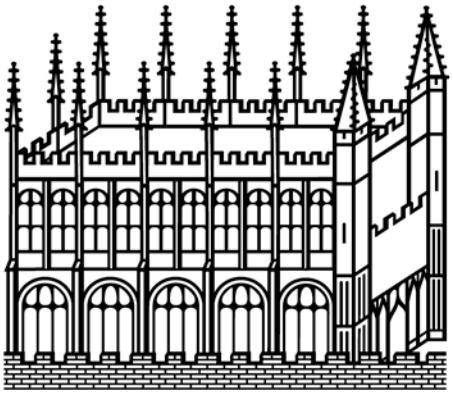

Maria Norris
The Gift of Miss Russ
Wardsend

TALES OF THE POOR,

OR

INFANT SUFFERINGS.

Tales of the Poor,

OR,

INFANT SUFFERINGS:

CONTAINING

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER'S BOY;
SALLY BROWN, THE COTTON SPINNER;
THE ORPHANS,—A BALLAD;
MARY DAVIS.

"CHILDREN OF MISERY, BAPTIZED WITH TEARS."

SHEFFIELD:
Printed by James Montgomery, for the Benefit of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor in Sheffield;
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1813.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

The Princeſs Charlotte of Wales.

MADAM,

To whom can the supplicant for suffering humanity, and especially for suffering youth, innocence and weakness apply with so much propriety, or chance of obtaining effectual aid, as to youth and innocence possessing both power and inclination to succour the oppressed?

The simple and unadorned Tales of this little Volume contain no relation of FICTITIOUS *woe. The sufferings, which they faintly describe, are unfortunately but too real:—Nor are they rarely occurring instances; they are such as every day produces, in almost every district and in almost every town in the Kingdom. Were it possible, for your Royal Highness,* PERSONALLY *to witness them, solicitations in their favour would be totally useless.*

No bosom, like yours, unhardened by familiarity with misery, unengrossed by scenes of gaiety, vanity, and frivolity, undisturbed by the cares, the anxieties and the sorrows of riper years, could for a moment withstand their powerful appeal.

How much higher would it elevate a nation's hopes, should one of the first actions of your public life be to give MORE THAN LIFE, *to thousands of unprotected infants, who, but for you, might not only have been* LOST *to society, but have become its baneful pests; who might, but for you, not only have failed of acquiring happiness, but have been sunk into misery both temporal and eternal.*

Should it seem good to the All-wise Sovereign of the Universe, in His merciful dispensation, and in His own good time and way, to appoint you to reign over these highly favoured realms, may He grant you to follow the bright and pure example of your august and venerable Grandsire and his worthy Consort, our present Sovereigns, who through more than half a century have together exhibited an example of every private and public virtue.— May you, after a long, prosperous and happy reign, when approaching that awful period, at which worldly

greatness will only be important as it has been rendered useful, experience, like them, the blessings of an approving conscience. May you, like them, enjoy, amidst the prayers of an affectionate and grateful people, the bright prospect of obtaining an ETERNAL CROWN in the realms of everlasting bliss and glory. That these, and every other blessing, may be afforded to your Royal Highness, is the sincere and fervent prayer of,

MADAM,

Your most truly Obedient,

and Faithful Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

FEBRUARY 16, 1813.

TALE I.

THE

CHIMNEY SWEEPER'S

BOY.

[THE SECOND EDITION.]

TO THE SOCIETY

INSTITUTED IN LONDON,

For superseding the Necessity of Climbing Boys,

By encouraging a New Method of Sweeping Chimnies,

AND FOR

Improving the Condition of Children and others employed by Chimney Sweepers,

THIS SIMPLE TALE,

(In which is attempted to be delineated

A SPECIES OF MISERY AND OPPRESSION,

Which the painful experience of the Society must have convinced them is neither imagined nor exaggerated,)

IS HUMBLY DEDICATED,

AS A MARK OF RESPECT

AND GRATITUDE FOR THEIR EXERTIONS

IN THE CAUSE OF

SUFFERING HUMANITY,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

OBSERVATIONS

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

From the miseries of contending nations, and from the tumult of contending parties*, with what complacency does the mind turn to objects which breathe the spirit of peace and brotherly kindness; which are so far from inflicting misery, that they pour the balm of comfort into the wounds of suffering humanity, and shed blessings on the heads of the children of affliction. The heart, sick and oppressed with contemplating slaughter and devastation, and wearied with witnessing contention, detraction and abuse, looks around for something on which it may repose with serenity and self-complacency.

How grateful, how satisfactory then to the feeling heart will be the exercise of humanity, and how gladly will it embrace those opportunities which

* Written during the contested Election for the County of York, 1807.

present themselves of comforting the sorrowful, relieving the oppressed and instructing the ignorant.

Of all the objects on which humanity can be exercised, CHILDREN appear to stand amongst the first and most deserving. Whether we consider their helplessness, their necessities, or their innocence, THERE is the widest field for the exercise of humanity, and THERE is the fairest prospect afforded of final success; THEY possess the greatest pliability of disposition to receive good impressions, and they afford the brightest hopes of retaining those impressions the longest, and of becoming most eminently useful.

Of all the Children, demanding the helping hand of humanity, which this country exhibits, probably those who are employed by CHIMNEY SWEEPERS, as CLIMBING BOYS, are the most deserving of commiseration and assistance*, whether we consider the distressing and unjustifiable means by which they are often obtained, the shocking and painful methods which are used to force them, at that tender age, to the performance of a task, not only the most horrid

* Here perhaps ought to be excepted thoſe poor Children who have been tranſported by their Pariſh Officers to diſtant Cotton Mills, compared with many of whom the Weſt India Slave enjoys happineſs and freedom; this is a ſubject which greatly merits, and imperiouſly demands, the attention of the Legiſlature.—*See Tale II.*

that can be conceived by the imagination of a child, but also one of the most difficult to be accomplished, whether we consider the hardships and misery to which they are in general exposed from the tyranny of ignorant and unfeeling masters, from cold, nakedness, hunger, and labour, at a period of life which demands the fostering care of parental affections and support, to render the body capable of hereafter discharging those duties which more advanced age will demand of them; or that total neglect of all learning, and moral and religious instruction, which is so absolutely necessary to fit the child to become a blessing to himself and to society; whether we consider the diseases and consequent deformity, if not death, to which they are perpetually exposed, or those habits of wickedness of every description, which they are not only thrown in the way of witnessing, but in which they are too often encouraged to take a part, and it is to be feared to which they are even sometimes driven; we cannot surely avoid commiserating their deplorable situation, nor refrain from affording them every assistance in our power.—Animated by these and other similar considerations, a Society was formed some years ago in London for the purpose of bettering the situation of the Climbing Boys, and for endeavouring to supersede the necessity of employing them at all, by offering rewards for the invention and application of Machines for sweeping Chimnies.

