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The Ballad of Beau Brocade

and other poems

of the XVIII Century

by

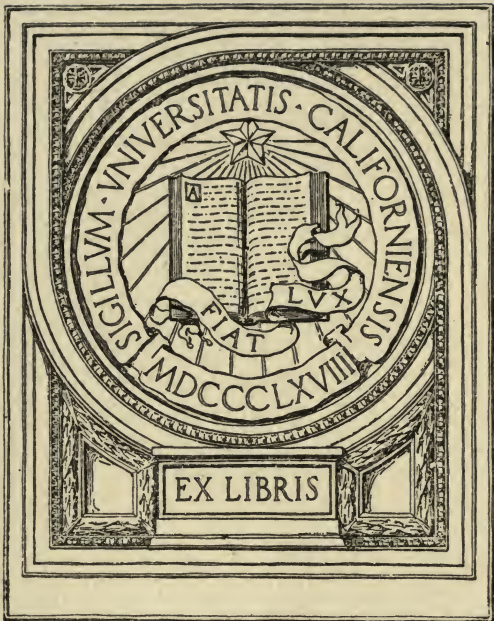
Austin Dobson

with

fifty Illustrations

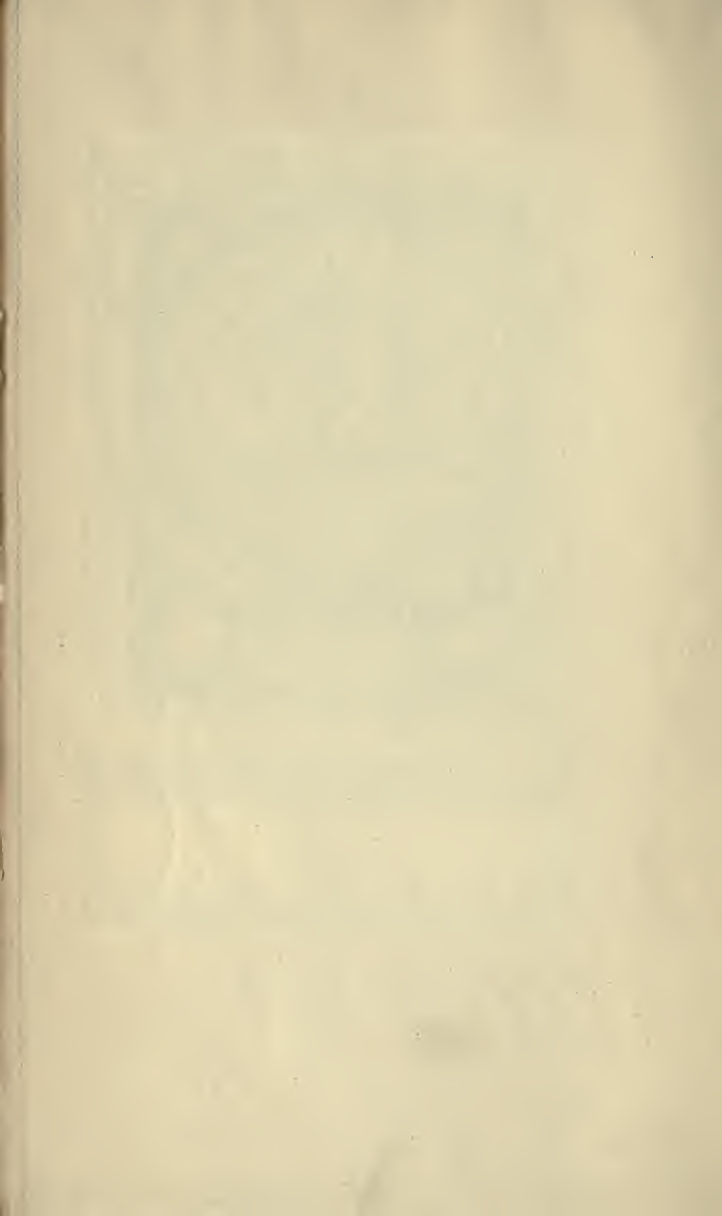
by

Hugh Thomson



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*THE BALLAD OF BEAU BROCADE
AND OTHER POEMS*



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THE
COLUMBIAN



A. Thomson.
cut 92.

"As he lifts her out light"

CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

PRINTED BY
CHISWICK PRESS

PR4606

B3

1903

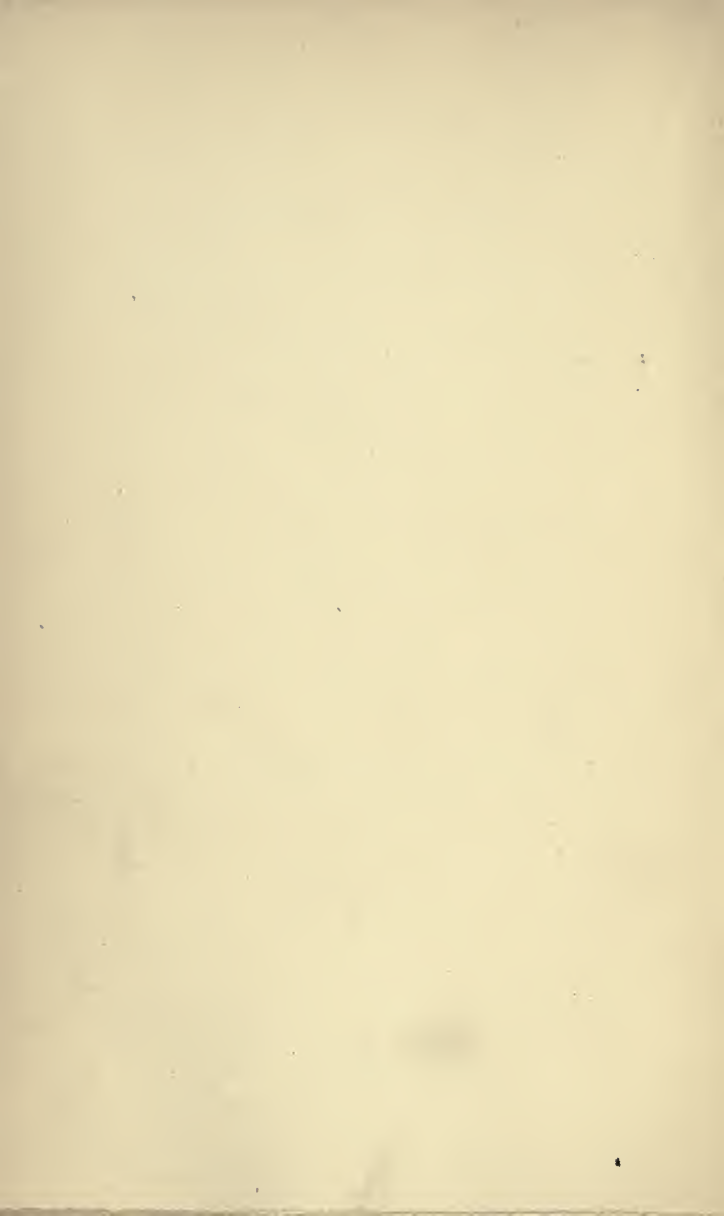
MAIN

TO
LADY BOWEN
"FOR OLD SAKE'S SAKE"

