulse of my heart, and relate it to the little reader.

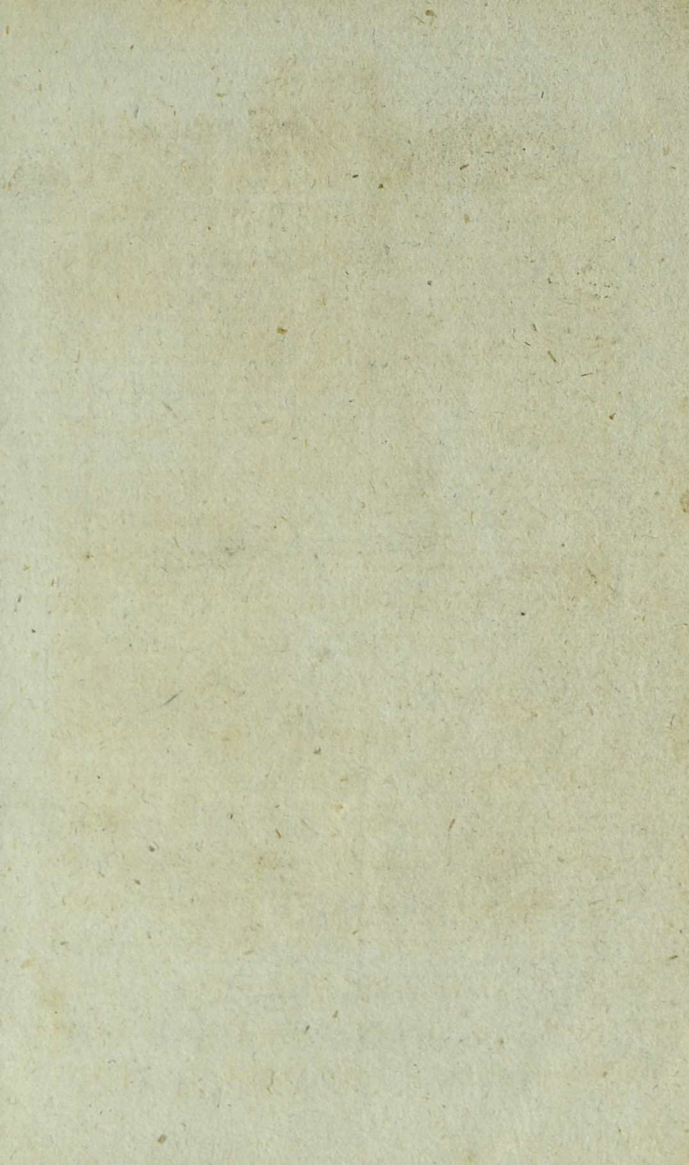
THE DREAM.

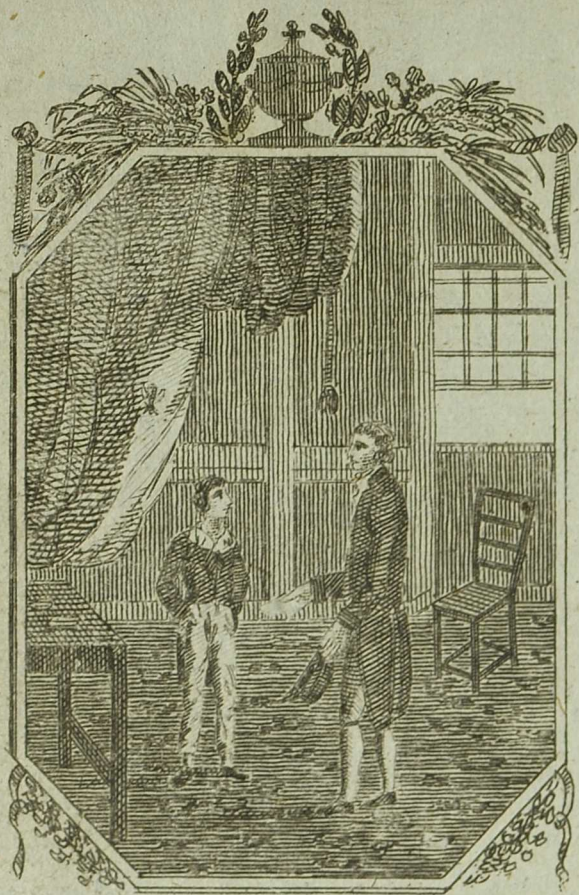
I thought that I saw, in passing through one of the streets which lead to the city, a poor man in the hands of an officer of justice, who

was taking him, regardless of his prayers and intreaties, to the common gaol.—“What injury,” said I to the officer, “has this poor man done to you, my friend, that you should use him thus hardly.”

