

CHEAP TRACTS,

Calculated to promote the Interests of Religion, Virtue, and Humanity.

No. I.

THE MAGDALEN:

OR, THE
HISTORY

OF A

Reform'd Prostitute.

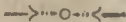
IN TWO LETTERS,

Written by Herself, & published by Dr. DODD.

Giving an Account of the means of Seduction, the
subsequent Conduct and Misery of an

UNFORTUNATE FEMALE,

and her Providential Deliverance, from a state of
Sin and Shame.



To which is added,

THE

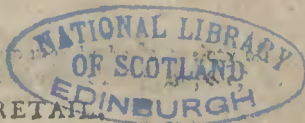
Forsaken Maid's Lamentation.



DUNBAR:

Printed by G. A. ...

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.



THE
MAGDALEN, &c.



— — — Your bounty is beyond my speaking :
But tho' my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank you:
And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
My fervent soul shall breathe forth prayers for you ;
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you need ;
The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

ROWE.

SIR,

THOUGH I can scarcely hope that my mean & unadorned essay can be worthy a place in your paper, yet I am prompted so strongly by gratitude, that I must make the attempt; and should esteem it particularly kind, if you would enable me to spread as extensively as I can my present felicity, and the blessed source of it.

Without further preface, Sir, I must inform you that I am one of those, who owe life, salvation, happiness; every comfort and every hope, to that happy place the MAGDALEN-HOUSE. Believe me in what I deliver; for I do assure you in the most solemn manner, that it is the strictest truth. I was amongst

the first who sought that hospitable dwelling; and alas, it makes my very blood run chill, to reflect upon my situation, when admitted into that house! Good God, was there ever such an object of pity and distress! Abandoned by every friend I had; abhorring my dire business, but obliged to continue it for bread, almost naked; broken hearted; without a roof to receive me; without an eye to pity me; without any kind christian to look on and rescue me. People, Sir, think, that no hard usage is bad enough for *us* in that state: but indeed, if they knew all, they would not think so. For as bad a creature as I might seem, I would have given the world to have been employed in any honest means of livelihood: though there was a time when I should have thought servile employ much beneath me. But, alas, times were sorely changed, and my affliction was greater than could be fancied. If you indulge me by printing this, perhaps, when I can get a little time I may send you some short account of my misfortunes, to shew that we are not *all* such objects of every body's worst contempt and insults. But I beg pardon for running from my subject; women's pens, Sir, are not used to order.

In my calamitous distress I applied to the *Magdalen House*; and I was received with all that humanity which distinguishes the worthy managers of it. I fancied and fore-
 coded every good to myself, when, on the

day of admission, I perceived many of the gentlemen wipe their eyes while I was relating some of my early miseries! For alas, Sir, though I am old in grief, I have yet seen but nineteen years! It is impossible for me to describe, as I ought, the comforts I found in that house. I was neatly cloathed, satisfactorily employed, and had such provisions as the very best would be contented with. But these were small to the comforts abounding to my mind: the divine instructions I have heard in that *chapel*, which I must always think a little heaven, (the door to heaven, I am sure it has been to me;) those instructions will never be erased from my mind! They have calm'd my troubled soul and convinced me that my repentance will not be in vain; that my resolutions of virtue, through grace, will not be ineffectual. Resolutions! Oh, Sir, can it be possible that any of *us* who have so much experienced the miseries of vice, can ever return to it again! This, I think, must be impossible.

To speak of every thing commendable and humane in the house, would exceed my present limits. Nothing, surely, can be calculated better for the relief, the comfort, the information, of poor unhappy girls: and the gentlemen act like fathers indeed. Satisfied with my behaviour, our worthy and never enough to be applauded *treasurer*, was so kind some few weeks since as to inform me, that if I chose to accept it, a

place offered tolerably advantageous, and he would recommend me. I desired his, and our incomparable matron's advice; and in consequence of that, have accepted it. I was fitted out with all things proper and decent, much beyond my wish or expectation; and am happily situated with a worthy lady, whose amiable behaviour makes me perfectly blest; and be satisfied, my whole study shall be to please her; and to shew myself sensible of those divine mercies which I have experienced, in the deliverance of both body and soul from death.