*"For old sake's sake!" 'Twere hard to choose
Words fitter for an old-world Muse
Than these, that in their cadence bring
Faint fragrance of the posy-ring,
And charms that rustic lovers use.*

*The long day lengthens, and we lose
The first pale flush, the morning hues,—
Ah! but the back-look, lingering,
For old sake's sake!*

*That we retain. Though Time refuse
To lift the veil on for-ward views,
Despot in most, he is not King
Of those kind memories that cling
Around his travelled avenues
For old sake's sake!*





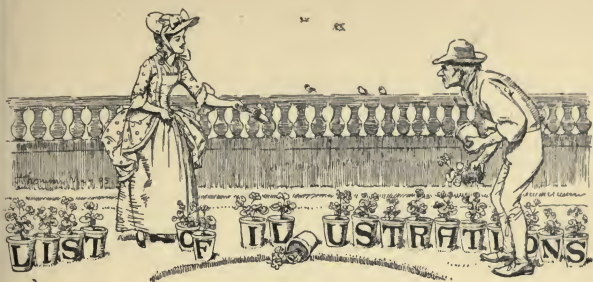
Concerning the eight pieces here reprinted from "Old-World Idylls" and "At the Sign of the Lyre," it is only necessary to say that they have been chosen because, being laid in the Eighteenth Century, they appeared to present a congenial field for the artistic ingenuity of Mr. Hugh Thomson, who has illustrated them with an ability which I can only admire, and a personal enthusiasm for which I can scarcely be sufficiently grateful.

AUSTIN DOBSON.



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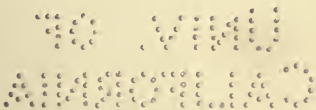
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"Jotted her down on the spot."



THE
BEGGARS
OPERA



I.

EVENTEEN hundred and thirty nine:—
That was the date of this tale of mine.

First great GEORGE was buried and gone ;
GEORGE the Second was plodding on.

LONDON then, as the "Guides" aver,
Shared its glories with *Westminster* ;

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

And people of rank, to correct their "tone,"
Went out of town to *Marybone*.

Those were the days of the War with *Spain*,
PORTO-BELLO would soon be ta'en;

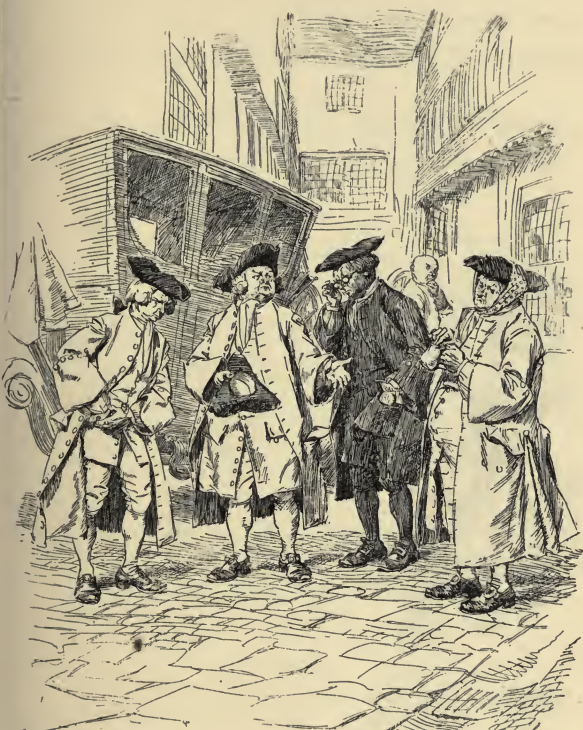
WHITEFIELD preached to the colliers grim,
Bishops in lawn sleeves preached at him;

WALPOLE talked of "a man and his price";
Nobody's virtue was over-nice:—

Those, in fine, were the brave days when
Coaches were stopped by . . . *Highwaymen!*

And of all the knights of the gentle trade
Nobody bolder than "BEAU BROCADE."

This they knew on the whole way down;
Best,—maybe,—at the "*Oak and Crown.*"



H. Thompson
June 72

"Would 'Club' for a Guard"

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

(For timorous cits on their pilgrimage
Would “club” for a “Guard” to ride the stage;
And the Guard that rode on more than one
Was the Host of this hostel’s sister’s son.)



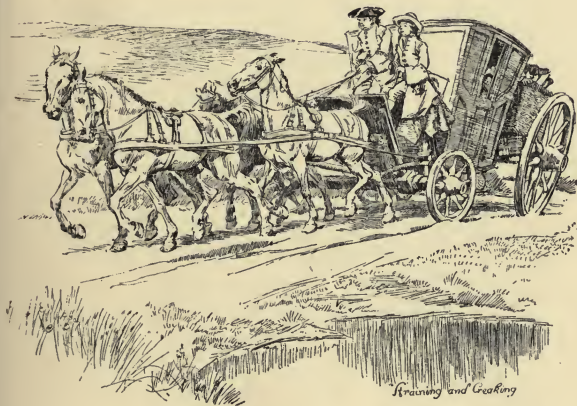
Open we here on a March-day fine,
Under the oak with the hanging sign.

There was Barber DICK with his basin by;
Cobbler JOE with the patch on his eye;

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Portly product of Beef and Beer,
JOHN the host, he was standing near.

Straining and creaking, with wheels awry,
Lumbering came the "*Plymouth Fly*";—



Lumbering up from *Bagshot Heath*,
Guard in the basket armed to the teeth ;

Passengers heavily armed inside ;
Not the less surely the coach had been tried !



The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Tried!—but a couple of miles away,
By a well-dressed man!—in the open day!

Tried successfully, never a doubt,—
Pockets of passengers all turned out!

Cloak-bags rifled, and cushions ripped,—
Even an Ensign's wallet stripped!

Even a Methodist hosier's wife
Offered the choice of her Money or Life!

Highwayman's manners no less polite,
Hoped that their coppers (returned) were right;—

Sorry to find the company poor,
Hoped next time they'd travel with more;—

Plucked them all at his ease, in short:—
Such was the "*Plymouth Fly's*" report.