“Done! Bless you, Master, he has done nothing to me: he owes money, Master; and more money than the rags would fetch which hang upon himself, his wife, and children, if we were to strip them to the skin.”

“And is it possible,” said a genteel young man in black, who had overheard what had passed, “is it possible that any one can be so inhuman as to tear a poor man from his wife and children, and that wife and those children perhaps naked, and perishing for want of food, and to throw





*Peter Pride surveying
M^r Sermo.*

“ him into a dungeon, where he
“ may die and rot unpitied and
“ unknown!—Will is death, and
“ the miserable groans of the poor
“ man’s helpless family, pay the
“ debt, or will they satisfy the mer-
“ ciless creditor?—Who is your
“ creditor?” said he to the poor
man; “ and how much is the debt
“ that is to deprive you perhaps of
“ liberty and life?”—“ My credi-
“ tor,” said he, “ is my landlord;
“ misfortunes which no man could
“ foresee, and losses which a poor
“ labouring man could not soon
“ repair, obliged me to let my rent
“ run on till it came to a year’s
“ money, which, though my family
“ and myself have used all honest
“ means to earn and to save for
“ him, we have not been able to
“ accomplish; and therefore he
“ has arrested me, depriving me

“ by these means of all power ever
 “ to pay the debt: though God
 “ knows,” added he, weeping bitterly, “ that I would work till my
 “ flesh dropped from my bones,
 “ sooner than any man should lose
 “ his right.”

“ Well,” said the young gentleman, “ suffer your prisoner to go
 “ home to his family, and I will
 “ satisfy his creditor, and repay
 “ your trouble.”—“ Where do you
 “ live, good man?” said he, turning to the poor debtor.—The poor man’s heart was full of gratitude—he wept, but could not utter a word.

“ I, ll shew you,” said the officer,
 “ if you’ll be so kind, Sir, as to
 “ look into their little affairs.—
 “ God Almighty, I’m sure, will
 “ never let you want a friend.”—
 Methought I now followed them,

resolving to see the virtue of charity displayed in all its beauty. As we walked, we came near to a bricklayer's labourer, leaning pensively upon his hod of mortar. I observed that he wept, though he took some pains to conceal it.

Curiosity (perhaps a nobler motive, compassion) induced me to step aside to inquire the cause that could so unman one whose profession seemed to imply hardships and dangers.

"Alas, Sir!" said the man, "you will, perhaps, hardly believe me, when I tell you that I was born to a plentiful inheritance, and bred up in an unlimited indulgence by a fond but mistaken father.

"Incredible as it may seem, Sir, I am the son of the late Sir *Peter Pride*, Knight.

“ My father, Sir, either by mis-
 “ fortunes, or by imprudence,
 “ which it does not become me to
 “ reflect on now he is no more,
 “ lost all his property, and was led
 “ by distraction to fly from his
 “ friends and country, leaving me
 “ and a sister wholly unprovided
 “ for, and ignorant of any re-
 “ sources.”

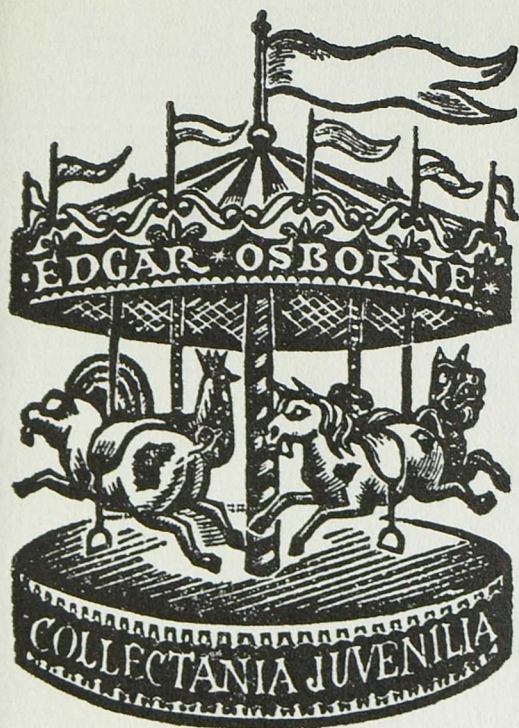
“ Poor man,” said I—(and I
 administered comfort to his afflict-
 ed heart)—so true is the saying
 (thought I, as I left him) that
 “ *Pride will surely meet its fall.*”

FINIS.

James Bailey
His Book

SB

dr



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