Now, Sir, all I wish is, that this may be known for the satisfaction of those concerned in this noble charity: whose humane breasts it must fill with pleasure, to think they have redeemed a poor girl from the depth of misery: a girl not yet twenty: who lives happy and peaceful through their bounty; lives to pray for and to bless them every day! May the Lord of heaven crown them with all their hearts wishes: and increase the number of *those* daily, who are friends to this glorious design. To the advantages of which, not myself only, but numbers already are witnesses. *Polly* * * * is a comfortable instance. This charity has saved her poor mother's life: with whom she now lives: and I would fain have persuaded her to write to you. I believe I should have deferred it myself, something longer, if it had

not been for an accident, which happened, last night ; and which determined me in my purpose : as I was led to hope, that, perhaps this notice in your paper, may be seen by some unfortunate *girls*, who may be curious to read a letter from one, unhappy enough to have been of their number : though, thank God, by miracle almost, rescued and saved. And great need there is for thanks. For as I was about to tell you, last night, as I was going *cross* our

Sir ; last night, I was going *cross* our square on an errand for my mistress, a poor creature, in a sad hollow tone, begged me, for Christ's sake, to give her a bit of bread. I turned to look at her, and she was almost naked, with a tattered blanket thrown over her, and an old handkerchief tied about her head ; she asked very pressingly, for a piece of bread, only a crust, any thing to relieve her hunger. I thought, I knew something of the voice : and taking her to the next lamp—Blessed father, can I ever enough express my horror and surprize ! I was ready to drop down ! For it was *Nancy* * * * ! who came into the *Magdalen* sometime after me : but her sad temper would not permit her to stay there : so that the gentlemen, after having long waited her better behaviour in vain, (for nothing can be imagined more tender and careful than they are, more slow to punish, more desirous to continue us) were forced to dismiss her ! and

she, having no friend to receive her, was obliged to return to her old way of life; and now diseased and cast off, was at the point of starving; when thus accidentally she applied to me in the street! The moment she knew me, she burst into the most lamentable cries and tears, I ever heard or saw! 'Oh! happy girl, said she, would to God, I had been like you. Now, I am ruined and lost for ever. I have no cloathes to cover me; no food to supply my hunger, and I am almost perishing with it; disease is preying upon me in a terrible manner: I have no where to hide my head: I am cast out by every body; and in a few days must perish; and what will become of my soul, I dare not even think.'

You may imagine, Sir, what a situation mine was, while I heard her speaking thus; I gave her what present relief I could: and provided for her last night. I have made her dismal case known to my humane and charitable mistress; and she will assist this poor creature. And now, Sir, if I should be so happy, after all, as to be made an instrument of saving my fellow-sufferer, I shall bless God, indeed; and think that such a mercy granted me, is a proof, he has graciously and fully pardoned me. I wish all the poor unfortunate girls in the city, and every where, could have seen poor *Nancy* ***: for none, I am sure, would

then be bad upon principle, or stay a minute from the blessed *Magdalen*, to perish in the streets, like a beast, neglected by all, in cold, in nakedness, in hunger, in distemper,—unhoused, unfriended, unpitied, unrelieved—What distress can be equal! I hope, Sir, you will correct all my mistakes: and, as it is proper to conceal real names, I shall beg leave to subscribe myself, now, and whenever again you will suffer me to trouble you,

A GRATEFUL MAGDALEN

LETTER SECOND.

The REAL HISTORY *of a* MAGDALEN.

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*Man, the lawless libertine may rove  
Free and unquestion'd, thro' the wilds of love :  
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,  
If poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,  
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame ;  
And one false step entirly damns her fame.  
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore ;  
In vain look back to what she was before ;  
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.*

ROWE.

SIR,

I AM much obliged to you for giving my poor performance a place in your paper; and upon that encouragement, I take the liberty once more to trouble you. I have a plain and artless tale to deliver; and I deliver it only to shew, that pity and relief may not improperly be extended to unhappy objects like myself. Parents too, perhaps, may learn some instruction from my story.