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Sympathy! horror! and wonderment!

“Catch the Villain!” (But Nobody went.)



Where the best strong waters are

Hosier's wife led into the Bar;

(That's where the best strong waters are!)



"Sympathy horror and wonderment"

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Followed the tale of the hundred-and-one
Things that Somebody ought to have done.



Ensign (of Bragg)

Ensign (of BRAGG's) made a terrible clangour:
But for the Ladies had drawn his hanger!

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Robber, of course, was "BEAU BROCADE";
Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid.

Devonshire DOLLY, plump and red,
Spoke from the gallery overhead;—

Spoke it out boldly, staring hard:—

"Why didn't you shoot then, GEORGE the
Guard?"

Spoke it out bolder, seeing him mute:—

"GEORGE the Guard, why didn't you shoot?"

Portly JOHN grew pale and red,
(JOHN was afraid of her, people said;)

Gasped that "DOLLY was surely cracked,"
(JOHN was afraid of her—that's a fact!)

GEORGE the Guard grew red and pale,
Slowly finished his quart of ale:—



George the Guard



Out-shore Dolly the Chambermaid

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

“Shoot? Why—Rabbit him!—didn’t he shoot?”
Muttered—“The Baggage was far too ’cute!”

“Shoot? Why he’d flashed the pan in his eye!”
Muttered—“She’d pay for it by and by!”
Further than this made no reply.

Nor could a further reply be made,
For GEORGE was in league with “BEAU BRO-
CADE”!

And JOHN the Host, in his wakefullest state,
Was not—on the whole—immaculate.

But nobody’s virtue was over-nice
When WALPOLE talked of “a man and his price”;

And wherever Purity found abode,
’Twas certainly *not* on a posting road



“Forty” followed to “Thirty-nine.”

Glorious days of the *Hanover* line!

Princes were born, and drums were banged;
Now and then batches of Highwaymen hanged.

“Glorious news!”—from the *Spanish Main*;
PORTO-BELLO at last was ta'en.

“Glorious news!”—for the liquor trade;
Nobody dreamed of “BEAU BROCADE.”

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

People were thinking of *Spanish Crowns*;
Money was coming from seaport towns!

Nobody dreamed of "BEAU BROCADE,"
(Only DOLLY the Chambermaid!)

Blessings on VERNON! Fill up the cans;
Money was coming in "*Flys*" and "*Vans*."

Possibly, JOHN the Host had heard;
Also, certainly, GEORGE the Guard.

And DOLLY had possibly tidings, too,
That made her rise from her bed anew,

Plump as ever, but stern of eye,
With a fixed intention to warn the "*Fly*."

Lingering only at JOHN his door,
Just to make sure of a jerky snore;



JJ

and drums were banged

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Saddling the gray mare, *Dumpling Star*;
Fetching the pistol out of the bar;

(The old horse-pistol that, they say,
Came from the battle of *Malplaquet*;))

Loading with powder that maids would use,
Even in "Forty," to clear the flues;

And a couple of silver buttons, the Squire
Gave her, away in *Devonshire*.

These she wadded—for want of better—
With the B—SH—P of L—ND—N's "Pastoral
Letter";

Looked to the flint, and hung the whole,
Ready to use, at her pocket-hole.

THE
CANTON
MAGAZINE



Clattered away to Excisemens Jelly

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Thus equipped and accoutred, DOLLY
Clattered away to "*Exciseman's Folly*";—

Such was the name of a ruined abode,
Just on the edge of the *London* road.

Thence she thought she might safely try,
As soon as she saw it, to warn the "*Fly*."

But, as chance fell out, her rein she drew,
As the BEAU came cantering into the view.

By the light of the moon she could see him drest
In his famous gold-sprigged tambour vest;

And under his silver-gray surtout,
The laced, historical coat of blue,

That he wore when he went to *London-Spaw*,
And robbed Sir MUNGO MUCKLETHRAW.

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Trembling a little, but not afraid,)
“Stand and Deliver, O ‘BEAU BROCADE’!”

But the BEAU rode nearer, and would not speak,
For he saw by the moonlight a rosy cheek;

And a spavined mare with a rusty hide;
And a girl with her hand at her pocket-side.

So never a word he spoke as yet,
For he thought 'twas a freak of MEG or BET;—
A freak of the “*Rose*” or the “*Rummer*” set.

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Tremulous now, and sore afraid,)
“Stand and Deliver, O ‘BEAU BROCADE’!”—

Firing then, out of sheer alarm,
Hit the BEAU in the bridle-arm.



"Came cantering into the view"

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Button the first went none knows where,
But it carried away his *solitaire*;

Button the second a circuit made,
Glanced in under the shoulder blade;—
Down from the saddle fell “BEAU BROCADE”!

Down from the saddle and never stirred!—
DOLLY grew white as a *Windsor* curd.

Slipped not less from the mare, and bound
Strips of her kirtle about his wound.

Then, lest his Worship should rise and flee,
Fettered his ankles—tenderly.

Jumped on his chestnut, BET the fleet
(Called after BET of *Portugal Street*);

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Came like the wind to the old Inn-door;—
Roused fat JOHN from a three-fold snore;—

Vowed she'd 'peach if he misbehaved . . .
Briefly, the "*Plymouth Fly*" was saved!

Staines and *Windsor* were all on fire:—
DOLLY was wed to a *Yorkshire* squire;
Went to town at the K—G's desire!

But whether His M—J—STY saw her or not,
HOGARTH jotted her down on the spot;

And something of DOLLY one still may trace
In the fresh contours of his "*Milkmaid's*" face.

GEORGE the Guard fled over the sea:
JOHN had a fit—of perplexity;



"Turned King's Evidence"

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Turned King's evidence, sad to state;—
But JOHN was never immaculate.

As for the BEAU, he was duly tried,
When his wound was healed, at *Whitsuntide*;

Served—for a day—as the last of “sights,”
To the world of *St. James's-Street* and “*White's*,”

Went on his way to TYBURN TREE,
With a pomp befitting his high degree.

Every privilege rank confers:—
Bouquet of pinks at *St. Sepulchre's*;

Flagon of ale at *Holborn Bar*;
Friends (in mourning) to follow his Car—
 (“t” is omitted where HEROES are!)

The Ballad of Beau Brocade

Every one knows the speech he made;
Swore that he "rather admired the Jade!"—

Waved to the crowd with his gold-laced hat:
Talked to the Chaplain after that;

Turned to the Topsman undismayed . . .
This was the finish of "BEAU BROCADE"!