In these several objects the Society has met with considerable success, the condition of the Climbing Boys has been much improved, the number in some degree lessened, and Machines have been invented, particularly one by Mr. SMART, which bid fair, with such improvements as time and experience may point out, to become a good and sufficient substitute, ninety nine times in a hundred, for Climbing Boys, and it (Mr. Smart's) can often be used in chimnies which CHILDREN cannot ascend.

This Machine, with some improvements, the Society HERE have procured, which, when they shall have met with a person properly qualified, and who is willing to undertake the management of it, and as soon as he shall have become sufficiently expert in the use of it, they mean to offer to the public.

The Society in London appear in some degree to have retarded the success of the plan, by putting the Machine, (from the best of motives,) in the first instance, into the hands of the regular Chimney Sweepers, who seem to have considered it as their interest to prevent the success of it, since it has been found that not one of them has made it answer to the general satisfaction of their employers, whilst Mr. Smart, who is not a Chimney Sweeper, has carried the practice to a very considerable extent, and given great satisfaction. He says, that out of one hundred

chimnies, they do not meet with more on an average than one which they cannot sweep with the Machines, and that there is a greater proportion than this which a Climbing Boy cannot ascend.—The Society in Sheffield, desirous of profiting by the experience of the London Society, do not wish the regular Chimney Sweepers to be encouraged in using the Machines till such time as the art shall have been sufficiently acquired by some others; the competition will then act as a sufficient stimulus to exertion, and the Society then mean to give the preference to the regular Chimney Sweepers, so far as their character and conduct shall seem to merit it. In so extensive and populous a place as London, one or two persons using the Machine with success would cause little competition, but here the case would be widely different, and if the inhabitants be only well disposed to give the plan a fair trial, the Chimney Sweepers must either use it themselves with success, or relinquish their employment. It has been said, "Why would you deprive any class of men of their usual means of obtaining a livelihood?" It is answered:—Many cases might occur where it would be right to do that; but in this there is no occasion to do it, nor would even the general introduction of the Machines have a tendency to that effect; on the contrary it would be the means of affording the Chimney Sweepers a more constant, reputable and comfortable employment than what they

had before. At present by far the greater number are young Children, not one sixth part of whom, if they stood the same chance as others for life, could probably on the present plan find employment in their own calling when they grew up, and they must therefore THEN either apply themselves to another, or become burdensome to the parish; but the fact is that so many of them die, or become incapable of working, that the trade is not much overstocked with them. But as each Machine will probably require a man and a boy to work it, there will be employment for them at all ages, and such as will neither be particularly disagreeable, unhealthy, nor disreputable.

It has been said, that in some instances the pots or pipes, on the tops of the chimnies, have been displaced by the Machine, but if that ever was the case, it must have been when they were so insecure as to be liable to be blown off by the first gust of wind, and it is surely better that they should be thrown off by the Machine, than with the poor Climbing Boys in them; *as was the case lately in London, where the little wretched Being fell down in the pot, and was literally dashed to pieces.* There will, however, in all probability, always exist a necessity for SOME Climbing Boys; a considerable share therefore of the attention of the Committee will be given to render THEIR situations as little oppres-

sive and degrading as possible, by enforcing those regulations which the wisdom of the Legislature has enacted respecting them, and by every other method in their power.

The Society will have occasion for a considerable Fund to defray the necessary expences of purchasing Machines, of encouraging those who may undertake the working of them; of purchasing and enforcing Acts of Parliament relative to Chimney Sweepers; of granting Premiums for improvements in the Machines; of advertising, and for many other expences, which it is neither possible nor necessary to enumerate.

To a Subscription adequate to every necessary purpose the Society may look forward with confidence; the Public in Sheffield were never backward in contributing their pecuniary aid towards the accomplishment of any plan for the relief of the unfortunate, which their judgment approved. *The final success of the undertaking must, however, in a great measure depend on the encouragement afforded it by the FEMALE part of the Public,*—a circumstance from which the Society may venture with confidence to draw the most favourable conclusion; THEIR hearts are ever open to the most lively impressions of compassion, and their hands ever ready to administer relief;—the circumscribed know-

ledge of the world which the more respectable part of them have opportunities of acquiring may often cause their benevolence to be bestowed on the hypocritical and designing,—but HERE the merits of the object cannot be mistaken, nor its necessities doubted, and here therefore their most cordial and earnest co-operation may be depended upon, nor will they be discouraged should circumstances arise in the infancy of the institution attended with some inconvenience.

The Committee will undoubtedly find many prejudices and many difficulties to remove and overcome, but they need not be disheartened, for unwearied perseverance in a practicable and good cause never failed of being crowned with considerable success; and it is presumed that few will be inclined to doubt, in this instance, the goodness of the cause, whatever opinion they may at present entertain respecting its practicability.

SHEFFIELD,
AUGUST 5th, 1807.

OBSERVATIONS

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE experience of nearly five years, which have passed since the publication of the first edition of this poem, has enabled the author to form a much more correct judgement than at that time respecting the probable success of applying machinery to the cleansing of chimnies. The Committee, in this town, of which he is a member, have, in the prosecution of that object, encountered numerous difficulties, they have likewise experienced some pleasing, and many painful feelings. They have been enabled to prove the *possibility* of much good being effected by it, and they have unhappily become convinced of the *probability* that it will produce comparatively but very little. Every year, though it has added to their conviction of the necessity of the attempt, has served to weaken their hopes of its final success.—

Though numbers of young helpless children are continually falling sacrifices to the cruel practice of forcing them up chimnies, yet the only means which has hitherto been offered as a substitute is neglected by the public.

Pity for the sufferings of our fellow creatures is a quick, a lively and an active passion; but it is transient and evanescent; if left to itself it soon grows weak, it shrinks from repeated solicitation and it vanishes before difficulties.