I am the daughter of a tradesman in this city: my father, though engaged in a reputable and advantageous business, had yet no right to the privileges of a gentleman; but

my mother desirous to assume those privileges, from her marriage determined to live and act as a gentlewoman. With this view she always followed the fashion: her dress was ever in the mode; and her dining room was furnished in taste; the chimney piece had no small share of *Bow-china ware*; the curtains were made after the most elegant manner; and the whole floor was covered with *Wilton carpet*.

You may be satisfied from this disposition of my mother's, that she was careful, whatever else she might forget, to instruct her children in politeness. Indeed, Sir, ever from the time that I can remember ought, I remember nothing so diligently inculcated upon me as lessons of my own importance, gentility and beauty, and the necessity of setting off my person to the best advantage. Imagine not, that I mean to dishonour my mother by repeating these things, which may appear trifling, but were in reality the inlets to my ruin: I reverence the memory of my parent; but by mentioning her mistakes, perhaps I may happily warn others.

At the age of fifteen I lost my mother, who left my father a widower, with myself, a sister, and two brothers; and, as I was the eldest, and my father was very fond of me, the chief conduct of domestic affairs fell upon me. But Oh! Sir, how ill capacitated was I for this, who had been initiated into all

the fashionable diversions and amusements for which I had contracted an insuperable fondness; as they led me to display those personal graces, which alone I was taught to cultivate; and which, alas! I valued but too highly. My mother's death tended to advance me more early into a state of womanish behaviour; and my father gratified too blindly my wild inclinations. As I had heard only general and random lessons of virtue, and very few or occasional instructions in religion, it is not to be supposed, that mere *female* honour could give me great strength to withstand temptations. But indeed, I thought little of temptations: as I scarcely knew what was vice, so it gained little of my reflection: my chief wish was to be admired; and my grand aim and pursuit, to get a very fine and wealthy husband. Chariots, country houses, routs, dress, and gaiety occupied my waking and sleeping thoughts.

Thus a year and more ran on: during which time I wanted not admirers; for I must be allowed to say, my person was pleasing and attractive. Amongst these the son of an opulent merchant in our neighbourhood attended me most assiduously; and his endearing behaviour soon won my unsuspecting heart. My father encouraged his visits; which yet he himself desired might be as secret as possible: 'For his father, he informed us, would be greatly of-

fended, if acquainted with his attachments to me, the only thing, he daily protested, which prevented his marrying me.' I heard his oaths, I listened and believed. But how distant was I from suspecting any dishonourable intentions, since, in all the fervour of passion, he would curse his fate, and the vile folly of mankind in suffering *priests* to obstruct their bliss by a foolish ceremony, devised solely for their profit; since, in the sight of God, (if there was a God who took notice of such things) an union of hearts, and mutual oaths and vows, must doubtless constitute a marriage. Much of this I often heard; and love blinded my eyes to its intent.

In the mean time a sudden shock overwhelmed our family in the deepest distress: my father became a bankrupt; and the miseries impending over his children so affected him, that he turned perfectly melancholy. This accident was Mr. \* \* 's triumph: his friendship and tenderness for me on this occasion was such, that I fear it would have prevailed over a heart better fortified. Wonder not, Sir, that it prevailed over me, whose heart was melting with the softest love to him! Cruel deceiver, he persuaded me to leave that distressful scene, and to take possession of a lodging, which he had provided, he told me, till better times would allow him publicly to acknowledge me as his wife. My



father's brother took the management, of his affairs, and the kind protection of my brothers and sister; while I, only I, was lost to them; drowned in a state of insensibility, though not without the tenderest regard to my dear relations; whom I endeavoured to persuade, that I was married to Mr. \*\*; but they were too wise: they could not be deceived; and foretelling me my fate with severity enough, utterly cast me off.