*And this is the Ballad that seemed to hide
In the leaves of a dusty "LONDONER'S GUIDE";*

*"Humbly inscrib'd" (with curls and tails)
By the Author to FREDERICK, Prince of WALES:—*

*"Published by FRANCIS and OLIVER PINE;
Ludgate-Hill, at the Blackmoor Sign.
Seventeen-Hundred-and-Thirty-Nine."*



*A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD
SCHOOL*

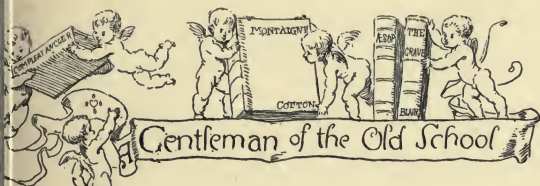
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D



Johnson
July 72

*No sophistries could make him see
His slender credit."*



HE lived in that past Georgian day,
When men were less inclined to
say
That "Time is Gold," and overlay
With toil their pleasure;
He held some land, and dwelt thereon,—
Where, I forget,—the house is gone;
His Christian name, I think, was John,—
His surname, Leisure.

A Gentleman of the Old School

Reynolds has painted him,—a face
Filled with a fine, old-fashioned grace,
Fresh-coloured, frank, with ne'er a trace
Of trouble shaded ;
The eyes are blue, the hair is drest
In plainest way,—one hand is prest
Deep in a flapped canary vest,
With buds brocaded.

He wears a brown old Brunswick coat,
With silver buttons,—round his throat,
A soft cravat ;—in all you note
An elder fashion,—
A strangeness, which, to us who shine
In shapely hats,—whose coats combine
All harmonies of hue and line,
Inspires compassion.

A Gentleman of the Old School

He lived so long ago, you see!
Men were untravelled then, but we,
Like Ariel, post o'er land and sea
With careless parting;



He found it quite enough for him
To smoke his pipe in "garden trim,"
And watch, about the fish tank's brim,
The swallows darting.



To catch
the Cuckoo's Call

High Thomson

July 1842

A Gentleman of the Old School

Not that, in truth, when life began
He shunned the flutter of the fan;



He too had maybe "pinked his man"
In Beauty's quarrel;

A Gentleman of the Old School

But now his "fervent youth" had flown
Where lost things go; and he was grown



As staid and slow-paced as his own
Old hunter, Sorrel.



When Sweetly Swells
its Jovial Riot

A Gentleman of the Old School

Yet still he loved the chase, and held
That no composer's score excelled
The merry horn, when Sweetlip swelled
 Its jovial riot;
But most his measured words of praise
Caressed the angler's easy ways,—
His idly meditative days,—
 His rustic diet.

Not that his "meditating" rose
Beyond a sunny summer doze;
He never troubled his repose
 With fruitless prying;
But held, as law for high and low,
What GOD withholds no man can know,
And smiled away inquiry so,
 Without replying.

A Gentleman of the Old School

We read—alas, how much we read!—
The jumbled strifes of creed and creed
With endless controversies feed

Our groaning tables;
His books—and they sufficed him—were
Cotton's "Montaigne," "The Grave" of Blair,
A "Walton"—much the worse for wear,
And "Æsop's Fables."

One more,—“The Bible.” Not that he
Had searched its page as deep as we;
No sophistries could make him see

Its slender credit;
It may be that he could not count
The sires and sons to Jesse's fount,—
He liked the “Sermon on the Mount,”—
And more, he read it.



St. Thomas
June 1877

St. Thomas
June 1877

A Gentleman of the Old School

Once he had loved, but failed to wed,
A red-cheeked lass who long was dead;
His ways were far too slow, he said,
 To quite forget her;
And still when time had turned him gray,
The earliest hawthorn buds in May
Would find his lingering feet astray,
 Where first he met her.

“*In Cælo Quies*” heads the stone
On Leisure’s grave,—now little known,
A tangle of wild-rose has grown
 So thick across it;
The “Benefactions” still declare
He left the clerk an elbow-chair,
And “12 Pence Yearly to Prepare
 A Christmas Posset.”

A Gentleman of the Old School

Lie softly, Leisure! Doubtless you,
With too serene a conscience drew
Your easy breath, and slumbered through
 The gravest issue;
But we, to whom our age allows
Scarce space to wipe our weary brows,
Look down upon your narrow house,
 Old friend, and miss you!



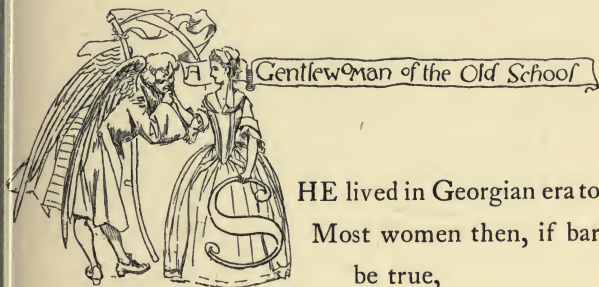


*A GENTLEWOMAN OF THE OLD
SCHOOL*



J. Thomson
July 72

"She once had been the rage;—"



HE lived in Georgian era too.
Most women then, if bards
be true,
Succumbed to Routs and Cards, or grew
Devout and acid.
But hers was neither fate. She came
Of good west-country folk, whose fame
Has faded now. For us her name
Is "Madam Placid."

A Gentlewoman of the Old School

For her e'en Time grew debonair.
He, finding cheeks unclaimed of care,
With late-delayed faint roses there,
 And lingering dimples,
Had spared to touch the fair old face,
And only kissed with Vauxhall grace
The soft white hand that stroked her lace,
 Or smoothed her wimples.

So left her beautiful. Her age
Was comely as her youth was sage,
And yet she once had been the rage;—
 It hath been hinted,
Indeed, affirmed by one or two,
Some spark at Bath (as sparks will do)
Inscribed a song to "Lovely Prue,"
 Which Urban printed.

A Gentlewoman of the Old School

I know she thought; I know she felt;
Perchance could sum, I doubt she spelt;
She knew as little of the Celt

As of the Saxon;

I know she played and sang, for yet
We keep the tumble-down spinet
To which she quavered ballads set
By Arne or Jackson.

Her tastes were not refined as ours;
She liked plain food and homely flowers,
Refused to paint, kept early hours,
Went clad demurely;
Her art was sampler-work design,
Fireworks for her were "vastly fine,"
Her luxury was elder-wine,—
She loved that "purely."



The Thomson
Aug 92.

"The
warm west-looking window-seat."

A Gentlewoman of the Old School

She was renowned, traditions say,
For June conserves, for curds and whey,
For finest tea (she called it "tay"),
 And ratafia;
She knew, for sprains, what bands to choose,
Could tell the sovereign wash to use
For freckles, and was learned in brews
 As erst Medea.

