GAMMER GURTON'S PLEASANT STORIES & BALLADS

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GAMMER GURTON'S

Pleasant Stories

of Patient Grissel, The Princess Rosetta, & Robin Goodfellow, and Ballads of The Beggar's Daughter, The Babes in the Wood, and Fair Rosamond.

Newly Revised and Amended by

Printed for JOSEPH CUNDALL, *Old Bond St. in the City of Westminster.*

AMBROSE MERTON, GENT. F.S.A.

TO THE INDULGENT READER.

THIS Goodly Little Volume contains Histories, which, in bygone days, delighted the childhood of England's master-spirits. They formed a principal part of the intellectual food of children who, in their generation, became, as men and women, great, and wise, and good.

Their design is to cultivate the heart, to enrich the fancy, to stir up kindly feelings, to encourage a taste for the BEAUTIFUL, and to accomplish this by taking advantage of the youthful longing for amusement.

They have been prepared for the press by one who holds, that

> "*Truth and Good are one:*
> *And Beauty dwells in them and they in her,*
> *With like participation.*"

And who, in that faith, and in all hearty good will and affection, dedicates these world-renowned Stories to

THE PARENTS AND CHILDREN OF
MERRIE ENGLAND.

to it, by the desires and petitions of his people, who often importuned him thereto.

At last he consented to it; and fame soon spread the report abroad, and each princess was filled with hopes of being the Marquis's happy partner.

All this time, the Marquis continued his hunting; and usually resorted to a little village, not far from Salus, where lived a poor countryman, named Janicola, overworn in years, and overcome with distress; having nothing to make his life comfortable, but an only daughter, who was exceedingly beautiful, modest, and virtuous: but, as fire will not lie hid, where there is matter of combustibles, so virtue cannot be obscured, where there be tongues and ears; thus the report of her reached the Marquis. He, being satisfied of the truth, and finding her a fit woman to be his wife, resolved to forward the business. In the mean time, the court was furnished, and a crown and rich apparel prepared for the Queen; but who she was, the nobles all wondered, and the damsels marvelled, while the people in general flocked to see, who was to be the happy woman. At last, the nuptial day arrived: but who the Bride was, the next chapter must discover.

Chap. II.—*The Marquis demands and marries the old Man's Daughter.*

WHEN all things were prepared, the noble Marquis took with him a great company of earls, lords, knights, squires, gentlemen, ladies, and attendants, and went from the palace into the country, towards Janicola's house; where Grissel, the fair maid, ignorant of what had happened, or of what was to come, had made herself and house clean, determining, with the rest of the neighbouring maidens, to see the solemnity. At this instant the Marquis arrived with his company; and meeting Grissel, with two pitchers of water, which she was carrying home, asked her, where her father was. She answered, "In the house." "Go then," replied he, "and tell him I would speak with him." The poor man came forth to him, somewhat abashed, until the Marquis, taking him by the hand, said that he had a secret to impart to him; and taking him from the rest of the company, spoke to him in the following manner:

"Janicola, I know thou always lovedst me; and am satisfied thou dost not hate me now. You have

been pleased, when I have been pleased; and you will not now be sorrowful, if I am satisfied. Nay, I am sure, if it lies in your power, you will further my delight; I come with the intention of begging your daughter to be my wife; will you take me for your son-in-law, as I have chosen you for my father."

The poor old man was so astonished, that he could not speak for joy; but, when the ecstasy was over, he thus faintly replied:—"Most gracious sovereign, you are my lord, and therefore I must agree to your will; but you are generous, and therefore take her, and make me a glad father." "Why, then," quoth the Marquis, "let us enter your house, for I must ask her a question before you." So he went in; the company tarrying without, in vast astonishment.

The fair maid was busied, in making it as handsome as she could; so, the Marquis took hold of her hand, and used these speeches, "To tell you this blush becomes you, were but a folly; or, that your modesty has graced your comeliness, is unbecoming my greatness: but, in one word, your father and I have agreed to make you my wife, therefore delays shall not entangle you with suspicion, nor, two days longer protract our happiness. Only, I must be

satisfied in this, if your heart affords willing entertainment to the motion; and your virtue and constancy to the following resolution: that is, not to repine at my pleasure, in any thing, nor, presume on contradiction when I command; for as good soldiers must obey without disputing the business, so must virtuous wives dutifully consent without reproof. Therefore be advised how you answer; and I charge thee, take heed, that thy tongue utters no more than thy heart conceits."

All this time was Grissel wondering at these words; but, thinking nothing impossible with God, made the Marquis the following answer:

"My gracious lord, I am not ignorant of your greatness; and know my own weakness. There is nothing worthy in me to be your servant; therefore I can have no desert to be your wife. Notwithstanding, because God is the author of miracles, I yield to your pleasure, and praise him for the fortune. Only this I will be bold to say, that your will shall be my delight, and death shall be more welcome to me, than a word of displeasure against you."

After this, the ladies adorned Grissel with robes befitting her state: the Marquis and all the company returned back to Salus; where, in the cathedral, in

the sight of the people, according to the fulness of religious ceremonies, they were by the priest joined together.

CHAP. III.—*Lady Grissel's Patience tried by the Marquis.*

TO the other blessings, in process of time, there was added the birth of a daughter, which rejoiced the mother, and gladdened the father. The country triumphed; and the people clapped their hands for joy. Notwithstanding this, fortune had a trick to check Grissel's pride; and prosperity must be seasoned with crosses, for else it would corrupt us too much. It fell out, that the Marquis determined to prove his wife, and to make a trial of her virtues: and so, taking a convenient season, after the child was weaned, he one day repaired secretly to her chamber, and, seeming angry, imparted to her some of his mind; telling her, that to preserve amity between him and his people, who were determined that none of her posterity should rule over them, he must needs take away her daughter. The lady sorrowfully apprehended the Marquis's resolution, to

her grief, (though every word was like an arrow in her side,) yet admitted the temptation, disputing with herself to what end the virtues of patience, modesty, forbearance, fortitude, and magnanimity were ordained, if they had not proper subjects to work upon.

When the Marquis saw her constancy, he was pleased with her modest behaviour, and said but little at that time, but between joy and fear departed, resolving to make a farther trial of her love.

Chap. IV.—*The Marquis's Daughter is taken from her Mother, and sent to Bologna, to be there brought up.*

NOT long after this conference between the Marquis and his lady, he called a faithful servant, to whom he imparted what he meant to do with his child, and then sent him to his wife, with an angry message. When Grissel had heard him out, remembering the conference the Marquis had with her, and apprehending there was no room for dispute, but that the child was ordained to die, she took it up in her arms, and, with a mother's blessing, kissed it;

being not once amazed or troubled, since her lord would have it so; only she said, "I must, friend, entreat one thing at your hand, that, out of humanity and christian love, you leave not the body to be devoured by beasts and birds, for she is worthy of a grave." The man, having got the child, durst not tarry, but returned to his master, repeating every circumstance of her answer.

The Marquis, considering the great virtue of his wife, and looking on the beauty of his daughter, began to entertain some compassion, and to retract his wilfulness; but having, as he thought, so well began, he would not so soon give over, so, with the same secrecy he had taken her from his wife, sent her away to his sister, the Duchess of Bologna, with presents of worth, and letters of recommendation, containing in them the nature of the business, and the manner in which he wished the child to be brought up; which, she accordingly put into practice.

CHAP. V.—*The Marquis makes a further trial of his Wife's Patience.*

AS this patient and wonderful lady was, one day, sporting with her infant son, two years after it had passed the danger of a cradle, and the trouble of infancy, the Marquis, to put her to a further trial, sent again his former messenger, to demand that child also. Yet he, (as if there were a conscience in disquieting her greatness,) came forward with preambles, craving pardon of the lady, that his message might seem blameless. But he was not so sudden in his demand as she was in her dispatch; for she presently blessed, kissed, and gave him this child also; only she pleaded with the same enforcement, as she had spoken in behalf of her daughter, that he would not see it devoured, for lack of a grave. In like manner he returned to the Marquis, who had still more cause for astonishment, and less reason to abuse so obedient a wife. Nevertheless, for a time he sent this child also to his sister; who, understanding her brother's mind, brought up the children in such a manner, that though no man ever knew whose chil-

dren they were, yet they supposed them to belong to some great potentate.

By this time the Marquis' unkindness to his wife got spread among the people; who all admired, and wondered at her, for her constancy, patience, and love, for although he had more than once tried her patience, yet she never complained, but seemed to love him the more.

CHAP. VI.—*Grissel disrobed and sent home to her Father by her Husband; her Son and Daughter brought home under pretence of the Marquis marrying the latter: Grissel is sent for to make preparations, and her condescension thereon.*

AFTER this, the Marquis was resolved to put her to another trial; so sent for her clothes, and commanded her to go home again to her father's, disrobed of every thing. Accordingly, in the midst of the nobility, she disrobed herself, and returned back to her father's cottage, deploring, indeed, the alteration of her fortune, but smiling that her virtue was predominant over her passion. The nobles all

exclaimed against the cruelty of her lord; but she used no invective. They wondered at her so great patience and virtue; she answered, they were befitting a modest woman.

By this time they approached the house; and old Janicola, seeing his daughter so pitifully arrayed, amidst such honourable company, ran into the house, and brought her the robes she formerly wore; and putting them on her, said, "Now thou art in thy element;" and kissing her, bade her welcome.

The company were in amaze at his moderation, and wondered how nature could be so restrained from passion, and that any woman could have so much grace and virtue. In which amazement, not without some reprehension of fortune and their lord's cruelty, they left her, and returned to the palace, where they recounted to the Marquis, how she continued in her moderation and patience.