Though upwards of twelve hundred chimnies were swept by one man, with the Machine, in this town and neighbourhood, within the first twelve months, and the practicability of the measure thereby fully established, the number has, in spite of all the exertions of the Committee, been every succeeding year greatly diminished. Nothing therefore, it is probable, short of coercion, will serve to render the practice of Machine Sweeping so generally and permanently adopted as to prove lastingly beneficial.—The author scarcely dares, however, flatter himself with the hopes that an act of Parliament to abolish the practice of employing Climbing Boys would pass were it to be proposed. Yet it does not appear either unjust or unreasonable to compel a man to alter his chimney when the sweeping of it, in its present state, endangers the lives of his fellow

creatures, since, it is probable, that if the same chimney incommoded himself by smoking, he would voluntarily have it altered, even at a much greater expence. Indeed, in most other instances, when any building from its form, its situation or its condition threatens the lives of our fellow creatures, the owner is compelled to alter or remove it, and why not in this?

Much good, however, there is no doubt, has arisen and will arise from the attempt which has been made. Those in whom humanity is not only an active, but a durable principle, have an opportnnity afforded them, of which, it is to be hoped, they will gladly avail themselves, of indulging their amiable and benevolent feelings, and of avoiding those distressing sensations which they cannot but experience when compelled to employ their fellow creatures, during their tender years, in a species of labour so disgusting, degrading and dangerous, It is likewise probable, that the condition of the poor Climbing Boys has already been, in some degree, and it is to be hoped will be still farther ameliorated. The attention of the Legislature having been, by the efforts of the London and other Societies, drawn to the subject.— The active, benevolent and pious member for this county, the strenuous indefatigable and successful advocate of the abolition of the Slave Trade, has, I believe, at this time in contemplation a Bill for the

protection and benefit of this degraded and oppressed class of our fellow creatures:—may he live, if it please God, to witness for many years the success of it.

SHEFFIELD, MARCH 24, 1812.

P. S. *The following Extracts from a Work of the late Dr. Buchan, entitled "Advice to Mothers," deserve particular attention.*

"But there is another set of devoted beings more pitiable still than those which I have now described —I mean the children that are bound apprentices to chimney-sweepers. If any creature can exist in a state of greater wretchedness, or is a juster object of commiseration than a boy who is forced to clean chimneys in this country, I am very much mistaken. Half naked in the most bitter cold, he creeps along the streets by break of day—the ice cutting through his feet—his legs bent—and his body twisted. In this state, he is compelled to work his way up those dirty, noisesome passages, many of which are almost too narrow for a cat to climb. In order to subdue

the terror which he must feel in his first attempts, his savage master often lights up some wet straw in the fire-place, which leaves the poor creature no alternative but that of certain suffocation, or of instantly getting to the top. I have witnessed still greater cruelty: *I have more than once seen a boy, when a chimney was all in a blaze, forced down the vent, like a bundle of wet rags, to extinguish the flame.*

"Perhaps I shall be told, that boys so trained are necessary. I deny the assertion. Chimneys are kept clean, without such cruel and dangerous means, not only in many countries on the Continent, but even in some parts of our own island, *where the houses are much higher than in London.* In North Britain, for instance, a bunch of furze or broom answers the purpose, and does the business cheaper and better. One man stands at the top and another at the bottom of the chimney, when a rope is let down by means of a ball, and the bunch of furze or of broom, being properly fastened on, is pulled up and down till the chimney is quite cleaned. The little trouble and expence attending the operation are the strongest incitements to repeat it so often as to preclude the possibility of a chimney's ever taking fire. Is this the case in London, though hundreds of lives are every year sacrificed to the most barbarous method of preventing danger? How vain shall we find the boasts that are made of mighty improvements

in the metropolis of the British empire, if we fairly consider that it is at least a century behind the meanest village in the kingdom, in almost every thing that regards the preservation of human life.

"My late worthy friend, JONAS HANWAY, who literally *went about, doing good*, used all his influence to ameliorate the condition of those unhappy creatures; which, in a certain degree he effected. But there are some customs, that can be thoroughly mended, only by being completely abolished. While boys are forced up chimneys, they must be miserable, whatever laws are made for their relief. A law prohibiting the practice altogether, would be at once laying the axe to the root of the tree; and the evil admits of no other remedy.

"Had Mr. Hanway taken up the matter upon this ground, he had spirit and perseverance sufficient to have carried it through, and to have obtained an act of parliament for the effectual relief of the most wretched beings on the face of the earth. He confined his benevolent exertions to a partial alleviation of their miseries, because it had never occurred to him that the *climbing boys*, as he calls them, were wholly unnecessary. What a pity that he did not carry his views a little farther, as, in that case, he certainly would not have remained satisfied with any thing short of their total emancipation from such cruel and useless bondage!

"But surely there is humanity enough in both houses of parliament to take up this subject, without any other appeal to their feelings than a bare representation of facts.

"Many touches more would be necessary to finish the melancholy picture of the wretchedness of young chimney-sweepers. It is enough for me to sketch the principal outlines, in hopes that some person more at leisure may be induced to lay on the internal colouring. In addition, however, to the miseries already described, I must not omit the malignity of the disorders, with which those poor creatures, if they live long enough, are almost sure to be afflicted.—They are not only deformed and stunted in their growth, but, in consequence of having their pores clogged, and the surface of their bodies continually covered with a coat of dirt composed of soot, sweat, &c. they are subject to various maladies unknown to the rest of mankind.

"I need only give an instance of one of those diseases, which is called by the sufferers the *Soot-wart*, but which the late Mr. Pott has very properly named the *Chimney-Sweepers' cancer*. He describes it as a ragged, ill-looking sore, with hard and rising edges,—rapid in its progress, painful in all its attacks, and most certainly destructive in its event. Extirpation by the knife, on its first appearance, and

the immediate removal of the part affected, he looks upon as the only chance of putting a stop to, or preventing the fatal issue of the disease. His reflection on the subject does equal honour to his heart and to his understanding. 'The fate of these people,' says he, 'seems singularly hard. In their early infancy, they are frequently treated with great brutality, and almost starved with cold and hunger.—They are thrust up narrow, and sometimes hot chimneys, where they are bruised, burned, and almost suffocated; and when they get to puberty, they become peculiarly liable to a most noisesome, painful and fatal disease.' ".