Yet studied little. She would read,
On Sundays, "Pearson on the Creed,"
Though, as I think, she could not heed
 His text profoundly;
Seeing she chose for her retreat
The warm west-looking window-seat,
Where, if you chanced to raise your feet,
 You slumbered soundly.



J. Thomson
July 72

'She'd still her beau,



July 1.
Hugh Thomson

Delighted in his
cackling laughter;

A Gentlewoman of the Old School

Younger than she, well-born and bred.
She'd found him in St. Giles', half dead
Of teaching French for nightly bed
 And daily dinners;
Starving, in fact, 'twixt want and pride;
And so, henceforth, you always spied
His rusty "pigeon-wings" beside
 Her Mechlin pinnars.

He worshipped her, you may suppose.
She gained him pupils, gave him clothes,
Delighted in his dry bons-mots
 And cackling laughter;
And when, at last, the long duet
Of conversation and picquet
Ceased with her death, of sheer regret
 He died soon after.

A Gentlewoman of the Old School

Dear Madam Placid! Others knew
Your worth as well as he, and threw
Their flowers upon your coffin too,
I take for granted.

Their loves are lost; but still we see
Your kind and gracious memory
Bloom yearly with the almond tree
The Frenchman planted.



Johnson
July 9th

The Almond
Tree



THE OLD SEDAN CHAIR

THE
PUNCH
AND
JUDY
SHOW



Atkinson
cnsd 92

"But prone, on a question
of fare"



*“What’s not destroy’d by Time’s devouring Hand?
Where’s Troy, and where’s the May-Pole in the Strand?”*

BRAMSTON’S “ART OF POLITICKS.”

IT stands in the stable-yard, under the eaves,
Propped up by a broom-stick and covered with
leaves:

It once was the pride of the gay and the fair,
But now ’tis a ruin,—that old Sedan chair!

The Old Sedan Chair

It is battered and tattered,—it little avails
That once it was lacquered, and glistened with
nails;

For its leather is cracked into lozenge and square,
Like a canvas by Wilkie,—that old Sedan chair!

See,—here came the bearing-straps; here were the
holes

For the poles of the bearers—when once there
were poles;

It was cushioned with silk, it was wadded with
hair,

As the birds have discovered,—that old Sedan
chair!

“Where’s Troy?” says the poet! Look,—under
the seat,

Is a nest with four eggs,—’tis the favoured retreat
Of the Muscovy hen, who has hatched, I dare
swear,

Quite an army of chicks in that old Sedan chair!

The Old Sedan Chair

And yet—Can't you fancy a face in the frame
Of the window,—some high-headed damsel or
dame,
Be-patched and be-powdered, just set by the
stair,
While they raise up the lid of that old Sedan
chair?

Can't you fancy Sir Plume, as beside her he
stands,
With his ruffles a-droop on his delicate hands,
With his cinnamon coat, with his laced solitaire,
As he lifts her out light from that old Sedan
chair?

Then it swings away slowly. Ah, many a league
It has trotted 'twixt sturdy-legged Terence and
Teague ;
Stout fellows!—but prone, on a question of fare,
To brandish the poles of that old Sedan chair !

The Old Sedan Chair

It has waited by portals where Garrick has played ;
It has waited by Heidegger's "Grand Masquer-
ade" ;

For my Lady Codille, for my Lady Bellair,
It has waited—and waited, that old Sedan chair !

Oh, the scandals it knows ! Oh, the tales it could
tell

Of Drum and Ridotto, of Rake and of Belle,—
Of Cock-fight and Levee, and (scarcely more
rare !)

Of Fête-days at Tyburn, that old Sedan chair !

"*Heu! quantum mutata,*" I say as I go.

It deserves better fate than a stable-yard, though !
We must furbish it up, and dispatch it,—“With
Care,”—

To a Fine-Art Museum—that old Sedan chair !



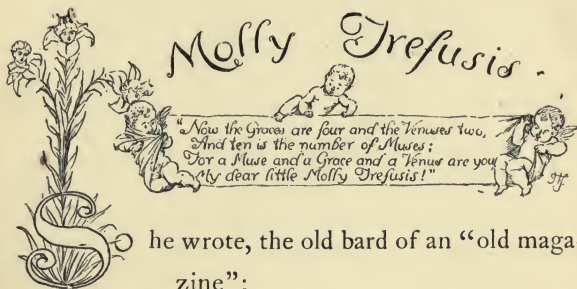
THE
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OF THE
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COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AND
ANATOMY
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

MOLLY TREFUSIS



"What of the wood?"

J. Thomson
August 1872



he wrote, the old bard of an "old magazine":

As a study it not without use is,
If we wonder a moment who she may have been,
This same "little Molly Trefusis!"

She was Cornish. We know that at once by the
"Tre";

Then of guessing it scarce an abuse is
If we say that where Bude bellows back to the
sea

Was the birthplace of Molly Trefusis.



H Thomson

Augt. 92

Miss Molly Trefusis

Molly Trefusis

And she lived in the era of patches and bows,
Not knowing what rouge or ceruse is;
For they needed (I trust) but her natural rose,
The lilies of Molly Trefusis.

And I somehow connect her (I frankly admit
That the evidence hard to produce is)
With BATH in its hey-day of Fashion and Wit,—
This dangerous Molly Trefusis.

I fancy her, radiant in ribbon and knot,
(How charming that old-fashioned puce is!)
All blooming in laces, fal-lals and what not,
At the PUMP ROOM,—Miss Molly Trefusis.

Molly Trefusis

I fancy her reigning,—a Beauty,—a Toast,
Where BLADUD's medicinal cruse is;
And we know that at least of one Bard it could
boast,—
The Court of Queen Molly Trefusis.

He says she was "VENUS." I doubt it. Beside,
(Your rhymer so hopelessly loose is!)
His "little" could scarce be to Venus applied,
If fitly to Molly Trefusis.

No, no. It was HEBE he had in his mind;
And fresh as the handmaid of Zeus is,
And rosy, and rounded, and dimpled,—you'll
find,—
Was certainly Molly Trefusis!

Molly Trefusis

Then he calls her "a MUSE." To the charge I
reply

That we all of us know what a Muse is;
It is something too awful,—too acid,—too dry,—
For sunny-eyed Molly Trefusis.

But "a GRACE." There I grant he was probably
right;

(The rest but a verse-making ruse is)
It was all that was graceful,—intangible,—light,
The beauty of Molly Trefusis!

Was she wooed? Who can hesitate much about
that

Assuredly more than obtuse is;
For how could the poet have written so pat
"My dear little Molly Trefusis!"



"I was a Knight of the Shire"

H. J. Aug

Molly Trefusis

And was wed? That I think we must plainly
infer,

Since of suitors the common excuse is
To take to them Wives. So it happened to her,
Of course,—“little Molly Trefusis!”