Not long after came the Duchess of Bologna, with her glorious company, she sending word beforehand she should be at Salus, on such a day. Whereupon, the Marquis sent a troop to welcome her, and prepared a court for her entertainment. While some of his courtiers condemned the Marquis, whilst others deplored his wife's misfortunes, all were transported

with the gallant youth, and comely virgin, that came along with the Duchess; the latter of whom, it was reported, the Marquis was going to marry. And neither the Duke, nor the Princess, knew themselves to be the children of the Marquis.

The next morning, after their arrival, the Marquis sent a messenger for Grissel, bidding her come and speak with him, just in the dress she then was; upon which, she immediately waited on her Lord. At her approach, he was somewhat abashed; but recovering his spirits, he thus addressed her.

"Grissel, the lady with whom I must marry, will be here to-morrow by this time; and the feast is prepared accordingly. Now, because there is none so well acquainted with the secrets of my palace, and disposition of myself, as you are, I would have you, for all this base attire, address your wisdom to the ordering of the business, appointing such officers as are befitting, and disposing of the rooms, according to the degrees, and estates, of the persons. In a word, let nothing be wanting, which may set forth my honour, and delight the people."

"My Lord," said she, "I ever told you, that I took pleasure in nothing, but your contentment, and in whatsoever might conform to your delight. Herein

consisted happiness; therefore make no question of my diligence and duty in this, or any thing, you shall please to impose upon me." And so, like a poor servant, she presently addressed herself to the business of the house, performing all things with such dispatch and quickness, that each one wondered at her goodness, and fair demeanour: and many murmured, to see her put to such a trial.

The day of the entertainment being come, when the fair lady approached, she looked so exceedingly beautiful, that some began not to blame the Marquis, for the change: while, Grissel, taking her by the hand, thus addressed her.

"Lady, if it were not his pleasure that may command to bid you welcome, yet, methinks, there is a kind of overruling grace from nature in you, which must extort a respect unto you. And, as to you, young Lord, I can say no more; but, if I might have my desires, they should be employed to secure your happiness. To the rest, I offer all that is fit for entertainment; hoping they will excuse whatever they see amiss." So saying, she conducted them to their several apartments, where they agreeably reposed themselves, till it was dinner time.

When all things were prepared, the Marquis sent

for his Grissel, and standing up, took her by the hand, and thus addressed himself to her.

"You see the lady is here I mean to marry; and the company assembled to witness it. Are you, therefore, contented I should thus dispose of myself? and do you, most quietly, submit to the alteration?" "My Lord," replied she, "before you all, in what as a woman, I might be found faulty, I will not now dispute; but, because I am your wife, and have devoted myself to obedience, I am resolved to delight myself in your pleasure; so, if this match be designed for your good, I am satisfied, and more than much contented. Only, great Lord, take care of one thing, that you try not your new bride, as you did your old wife; for she is young, and perhaps wants that patience, which poor I have possessed."

Chap. VII.—*The Marquis's Speech to his Wife; and the discovery of the Children.*

TILL this, the Marquis had held out bravely; but now, he could not forbear bursting into tears. After he had recovered himself, he thus addressed his patient wife, Grissel. "Thou wonder

of women! the champion of true virtue! I am ashamed of my imperfections, and tired with abusing thee; I have tried thee beyond all modesty. Believe me, therefore, I will have no wife but thyself, and, therefore, seeing that I have used you so unkindly heretofore, I protest never to disquiet thee any more; and wherein my cruelty extended against thee, in bereaving thee of thy children, my love shall now make amends, in restoring thee thy son and daughter; for this, my new bride, is our daughter, and this young lord, her brother. Thank this good lady, my sister, for bringing them up; and, this man, you know him well enough, for his secrecy. I have related the truth, and will confirm it with my honour, and this kiss; only sit down till the dinner is come, and then bid the company welcome, even in this poor array." The Marquis, thus tenderly treating her, and discovering who the young lord and lady were, gave the nobility a fresh opportunity to show their obedience; the which they immediately did to all three, and the dinner being over, none was so ready to attire Grissel, as her daughter, who was more glad than disappointed, at this so sudden a change. Janicola was sent for to court, and ever after he was the Marquis's counsellor. The

servant also was well rewarded for his fidelity; and the Dutchess returned to her palace, leaving her brother and sister to live and reign in peace. In length of time, the Marquis died, and Grissel lived thirty-three years after him; and then died in a good old age, being a pattern for all women.


H.C.MASON

THE ROMANTIC STORY OF THE PRINCESS ROSETTA.

ONCE upon a time there was a King and Queen, who had two fine boys. After awhile the Queen had a beautiful little girl, who was so pretty that it was impossible to see her without loving her. The Queen, having royally entertained all the fairies who came to see her on the occasion, said to them at their departure, "Pray do not forget your usual custom, but tell me what will happen to Rosetta?" for such was the name of the little princess. The fairies told her that they had forgotten to bring their conjuring books. "Ah!" said the Queen, "that forebodes no good. You do not wish to afflict me, by telling me her bad fate. But, pray do not conceal any thing from me; but tell me all." They tried hard to excuse themselves; but this only made the Queen more anxious to know what was to happen. At last, the chief fairy said to her, "We fear, Madam, that Rosetta will bring great misery upon her brothers; that they may even be put to death on her account. This is all that we

can foretell of this beautiful little girl, and we are very sorry that we have not better news to offer you." They then left her; and the Queen became so sorrowful, that the King noticed it, and asked her what was the matter. She replied, "That she had gone too near the fire, and had burned all the flax off her distaff." "Is that all?" said the King; and thereupon went to his stores, and brought her more flax than she could have spun in a hundred years.

The Queen was still sad, and the King asked her again what was the matter? She told him, "That as she was walking by the river, she had let one of her green satin slippers fall therein." "Is that all?" said the King. He immediately summoned all the shoe-makers in his kingdom, who made the Queen ten thousand slippers of the same material. Still the Queen remained inconsolable, and the King asked her a third time what was the matter? She said, "that eating too fast, she had swallowed the ring he had given her on their marriage." The King knew that she was not telling him the truth, for he had the ring in his possession; so he said to her "My dear wife, you are telling an untruth, here is your ring, which I had in my purse." The lady was shocked at being thus detected telling falsehoods (which is the most wicked thing in the world), and seeing that the King was angry told him what the fairies had predicted of the little Rosetta; and begged, that if he knew any means of preventing it, he would tell her. The King, much grieved at this, replied, "My dear, I know of no other means of saving the lives of our two sons, than by putting Rosetta to death, while she is yet in her cradle." But the Queen

declared she would rather suffer death herself, than consent to such cruelty; and begged him to find out some other means. While the King and Queen were still meditating on this subject, the Queen was told, that in a large wood near the town, there lived an old hermit, in a hollow tree, who was consulted by people far and near. Then she said, "I too must go and consult him; the fairies warned me of the evil, but they forgot to tell me how to remedy it."

So the next morning the Queen rose early, mounted a pretty white mule, whose shoes were of gold, and left the palace, accompanied by two of her maids of honour on beautiful steeds. When they reached the wood, the Queen and her maidens alighted, and sought the tree where the hermit lived. He did not like to see women; but when he perceived that it was the Queen, he said to her, "Madam, you are welcome; what do you wish to know?" She told him what the fairies had said about Rosetta, and asked his advice. He directed her to shut the princess in a tower, and never allow her to leave it. The Queen thanked him, rewarded him liberally, and rode home to tell the King.

The King upon hearing this, caused a large tower to be erected, and when it was finished, shut his daughter up in it; but, that she might not be lonely, he, the Queen, and the two young princes, Prince Royal and Prince Orlando, visited her every day. They both loved their sister passionately, for she was the fairest and the most sweet tempered girl, that ever was seen.

When she was fifteen years old, the King and Queen were taken very ill, and died nearly about the

pearls and diamonds; and she behaved so prettily, kissing her hand and curtsying whenever anything was presented to her, that all were delighted with her.

Meanwhile the King and the prince resolved to have a portrait taken of the Princess Rosetta. When they had had it painted, so beautifully that it only wanted speech, they said to her, "Rosetta, since you will only marry the King of the Peacocks, we are going to seek him for you, all over the world. We shall be very glad to find him; and in the mean time you must take care of our kingdom." Rosetta thanked them for the pains they were taking; assured them that she would govern the kingdom well, and that while they were gone her only pleasure would be looking at the beautiful peacock, and seeing Fretillon dance.

The two young princes then set forth on their journey; and at length reached the country they were in search of, and observed that all the trees were loaded with peacocks; the place being so full of them, that their voices might be heard six miles off.

When they arrived at the chief town, they observed that it was full of men and women, whose clothes were made of peacocks' feathers; and that peacocks' feathers were displayed every where, as very fine things. They met the King, who was taking an airing in a beautiful little carriage, made of gold, and set with diamonds, drawn by twelve peacocks; and who conjecturing that the two princes were foreigners, stopped his carriage and called them to him.

