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PENNY WORTH  
OF WIT,

IN THREE PARTS,

Part I. Shewing how a Merchant was deluded  
from his Lady by a Harlot.

Part II. And how he sailed to a far Country,

Part III. How he returned to the British shore.



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## A PENNY-WORTH OF WIT.

## P A R T I.

**H**ERE is a penny worth of wit,  
 for those that ever went astray;  
 If warning they will take by it,  
 'twill do them good another day.  
 It is a touchstone of true love,  
 betwixt a Harlot and a Wife.  
 The former doth destruction prove,  
 the latter yields the joys of life.  
 As in this book you may behold,  
 set forth by famous William Lane;  
 A Wealthy Merchant brave and bold,  
 Who did a Harlot long maintain.  
 Although a virtuous Wife he had,  
 likewise a youthful daughter dear  
 Which might have made his heart full glad  
 yet seldom would he them come near.  
 The treasure which he traded for,  
 on the tempestuous ocean wide,  
 His Harlot had, he brought it her,  
 but nothing to his virtuous Bride.  
 The finest silks that could be bought,  
 nay, jewels, rubies, diamonds, rings,  
 He to his wanton Harlot brought,  
 with many other costly things.  
 She still receiv'd him with a smile,  
 when he came from the raging seas,  
 And said with words as smooth as oil  
 my dearest come and take thy ease.  
 To thy soft bed of linen fine,  
 thou art welcome love said she,  
 Both I, and all that e'er was mine,  
 shall still at thy devotion be.  
 He brought two hundred pounds of gold,  
 and after that two hundred more,

ith chains and jewels many fold,  
 and bid her lay them up in store.  
 e that I will thou needs not fear  
 and so embrac'd him with a kiss,  
 en took the wealth, and said my dear,  
 I'll have a special care of this.  
 en did they banquet many days,  
 feasting on delicious fare?  
 us by her false deluding words,  
 she drew him in a fatal snare.  
 hen he had liv'd some time on shore,  
 he must go to the sea again  
 ith traffic to increase his store  
 the wanton Harlot to maintain.  
 o whom he said, My joy, my dear,  
 with me what venture wilt thou send?  
 good return thou need not fear,  
 I'll be thy factor and thy friend,  
 , goods my dear. I'll send above,  
 ten pounds which thou shalt take on board  
 know that unto me, my love,  
 a treble gain thou wilt afford.  
 is said, next to his Wife he goes,  
 and ask'd her in a scornful way,  
 hat venture she would now propose,  
 to send with him for merchandise.  
 ll send a penny, love by thee,  
 be sure ye take good care of it;  
 hen you re in foreign parts, said she,  
 pray buy a penny-worth of wit.  
 he laid the penny in his baud,  
 and said, I pray now don't forget,  
 When you are in a foreign land,  
 to buy a penny-worth of wit.  
 e put the penny up secure,  
 and said, I'll take a special care,  
 o lay it out you may be sure,  
 so to his Mifs he did repair.

And told her what he was to buy,  
 at which she laugh'd his wife to scorn;  
 On board he went immediately,  
 and set to sea that very morn.

## P A R T II

N O W were they gone with merry hearts  
 the Merchant and his jovial crew,  
 From port to port in foreign parts  
 to trade as they were wont to do,  
 At length when he had well bestow'd,  
 the cargo which was outward bound,  
 He did his trading vessel load,  
 with richer treasure which he found,  
 As he his merchandise did vend,  
 they turn'd to gems and golden ore,  
 Which crown'd his labours with content,  
 he never was so rich before.  
 The wanton Harlot's venture then,  
 did run to great account likewise.  
 For ev'ry pound she would have ten,  
 such was their lucky merchandise  
 For joy of which the Merchant cry'd,  
 one merry bout my lads shall have;  
 A splendid supper I'll provide,  
 of all the dainties you can crave.  
 Before you set to sea again,  
 this said they to a tavern went,  
 Where they did feast and drink amain,  
 till many crowns and pounds were spent.  
 The Merchant then, with laughter mov'd,  
 said, he for wit had never tought,  
 My Harlot's venture is improv'd,  
 but of my Wife's I never thought.  
 One single penny and no more,  
 she has a venture sent with me,  
 I was to lay it out therefore,  
 in what you'd call a rarity  
 She bid me use my utmost skill.