THE

*Chimney Sweeper's Boy.**

THRICE had young Flora, with her laughing train,
Chas'd sullen Winter from the frozen plain;
Clothed it with verdure, and bedeck'd with flowers,
Fan'd it with zephyrs, and refreshed with showers;
Thrice call'd forth all the songsters of the groves
To chaunt aloud their praises and their loves;
Since first the new-born EDWIN, smiling, prest
And stirr'd strange transports in his mother's breast;
Since first his Parents, gazing on his charms,
By turns caress'd him in their circling arms,
And oft, enraptured, kiss'd their lovely boy,
Their first, their greatest, almost only joy;
For, though possessing every earthly bliss,
The rest were all absorbed and lost in this,
And each returning season seem'd to prove
How much the child deserved the Parents' love.

* Though this Poem is not, throughout, a literal relation of facts, too many fimilar inftances have unfortunately occurred to ferve as a foundation for it.

Oft as his tiny feet the lawn did tread,
Which round the spacious mansion smoothly spread,
He sprang and bounded like a lamb at play,
As meek, as innocent, as wild and gay.
There as he once beheld with longing eye
The tempting beauties of a gaudy fly,
With eager hands he strove the prize to gain,
And chased it on from flower to flower in vain,
'Till to the lawn's extremest verge he prest,
Where the deep fence and mound his feet arrest;
Sad on the brink he disappointed stands
With eager longing eyes and outstretch'd hands;
A wandering gipsy passing view'd the boy,
With cautious sidelong looks of guilty joy,
His aim she saw, and stretch'd her wither'd arm,
He seized the proffer'd aid, nor felt alarm,
But sprang away as by her hand he held,
And as her cheering voice to speed impell'd.
Soon, soon they gain'd the confines of the wood,
Nor long the gipsy hesitating stood,
Claspt in her arms she bore without delay,
Thro' briers and thorns, her trembling prize away,
Nor stopt 'till in the wood's profoundest shade
She reach'd a rocky dell, by torrents made,
A fearful place by human steps untrod,
The raven's gloomy undisturb'd abode.

The struggling EDWIN shriek'd and shriek'd again;
Vain were his shrieks and all his struggles vain,

Stript of his clothes, in filthy tatters drest,
He sobb'd till wearied nature sunk to rest.
When the deep shades of night around were spread,
Far with the sleeping child the gipsy sped;
From safety, parents, home and comfort tore,
And far away the helpless sufferer bore,
With pain and sin, and wretchedness to roam,
And heat and cold endure without a home,
Taught and compell'd to beg from door to door,
To feel much true distress and feign much more.

But, oh! what words shall paint the Parents' woe,
Nor rest, nor peace, nor comfort more they know;
For them in vain profusion spreads her store,
And Nature smiles,—her smiles can charm no more;
Their mourning restless days bring no repose,
Their nights no sleep to mitigate their woes;
Yet oft they cry with piercing anguish torn,
At morn, "would God 'twere night!" at night "would
God 'twere morn!"

Meanwhile, a vagrant life poor EDWIN led,
And three long years he begg'd his daily bread,
When, as they trod the city's crowded street
A Chimney-Sweeper 'twas their chance to meet,
Whose watchful eye poor EDWIN's figure caught
And soon the well form'd active child he bought;
Then bore him, weeping, to his filthy cell,
Midst pain and want, in wretchedness to dwell.

Alas! how lamentably changed his lot,
Since torn from that endear'd regretted spot
Where every comfort sprung, where luxury spread
Her ample store, and many a blessing shed;
Where all Parental fondness could bestow
He found to give delight and guard from woe;
But now, when most he needs a Parent's care,
He's doom'd unfriended, every grief to share,
To eat affliction's bread, and from the cup
Of woe to drain the dregs, and drink them up;
His horrid task t'explore from day to day,
The chimney's fearful, dark and rugged way,
Blindfold through clouds of soot aloft to climb
Bleeding with wounds from sharp projecting lime.
Oft were the tyrant's blows, the cutting scourge,
Applied, his weak and trembling limbs to urge
The horrid flue t' ascend, but urged in vain,
As oft he fell o'ercome with fear and pain,
'Till driven again, again he strove to please,
With lacerated back and bleeding knees;
At length he reach'd a part which sloped away,
Where midst the choaking soot he panting lay,
The big black tears fast rolling from his eyes,
Midst bursting sobs and plaintive stifled cries,
To desperation urged by sad despair,
No way but one appear'd to end his care;
That one he chose, resolving there to lie,
(Far from the tyrant's rage secure,) and die.

Now threats and promises in vain assail;
Nor threats nor promises can ought avail;
At length the blazing straw's thick smothering smoke
Away his breath, his strength, and senses took,
And down he fell; with joy the tyrant smiled,
And with the whip to life restored the child;
To life, to misery, want, disease and pain!
—Sore was the conflict ere he could attain
The dreadful art; nor did he find success
One comfort add, or make one trouble less;
Through heat and cold, thro' rain and frost and snow,
O'er cutting stones barefooted doom'd to go;
And oft ere morn to pace the silent street,
While the tempestuous hail and driving sleet
Against his naked bosom keenly beat;
Nor did the closing day, or dusky eve,
Always his weary painful limbs relieve,
His daily earnings if he could not gain,
His tears and prayers for food were all in vain;
Cold, hungry, shivering, wretched and forlorn,
Stretch'd on a sooty sack he wept till morn.

When six long lingering months had crept away,
One morning roused, long ere the break of day,
He with another shivering wretch was sent
To good ALCANDER'S, and with joy they went,
Tho' tedious was the way; for well they knew,
None cold or hungry ever thence withdrew;

With joy they went; tho' deep the drifted snow,
And cold and loud the whistling wind did blow;
For all ALCANDER loved, but most the poor,
Who, if deserving, never left his door
Unblest; nor did his feeling generous heart
Wait to be ask'd his bounty to impart;
The modest worthy poor he sought and found,
As with NERINA oft he took his round;
NERINA mild, benevolent and fair,
Worthy the love of such a spouse to share.