The King and the prince went up to him, and, having made an obeisance, said, "Sire, we have come

from afar to show you a portrait." They then took from their portmanteau the picture of Rosetta. When the King of the Peacocks had looked at it, "I cannot imagine," said he, "that there is in the world so beautiful a maiden." "The original is a hundred times more beautiful than the picture," said the King. "Ah! you are joking," said the King of the Peacocks. "Sire," said the prince, "here is my brother, who is a King like you: he is a King and I am a prince; our sister, whose portrait this is, is the Princess Rosetta: and we are come to ask you whether you are willing to marry her. She is very beautiful and very good, and we will give with her a bushel measure full of golden crowns." "Oh," said the King, "I will marry her with all my heart; and I will be fond of her, if she is as fair as her portrait; but if she be in the least degree less beautiful, I will put you to death." "Well, we consent," answered Rosetta's two brothers. "You consent?" said the King, "go then to prison, and remain there until the princess arrives." And the princes left him without a murmur, for they were convinced that Rosetta was far more handsome than her portrait. While they were in prison, the King often visited them, to see that they were well treated; while he kept in his room Rosetta's portrait, with which he was so infatuated, that he slept neither day nor night. Meanwhile the King and his brother wrote to the princess, desiring her to hasten to them with all speed, for they had found the King of the Peacocks.

When the Princess received the letter, she was delighted beyond measure; she told every body that the King of the Peacocks was found, and wished to

marry her. Bonfires were lighted, cannons fired, and sugar-plums and sweet-meats were universally eaten; and all who came to see the Princess during three days, were presented with bonbons, hypocras, and all sorts of nice things. Then leaving her prettiest dolls to her best friends, she placed the government in the hands of the wisest old men of the city; whom she recommended to take care of every thing, to spend nothing, and to collect plenty of money against the King's return. Lastly, she begged them to keep her peacock, and taking with her only her nurse and foster-sister, departed with her little green dog, Fretillon. They embarked on board a boat, taking with them a bushel of golden crowns, and clothes enough to last them ten years, if they changed them twice a day.

From time to time the nurse enquired of the captain, "Are we approaching the kingdom of the Peacocks?" And when at length he answered "Yes," the nurse came forward, seated herself by him, and said to him, "If you wish to make your fortune, to-night, while the Princess is asleep, you must help me to throw her overboard. When she is drowned I will dress my daughter in her fine clothes, and take her to the King of the Peacocks, who will be very glad to marry her; and for a reward, we will load you with diamonds." The sailor was very much surprised at the nurse's proposal, and told her that it would be a thousand pities to drown so beautiful a princess; but she gave him a bottle of wine, and made him drink so much, that he did not know how to refuse her.

When night came, the Princess went to bed as usual, and little Fretillon lay prettily at her feet,

without moving a paw. As soon as Rosetta was sound asleep, the wicked nurse brought the captain where the Princess was slumbering; and, without awakening her, they took and threw her, with her feather-bed, mattress, sheets, and counterpane, all into the sea; and the Princess was sleeping so soundly that she never woke. Fortunately her couch was made of phœnix-feathers, which have this property, that they cannot sink. This caused her to float in her bed, as though she had been in a boat. By degrees, however, the sea wetted her feather-bed, then the mattress, and at last Rosetta herself, who feeling the water, could not tell what it meant.

In the meanwhile the King of the Peacocks, whose country they were fast approaching, had sent to the sea-shore a hundred carriages, drawn by all manner of strange animals; such as lions, bears, stags, wolves, horses, oxen, asses, eagles, and peacocks; and the carriage intended for the Princess Rosetta, was drawn by six blue monkeys, who could dance on the tight rope, and play a thousand antics. Their harness was most superb, being made of crimson velvet, plated with gold. There were also sixty young ladies, whom the King had chosen to wait on her; their clothes were of all sorts of colours, and gold and silver were the least valuable of their ornaments.

The nurse had been at great trouble to decorate her daughter in Rosetta's finest gown, with a diamond head dress and lots of jewels. But in spite of her pains, her daughter was as ugly as an ape; her hair was black and woolly, and she was blear-eyed and bow-legged, and had a large hump between her

shoulders. She was ill-tempered, slovenly, and, what was worse, always grumbling.

When the King of the Peacocks' attendants saw her coming out of the vessel, they were so surprised that they could not speak. "What is the matter?" said she. "Are you all asleep? Make haste and bring me something to eat; you are a set of vulgar wretches, and I will have you all hanged." On hearing this, they said among themselves, "What an ugly creature! and she is as wicked as she is ugly. Our king will make a pretty match of it."

While all the peacocks, who were perched on the trees to salute her as she passed along, instead of crying, "Long live beautiful queen Rosetta!" when they saw her so ugly, cried, "Fie, fie, how ugly she is!" This put her into a violent passion, and she said to her guards, "Kill these saucy peacocks, who insult me so." But the peacocks quickly flew away, and laughed at her.

When they announced to the King that the Princess was drawing nigh, he said, "Did her brothers tell the truth? Is she more beautiful than her portrait?" "Sire," said a courtier, "it is enough if she is as good-looking." "Yes, indeed," said the King, "I shall be satisfied; let us go and see her:" for he guessed by the noise in the court-yard, that she was now very near, though he could not make out exactly what was said, excepting, "Dear me, how ugly she is!" He thought, however, that these observations applied to some dwarf or curious animal that she had brought with her; for it never once entered his head that they were spoken of the Princess herself.

The portrait of Rosetta was carried upon a long pole, so that every body might see it, and the King walked slowly after it, with all his barons, his peacocks, and the ambassadors from the neighbouring states. The King of the Peacocks was very impatient to see his dear Rosetta, but when he did see her, the sight nearly killed him. He tore his clothes, put himself into a most violent rage, and would not go near her ; she quite frightened him.

" What," said he, " have these two scoundrels that I have in prison, had the impudence to mock me, and to propose to marry me to such a baboon as that ? They shall be put to death. As for this silly woman and her nurse and all who brought them, away with them to the round tower."

In the meanwhile, the King and his brother, who knew that it was about the time that their sister should arrive, put on their gayest clothes to receive her. Instead, however, of finding themselves set at liberty, as they expected, the jailor came with a party of soldiers, and made them descend into a dismal dungeon, full of noxious reptiles, and where they were up to their necks in water.

At the end of three days, the King of the Peacocks came to an opening that was in the wall, to reproach them. " You have called yourselves King and prince," said he, " to entrap me into a marriage with your sister ; but the rope is twisting with which I will have you hanged." " King of the Peacocks," said our King, filled with indignation, " do nothing rashly in this affair, or you may repent it. I am, like you, a king, and will be revenged for this." When the King heard him speak so resolutely, he

began to think whether he should not spare their lives, and let them go with their sister; but his trusty friend, who was a thorough courtier, suggested that if he did not avenge the insult, all the world would laugh at him. So he vowed that he would not forgive them, and ordered them to be tried. Their trial did not last long, as to condemn them it was merely necessary to compare the portrait of Rosetta with the pretended Princess. They were, therefore, sentenced to be beheaded, for having promised the King in marriage a beautiful princess, and then giving him an ugly country girl.

This decree was read to them in due form; when they still protested, that their sister was a princess, more beautiful than the day, and demanded a respite of seven days, stating that in that time something might occur to establish their innocence. The King of the Peacocks, who was very angry, would hardly grant them this favour, but at last consented.

While all this was passing at the court, poor Princess Rosetta, who when it was daylight, had been very much surprised, as was Fretillon also, to find herself out at sea without a boat or any assistance, cried so pitifully, that all the fish were sorry for her. "Certainly," said she, "the King of the Peacocks must have condemned me to be thrown into the sea; he has repented of his bargain, and to get rid of me decently, ordered me to be drowned." Then she cried still more, for in spite of his supposed cruelty, she could not help loving him.

She remained two days floating in this manner, drenched to the skin, and nearly frozen with cold; indeed, had it not been for little Fretillon, who nest-

ling in her bosom, kept up a little warmth near her heart, she would have died a hundred times. She was dreadfully hungry too; when seeing some oysters in their shells, she took as many as she liked and ate them. Fretillon was not fond of oysters, however he was obliged to eat some, in order to keep himself alive. When night came on, Rosetta was very much alarmed, and said to her dog, "Dear Fretillon! pray keep barking, for fear the fishes should eat us up." So he barked all night long; and when morning broke, the princess' bed was not very far from the shore. Now there happened to dwell thereabouts a good old man, who lived by himself in a little cottage. He was very poor, and did not care for the things of this world. When he heard Fretillon bark, there being no dogs in those parts, he thought that some travellers had lost their way, and went out kindly to direct them. Suddenly he perceived the Princess floating on the sea, who, stretching her arms towards him, cried, "Good old man, save me, I pray you, or I shall perish." When he heard her speak so sadly, he pitied her misfortune, and fetching a long boat-hook, succeeded in dragging the bed to land. Rosetta and Fretillon were very glad to be once more on dry ground; the Princess was very thankful to the good man, and wrapping herself in a blanket, barefooted as she was, she entered his cottage, where he lighted a little fire of dry straw, and took out of his chest a woman's gown, with shoes and stockings, in which Rosetta dressed herself; clad thus, as a poor peasant girl, she was as beautiful as the day, and Fretillon danced round her for her amusement.

The old man saw plainly that Rosetta was a lady

of distinction; for her bed-clothes were embroidered with gold and silver, and her mattress was covered with satin; and he begged her to tell him her story, So she told him all, from beginning to end, crying bitterly all the while; for she still thought that the King of the Peacocks had ordered her to be drowned. "How shall we act, my child?" said the old man to her. "You are a noble Princess, used to good living, while I have only black bread and radishes: permit me to go and tell the King of the Peacocks that you are here; for were he once to see you, he would certainly be but too happy to marry you." "Alas! he is a wicked man," said Rosetta, "and would put me to death; but if you have a little basket, tie it round my dog's neck, and it is hard but he will bring us back something to eat."