Possessed of Mr. \*\*'s affection, I felt, I conceived no loss or hurt from any other's neglect. And my heart can bear me witness, that I never knew a thought, or indulged a wish from him. Seven months he continued all I could hope: and I began to believe that every thing, (though little enough) which I had heard of formal virtue, was a name; and that outward ceremonies, and the like, tended only to the infelicity of the married state. But soon, too soon, was I awakened from this golden dream. Mr. \*\* grew thoughtful in my company, began to make his visits less frequent and more short; urging great business in the counting house, the preparation of ships, and I know not what: it gave me pain, but I suspected nothing. One day, however, when I was at the window waiting for him as usual, with fond impatience, a messenger came with a letter: but what words can express my anguish upon reading it! It was to inform me that his father had found out his connection

with me, and had provided a match for him with a lady of very great fortune; and since it was impossible for him to refuse, as he must thereby forfeit all his father's regard, he hoped I would make myself easy: especially, as he would take care of the child I should bring into the world, (for I was then with child by him) and would procure me a good place after my delivery; to support me till which time, he sent me a bill of thirty pounds.

My torture and distress were beyond all description, I will not therefore attempt it; a miscarriage ensued, & a dangerous illness, in which I had good hope that I should have finished a burdensome life: though the dread I had of something future deterred me from any thing violent, to which my distresses frequently prompted me. For tho' I wrote and entreated but for one interview, would you believe that I entreated always in vain? This hard-hearted man, this most unkind and cruel source of all my sorrow, would scarcely deign me a reply! My relations were equally obdurate: I desired but to see my sister; my aunt and uncle sent me only in return to my request, sharp upbraidings and savage counsels! Gracious heaven, what a situation was mine! How early did I begin to drink of the bitter cup of penance for my unlawful pleasures & criminal indulgencies!

My youth supported me under this heavy load; the heaviest part of which was my soli-

and the want of some female friend to  
 console me, and to amuse my gloomy  
 thoughts. My nurse, to whom I had fre-  
 quently made my complaint, and from whom  
 had concealed no part of my afflictions, at  
 my repeated request, was so kind (I concei-  
 ed it kind) to introduce to me a lady of the  
 neighbourhood, as she told me; whose  
 rank and generous converse soon engaged  
 my foolish heart; and I thought myself  
 happy in the friendship of Mrs. *Marriot*.  
 Mrs. *Marriot* took me to her country house;  
 several ladies were recommended by her to  
 my acquaintance. Two or three gentlemen  
 paid us short visits; and after a day  
 or two's stay there, we returned to town  
 together; but, as it happened to be  
 late, she pressed me much to take a bed at  
 her house. I complied, and laid me down to  
 sleep under her care & custody, dreaming of  
 nothing ill. When I was awakened in the night  
 by the admission of a person into my room  
 and bed; whom I found it in vain to resist,  
 as he informed me truly where I was, what  
 I must expect, and how unreasonable and  
 unavailing any refractory conduct would  
 prove. The terror of the scene deprived me  
 of my senses, and I have no recollection of  
 myself, but as surrounded the following  
 day by Mrs. *Marriot*, and several of her  
 house, using their endeavours to support  
 my life, of which they seemed almost to  
 despair.

it would be superfluous, Sir, to tell you the horrid situation I was now in, since this is an evil but too commonly known: I was again a ruined wretch; and besides this, a beggared prisoner, destined to every misery that human nature is capable of. My very soul abhorred my manner of living; but alas, I knew not, I could not apprehend any method of redress! Some months I was compelled to the drudgery of this detestable life; and as ours was a much frequented house, mine was the more deplorable a fate: With some difficulty I again found means to apply to my uncle and my sister, but they were as obdurate as the flint. Good God, that neither wretchedness, relationship, prayers, nor intreaties should avail! If thou wast as severe as our fellow creatures, what must become of sinful mortals!