To the Bard? 'Tis unlikely. Apollo, you see,
In practical matters a goose is;—
'Twas a knight of the shire, and a hunting J.P.,
Who carried off Molly Trefusis!

And you'll find, I conclude, in the “*Gentleman's*
Mag.,”

At the end, where the pick of the news is,
“*On the (blank), at 'the Bath,' to Sir Hilary*
Bragg,
With a Fortune, MISS MOLLY TREFUSIS.”

Molly Trefusis

Thereupon . . . But no farther the student may pry:
Love's temple is dark as Eleusis;
So here, at the threshold, we part, you and I,
From "dear little Molly Trefusis."



J. H. Johnson
1842

A Toast

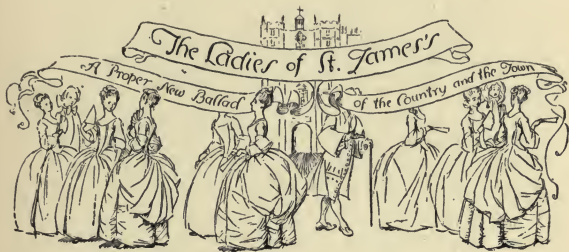
THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S



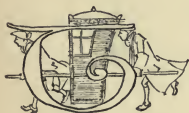
Stimson
Aug 92

With a "Stand by! Clear the Way"



"Phyllida amo ante alias."

VIRG.



HE ladies of St. James's
 Go swinging to the play;
 Their footmen run before them,
 With a "Stand by! Clear the way!"
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
 She takes her buckled shoon,
 When we go out a-courting
 Beneath the harvest moon.

The Ladies of St. James's

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.



H. Thomson
1 Aug 92

And runs to gather May Dew



J. H. Mason
Sept 1

They frown on you - for weeks

The Ladies of St. James's

The ladies of St. James's!

They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies:

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!

Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!

You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!

Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The Ladies of St. James's

The ladies of St. James's!

They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds,
They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!

Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
Is always true—and mine.

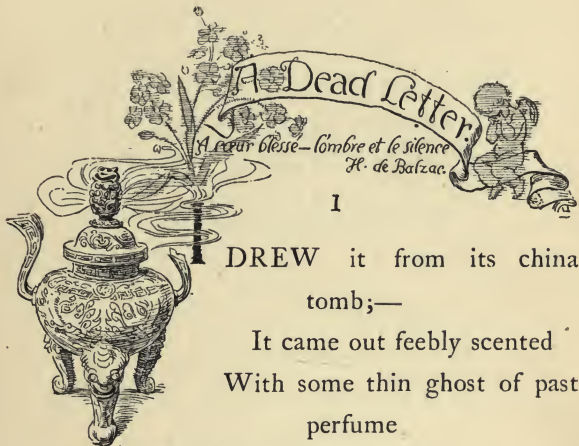
My Phyllida! my Phyllida!

I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida—for Phyllida
Is all the world to me!



"By the broken stile."

H.J.
Aug 92



I
DREW it from its china
tomb;—

It came out feebly scented
With some thin ghost of past
perfume

That dust and days had lent it.

An old, old letter,—folded still!

To read with due composure,

I sought the sun-lit window-sill,

Above the gray enclosure,

A Dead Letter

That glimmering in the sultry haze,
Faint-flowered, dimly shaded,
Slumbered like Goldsmith's Madam Blaize,
Bedizened and brocaded.

A queer old place! You'd surely say
Some tea-board garden-maker
Had planned it in Dutch William's day
To please some florist Quaker,

So trim it was. The yew-trees still,
With pious care perverted,
Grew in the same grim shapes; and still
The lipless dolphin spurted;

Still in his wonted state abode
The broken-nosed Apollo;
And still the cypress-arbour showed
The same umbrageous hollow.

A Dead Letter

Only,—as fresh young Beauty gleams
From coffee-coloured laces,—
So peeped from its old-fashioned dreams
The fresher modern traces;

For idle mallet, hoop, and ball
Upon the lawn were lying;
A magazine, a tumbled shawl,
Round which the swifts were flying;

And tossed beside the Guelder rose,
A heap of rainbow knitting,
Where, blinking in her pleased repose,
A Persian cat was sitting.

“A place to love in,—live,—for aye,
If we too, like Tithonus,
Could find some God to stretch the gray,
Scant life the Fates have thrown us;

A Dead Letter

“But now by steam we run our race,
With buttoned heart and pocket;
Our Love’s a gilded, surplus grace,—
Just like an empty locket!

“‘The time is out of joint.’ Who will,
May strive to make it better;
For me, this warm old window-sill,
And this old dusty letter.”

II.

“Dear *John* (the letter ran), it can’t, can’t be,
For Father’s gone to *Chorley Fair* with *Sam*,
And Mother’s storing Apples,—*Prue* and Me
Up to our Elbows making Damson Jam:
But we shall meet before a Week is gone,—
‘Tis a long Lane that has no Turning,’ *John!*



July 1892
92
"Sam's two Eyes are all for Cissy"
Hugh Thomson '92

A Dead Letter

“ Only till Sunday next, and then you’ll wait
 Behind the White-Thorn, by the broken Stile—
We can go round and catch them at the Gate,
 All to Ourselves, for nearly one long Mile;
Dear *Prue* won’t look, and Father he’ll go on,
And *Sam*’s two Eyes are all for *Cissy*, *John*!

“ *John*, she ’s so smart,—with every Ribbon new,
 Flame-coloured Sack, and Crimson Padesoy:
As proud as proud; and has the Vapours too,
 Just like My Lady;—calls poor *Sam* a Boy,
And vows no Sweet-heart ’s worth the Thinking-
 on
Till he ’s past Thirty . . . I know better, *John*!

“ My Dear, I don’t think that I thought of much
 Before we knew each other, I and you;
And now, why, *John*, your least, least Finger-
 touch,
 Gives me enough to think a Summer through.

A Dead Letter

See, for I send you Something! There, 'tis gone!
Look in this corner,—mind you find it, *John!*”

III.

This was the matter of the note,—
A long-forgot deposit,
Dropped in an Indian dragon's throat,
Deep in a fragrant closet,

Piled with a dapper Dresden world,—
Beaux, beauties, prayers, and poses,—
Bonzes with squat legs undercurled,
And great jars filled with roses.

Ah, heart that wrote! Ah, lips that kissed!
You had no thought or presage
Into what keeping you dismissed
Your simple old-world message!

A Dead Letter

A reverent one. Though we to-day
Distrust beliefs and powers,
The artless, ageless things you say
Are fresh as May's own flowers,

Starring some pure primeval spring,
Ere Gold had grown despotic,—
Ere Life was yet a selfish thing,
Or Love, a mere exotic!