The old man gave the Princess a basket, which she tied round Fretillon's neck, and said to him, "Go to the best saucepan in the city, and bring back whatever you find in it." Fretillon ran to the city, and there being no better kitchen than the king's, he went there, found out the best saucepan, and cleverly contrived to bring away its contents. Rosetta then said to him, "Go back to the pantry and fetch me the best you can find in it." Fretillon did so, and soon returned laden with as much white bread, wine, fruits, and sweet-meats, as he could carry.

When it was the King of the Peacocks' dinner-time, there was nothing in his saucepan, nothing in his pantry; the servants looked aghast, and the King got in a violent rage. "What," said he, "am I to have no dinner? let the spit be put to the fire, and let me have some nice roast meat this evening."

When evening came, the Princess said to Fretillon, "Go to the best kitchen in the city and fetch me a nice piece of roast meat." Fretillon did as he was bid; and thinking that the King's was the best kitchen, crept in very softly, and brought away all that was on the spit. He then returned with his basket full to the Princess, who sent him back again to the pantry; whence he brought all the King's stewed fruit and sugar-plums. The King, having had no dinner, wanted his supper early; but as there was nothing for him, he again put himself into a terrible passion, and went to bed supperless. The next day at dinner, and supper-time it was just the same; so that the King was three whole days without eating or drinking any thing. At last his trusty friend, who was afraid the King would die, hid himself in a corner of the kitchen, keeping his eyes fixed on the saucepan, which was boiling on the fire. How great was his surprise, when a little green dog, having only one ear, crept into the kitchen, went to the saucepan, took the meat out of it, and put it into his basket. Having followed the dog out of the town, right up to the old man's door, he returned and revealed all to the King, who was very much astonished, and ordered the dog to be sent for. His attendants went accordingly, and finding the old man and the Princess dining on the King's boiled meat, bound them with large ropes, and poor Fretillon also and brought them to the court.

When the King was informed of their arrival, he said, "To-morrow is the last day I granted to those insulting pretenders, and they shall die with the thieves who have stolen my dinner;" and then went into

his justice-hall. The old man threw himself on his knees, and said that he would tell the whole truth; and while he was speaking, the King looked at the beautiful Princess, and was moved by seeing her in tears. And when the good old man declared, that she was the real Princess Rosetta, who had been thrown into the sea, in spite of his weakness from having been so long without food, the King rushed to embrace her, and untying the ropes with which she was bound, told her that he loved her with all his heart. Her brothers, who were immediately sent for, thought that they were about to be put to death; they came very sorrowfully, hanging down their heads. At the same time the nurse and her daughter were sent for. When they met, they all recognised each other; Rosetta threw herself into her brothers' arms: the nurse, her daughter, and the skipper, knelt and asked for pardon. The joy was so great that they were forgiven by the King and the Princess; while the good old man was handsomely rewarded.

Moreover, the King of the Peacocks made every apology to Rosetta's brothers for his treatment of them. The nurse restored to Rosetta her fine clothes and the bushel of golden crowns, and the wedding-feast lasted a fortnight. Every body rejoiced, even little Fretillon, who never afterwards was fed on anything less dainty than partridge wings.


E. DALZIEL

THE MAD PRANKS OF ROBIN GOODFELLOW.

CHAPTER I.

Of the birth of Robin Goodfellow.

NCE upon a time, a great while ago, when men did eat more and drink less; about that time (whensoe'er it was), there was wont to walk many harmless spirits, called Fairies, dancing in brave order, in fairy rings, on green hills, with sweet music. Many mad pranks would they play, such as pinching of sluts black and blue, and misplacing things in ill ordered houses. But lovingly would they use wenches that cleanly were, giving them silver, and other pretty toys, which they would leave for them, sometimes in their shoes, sometimes in their pockets, sometimes in bright basins, and clean vessels.

Now the King of these Fairies fell in love with a fair young damsel, and every night with other fairies came to the house, and there danced in her chamber. At length this damsel had a baby, and the old women, that then had more wit than those who are

living now, and have none, bade her be of good comfort, for the child must needs be fortunate, who had so noble a father as a fairy was, and should work many strange wonders. The birth of this child so rejoiced his father's heart, that the mother was nightly supplied with every thing befitting her condition, and all kinds of dainties.

The gossips liked this fare so well, that she never wanted company. Wine had she of all sorts, as muskadine, sack, malmsley, and claret. This pleased her neighbours so well, that few that came to see her, but they had home with them a medicine for the fleas. Sweet-meats, too, they had in such abundance, that some of their teeth are spoilt to this day; and for music she wanted not, or any other thing she desired.

All praised this honest fairy for his care, and the child for his beauty, and the mother for a happy woman. In brief, christened he was, at the which all this good cheer was doubled, which made most of the women so wise, that they forgot to make themselves unready, and so lay in their clothes; and none of them the next day could remember the child's name but the clerk, and he may thank his book for it, or else it had been utterly lost. So much for the birth of little Robin.

Chap. II.—*Of Robin Goodfellow's behaviour when he was young.*

WHEN Robin was grown to six years of age, he was so knavish that all the neighbours did complain of him; for no sooner was his mother's

back turned, but he was in one knavish action or another, so that his mother was constrained (to avoid these complaints) to take him with her to market, or wheresoever she went or rid. But this helped little or nothing, for if he rid before her, then would he make mouths and ill favoured faces at those he met; if he rid behind her, then would he clap his hand on his tail, so that his mother was weary of the many complaints, that came against him; yet knew not how to beat him justly for it, because she never saw him do that which was worthy blows. The complaints were daily so renewed, that his mother promised him a whipping. Robin did not like that cheer, and therefore to avoid it he ran away, and left his mother a heavy woman for him.

Chap. III.—*How Robin Goodfellow dwelt with a Tailor.*

After that Robin Goodfellow had gone a great way from his mother's house, he began to be a-hungry, and going to a tailor's house, he asked something for God's sake. The tailor gave him meat; and understanding that he was masterless, he took him for his man, and Robin so plied his work that he got his master's love.

On a time, his master had a gown to make for a woman, and it was to be done that night. They both sat up late, so that they had done all but setting on the sleeves by twelve o'clock. His master then being sleepy, said, "Robin, whip thou on the sleeves and then come thou to bed. I will go to bed before." "I will," said Robin. So soon as his master was

gone, Robin hung up the gown, and taking both sleeves in his hands, he whipped and lashed them on the gown. So stood he till the morning that his master came down. His master seeing him stand in that fashion, asked him what he did? "Why," quoth he, "as you bid me whip on the sleeves." "Thou rogue," said his master, "I did mean that thou shouldest have set them on quickly and slightly." "I would you had said so," said Robin, "for then had I not lost all this sleep." To be short, his master was fain to do the work; but ere he had made an end of it the woman came for it, and with a loud voice chafed for her gown. The tailor thinking to please her, bid Robin fetch the remnants that they left yesterday (meaning thereby meat that was left); but Robin, to cross his master the more, brought down the remnants of the cloth, that was left of the gown. At the sight of this his master turned pale; but the woman was glad, saying, "I like this breakfast so well, that I will give you a pint of wine to it." She sent Robin for the wine, but he never returned again to his master.

Chap. IV.—*What happened to Robin Goodfellow after he went from the Tailor.*

AFTER Robin had travelled a good day's journey from his master's house, he sat down, and being weary, he fell asleep. No sooner had slumber taken full possession of him, and closed his long-opened eyelids, but he thought he saw many goodly proper personages in antic measures tripping about him, and withal, he heard such music as he thought,

that Orpheus, that famous Greek fiddler (had he been alive), compared to one of these, had been as infamous as a Welch harper, that plays for cheese and onions. As delights commonly last not long, so did these end sooner, than he would willingly they should have done; and for very grief he awaked; then found he lying by him a scroll, wherein was written these lines following, in golden letters:

Robin, my only son and heir,
How to live take thou no care:
By nature thou hast cunning shifts,
Which I'll increase with other gifts.
Wish what thou wilt, thou shalt it have.
And for to vex both fool and knave,
Thou hast the power to change thy shape,
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape.
Transformed thus, by any means
See none thou harm'st, but knaves and queans.
But love thou those that honest be,
And help them in necessity.
Do thus, and all the world shall know,
The pranks of Robin Goodfellow.
For by that name thou called shalt be,
To age's last posterity.
If thou observe my just command,
One day thou shalt see Fairyland!
This more I give, who tells thy pranks,
From those that hear them shall have thanks.

Robin having read this was very joyful, yet longed he to know whether he had this power or not; and to try it he wished for some meat: presently it was before him. Then wished he for beer and wine, he

straightway had it. This liked him well; and because he was weary, he wished himself a horse: no sooner was his wish ended but he was transformed, and seemed a horse of twenty pounds' price, and leaped and curveted as nimble as if he had been in stable, at rack and manger, a full month. Then wished he himself a dog, and was so; then a tree, and was so. So from one thing to another till he was certain, and well assured, that he could change himself to any thing whatsoever.

Chap. V.—*How Robin Goodfellow served a clownish fellow.*

ROBIN GOODFELLOW going over a field met with a clownish fellow, to whom he spoke in this manner. "Friend," quoth he, "what is a clock?" "A thing," answered the clown, "that shows the time of the day." "Why then," said Robin Goodfellow, "be thou a clock, and tell me what time of the day it is." "I owe thee not so much service," answered he again; "but because thou shalt think thyself beholden to me, know that it is the same time of the day, as it was yesterday at this time."

These cross answers vexed Robin Goodfellow, so that in himself he vowed to be revenged on him, which he did in this manner.