Now to ALCANDER's hospitable dome
The shivering EDWIN and his Partner come;
As on the marble hearth they barefoot stand,
The room spreads far in gloom on either hand,
The glimmering taper sheds a feeble light,
And faintly shews the gilding glittering bright,
The lofty mirrors long perspectives throw,
And other distant sweeps and glimmering tapers show.
The wondering EDWIN silent stood, and threw
His eyes around, struck with the splendid view;
Strong recollection rush'd upon his mind
Of scenes like this, tho' faintly now defined,
Scenes far and distant, scenes whose memory dear
Drew from his eyes the silent trickling tear.
Straight from his back the cumb'ring rags he threw,
And o'er his face the sooty cap he drew,
Then up the dark and dismal flue ascends,
Whilst loosen'd soot in clouds his course attends;

The room he pass'd, (as up the flue he crept,)
In which ALCANDER and NERINA slept;
His clattering brush beat loud from side to side,
The good NERINA heard, and hearing sigh'd,
Then thus she spoke,—"ALCANDER! hark how loud
" The wintry tempest howls from every cloud,
" Thick fall the sleet and snow, and by the frost
" Fast bound, the rill and spreading lake are lost,
" Yet here WE in security are blest,
" And midst the howling tempest safely rest;
" Then let us feel for those exposed to all
" The season's fury:—let us hear the call
" Of those who want our aid; of that poor boy
" Whom we with thoughtless cruelty employ,
" (Our comfort to promote,) even in a task
" Unfit for him to ply or us to ask.
" Oh, my ALCANDER! let us ne'er again
" Afflict the infant poor with needless pain.
" How my heart bleeds to think, in such a morn,
" That he from rest and slumber has been torn,
" And forced, at such an hour, through frost and snow,
" And through the raging storm half clad to go,
" Perhaps unfed, perhaps—but let me hold,
" Nor further seek such miseries to unfold;
" WE, of all others, never should oppress,
" WE should, ABOVE ALL OTHERS, strive to bless,
" For we distress have known, distress severe,
" And we have found a hand to wipe the tear,

"The hand of GOD;—to whom all praise be given,
"Whose will be done on earth as 'tis in heaven;
"That love which we to Him alone should show,
"That love we on His creature did bestow,
"And might all hopes of future bliss have lost,
"Had we not been in purest mercy crost.
"In vain by change of residence we sought
"To flee from memory and corroding thought,
"For God alone had power to calm our grief,
"And He, amidst despair, bestowed relief.
"Then let us bow with reverence to His will,
"And His commands with grateful hearts fulfil."

Now from the chimney top did EDWIN peep,
And, midst the howling tempest, shouted "sweep!"
As the pale moon burst through a parting cloud,
Awhile the wind was hush'd, again he shouted loud;
A fearful tremor shook NERINA's frame,
And all the powers of reasoning overcame;
She seized ALCANDER's arm, and with a grasp
Strong and convulsive, seem'd for breath to gasp,
"Hark! hark!" she cried,—the wind appear'd to sleep,
Again poor EDWIN shouted, "sweep! sweep! sweep!"
"My child! my child!" she cried, with transports wild,
"Oh Heavens! IT IS, IT IS my child, my child!"

IT WAS her child, her son, her EDWIN dear,
The source of all her joy, her grief, her fear,

Restored from pain, from sorrow, and distress,
His Parents' hopeless arms again to bless.

Oft did their hearts with gratitude o'erflow,
Oft did their knees in silent reverence bow
To HIM, enthroned in wisdom, goodness, might,
Who guides ten thousand rolling worlds of light,
Yet sees and traces with minutest ken
Each thought, each action of the least of men;
HIS hand they own, HIS wisdom they descry,
Who makes affliction peace and bliss supply,
From seeming ill produces good supreme,
And pours from misery's fount pure mercy's stream.

Long, long they lived, of sweet content possest,
Dispensing blessings, and by others blest:
They saw their EDWIN grow in grace and truth,
Taught by adversity in early youth;
O'er each accomplishment which round him spread
Humility a soften'd lustre shed;
Each child of sorrow drew his ready tear,
He knew their griefs and therefore strove to cheer;
His time, advice and wealth were freely given
To bless them here, and lead to bliss in heaven.

END OF TALE I.

TALE II.

SALLY BROWN,

OR THE

ORPHAN COTTON SPINNER.

[A BALLAD.]

Introductory Address.

IN the following simple Ballad, the Author has endeavoured to draw the attention of the public to a species of oppression which no disinterested man, possessed of even a common share of humanity, can witness without horror. The objects, to whom he more particularly refers, are young children, of both sexes, sent from distant parishes, and bound apprentice to Cotton Spinners. It appears to the Author, that even the *Slave Trade* itself, dreadful and disgraceful as it was in all its circumstances, was not, according to its extent, more cruel, more unjust, or more impolitic than this. Human Nature under similar circumstances is, in all climates, pretty much the same, and whenever passion and self-interest, accompanied with power, impel to oppression, it is much to be feared that, in general, little more reliance is to be placed on the humanity and forbearance of a British Cotton Spinner, than on that of a West Indian Planter. Many of the Slaves

brought from Africa undoubtedly were prisoners of war, who, if not sold as slaves, would in all probability, have been put to death,—others were such as had been guilty of crimes which subjected them justly to punishment.—But what have any of these little Innocents done to subject *them* to so cruel a doom?—*They* have fought against no one. They have been guilty of no crime. They are, it is true, young, and helpless, and poor and friendless; but surely these are not crimes: these are not circumstances which call upon us to condemn them, in their tender years, to excessive labour, to oppression, to disease, to sin, and to misery. These are not circumstances which authorise us to tear them from the place of their birth, from all to which they were become attached, from all who were, by ties of blood, bound to serve them, nay even, sometimes, from the very arms of their agonized Parents.—*(See the heart-rending Letter at the end of this Address from such a Parent.)* Their condition during their miserable servitude is in general, it is to be feared, even worse in many respects than that of the Slaves in the West Indies. The latter generally are arrived at their full growth and strength, and therefore are able to bear fatigue. Their labour is in the open air, in a climate in some degree congenial to their native one, it is attended with the use and exercise of all their limbs, and, when not carried to excess, has a tendency to give strength, and tone, and vigour to the frame,

aiding digestion, and procuring them an appetite, which probably renders even their coarse food palatable, if not delicious. But what is the state, in these respects, of the poor *infant Slaves* at home?—Of those whom we are called upon, in every way, to cherish and protect?—Our kindred in country, in colour, in language, in religion. Young, innocent, and helpless, we tear them from every thing that is dear to them; we hurry them they know not whither, and cast them amongst they know not whom, and into scenes, than which nothing more appalling to an infant mind can possibly be conceived, amongst machinery by which they must momentarily expect to be crushed to death, or torn in pieces. Here they are to stand on their little legs, trembling with fear and weakness, during more hours than a negro-slave labours, till they are ready to sink; and this not in the open air, in a clear atmosphere, where the health-inspiring breath of Heaven visits and refreshes them, but in a close, though large room, amidst the confused noise of huge inanimate machines, and of little miserable living machines like themselves:—amidst the nauseous stench of rancid oil, and the blinding and suffocating dust of cotton, breathing an atmosphere impure and infectious, causing them even to loathe their food, relaxing their frames, and rendering them unfit to enjoy, or even to bear to breathe a purer air;—their limbs weakened and distorted for want of proper exercise;—their constitutions de-

stroyed by the unwholesomeness of their employment, and the impurity of the atmosphere in which they breathe, and their minds contaminated by the wickedness and bad examples of those with whom they are doomed to associate.