But that I may not be tedious: at length, Sir, myself and the rest of our unhappy sisterhood, were delivered from our prison, and dispersed by the disgrace of our mistress, who for some misdemeanor fell into the hands of justice. But alas! I was then as much to seek as ever. Sally\*\*\*, with whom I had contracted a friendship, advised me to go with her to some public office, and there to enquire for a place: but at these offices we were again and again rejected, unable, as we were, to refer any where for a character: and too plainly as our improper dress discovered our manner of life. We



had no money : we had no friends : we wept together, but we could find no possibility of deliverance from a pursuit of our former life, in order to obtain sustenance. I am sure, and can say it with the most solemn truth, any employment would have been blessed, in comparison of this. For let the humane only judge of a timorous young girl entering the streets with a guilty mind, and a shameful purpose ; darkness and distress around her ; and under the dire necessity of submitting to the brutality of lust with any wretch who is inclined to use her. I was shocked with horror. Exquisite and pressing hunger, I truly declare, alone compelled me. Sally and myself took a little apartment, and there breathed a miserable existence.

Some weeks after which, as I was crossing the *Strand*, a young man met me, and using my name, I looked at him attentively : but what was my surprize and my pleasure to find it my *elder brother*, who was grown much since I saw him, and was now near sixteen years old ! I was ready to faint at the sight of him ! For there had always been a particular love between us. I perceived the tears gush down the cheeks of the dear youth, and you may easily conceive I could not refrain mine. He beckoned me to follow, and when we came to a private avenue in the street, he took my hand, and, 'Oh ! my dearest sister, said he, how happy am I, that at last I have found you ! my uncle

' and my friends have continually represen-  
 ' ted you to me as lost, and I have been un-  
 ' able to learn more, than that you are be-  
 ' come a vile & abandoned woman of the  
 ' town !' Oh brother, I replied, they have  
 indeed been cruel, though I am worthless :  
 but had they been more kind, they might  
 have saved me from my present distress.  
 You must have heard how often I have wrote to  
 them, & to you ; why was it that *you* would  
 never give me one word of an answer ? ' I  
 ' never received a line from you, replied he,  
 ' and whenever I enquired concerning you,  
 ' my uncle bad me be silent, and never ask  
 ' after the scandal of the family, using other  
 ' vile names, which I shall not repeat. But,  
 ' for God's sake, tell me, are you that un-  
 ' happy woman ? I tremble to think it.'—  
 You may be assured I could give no an-  
 swer. To hear this from a brother, and so  
 young, and whom I tenderly loved, and  
 whose sight renewed the remembrance of all  
 my past offences, the remembrance of my  
 dearest friends, and shewed me myself in  
 the utmost degree of horror ; to hear this,  
 shocked me beyond expression ; and his  
 tears and affectionate anxiety added poig-  
 nancy to every reflection. ' Oh ! sister, said  
 ' he, this is too much to be supported : but  
 ' heaven has made me happy, that I may be  
 ' the blessed means, I hope, of administering  
 ' relief to you. If you have any proper place  
 ' to go to, let me attend you, and tell you

what I have to offer.' We went to my little lodging immediately. And can I, Oh! can I ever enough express my joy, when this good young man, now dearer to me than life, informed me of the *Magdalen-House*: whereof he told me his excellent master was a governor, and to the chapel of which he had one *Sunday* introduced him.

There needed not much recommendation; for how could I be unwilling to abandon a life which was big with misery and sorrow?

But had I not been so, his description of this blessed *House* would have certainly led me to it. I told him, I hoped he would recommend me to his master, not naming my relationship to himself. But this he said was impossible; since no favour was shewn in admission. The most proper objects, the truest penitents, and the most afflicted, being always preferred by the governors. If so, said I, there is no doubt but I shall obtain their favourable regard. I thought the hours long, till *Thursday* arrived, the day of admission: upon which I repaired to the *Magdalen*; petitioned; prevailed; and was blest!

Thus, Sir, I owe, under God, my present happiness to my brother, which endears it still more; during my stay in the *House*, I was frequently blest with his company, which is always instructive; and he has constantly supplied me with some religious treatise or other, which I read with a double pleasure.

as coming from him. I have hopes too of regaining the regard of my other friends, and have already seen my sister. My poor father, to my exquisite sorrow, died soon after my departure. This is at present the greatest burden to my mind.