Robin Goodfellow turned himself into a bird, and followed this fellow who was going into a field, a little from that place, to catch a horse that was at grass. The horse being wild, ran over dike and hedge, and the fellow after, but to little purpose; for

the horse was too swift for him. Robin was glad of this occasion, for now, or never, was the time to put his revenge in action.

Presently Robin shaped himself like to the horse that the fellow followed, and so stood before the fellow, who straightway took hold of him and got on his back; but long had he not rid, but with a stumble, he hurled this churlish clown to the ground, that he almost broke his neck. Yet Robin took not this for a sufficient revenge for the cross answers he received; but, stood still and let the fellow mount him once more. In the way the fellow was to ride, was a great plash of water of a good depth; through this he must of necessity ride. No sooner was he in the midst of it but Robin Goodfellow left him, with nothing but a pack saddle betwixt his legs, and in the shape of a fish swam to the shore, and ran away laughing *ho, ho hoh*, leaving the poor fellow almost drowned.

CHAP. VI.—*How Robin Goodfellow helped a Maid to work.*

ROBIN GOODFELLOW oftentimes would in the night visit farmer's houses, and help the maids to break hemp, to bowlt, to dress flax, and to spin, and do other works; for he was excellent in every thing. One night he came to a farmer's house, where there was a good handsome maid. This maid having much work to do, Robin one night did help her, and in six hours did bowlt more than she could have done in twelve hours. The maid wondered the next day how her work came,

and to know the doer, she watched the next night that did follow. About twelve of the clock in came Robin, and fell to breaking of hemp, and for to delight himself he sang this mad song:

" *And can the physician make sick men well,*
And can the magician a fortune divine,
Without lily, germander, and sops in wine.
With sweet briar,
And bon-fire,
And strawberry wine,
And columbine.

Within and out, in and out, round as a ball,
With hither and thither, as straight as a line,
With lily, germander, and sops in wine.
With sweet briar, &c.

When Saturn did live, there lived no poor,
The King and the beggar with roots did dine,
With lily, germander, and sops in wine,
With sweet briar, &c."

The maid seeing him bare in clothes, pitied him, and against the next night provided him a waistcoat. Robin coming the next night to work, as he did before, espied the waistcoat, whereat he started, and said:

" *Because thou lay'st me himpen hampen,*
I will neither bowlt nor stampen.
'Tis not your garments, new or old,
That Robin loves, I feel no cold.
Had you left me milk or cream,
You should have had a pleasing dream.

Because you left no drop or crumb,
Robin never more will come."

So went he away laughing *ho, ho, hoh.* The maid was much grieved and discontented at his anger: for ever after she was fain to do her work herself, without the help of Robin Goodfellow.

Chap. VII.—*How Robin Goodfellow led a company of fellows out of their way.*

A COMPANY of young men, having been making merry with their sweethearts, were, at their coming home, to come over a heath. Robin Goodfellow knowing of it met them, and to make some pastime, he led them up and down the heath a whole night, so that they could not get out of it; for he went before them in the shape of a walking fire, which they all saw, and followed till the day did appear. Then Robin left them; and at his departure spake these words:

" *Get you home, you merry lads,*
Tell your mammies and your dads,
And all those that news desire,
How you saw a walking fire.
Wenches that do smile and lisp,
Use to call me Willy Wisp,
If that you but weary be,
It is sport alone for me.
Away unto your houses go,
And I'll go singing ho, ho, hoh!"

The fellows were glad that he was gone, for they

were all in a great fear that he would have done them some mischief.

CHAP. VIII.—*How King Oberon called Robin Goodfellow to dance.*

KING OBERON seeing Robin Goodfellow do so many honest and merry tricks, called him one night out of his bed with these words, saying:

"*Robin, my son, come quickly rise,*
First stretch, then yawn, and rub your eyes,
For thou must go with me to night,
To see and taste of my delight.
Quickly come, my wanton son,
'Twere time our sports were now begun."

Robin hearing this, rose and went to him. There were with King Oberon a great many fairies, all attired in green silk; all these with King Oberon did welcome Robin Goodfellow into their company. Oberon took Robin by the hand, and led him a dance. Their musician was little Tom Thumb, who had an excellent bagpipe. This pipe was so shrill and so sweet, that a Scottish pipe compared to it, would no more come near it, than a Jews' trump doth to an Irish harp. After they had danced, King Oberon spoke to his son, Robin Goodfellow, in this manner:

"*Whene'er you hear my piper blow,*
From thy bed see that thou go;
For nightly you must with us dance,
When we in circles round do prance.

I love thee, son, and by the hand
I carry thee to Fairyland,
Where thou shalt see what no man knows;
Such love to thee King Oberon owes."

So marched they in good manner, with their piper before, to Fairyland. There did King Oberon show Robin Goodfellow many secrets, which he never did open to the world.

CHAP. IX.—*How Robin Goodfellow was wont to walk in the night.*

ROBIN GOODFELLOW would many times walk in the night, with a broom on his shoulder, and cry Chimney sweep; but when any one did call him, then would he run away laughing *ho, ho, hoh*. Sometimes he would counterfeit a beggar, begging very pitifully; but when they came to give him an alms, he would run away laughing, as his manner was. Sometimes would he knock at men's doors, and when the servants came he would blow out the candle, if they were men; but if they were women, he would not only put out their light, but kiss them full sweetly, and then go away as his fashion was, *ho, ho, hoh*. Oftentimes would he sing at a door, like a singing man, and when they did come to give him his reward, he would turn his back and laugh. In these humours of his he had many pretty songs.

CHAP. X.—*How the Fairies called Robin Goodfellow to dance with them, and how they showed him their several conditions.*

ROBIN GOODFELLOW being walking one night, heard the excellent music of Tom Thumb's brave bagpipe; he remembering the sound went to the fairies; who, for joy that he was come, did circle him in, and in a ring did dance round about him. Robin Goodfellow, seeing their love to him, danced in the midst of them, and sang them this song:

Round about little ones, quick and nimble,
In and out, wheel about, run, hop, or amble,
Join your hands lovingly; well done, musician!
Mirth keepeth, man in health, like a physician.
Elves, urchins, goblins all, and little fairies
That do fillip, black, and pinch maids of the dairies,
Make a ring on the grass with your quick measures,
Tom shall play, and I'll sing, for all your pleasures,
Pinch and Patch, Gull and Grim,
Go you together,
For you can change your shapes
Like to the weather;
Sib and Tib, Licke and Lull,
You all have tricks too:
Little Tom Thumb, that pipes,
Shall go betwixt you.

Tom, tickle up thy pipes,
Till they be weary,
I will laugh oh, oh, hoh!
And make me merry.

Make a ring on this grass, with your quick measures,
Tom shall play, I will sing, for all your pleasures.

The moon shines fair and bright,
And the owl hollows;
Mortals now take their rest
Upon their pillows.
The bat's abroad likewise,
And the night raven,
Which doth use for to call
Men to death's haven.
Now the mice peep abroad,
And the cats take them.
Now do young maidens sleep,
Till their dreams wake them.

Make a ring on the grass, with your quick measures,
Tom shall play, I will sing, for all your pleasures.

Thus danced they a good space. At last they left, and sat down upon the grass, and to requite Robin Goodfellow's kindness, they promised to tell to him all the exploits that they were accustomed to do. Robin thanked them, and listened to them: and one began to tell his tricks in this manner.

The tricks of the Fairy called Pinch.

AFTER that we have danced in this manner, as you have beheld, I, that am called Pinch, do go about from house to house. Sometimes I find a slut sleeping in the chimney corner, when she should be washing of her dishes, her I pinch about the arms for not laying her arms to her labour. Some, I find in their bed snorting, and sleeping, and their houses lying as clean as a nasty dog's kennel; in one corner

bones, in another egg-shells, behind the door a heap of dust, the dishes under feet, and the cat in the cupboard: all these sluttish tricks I do reward with blue legs and blue arms.

But to the good I do no harm,
But cover them, and keep them warm;
Sluts and slovens I do pinch,
And make them in their beds to winch;
This is my practice and my trade,
Many have I cleanly made.

The tricks of the Fairy called Gull.

SOMETIMES I steal milk and cream, and then with my brothers, Patch, Pinch, and Grim; and my sisters, Sib, Tib, Licke, and Lull, I feast with my stolen goods, and our little piper hath his share in all our spoils.

What Gull can do I have you shown,
I am inferior unto none.
Command me, Robin, thou shalt know
That I for thee will ride or go;
I can do greater things than these
Upon the land, and on the seas.

The tricks of the Fairy called Grim.

I WALK with the owl, and make many to cry as loud as she doth hollow. Sometimes I do affright many simple people; for which, some have termed me, the Black Dog of Newgate. At the meetings of young men and maids, I many times am, and when they are in the midst of all their merriment, I come in, in some fearful shape, and affright them, and

then carry away their good cheer, and eat it with my fellow fairies. 'Tis I, that do like a screech-owl cry, at sick men's windows, which makes the hearers so fearful, that they say that the sick person cannot live. Many other ways have I to fright the simple, but the understanding man I cannot move to fear, because he knows I have no power to do hurt.

My nightly business I have told,
To play these tricks I use of old,
When candles burn both blue and dim,
Old folks will say here's Fairy Grim.
More tricks than these I use to do;
Hereat cry'd Robin ho, ho, hoh!

The tricks of the women Fairies, told by Sib.

To walk nightly, as do the men fairies, we use not; but now and then we go together, and at good housewives' fires we warm and dress our fairy children. If we find clean water, and clean towels, we leave them money, either in their basins or in their shoes; but if we find no clean water in their houses, we wash our children in their potage milk, or beer, or whate'er we find; while the sluts that leave not such things fitting, we carry to some river, and duck them over head and ears. We often use to dwell in some great hill, and from thence we do lend money to any that have need; but if they bring it not again, at the day appointed, we do not only punish them with pinching, but also in their goods, so that they never thrive, till they have paid us.

