

No. 19.

THE
PENNY-WORTH OF WIT'S

GARLAND,

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.—Showing how a Merchant was deluded from
his Lady by a Harlot.

PART II.—How he sailed into a far Country.

PART III.—How he returned to the British shore.



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THE PENNY WORTH OF WIT'S GARLAND.

PART I.

Here is a penny worth of wit,
For those that ever went astray,
If warning they will take by me
'Twill do them good some other day.

It is a touch stone of true love,
Betwixt a harlot and a wife;
The former doth destructive prove,
The latter yields the joys of life.

As in this book you may behold,
Set forth by 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 he seldom would them come near.

The finest silks that could be bought,
Nay, jewels, rubbies, diamonds, rings,
He to his wanton harlot bought,
With many other costly things.

She'd still receive them with a smile
When he came from the roaring seas,
And said, with words as smooth as oil,
My dearest come and take thy ease;

To my soft bed of linen fine,
Thou art right welcome love, said she,
Both I and all that e'er was mine
Shall still at thy devotion be.

Ayē that I will thou needs not fear,
 And so embraced him with a kiss,
 Then took the wealth, and said, my dear
 I'll have a special care of this.

To her life said, my joy, my dear,
 With me what venture wilt thou send,
 A good return thou needs not fear,
 I'll be thy factor and thy friend.

In goods, my dear jewel, I'll send above
 Ten pounds, which you shall take on board,
 I know that unto me my love
 A treble gain thou wilt afford,

This said, next to the wife he goes
 And asked her in scornful ways,
 What venture she will now propose
 To send by him for merchandise.

I'll send a penny love by thee,
 Be sure to take great care of it,
 When you're in foreign part, said she,
 Pray buy a penny worth of wit.

He put the money up secure,
 And said I'll take a special care
 To lay it out you may be sure,
 So to his miss he did repair.

And told her what he was to buy,
 At which she laughed his wife to scorn;
 On board he went immediately,
 And set to sea that very morn.

PART II.

Now 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 bestowed
 The cargo which was outward bound,
 He did his trading vessel load
 With rich treasures which he found.

As this merchandise did vend,
 They turned the gems and golden ore,
 Which crowned his labour with content,
 He never was so rich before.

The wanton harlot's venture then,
 Did run to great account likewise,
 For every pound she would have ten,
 Such was their lucky merchandise.

The merchant then with laughter mov'd
 Said he for wit had never sought,
 My harlot's venture is approved,
 But of my wife's I never thought.

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.

An aged father sitting by,
 Whose venerable locks were grey,
 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 faithful wife
 Will stand by thee in well or woe.

If thou will prove the truth of this,
 Strip off thy gaudy rich array,
 And so return to thy lewd miss,
 Declare that thou wast cast away.

Thy riches buried in the main,
 Besides as you passed through a wood,
 One of your servants you had slain
 For which your life in danger stood;

Beseech her for to shelter thee,
 Declare to her you so depend,
 And then, alas, full soon you'll see
 How far she'll prove a faithful friend.

Then if she frowns go to thy wife,
 Tell her this melancholy thing;
 Who labours most to save thy life,
 Let her be most in thy esteem.

Further the merchant then reply'd,
 You must this single penny take,
 And when I have passed the ocean wide,
 A proof of this I mean to make.

PART III.

With full sail to sea they went,
 Neptune the golden cargo bore,
 Thro' roaring waves, to their content
 At length they reached 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.

He cried no man was ere so crossed
 As I have been, sweet heart delight,
 My ship and all I had is lost,
 Without thy aid I'm ruined 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 near my wife
 Whom I have wronged for many years,
 Into thy hands I'll put my life,
 Take pity on my melting tears.

Ye bloody villian, she replied,
 Do'nt in the least on me depend,
 Begone, or as I live, she cried,
 I for an officer will send.

Then to his loving wife he came,
 Both poor and naked, in distress,
 He told her all the very same,
 Yet she received him ne'ertheless.

My dear, she cried, 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.
 Unto his virtuous wife, he said,
 My jewel set thy heart at rest.

Behold I have no servant slain,
 Nor have I suffered any loss;
 Enough I have us to maintain,
 The ocean seas no more I'll cross.

My loaded ship lies near the shore,
 With gold and jewels richly fraught,
 So much I never had before,
 The penny-worth of wit I've bought.

Once more he to his harlot goes
 With fourteen sailors brave and bold,
 All clothed in new and costly clothes,
 Of silk and embroider'd gold.

The miss when she his pomp beheld,
 Did offer him a kind embrace,
 But he with wrath and anger filled,
 Did straight upbraid her to her face.

But she with smiles these words expressed,
 I have a faithful love for thee,
 What e'er I said was but a jest,
 Why didst thou go so soon from me?

'Twas full time to go from thee,
 You have another love in store,
 Whom you have furnished with my gold,
 And jewels which I brought on shore.

'Tis false, she cried, I have them all;
 With that the merchant straight replied
 Lay them before me and I shall,
 Be soon convinced and satisfied.

Then up she ran and brought them down,
 His jewels, gold, and rubbies bright;
 He seized them all, and with a frown,
 He bad the wanton jilt good night.

When he had seized the golden purse
 And swept up every precious stone,
 She cried, what! will you rob me thus?
 Yes that I will, of what's my own.

You wanted to betray my life,
 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;
 E'er since they live a happy life,
 And he'll to harlots no more run.