to buy a penny-worth of wit,  
 But I have kept the penny still,  
 and ne'er so much as thought of it.  
 Where shall I go to lay it out?  
 true wit is scarce and hard to find,  
 But come my lads let's drink about,  
 my Wife's small venture we'll not mind.  
 There is a proverb often us'd,  
 wit's never good till bought too dear,  
 Where I right well may be excus'd,  
 there's little for a penny here.  
 An aged Father sitting by,  
 whose venerable locks were gray,  
 Straight made the Merchant this reply,  
 hear me a word or two I pray.  
 Thy Harlot in prosperity,  
 she will embrace thee for thy gold.  
 But if in want and misery,  
 you'll nought but frowns from her behold,  
 And ready to betray thy life,  
 when wretched, naked, poor and low,  
 But thy true-hearted, faithfull Wife,  
 will stand by thee in well or wo  
 If thou wilt prove the truth of this,  
 strip of thy gaudy rich array,  
 And to return to thy proud Miss,  
 declare that thou wast cast away.  
 Thy riches buried in the main  
 besides as you pass'd through a wood,  
 One of your servants you had slain,  
 for which your life in danger stood.  
 Beseech her for to shelter thee,  
 declare on her you do depend:  
 And then alas! full soon you'll see,  
 how far she'd prove a faithful friend,  
 then if the frowns go to thy Wife;  
 tell her this melancholy thing,  
 Who labours most to save thy life,

let her be most in thy esteem,  
 Father, the Merchant then reply'd,  
 you must this single penny take,  
 When I have past the ocean wide,  
 a proof of this I mead to take.  
 And loving friend for ought I know,  
 I may this single penny prize,  
 May be the best I did bestow  
 in all my wealthy merchandise.  
 Taking his leave away they came,  
 both he and his brave hearts of gold,  
 to whom he said, I'll prove the same,  
 when I my native land behold

## P A R T I I

WITH full spread sail to sea they went,  
 Neptune the golden cargo bore,  
 Through foaming waves to their content,  
 at last they reach'd the British shore.  
 The Merchant put on poor array ;  
 the very worst of ragged clothes,  
 And then without the least delay,  
 he to his wanton Harlot goes  
 When she beheld him in distress,  
 she cry'd what is the matter now  
 Said he, I'm poor and penny-less,  
 with that he made a courteous bow.  
 Crying no man e'er was so cross,  
 as I have been sweet heart's delight  
 My ship and all I had is lost.  
 without thy help I'm ruin'd quite.  
 My loss is great, yet that's not all.  
 one of my servants I have slain,  
 As we did both at variance fall,  
 some shelter let me here obtain,  
 I dare not now go to my Wife,  
 whom I have wrong'd for many a year,  
 Into thy hands I'll put my life,  
 take pity on my melting tear.

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Ye bloody villain she reply'd,  
don't in the least on me depend  
Begone, or as I live she cry'd  
I for an officer will send,  
I'll give you neither meat nor drink,  
nor any shelter shall you have,  
Of musty, lousy rags you stink,  
begone you base perfidious slave.  
Don't think that I'll your counsel keep,  
or harbour any such as you :  
He turn'd away seem'd to weep  
and bid the wanton Jilt adieu  
Then to his loving Wife he came,  
both poor and naked in distress,  
He told her all the very same,  
yet she reliev'd him ne'er the less.  
My dear she cry'd since it is so  
take comfort in thy loving Wife,  
All that I have shall freely go  
to gain a pardon for thy life.  
I'll lodge thee in a place secure,  
where I will daily nourish thee :  
Believe me love, you may be sure  
to find a faithful friend in me.  
When he this perfect proof had made,  
which of them two did love him best,  
Unto his virtuous Wife he said,  
my jewel set thy heart at rest.  
Behold I have no servant slain!  
nor have I suffer'd any loss,  
Enough I have us to maintain,  
the ocean seas no more I'll cross  
My loaded ship lies ne'er the shore,  
with gold and jewels richly fraught,  
So much I never had before,  
thy penny worth of wit I've bought.  
Once more he to his Harlot goes,  
with fourteen sailors brave and bold,

All cloath'd with new and costly clothes  
 of silk and embroider'd gold  
 The Mils when she this pomp beheld,  
 did offer him a kind embrace,  
 But he with wrath and anger fill'd,  
 did straight upbraid her to her face.  
 But she with smiles the words exprest,  
 I have a faithful love for thee,  
 Whate'er I said was but in jest,  
 why didst thou go so soon from me,  
 It was full time to go from thee,  
 you have another love in store,  
 Whom you have furnish'd with my gold,  
 and jewels which I brought on shore,  
 'Tis false she cry'd I have them all,  
 with that the Merchant straight reply'd,  
 Lay them before me then I shall,  
 be soon convince'd and satisfy'd.  
 Then up she ran and fetch'd them down,  
 the jewels, gold and rubies bright,  
 He seiz'd them all and with a frown,  
 he bid the wanton Jilt good night,  
 When he had seiz'd the golden purse  
 and swept up every precious stone,  
 She cry'd what will you rob me thus?  
 yes that I will of what's my own  
 You wanted to betray my lie  
 but thanks to God there's no such fear,  
 These jewels shall adorn my Wife,  
 henceforth your house I'll not come near.  
 Home he returned to his sweet Wife,  
 and told her all that he had done,  
 Ever since they live a happy life,  
 and he'll to harlots no more run.  
 Thus he the wanton Harlot bid,  
 who long had his destruction sought,  
 This was a PENNY WORTH OF Wit  
 the best that e'er a Merchant bought.

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