Tib and I the chiefest are,
And for all things do take care.

Licke is cook, and dresseth meat,
And fetcheth all things that we eat.
Lull is nurse, and tends the cradle,
And the babes doth dress and swaddle.
This little fellow, called Tom Thumb,
That is no bigger than a plum,
He is the porter to our gate;
For he doth let all in thereat,
And makes us merry with his play,
And merrily we spend the day.

Sib had no sooner ended these lines, but a shepherd blew up a bag-pipe. This so frightened Tom Thumb, that he could not tell what to do. The fairies seeing Tom Thumb in such a fear, punished the shepherd with his pipes' loss, which presently brake in his hand, to his great amazement. Hereat did Robin Goodfellow laugh *ho, ho, hoh!* and morning being come, they all hastened to Fairyland; where I think they yet remain.

The Rarest Ballad that ever was seen of the Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green.

Fit the First.

T was a blind beggar had long lost his sight,
He had a fair daughter of beauty most bright;
And many a gallant brave suitor had she,
For none was so comely as pretty Bessie.

And though she was of favour most fair,
Yet seeing she was but a poor beggar's heir,
Of ancient housekeepers despised was she,
Whose sons came as suitors to pretty Bessie.

The Blind Beggar's Daughter

Wherefore in great sorrow fair Bessie did say,
"Good father and mother, let me go away
To seek out my fortune, whatever it be."
This suit then they granted to pretty Bessie.

Then Bessie that was of beauty so bright,
All clad in gray russet, and late in the night,
From father and mother alone parted she,
Who sighed and sobbed for pretty Bessie.

She went till she came to Stratford-le-Bow;
Then knew she not whither, nor which way to go:
With tears she lamented her hard destiny,
So sad and so heavy was pretty Bessie.

She kept on her journey until it was day,
And went unto Rumford along the highway;
Where at the Queen's Arms entertained was she,
So fair and well favoured was pretty Bessie.

She had not been there a month to an end,
But master and mistress and all was her friend:
And every brave gallant that once did her see,
Was straightway enamoured of pretty Bessie.

Great gifts they did send her of silver and gold,
And in their songs daily her love was extolled ;
Her beauty was blazed in every degree,
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessie.

The young men of Rumford in her had their joy ;
She showed herself courteous, and modestly coy ;
And at her commandment still would they be,
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessie.

Four suitors at once unto her did go ;
They craved her favour, but still she said " No ;
I would not wish gentles to marry with me ;"
Yet ever they honoured pretty Bessie.

The first of them was a gallant young knight,
And he came unto her disguised in the night :
The second a gentleman of good degree,
Who wooed and sued for pretty Bessie.

A merchant of London, whose wealth was not small,
He was the third suitor, and proper withal :
Her master's own son the fourth man must be,
Who swore he would die for pretty Bessie.

The Blind Beggar's Daughter

" And if thou wilt marry with me," quoth the knight,
" I'll make thee a lady with joy and delight;
My heart's so enthralled by thy beauty,
That soon I shall die for pretty Bessie."

The gentleman said, " Come, marry with me,
As fine as a lady my Bessie shall be;
My life is distressed: oh hear me," quoth he;
" And grant me thy love, my pretty Bessie."

" Let me be thy husband," the merchant did say,
" Thou shalt live in London both gallant and gay;
My ships shall bring home rich jewels for thee,
And I will for ever love pretty Bessie."

Then Bessie she sighed, and thus she did say:
" My father and mother I mean to obey;
First get their good-will, and be faithful to me,
And you shall enjoy your pretty Bessie."

To every one this answer she made;
Wherefore unto her they joyfully said—
" This thing to fulfil we all do agree;
But where dwells thy father, my pretty Bessie?"

"My father," she said, "is soon to be seen;
The silly blind beggar of Bethnal-Green,
That daily sits begging there for charitie,
He is the good father of pretty Bessie.

His marks and his tokens are known full well;
He always is led with a dog and a bell:
A silly old man, God knoweth, is he,
Yet he is the father of pretty Bessie."

"Nay, then," quoth the merchant, "thou art not for me:"
"Nor yet," said the innholder, "my wife shalt thou be:"
"I loathe," said the gentle, "a beggar's degree,
And therefore adieu, my pretty Bessie!"

"Why, then," quoth the knight, "hap better or worse,
I weigh not true love by the weight of the purse,
And beauty is beauty in every degree;
Then welcome to me, my pretty Bessie.

With thee to thy father forthwith I will go."
"Nay, soft," said his kinsmen, "it must not be so;
A poor beggar's daughter no lady shall be,
Then take thy adieu of pretty Bessie."

The Blind Beggar's Daughter

But soon after this, by break of the day,
The knight had from Rumford stole Bessie away.
The young men of Rumford, as thick as might be,
Rode after to fetch again pretty Bessie.

As swift as the wind to ride they were seen,
Until they came near unto Bethnal-Green ;
And as the knight lighted most courteously,
They all fought against him for pretty Bessie.

But rescue came speedily over the plain,
Or else the young knight for his love had been slain.
This fray being ended, then straightway d'ye see
His kinsmen come railing at pretty Bessie.

Then spake the blind beggar, " Although I be poor,
Yet rail not against my child at my own door ;
Though she be not decked in velvet and pearl,
Yet I will drop angels with you for my girl.

And then if my gold may better her birth,
And equal the gold that you lay on the earth,
Then neither rail nor grudge you to see
The blind beggar's daughter a lady to be.

But first you shall promise, and have it well known,
The gold that you drop shall all be your own."
With that they replied, " Contented be we."
" Then here's," quoth the beggar, " for pretty Bessie."

With that an angel he cast on the ground,
And dropped in angels full three thousand pound;
And oftentimes it was proved most plain,
For the gentlemen's one the beggar dropped twain:

So that the place wherein they did sit,
With gold it was covered every whit;
The gentlemen then having dropt all their store,
Said, " Now, beggar, hold, for we have no more.

Well hast thou fulfilled thy promise aright."
" Then marry," quoth he, " my girl to this knight;
And here," added he, " I will now throw you down
A hundred pounds more to buy her a gown."

The gentlemen all, that this treasure had seen,
Admired the beggar of Bethnal-Green;
And all those that were her suitors before,
Their flesh for very anger they tore.

Thus was fair Bessie matched to the knight,
And then made a lady in others' despite:
A fairer lady there never was seen,
Than the blind beggar's daughter of Bethnal-Green.

But of their sumptuous marriage and feast,
What brave lords and knights thither were prest,
The second fit shall set forth to your sight,
With marvellous pleasure and wished delight.

Fit the Second.

Of a blind beggar's daughter most fair and most bright,
That late was betrothed unto a young knight,
The discourse thereof you lately did see,
But now comes the wedding of pretty Bessie.

Within a gorgeous palace most brave,
Adorn'd with all the cost they could have,
This wedding was kept most sumptuously,
And all for the credit of pretty Bessie.

All kinds of dainties and delicates sweet
Were bought to the banquet, as it was most meet;
Partridge, and plover, and venison most free,
Against the brave wedding of pretty Bessie.

This wedding through England was spread by report,
So that a great number thereto did resort
Of nobles and gentles in every degree,
And all for the fame of pretty Bessie.

To church then went this gallant young knight;
His bride followed after, a lady most bright,
With troops of fair ladies, the like ne'er was seen,
As went with sweet Bessie of Bethnal-Green.

This marriage being solemnised then,
With music performed by the skilfullest men,
The nobles and gentles sat down at that tide,
Each one admiring the beautiful bride.

Now, after the sumptuous dinner was done,
To talk and to reason a number begun;
They talked of the blind beggar's daughter most bright,
And what with his daughter he gave to the knight.

The Blind Beggar's Daughter

Then spake the nobles, "Much marvel have we
This jolly blind beggar we cannot here see."
"My lords," said the bride, "my father's so base,
He is loath with his presence these states to disgrace."

"The praise of a woman in question to bring
Before her own face were a flattering thing;
But we think thy father's baseness," said they,
"Might by thy beauty be clean put away."

They had no sooner these pleasant words spoke,
But in comes the beggar clad in a silk cloak;
A fair velvet cap, and a feather had he;
And now a musician forsooth he would be.

He had a dainty lute under his arm,
He touched the strings, which made such a charm,
Said, "Please you to hear any music of me,
I'll sing you a song of pretty Bessie."

With that his lute he twanged straightway,
And thereon began most sweetly to play;
And after that lessons were played two or three,
He strained out this song most delicately.

" A poor beggar's daughter did dwell on a green,
Who for her fairness might well be a queen;
A blithe bonny lassie, and a dainty was she,
And many one called her pretty Bessie.

Her father he had no goods nor no land,
But begged for a penny all day with his hand;
And yet to her marriage he gave thousands three,
And still he hath somewhat for pretty Bessie.

And if any one here her birth do disdain,
Her father is ready with might and with main,
To prove she is come of noble degree;
Therefore never flout at pretty Bessie."

With that the lords and the company round
With hearty laughter were ready to swound;
At last said the lords, " Full well we may see
The bride and the beggar's beholden to thee."

On this the bride all blushing did rise,
The pearly drops standing within her fair eyes;
" Oh pardon my father, brave nobles," saith she,
" That through blind affection thus doteth on me."