Such is my story ; which I have delivered in the plainest manner. I want not to exculpate myself : That I am criminal, very criminal ; that I have done amiss, very much amiss, I am ready to acknowledge ; I do acknowledge in the sight of God and man. But oh ! dear Sir, let the most rigidly virtuous consider a poor uninstructed young girl, without any principles almost but those of *vanity*, attacked by every thing that can allure, youth, wealth, personal graces, solemn vows, and the most awful protestations and promises of marriage from a faithless heart ; her own, sick with love ; and let pardon at least be granted for one fault. For the rest, treachery, perfidy, cruelty, necessity, will speak. My sufferings have been very severe : and oh ! that I had known those dictates of virtue and religion, in which I have been instructed at the *Magdalen*, and which found a properly humbled mind to receive them ! Oh that in early youth I had known them ; that my parents had early taught me the ways of piety ; for, I am persuaded, I should then never have taken the first false step. I should then have preserved my innocence, and have escaped those sorrows, which, I am fa-

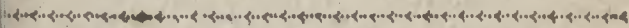


sified, are the never-failing attendants of  
ice.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

A GRATEFUL MAGDALEN.



THE

ORSAKEN MAID'S LAMENTATION.



COME all ye servant maids draw near,  
While I my griefs relate,  
And when the cruel tale you hear,  
O learn to shun my fate!

For I tho' born of humble race,  
By curs'd ambition led,  
Aspir'd to fill *Rebecca's* place,  
And shar'd my *master's* bed,

For this I scorn'd poor *Billy's* love,  
Altho, a parson's son;  
Whose ever gentle manners prove  
His heart was all my own.

My ruffet gown was laid aside,  
And all my best put on;

And every day in all the pride  
Of Sunday clothes I shone :

For this I set my cap on high,  
And curl'd my flowing hair ;  
And, more to fix the wandering eye,  
I left my bosom bare.

Too well, alas ! my wish succeeds ;  
Attracted by my charms,  
The youth his fervent passion pleads,  
And clasps me in his arms.

He swore by every name in heav'n  
He'd take me for his wife :  
And as he hop'd his sins forgiv'n,  
Would love me all his life.

While thus he press'd my bosom hard.  
He breath'd an humble pray'r,  
That I would instantly reward  
A passion so sincere.

His soft careffes sooth'd my mind,  
And virtue lull'd asleep ;  
My guardian angel staid behind,  
And turn'd aside to weep.

Full many, many months he lov'd  
With unabated fire,  
And full enjoyment only prov'd  
Creative of desire.

Till prudence urging the demand,  
 And careful of my fame,  
 claim'd the promise of his hand,  
 To take away my shame.

A rising blush his face o'erspread,  
 And *Nabal* thus reply'd :  
 You have alone your *master's* bed,  
 But cannot be his bride.

Well might the world my meanness scorn,  
 If I could stoop so low  
 To marry one so humbly born  
 And one so poor as you."

In vain I urg'd the vows he made,  
 In vain expos'd my grief,  
 In vain were all the tears I shed,  
 To bring my soul relief.

Too late I then at length perceiv'd,  
 That all my hopes were gone,  
 That I'd been cruelly deceiv'd,  
 And was, alas ! undone.

But soon disgusted at my tears,  
 And sated with my charms,  
 He realiz'd my boding fears,  
 And left my longing arms.

Another now enjoys the bliss  
 For which I humbly sigh'd,

Whose *wealth* has *bought* the venal kiss,  
And made her *Nabal's* bride.

Was it for this (O foolish maid!)  
I scorn'd the parson's son?  
For this alone I dress'd my head,  
And wore my Sunday's gown.

Did I for this his passion crown,  
My sex's pride forego,  
And brave the scandal of the town,  
To be forsaken so!

Ah gentle virgins timely wise,  
Th' impending danger shun!  
Nor seek to please your master's eyes,  
Lest you should be undone.

But from the youth upon the plain  
A partner chuse for life;  
For constant is the village swain,  
And happy is his wife.

Then peaceful in your little cot,  
Your days shall all be spent;  
And Heaven shall bless the favour'd spot  
With freedom and content.

While I for ever must deplore  
My foolish easy faith,  
And never hope for comfort more,  
But in the arms of death.