I need not search too much to find
Whose lot it was to send it,
That feel upon me yet the kind,
Soft hand of her who penned it;

And see, through two score years of smoke,
In by-gone, quaint apparel,
Shine from yon time-black Norway oak
The face of Patience Caryl,—

A Dead Letter

The pale, smooth forehead, silver-tressed ;
The gray gown, primly flowered ;
The spotless, stately coif whose crest
Like Hector's horse-plume towered ;

And still the sweet half-solemn look
Where some past thought was clinging,
As when one shuts a serious book
To hear the thrushes singing.

I kneel to you! Of those you were,
Whose kind old hearts grow mellow,—
Whose fair old faces grow more fair
As Point and Flanders yellow ;

Whom some old store of garnered grief,
Their placid temples shading,
Crowns like a wreath of autumn leaf
With tender tints of fading.

A Dead Letter

Peace to your soul! You died unwed—
Despite this loving letter.
And what of John? The less that's said
Of John, I think, the better.



Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a list of names or a table of contents, consisting of several columns of small, illegible characters.





(GRANDPAPA LOQUITUR.)



YOU don't know Froissart now, young folks,
This age, I think, prefers recitals
Of high-spiced crime, with "slang" for jokes,
And startling titles;

But, in my time, when still some few
Loved "old Montaigne," and praised Pope's
Homer

(Nay, thought to style him "poet" too,
Were scarce misnomer),

A Chapter of Froissart

Sir John was less ignored. Indeed,
I can re-call how Some-one present
(Who spoils her grandson, Frank!) would read,
And find him pleasant;

For,—by this copy,—hangs a Tale.
Long since, in an old house in Surrey,
Where men knew more of “morning ale”
Than “Lindley Murray,”

In a dim-lighted, whip-hung hall,
'Neath Hogarth's “Midnight Conversation,”
It stood; and oft 'twixt spring and fall,
With fond elation,

I turned the brown old leaves. For there,
All through one hopeful happy summer,
At such a page (I well knew where),
Some secret comer,



Thomson
1872

An ivy-leaf for "Orchard, corner"

A Chapter of Froissart

Whom I can picture, 'Trix, like you
 (Though scarcely such a colt unbroken),
Would sometimes place for private view
 A certain token;—

A rose-leaf meaning "Garden Wall,"
 An ivy-leaf for "Orchard corner,"
A thorn to say, "Don't come at all,"—
 Unwelcome warner!—

Not that, in truth, our friends gainsaid;
 But then Romance required dissembling,
(Ann Radcliffe taught us that!) which bred
 Some genuine trembling;

Though, as a rule, all used to end
 In such kind confidential parley
As may to you kind Fortune send,
 You long-legged Charlie,

A Chapter of Froissart

When your time comes. How years slip on!

We had our crosses like our betters;
Fate sometimes looked askance upon
Those floral letters;

And once, for three long days disdained,
The dust upon the folio settled;
For some-one, in the right, was pained,
And some-one nettled,

That sure was in the wrong, but spake
Of fixed intent and purpose stony
To serve King George, enlist and make
Minced-meat of "Boney,"

Who yet survived—ten years at least.

And so, when she I mean came hither
One day that need for letters ceased,
She brought this with her.

A Chapter of Froissart

Here is the leaf-stained Chapter:—*How*
The English King laid Siege to Calais;
I think Gran. knows it even now,—
Go ask her, Alice.

NOTES

NOTES

The Ballad of Beau Brocade.—There is no foundation in fact for this ballad. It has, however, been gravely asked how a story, some of the incidents of which take place in 1740, can have been suggested by a book published in 1739. Those who are oppressed by this delicate difficulty can—if they please—mentally substitute *Forty-Nine* for *Thirty-Nine* in the final line.

NOTE 1, PAGE 3.

“*Shared its glories with Westminster.*”—Westminster is now “swallowed up in the general vortex of modern London” (Wheatley and Cunningham’s *London*, 1891, iii. 460).

NOTE 2, PAGE 4.

“*Went out of town to Marybone.*”—“Many persons arrived in town from their country-houses in Marybone” (*Daily Journal*, Oct. 15, 1728).

NOTE 3, PAGE 4.

“WHITEFIELD *preached to the colliers grim.*”—“*Bristol*, The Rev. Mr. *Whitefield* . . . has been wonderfully laborious

Notes

and successful, especially among the poor Prisoners in *Newgate* and the rude Colliers of *Kingswood*. . . . On Saturday the 18th instant [March] he preached at *Hannum Mount* to 5 or 6000 Persons, amongst them many Colliers" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, March, 1739, vol. ix., p. 162).

NOTE 4, PAGE 4.

"WALPOLE talked of 'a man and his price.'"—This has been contradicted by the more literal historians. But it is sufficiently true for poetical purposes.

NOTE 5, PAGE 6.

"There was Barber DICK."—These two personages are borrowed from Plate ii. of Hogarth's *Election Series* ("Canvassing for Votes").

NOTE 6, PAGE 9.

"Highwayman's manners."—"On Friday in the Afternoon, between Three and Four o'Clock, the Bath Stage-Coach was robbed by a single Highwayman about two Miles this Side of Maidenhead, who took from the Passengers between four and five Pounds, behaved very genteely, and made off" (*Covent Garden Journal*, 10th March, 1752).

NOTE 7, PAGE 10.

"(That's where the best strong waters are!)"—Strong waters—*e.g.*, Barbadoes-water, citron-water, etc.—were

Notes

restorative cordials, much affected by the fair sex. In Richardson's *Familiar Letters*, 1741, p. 163, a sailor sends his Peggy from Barbadoes six bottles of citron-water. "It is what, they say, Ladies drink, when they can get it."

NOTE 8, PAGE 12.

"*Ensign (of BRAGG'S).*"—Despite its suspicious appropriateness in this case, "Bragg's" regiment of Foot-Guards really existed, and was ordered to Flanders in April, 1742 (see *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1742, i. 217). In 1759 Wolfe was leading it at Quebec when he was mortally wounded.

NOTE 9, PAGE 12.

"*But for the Ladies had drawn his hanger!*"—A hanger is "a broad, crooked, short sword" (Bailey). Tom Bowling (*Roderick Random*, ch. iii.) wears "an hanger with a brass handle," and Commodore Trunnion, going to his marriage, is equipped with "a huge hanger, with a hilt like that of a backsword" (*Peregrine Pickle*, ch. viii.).

NOTE 10, PAGE 16.