The Blind Beggar's Daughter

" If this be thy father," the nobles did say,
" Well may he be proud of this happy day;
Yet by his countenance well may we see,
His birth and his fortune did never agree;

And therefore, blind man, we pray thee take care,
(And look that the truth thou to us do declare),
Thy birth and thy parentage, what it may be,
For the love that thou bearest to pretty Bessie."

" Then give me leave nobles and gentles each one,
One song more to sing, and then I have done;
And if that It may not win good report,
Then do not give me a groat for my sport.

[Sir Simon de Montfort my subject shall be,
Once chief of all the great barons was he;
Yet fortune so cruel this lord did abase,
Now lost and forgotten are he and his race.

When the barons in arms did King Henry oppose,
Sir Simon de Montfort their leader they chose;
A leader of courage undaunted was he,
And ofttimes he made their enemies flee.

At length in the battle on Evesham plain,
The barons were routed, and Montfort was slain;
Most fatal that battle did prove unto thee,
Though thou was not born then, my pretty Bessie!

Along with the nobles that fell at that tide,
His eldest son Henry, who fought by his side,
Was felled by a blow he received in the fight,
A blow that deprived him for ever of sight.

Among the dead bodies all lifeless he lay,
Till evening drew on of the following day,
When by a young lady discovered was he,
And this was thy mother, my pretty Bessie.

A baron's fair daughter stepped forth in the night
To search for her father, who fell in the fight,
And seeing young Montfort, where gasping he lay,
Was moved with pity, and brought him away.

In secret she nursed him, and 'suaged his pain,
While he through the realm was believed to be slain;
At length his fair bride she consented to be,
And made him glad father of pretty Bessie.

And now lest our foes our lives should betray,
We clothed ourselves in beggar's array;
Her jewels she sold, and hither came we,
All our comfort and care was our pretty Bessie.

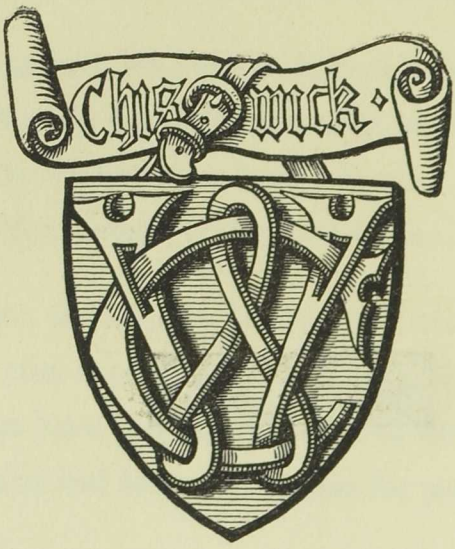
And here have we lived in fortune's despite,
Though poor, yet contented with humble delight;
Full forty winters thus have I been
A silly blind beggar of Bethnal-Green.]

And here, noble lords, is ended the song
Of one that once to your own rank did belong;
And thus have you learned a secret from me,
That ne'er had been known but for pretty Bessie."

Now when the fair company every one,
Had heard the strange tale in the song he had shown,
They all were amazed, as well they might be,
Both at the blind beggar and pretty Bessie.

With that the fair bride they all did embrace,
Saying, "Sure thou art come of an honourable race;
Thy father likewise is of noble degree,
And thou art well worthy a lady to be."

Thus was the feast ended with joy and delight;
A bridegroom most happy then was the young knight;
In joy and felicity long lived he
All with his fair lady, the pretty Bessie.



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1845.


G. DALZIEL. Sc.

THE DOLEFUL STORY OF THE BABES IN THE WOOD.

NOW ponder well, you parents dear,
These words which I shall write:
A doleful story you shall hear,
In time brought forth to light.

A Gentleman of good account
In Norfolk dwelt of late,
Who did in honour far surmount
Most men of his estate.

Sore sick he was, and like to die,
No help his life could save;
His wife by him as sick did lie,
And both possessed one grave;

No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kind;
In love they lived, in love they died,
And left two babes behind.

The one a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three years old;
The other a girl, more young than he,
And framed in beauty's mould.
The father left his little son,
As plainly doth appear,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred pounds a year.

And to his little daughter, Jane,
Five hundred pounds in gold,
To be paid down on marriage day,
Which might not be controlled;
But if the children chanced to die,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possess their wealth,
For so the will did run.

" Now, brother," said the dying man,
" Look to my children dear,
Be good unto my boy and girl,
No friends else have they here;
To God and you I recommend
My children dear, this day;
But little while, be sure we have
Within this world to stay.

" You must be father and mother both,
And uncle, all in one;
God knows what will become of them,
When I am dead and gone."
With that bespake their mother dear,
" O brother kind," quoth she,
" You are the man must bring our babes
To wealth or misery.

" And if you keep them carefully,
Then God will you reward;
But, if you otherwise should deal,
God will your deeds regard."

Yet one of them, more hard of heart,
Did vow to do his charge,
Because the wretch that hired him,
Had paid him very large.

The other won't agree thereto,
So here they fall to strife,
With one another they did fight,
About the children's life.
And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slay the other there;
Within an unfrequented wood,
The babes did quake for fear.

He took the children by the hand,
Tears standing in their eye,
And bade them straightway follow him,
And look they did not cry.
And two long miles he led them on,
While they for food complain;
"Stay here," quoth he, "I'll bring you bread,
When I come back again."

Babes in the Wood.

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and down;
But never more could see the man,
Approaching from the town:
Their pretty lips with blackberries,
Were all besmeared and dyed,
And when they saw the darksome night,
They sat them down and cried.

Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief,
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief:
No burial, this pretty pair,
Of any man receives,
Till Robin Redbreast piously,
Did cover them with leaves.

And now, the heavy wrath of God,
Upon their uncle fell;
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt a hell.

His barns were fired, his goods consumed,
His lands were barren made,
His cattle died within the field,
And nothing with him staid.

And in a voyage to Portugal,
Two of his sons did die;
And to conclude, himself was brought
To want and misery:
He pawned and mortgaged all his land,
Ere seven years came about,
And now at length this wicked act,
Did by this means come out.

The fellow that did take in hand,
These children dear to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to die,
Such was God's blessed will.
So did confess the very truth,
As hath been here displayed,
Their uncle having died in gaol,
Where he for debt was laid.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke,
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek;
Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such like misery,
Your wicked minds requite.

THE LADY ISABELLA'S TRAGEDY.

HERE was a Lord of worthy fame,
And a hunting he would ride,
Attended by a noble train
Of gentry, by his side.

And while he did in chase remain,
To see both sport and play;
His lady went, as she did feign,
Unto the Church to pray.

This Lord, he had a daughter dear,
Whose beauty shone so bright;
She was beloved, both far and near,
Of many a lord and knight.

Lady Isabella's Tragedy.

Fair Isabella was she called,
A creature fair was she;
She was her father's only joy,
As you shall after see.

Therefore her cruel step-mother
Did envy her so much;
That day by day she sought her life,
Her malice it was such.

She bargain'd with the master-cook,
To take her life away;
And taking of her daughter's book,
She thus to her did say:

"Go home, sweet daughter, I thee pray,
Go hasten presentlie,
And tell unto the master-cook
These words that I tell thee.

"And bid him dress to dinner straight
That fair and milk-white doe,
That in the park doth shine so bright,
There's none so fair to show."

This lady, fearing of no harm,
Obey'd her mother's will;
And presently she hasted home,
Her pleasure to fulfil.

She straight into the kitchen went,
Her message for to tell;
And there she spied the master-cook,
Who did with malice swell.

" Now, master-cook, it must be so,
Do that which I thee tell:
You needs must dress the milk-white doe,
Which you do know full well."

Then straight his cruel bloody hands
He on the lady laid;
Who quivering and shaking stands,
While thus to her he said:

" Thou art the doe that I must dress;
See here, behold my knife;
For it is pointed presently
To rid thee of thy life."

" Oh then," cried out the scullion-boy,
As loud as loud might be,
" O save her life, good master-cook,
And make your pies of me!

" For pity's sake, do not destroy
My lady with your knife;
You know she is her father's joy,
I pray thee save her life."

" I will not save her life," he said,
" Nor make my pies of thee;
Yet if thou dost this deed betray,
Thy butcher I will be."

Now when this lord he did come home
For to sit down and eat,
He called for his daughter dear,
To come and carve his meat.

" Now sit you down," his lady said,
" O sit you down to meat:
Into some nunnery she is gone;
Your daughter dear forget."

Then solemnly he made a vow,
Before the companie,
That he would neither eat nor drink,
Until he did her see.

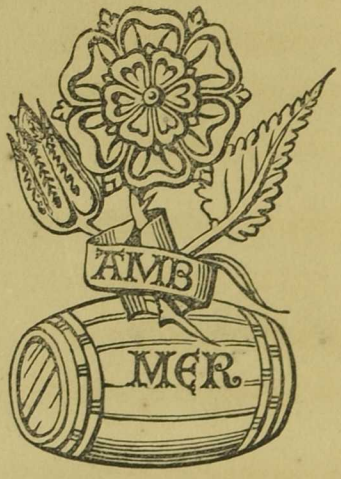
" O then," bespake the scullion-boy,
With a loud voice so high,
" If now you will your daughter see,
My lord, cut up that pie :

" Wherein her flesh is minced small,
And parched with the fire ;
All caused by her step-mother,
Who did her death desire !

" And cursed be the master-cook,
O cursed may he be !
I proffer'd him my own heart's blood,
From death to set her free ! "

Then all in black this lord did mourn ;
And, for his daughter's sake,
He judged her cruel step-mother
To be burnt at a stake.