If this is not slavery, it is something worse. It possesses some features more dreadfully appalling than even slavery itself. The Author has heard of many instances where the lower limbs of the little sufferers were become, from weakness and want of proper exercise, completely useless, so that they were regularly carried up, perhaps three or four stories, and placed on their seats, there to remain and work till again taken off and carried to their meals or to bed.

He was some years ago requested by a friend, then serving the office of Overseer of the Poor, in an extensive parish near London, to call at a Cotton-Mill, to which that parish had frequently sent children, and desired to make some enquiry respecting their health and treatment. The circumstances which then and there came to his knowledge, first turned his thoughts to the subject, and inspired him with an earnest desire to render the condition of the little sufferers, at least in some degree less afflicting. He will only mention here that amongst his other enquiries of the Superintendant, (for he understood

that no proprietor resided within an hundred miles of the Mill,) he asked "if they were ever permitted to go to a place of public worship on the Sabbath-Day." He was informed, "that *Now they were not*: —that formerly they did occasionally attend at one, but it was found, from having been constantly in a warm room all the rest of the week, that they could not bear the fresh air without taking colds, which often incapacitated them from working, and that therefore, of late, they had not been allowed to go to any place of public worship." Can volumes speak more? Let it not then be said that an exaggerated account is attempted to be given. That there are degrees of ill-treatment and oppression is admitted; that some proprietors of Mills are more attentive and humane is agreed; but from the nature of the case, in all instances, the lamentable circumstances, which have been stated, must in some degree, occur. It is even much to be feared, that if all the instances could be enumerated, in which ill treatment has been attended with death, (I had almost said murder,) there would be a list exhibited which could not be paralleled, amongst the same number of slaves, on any island in the West Indies.

Having thus stated the injustice and cruelty of the measure, it may be thought, *by some*, necessary to enquire respecting the expediency of it. If to such it will not suffice to answer, "that whatever i

morally wrong, cannot be politically right," let it be observed, that morality, mercy, and justice out of the question, it is impossible to conceive any measure, so far as it extends, more fraught with mischief to society, and therefore more impolitic, than permitting those children, who might be educated and disposed of, so as to add to the strength, the prosperity, and the defence of the Country, to be doomed to a condition, inevitably productive of misery, debility, and wickedness; to be lost to society, if not rendered burdensome and pestilential to the state. If the accuracy of this statement be doubted by any person, let them only be at the trouble of asking such as have served the Office of Overseer of the Poor in any parish, in which there has been one or more Cotton Mills established for a number of years, and their doubts will be speedily removed. How then, it will naturally and properly be asked, is the evil to be remedied?—That it can entirely be done away is, in the present state of this country, scarcely to be expected; but surely much might be done in alleviation of it. There has already been an Act of Parliament passed, enacting some very humane and judicious regulations:—Making it the duty of two Magistrates, or of one Magistrate and one Minister of the Established Church, to visit each Mill, and enforce the regulations.—This Act however, it is to be lamented, seems to have become little else than a dead letter; being, it is to be

feared, but little attended to, either by Magistrates, or Ministers. Unless, therefore, their superintendance can be, by some means or other, enforced, there seems but little reason to hope, that any regulations, however judicious, which are or may be enacted, will be of much avail. Perhaps one of the measures most likely to be efficacious would be for the proprietors of every Cotton Mill, in the United Kingdom, to be compelled to take out an Annual Licence, (no matter of what value,) and before another Licence was granted them to deliver in to the Officer of Excise, from whom the Licence was to be obtained, a Sealed Attestation, signed by the said Magistrates, or Magistrate and Minister, containing their answers to some such questions as the following. Such Attestation to be sent, by the Officers of Excise, to the Officer appointed to examine them, by whom the penalties decreed for breaches of the several regulations should be demanded and enforced.

Questions to be answered by A. *and* B.

How often has A. visited the Mill, alone, during the last year?

How often has B. visited the Mill, alone, during the last year?

How often have A. and B. visited the Mill, together, during the last year?

How many Apprentices belonged to the Mill, at the commencement of the last year?

How many have been taken since?

Where did they come from, and what their names and ages?

How many have died during the last year, and what their names, ages, and complaints?

Have any particular disorders been prevalent in the Mill, and of what nature?

Does it appear to you, that the patients have had proper medical assistance?

What appears to you to have been the general state of the health of the children?

Do the quantity and quality of their food appear to you to have been sufficient?

What number of hours are they employed in each day, and which are they?

What number of hours are they allowed in each day for relaxation, and which are they?

Are they, in the hours of relaxation, always allowed to play in the open air, the weather permitting?

What are they taught, and during what hours?

Are there proper persons appointed to instruct them in reading, &c.?

Are the rooms in which they are taught, and in which they sleep and eat, airy, and clean?

Have they been white washed this year, and how often?

At what hour do they go to bed, and at what hour rise?

Does it appear to you that their beds are sufficiently good, and kept sufficiently clean.

How many sleep, in any instance, in one bed?

Have they one dress for Working Days, and another for Sundays?

Does their clothing appear to you on the whole sufficiently good?

Do they go regularly to a place of public worship on the Sabbath Day, and during what hours?

How are the remaining hours of the Sabbath Day employed by them?

The following Letter appeared in the Monthly Magazine for September, 1811.

MR. EDITOR,

SIR,

I AM a Freeman of the City of London, but, from unavoidable misfortunes, have been compelled, with my wife, to seek a refuge in St. Luke's Workhouse, where my wife lately lay in. During that time, the Parish Officers took away our only girl, little more than eleven years of age, and against our consent, bound her apprentice to a Cotton Manufactory, more than two hundred miles from London.