"*For GEORGE was in league.*"—"That these suspicions [of connivance] were not without foundation is proved by the dying speeches of some penitent robbers of that age, who appear to have received from the inn-keepers services much resembling those which Farquhar's Boniface [in the *Beaux' Stratagem*] rendered to Gibbet" (Macaulay's *History of England*, ed. 1864, i. p. 181).

Notes

NOTE 11, PAGE 17.

“PORTO-BELLO at last was ta'en.”—Porto-Bello was taken in November, 1739, but Vice-Admiral Vernon's despatches did not reach England until the following March see *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1740, i. 124 et seq.).

NOTE 12, PAGE 20.

“With the B—SH—P of L—ND—N's ‘Pastoral Letter.’”—A Pastoral Letter was issued by the Bishop of London in August, 1739. It was at once answered by Whitefield.

NOTE 13, PAGE 23.

“In his famous gold sprigged tambour vest.”—This embroidery was so called from being worked on a drum-shaped frame. “Your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your style, as *tambour sprigs* would a ground of linsey-woolsey” (Sheridan's *Critic*, 1779, Act I., sc. i.).

NOTE 14, PAGE 23.

“*London-Spaꝝ*.”—A tavern and pleasure-garden at the corner of Rosoman Street and Exmouth Street, Clerkenwell, having a noted chalybeate spring on the premises.

“Sweethearts with their sweethearts go
To Islington or *London-Spaꝝ*;
Some go but just to drink the water,
Some for the ale which they like better.”

(*Poor Robin's Almanack*, 1733.)

Notes

NOTE 15, PAGE 24.

“*A freak of the ‘Rose’ or the ‘Rummer’ set.*”—The “Rose” was a famous tavern at Covent Garden; the “Rummer” was at Charing Cross.

NOTE 16, PAGE 26.

“*his solitaire.*”—A loose neck-tie of black silk, generally affixed to the bag of the wig (Fairholt).

NOTE 17, PAGE 26.

“(*Called after BET of Portugal Street.*)”—Portugal Street, Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

NOTE 18, PAGE 27.

“*In the fresh contours of his ‘Milkmaid’s’ face.*”—See the *Enraged Musician*, an engraving of which was published in November of the following year (1741).

NOTE 19, PAGE 29.

“*Served—for a day.*”—Walpole (*Letters*, 1857, ii. 219) says that “half White’s,” with Lord Mountford at their head, went to see James Maclean (the “gentleman highwayman”) in prison. Also that Lady Caroline Petersham and Miss Ashe had been to comfort and weep over him. Maclean was hanged on October 3, 1750, for robbing the Salisbury Coach, near Turnham Green.

Notes

NOTE 20, PAGE 29.

“White’s” was a famous coffee-house in St. James’s Street.

“*Aimwell*. Pray, Sir, ha’n’t I seen your Face at *Will’s* Coffee-house ?

Gibbet. Yes, Sir, and at *White’s* too.” (Farquhar’s *Beaux’ Stratagem*, Act III., sc. ii.)

NOTE 21, PAGE 29.

“*With a pomp befitting his high degree.*”—Fielding (*Covent Garden Journal*, 27th April, 1752) says: “This Day five Malefactors were executed at Tyburn. No Heroes within the Memory of Man ever met their Fate with more Boldness and Intrepidity, and consequently with *more felonious Glory.*”

Elsewhere he says (March 27) : “The real Fact at present is, that instead of making the Gallows an Object of Terror, our Executions contribute to make it an Object of Contempt in the Eye of a Malefactor; and we sacrifice the Lives of Men, not for [the italics are Fielding’s] *the Reformation, but for the Diversion of the Populace.*” Cf. also Macaulay’s *History of England*, ed. 1864, i. 182.

NOTE 22, PAGE 29.

“*Bouquet of pinks.*”—“Another curious custom observed at this church [St. Sepulchre’s] was that of presenting a nosegay to every criminal on his way to Tyburn” (Wheatley and Cunningham’s *London*, 1891, iii. 229, 230).

Notes

NOTE 23, PAGE 29.

“*Flagon of ale at Holborn Bar.*”—Holborn Bar, or Bars, marks the boundary in Holborn of the City Liberties. It was on the official route from Newgate to Tyburn.

NOTE 24, PAGE 29.

“*Friends (in mourning) to follow his Car.*”—“He [Richard Turpin, *alias* John Palmer, hanged at York, 7th April, 1739] gave 3*l.* 10*s.* to 5 Men who were to follow the Cart as Mourners, with Hatbands and Gloves to them and several others” (*Gentleman’s Magazine*, April, 1739, vol. ix. 213).

NOTE 25, PAGE 30.

“*Topsman*”—*i.e.*, the hangman. In the Tyburn scene of Hogarth’s *Apprentice Series* (Pl. xi.) he may be seen sitting at the top of the triple tree.

NOTE 26, PAGE 43.

“*What GOD withholdeth no man can know.*”—

“Nescire velle quæ Magister optimus

Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est.”

SCALIGER.

NOTE 27, PAGE 51.

A GENTLEWOMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.—The Bachelor Samson Carrasco in *Don Quixote* had his doubt about Second Parts, and there is a like prejudice against

Notes

Companion Pictures. *A Gentlewoman of the Old School* would probably have remained unwritten if an uninvited pendant to its forerunner (which originally came out in *St. Paul's Magazine* for July, 1870) had not made its appearance in *Chambers's Journal* for July 8, 1871.

NOTE 28, PAGE 69.

"*To brandish the poles of that old Sedan chair!*"—A friendly but anonymous critic, whose versatile pen it is not easy to mistake, recalls, *à-propos* of the above, the following passage from Molière, which shows that Chairmen were much the same all the world over :

"1. Porteur (prenant un des bâtons de sa chaise). *Cà, payez nous vite!*

Mascarille. *Quoi?*

1. Porteur. *Je dis que je veux avoir de l'argent tout à l'heure.*

Mascarille. *Il est raisonnable, celui-là,*" etc.

Les Précieuses Ridicules, Sc. vii.

NOTE 29, PAGE 70.

"*It has waited by portals where Garrick has played.*"—According to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter (Smith's *Nollekens*, 1828, i. 211), when Garrick acted, the hackney chairs often stood "all round the Piazzas [Covent Garden], down Southampton-street, and extended more than half-way along Maiden-lane."

Notes

NOTE 30, PAGE 75.

MOLLY TREFUSIS.—The epigram here quoted from “an old magazine” is to be found in Lord Neaves’s admirable little volume, *The Greek Anthology* (Blackwood’s *Ancient Classics for English Readers*). Those familiar with eighteenth-century literature will recognize in the succeeding verses but another echo of those lively stanzas of John Gay to “Molly Mog” of the Rose Inn at Wokingham which in their own day found so many imitators.



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