Likewise he judged the master-cook
In boiling lead to stand;
And made the simple scullion-boy
The heir of all his land.


AMB
MER

A MOURNFUL DITTY OF THE DEATH OF FAIR ROSAMOND,

TO WHICH IS ADDED

QUEEN ELEANOR'S CONFESSION.

WHEN as King Henry rul'd this land,
The second of that name;
Besides the Queen, he dearly lov'd
A fair and princely dame.

Most peerless was her beauty found,
Her favour and her grace;
A sweeter creature in the world
Did never prince embrace.

Her crisped locks, like threads of gold,
Appear'd to each man's sight;
Her comely eyes like orient pearls,
Did cast a heavenly light.

A Mournful Ditty of the

The blood within her crystal cheeks
Did such a colour drive,
As though the lily and the rose
For mastership did strive.

Yea Rosamond, fair Rosamond!
Her name was called so;
To whom dame Eleanor, our Queen,
Was known a mortal foe.

The King, therefore, for her defence,
Against the furious Queen,
At Woodstock builded such a bower,
The like was never seen.

Most curiously this bower was built,
Of stone and timber strong;
An hundred and fifty doors
Did to this bower belong.

And they so cunningly contrived,
With turnings round about,
That none but by a clue of thread,
Could enter in or out.

And for his love, and lady's sake,
That was so fair and bright,
The keeping of this bower he gave
Unto a valiant knight.

But fortune that doth often frown,
Where she before did smile;
The King's delight, the lady's joy,
Full soon she did beguile.

For why the King's ungracious son,
Whom he did high advance,
Against his father raised wars
Within the realms of France.

But yet, before our comely King
The English land forsook,
Of Rosamond, his lady fair,
His last farewell he took.

O Rosamond! the only Rose
That pleaseth best mine eye;
The fairest Rose in all the world
To feed my fantasy.

A Mournful Ditty of the

The flower of mine affected heart,
Whose sweetness doth excel;
My royal Rose, a thousand times
I bid thee now farewell!

For I must leave my fancy's flower,
My sweetest Rose a space;
And cross the seas to famous France
Proud rebels to abase.

But yet, my Rose, be sure thou shalt
My coming shortly see;
And in my heart, while hence I am,
I'll bear my Rose with me.

When Rosamond, that lady bright,
Did hear the King say so,
The sorrow of her grieved heart
Her outward looks did show.

And from her clear and crystal eyes
The tears gushed out apace;
Which like the silver pearled dew,
Ran down her comely face.

Her lips, like to a coral red,
Did wax both wan and pale;
And for the sorrow she conceiv'd,
Her vital spirits did fail.

And falling down all in a swoon
Before King Henry's face;
Full oft within his princely arms
Her corpse he did embrace.

And twenty times, with watery eyes,
He kiss'd her tender cheek,
Until he had revived again
Her senses mild and meek.

Why grieves my Rose, my sweetest Rose?
The King did often say;
"Because," quoth she, "to bloody wars
My lord must part away.

"But since your grace in foreign coasts,
Among your foes unkind,
Must go to hazard life and limb,
Why should I stay behind?

" Nay, rather let me like a page,
Your shield and target bear,
That on my breast the blow may light
That shall annoy you there.

" O let me in your royal tent
Prepare your bed at night;
And with sweet baths refresh your grace,
At your return from fight.

" So I your presence may enjoy,
No toil I will refuse;
But wanting you my life is death,
Which doth true love abuse!"

" Content thyself, my dearest friend,
Thy rest at home shall be;
In England's sweet and pleasant soil,
For travels fit not thee.

" Fair ladies brook no bloody wars,
Sweet peace their pleasures breed;
The nourishers of their hearts content,
Which fancy first doth feed.

Death of Fair Rosamond.

" My Rose shall rest in Woodstock Bower,
With music's sweet delight;
While I among the piercing pikes,
Against my foes do fight.

" My Rose in robes of pearl and gold,
With diamonds richly dight;
Shall dance the galliards of my love,
Whilst I my foes do smite.

" And you, Sir Thomas, whom I trust
To be my love's defence;
Be careful of my gallant Rose
When I am parted hence."

And therewithal he fetched a sigh,
As though his heart would break;
And Rosamond, for very grief,
Not one plain word could speak.

And at their parting, well they might
In heart be grieved sore;
After that day fair Rosamond
Did see the King no more.

For when his grace had pass'd the sea,
And into France was gone,
Queen Eleanor, with envious heart,
To Woodstock came anon.

And forth she call'd this trusty knight,
Which kept this curious bower;
Who with his twined clue of thread,
Came from that famous flower.

And when that they had wounded him,
The Queen this thread did get;
And went where Lady Rosamond
Was like an angel set.

But when the Queen, with stedfast eyes,
Beheld her heavenly face,
She was amazed in her mind,
At her exceeding grace.

"Cast off thy robes from thee," she said,
"That rich and costly be;
And drink thee off this deadly draught,
Which I have brought for thee."

But presently upon her knee,
Sweet Rosamond did fall;
And pardon of the Queen she crav'd
For her offences all.

"Take pity of my youthful years,"
Fair Rosamond did cry;
"And let me not with poison strong
Enforced be to die.

"I will renounce this sinful life,
And in a cloister bide;
Or else be banish'd, if you please,
To range the world so wide.

"And for the fault which I have done,
Though I was forc'd thereto;
Preserve my life, and punish me
As you think good to do."

And with these words, her lily hands
She wrung full often there;
And down along her lovely cheeks
Proceeded many a tear.

Death of Fair Rosamond.

But nothing could this furious Queen
Therewith appeased be;
The cup of deadly poison fill'd,
As she sat on her knee,

She gave that comely dame to drink,
Who took it in her hand,
And from her bended knees arose,
And on her feet did stand:

And casting up her eyes to Heaven,
She did for mercy call;
And drinking up the poison strong,
Her life she lost withal.

And when that death through every limb
Had done her greatest spite;
Her chiefest foes did plain confess,
She was a glorious wight.

Her body then they did entomb,
When life was fled away,
At Godstow, near to Oxford town,
As may be seen this day.

QUEEN ELEANOR'S CONFESSION.

UEEN ELEANOR was a sick woman,
And afraid that she should die;
Then she sent for two Friars of France,
To speak with her presently.

The King called down his nobles all
By one, by two, by three;
"Earl Marshall, I'll go shrive the Queen,
And thou shalt wend with me."

"A boon, a boon," cried the Earl Marshall,
And fell on his bended knee;
"That whatsoever Queen Eleanor say
No harm thereof may be."

Queen Eleanor's Confession.

" I'll pawn my lands," the King then cried,
" My sceptre, crown, and all;
That whatsoever Queen Eleanor says
No harm thereof shall fall."

" Earl Marshall, put on a Friar's coat,
And I will put on another;
And we will to Queen Eleanor go
Like a Friar and his Brother."

Thus both attired, then they go;
When they came to Whitehall,
The bells did ring, and the quiristers sing,
And the torches did light them all.

And when that they came before the Queen,
They fell on their bended knee;
" A boon, a boon, Queen Eleanor,
That you sent so hastily."

" Are you two Friars of France," she said,
" As I suppose you be?
For if you are two English Friars,
You shall hang on the gallows tree."

"We are two Friars of France," they said,
As you suppose we be;
"We have not been at any mass
Since we came from the sea."

"The first vile thing that ever I did,
I will to you unfold;
I gave ear to the Earl Marshall's love
Beneath this cloth of gold."

"That's a vile sin," then said the King,
"May God forgive it thee!"
"Amen, amen," quoth Earl Marshall,
With a heavy heart spake he.

"The next vile thing that ever I did,
To you I'll not deny;
I made a box of poison strong
To poison King Henry."

"That's a vile sin," then said the King,
"May God forgive it thee!"
"Amen, amen," quoth Earl Marshall,
"And I wish it so may be."

Queen Eleanor's Confession.

" The next vile thing that ever I did,
To you I will discover;
I poisoned the fair Rosamond
All in fair Woodstock Bower."

" That's a vile sin," then said the King,
" May God forgive it thee!"
" Amen, amen," quoth Earl Marshall,
" And I wish it so may be."

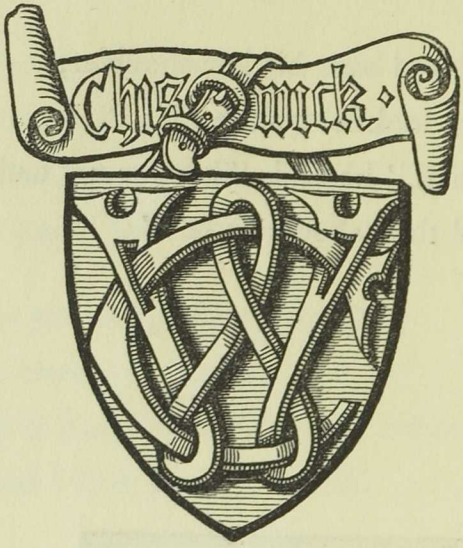
" Do you see yonder little boy
A tossing of the ball;
That is Earl Marshall's—the eldest son,
And I love him best of all.

" Do you see yonder little boy
A catching of the ball;
That is King Henry's—the youngest son,
And I love him the worst of all.

" His head is fashioned like a bull;
His nose is like a boar."
" No matter for that," King Henry cried,
" I love him the better therefore."

The King pulled off his Friar's coat,
And appeared all in red:
She shrieked, and cried, and wrung her hands,
And said she was betrayed.

The King looked over his left shoulder,
And a grim look looked he;
"Earl Marshall," he said, "but for my oath
Or hanged thou shouldest be!"



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