A respectable friend of mine made application to the Overseers, and offered to take her, but they would not let him have her, nor would they let me out of the gate, from the time they took her out and bound her, till after she had been sent into the country. My wife at the time had not lain in more than a week, and thus to lose her daughter nearly deprived her of her reason.

I wish to be informed if such binding will stand good.

JULY 20, 1810. *T. W. GASCOIGNE.*

*** After the preceding remarks were written, the Cotton Mill, therein alluded to, became the property of a Gentleman, then resident in London, distinguished alike for his humanity, abilities and politeness. Desirous of learning the manner in which the Children were treated, he made all due enquiries, to which he received such favourable answers as would have satisfied most minds upon the subject:—he however, took the earliest opportunity of personally visiting the Mill, when he was shocked to find the Children in a state dreadfully different from what had been represented to him by his friends and the Magistrates who had visited the Mill, and who, there is no doubt, had been themselves deceived.

Resolved to remedy these evils, as much as lay in his power, he removed his residence to the neighbourhood of the Mill, making every alteration in it that his enlarged and enlightened mind could suggest, as being likely to conduce to the health and comfort of those employed in it, by properly warming and ventilating the rooms, and preventing, as much as possible, the rising of the dust.

Finally, he resolved to take no more apprentices, but to have all the business performed by persons residing at their own homes, paying them by the piece, and not by the day. He is, he says, well assured that he shall not only thereby avoid many painful feelings, but likewise contribute to the prosperity of the factory, having no doubt but that the work will be better done, and also at a less expence. —May the experiment succeed, and the example be followed by all who have Mills so situated as to admit of it!

In the Courier Newspaper of the 7th Feb. 1812, it is stated;—that application had been made to the Court of King's Bench for a Habeas Corpus to bring up the bodies of eight Children from a Cotton Mill in Westmoreland. The circumstances of the case were these.—Eight poor Infants had been sent by the Governors of the Poor of the Parish of St. George, Bloomsbury, to a Cotton Mill, at Manchester. The

proprietors of the Mill becoming Bankrupts, the Children became chargeable to the Parish, in consequence they were sent by the Overseers to the said Cotton Mill, in Westmoreland. The Governors of the Poor of St. George's Parish hearing of the circumstance, and that the children were ill used, deputed two of their Members to go down and make all due enquiries respecting them. Their report, on returning, was, that the situation of the children was lamentable in the extreme; that their cloathing and food were poor and scanty, and that they were compelled nevertheless to spin during *fourteen hours* in each day.

In consequence of this report the Habeas Corpus was obtained.

How dreadful must have appeared the state of these poor transported infants to induce the Governors to undertake, at such great expence and loss of time, a journey of three hundred miles, and then to apply to a court of Justice to enable them to bring up the poor creatures, the same distance, to their own Parish.

"Surely such things ought not to be."

SALLY BROWN,

OR THE

ORPHAN COTTON SPINNER.

[A BALLAD.]

A LOVELY sweet, engaging child
Was little SALLY BROWN;
Near London City she did dwell,
In pleasant Hackney Town.

Her Father he made baskets;—these
Her Mother took to sell;
And Sally was their only child,
They loved her dearly well.

Her cheeks were like the damask rose,
Her lips of cherry hue,
Her skin was fair as new fallen snow,
Her eyes of brightest blue.

And all who knew the smiling maid,
The artless child did love;
For she was playful as a lamb,
And gentle as a dove.

Thus happy and beloved she lived,
Till more than seven years old,
When one cold, stormy, winter's day,
Her Mother caught a cold.

The cold a fever brought, which soon
Did end her Mother's life;
Her Father caught the fever too,
Nor long surviv'd his wife.

The self same day, in one cold grave,
Poor SALLY saw them laid,
Then sought her home, an orphan child,
Without a friend to aid.

The watchful landlord quickly came,
And sold the goods for rent;
And soon the weeping, trembling child
He to the Workhouse sent.

Nor found she there a home of rest,
For quickly she was told,
That to a Yorkshire Cotton Mill
She was with others sold.

One winter's morn before 'twas light
Poor Sally they did wake,
And sent her off, with many more,
Their journey drear to take.

Within a frightful waggon dark
They put them every one;
With packs and boxes piled around,
And straw to lie upon.

The keen, cold wind did whistling blow,
The rain in torrents fall,
The creaking waggon slowly moved,
The driver loud did bawl.

No light was there except a lamp,
Which, swinging, glimered dim;
Poor Sally crept beneath the straw,
And shook through every limb.

Some of the little wretches now
Both loudly cursed and swore;
Such dreadful words from infants' lips
Made SALLY tremble more.

Thus all the day the waggon slow
In ruts was tost about;
Till stiff and sore was every limb,
When they at night got out.

To rest, but not, alas, to sleep,
With trembling steps they go;
A barn their dreary place of rest,
Their bed, a bed of straw.

The night was dark, and cold the wind
Through every cranny blew,
The rain loud patter'd on the roof,
The owls round hooting flew.

Poor SALLY, almost dead with fear,
Could neither speak nor cry;
All night she thought of Parents dear,
And wish'd like them to die.

'Twas after many a weary day,
And many a sleepless night,
They reached the Mill, though almost dead,
With hunger, pain and fright.

Poor SALLY's trembling legs could scarce
Support her from the ground,
Whilst naked she was stript to see
If healthy, straight and sound.

To see if such a tender frame
Her purchase could repay,
And bear sufficient labour, ere
Her strength was worn away.

They then were order'd to the Mill;
But when they reach'd the door
Poor Sally shriek'd with wild affright,
And sunk upon the floor.

The room was large, and all the air
Was fill'd with dust and thread,
Which floating loosely, over all
A hazy whiteness spread.

There huge machines slow circumvolved
With loud and creaking sound,
Whilst many thousand little wheels
Were whirling quickly round.

Hundreds of sickly, dusty elves
Here faintly were espied;
Whose busy hands amongst the wheels
Their daily labour plied.

A loud, confus'd and constant noise
Resounded through the room;
In this confusion, noise, and dust
To toil was SALLY's doom.

Here then she plied her daily task,
Through many a tedious year;
With no relation to advise,
With no kind friend to cheer.

Oft did she bear the tyrant's rage,
And oft his brutal blow,
For those slight faults and errors, which
From inexperience flow.

Oft when her wearied limbs could scarce
Her sickly frame sustain,
To urge her to perform her task
His scourge increased her pain.

From such oppression to protect
To whom could she apply?
She dared not, could not, quit the Mill,
She'd no protector nigh.

Thus when the tender, pliant frame
Requires a parent's care,
To fit the child, in riper years,
A useful part to bear:—

'Twas SALLY's lot, with strangers placed,
To toil from day to day,
And 'midst disease, and pain, and sin,
To wear her life away.

Ere long, her legs with standing swell'd,
Her roses all were fled,
Her fair complexion sallow grew,
Her eyes look'd dull and dead.

Her lively spirits all were gone,
Dejection mark'd her look;
A sullen stupor seiz'd her frame,
She scarce her victuals took.

Regardless now of blame or praise,
She toil'd through each sad day,
Then weary sought at night her crib,
To sleep her cares away.

At first to hear them curse and swear
Around, did shock her ear,
But now, accustom'd to the sound,
She felt nor grief nor fear.

Thus time and constant intercourse
Made every scruple fly;
And, sad to tell, she learnt herself
At last to swear and lie.

And when by negligence or chance,
She spoil'd the thread she spun,
She stole and cast it in the fire
The punishment to shun.

Pent in an atmosphere so warm,
Her frame no cold could bear,
She shiver'd in the slightest breeze,
And shunn'd the purest air.

That air which God in mercy gave
His creatures to enjoy,
To her nor health nor pleasure brought,
It breathed but to destroy.

Prevented thus from joining those
Who meet, their God to praise,
Who meet to hear His holy word,
And learn His holy ways,

Her mind in ignorance remain'd;
She thought not of her God,
She never strove His love to gain,
Nor fear'd to brave His rod.

In sin and misery thus she dragg'd
Along her cheerless time;
Her body with disease deform'd,
Her mind with every crime.

That lovely form, which once so fair
Attracted every eye;
Was now become a loathsome sight
Disgusting to be nigh.

That pure, unsullied mind, in which
Once every grace was found,
Became at last, a sink of guilt,
A pest to all around.

And when her servitude was out,
She eagerly begun,
Through this vain, trifling, dangerous world
Her guilty course to run.

Disgusted with the name of work,
Impatient of restraint,
Her hopes and fancy, future bliss,
In brilliant colours paint.

But left without a friend to aid,
Or stretch the guiding hand,
She plunged in wickedness and guilt,
And join'd the brothel's band.

In scenes of lewdness and debauch
She pass'd her nights and days
Till their attendant, fell disease,
Stopt short her wicked ways.

Then tortured on the bed of pain,
In agonies she lay,
Till from their haunts the wretched crew,
Far banish'd her away.

The Workhouse now, the only place
Where she could lay her head,
She found compared with what she'd left,
With many comforts spread.

Her food, her clothes, her bed were coarse,
But wholesome, warm and clean,
Here no vile blasphemy was heard,
No impudence obscene.

As here to raise the drooping heart,
He took his daily round,
The good ALCÆUS came, and soon
The wretched sufferer found.

Now first the kind and soothing voice
Of pity met her ear,
Now first attentive mercy strove
To raise, support and cheer.

And now religion's purest ray,
First shone upon her mind,
Now first she felt its influence mild,
Consoling, cheering, kind.

Now, listening eagerly, she heard
Her Saviour's love made known,
Heard how His precious blood He shed
To make her all his own.

With trembling fears, she heard of God,
His wisdom, power, and might,
But of His *Love* and *Mercy* heard,
With transports of delight.

No wonder, when assailed by vice
In every varying way,
Without a friend her steps to guide,
She *once* was led astray.

But soon as Virtue's lovely path
Was opened to her view,
Transported with unwonted joy,
To gain the goal she flew.

Soon as she saw her errors past,
Determined to atone,
She burst the cloud, and through the gloom
A brightening prospect shone.

Escaped oppression's hand, which long
Had kept them back from sight,
The dormant virtues of her mind
Spring eagerly to light.

Those kind affections, which till now
Lay slumbering in her soul,
By kindness roused, by mercy freed,
No longer brook'd controul;

But unrestrain'd in looks appear
That love and bliss bespeak,
That lighted up her languid eyes,
And flushed her faded cheek.

Her calm, serene and placid smile,
Bespoke a heavenly mind,
Bespoke a heart where goodness dwelt,
Pure, thankful and resign'd.

For pain's keen agonies, no more
Her wasted frame oppress'd
But left her undisturbed, to sink
In peace to heavenly rest.

Her lovely slender form to grace,
By languid weakness bent,
A simple russet robe, its aid
Unostentatious lent.

Her countenance, serenely pale,
Where sense and goodness beam'd,
Whene'er a hectic cross'd her cheek,
A smiling cherub's seem'd.

Her mildness every heart did win,
And every hand engage ;
Each eager strove her wants to meet,
And all her pains assuage.

Thus, day by day, she weaker grew,
More languid, more resign'd,
She bade farewell to all around,
And on her couch reclined ;

Then as an infant falls asleep
Upon its mother's breast,
She calmly, gently, closed her eyes,
And sunk to heavenly rest.

In the church yard, retired from view,
Her grave may still be known,
For there these simple words you'll find,
"*Here lies POOR SALLY BROWN!*"

Let no one with presumptuous pride,
Dare of his God complain,
Nor ask *why* Sally suffer'd thus,
Nor His decrees arraign.

His Maker's ways, dare MAN condemn,
Whose weak, imperfect sight
Can neither guide him in the dark,
Nor in too strong a light?

This truth suffice, for him to know,
Nor let it be forgot,
What God decrees is good, is best,
Though man perceive it not.

Though dark to him his Maker's path,
His own is plain and clear;
It leads him the oppress'd to aid,
The fainting heart to cheer.

It leads him to exertions, such
As dangers can't restrain,
And yet to trust in God, as though
All human strength were vain.

O ye! who by your country's choice,
Are guardians of her poor,
Let no one child of misery e'er
Their country's choice deplore.

But first and chiefest, ever make
The infant poor your care;
Next to your heart their welfare place
And keep it ever there.

O! never, never, send them far
With strangers to abide,
Without one guardian to protect,
Without one friend to guide;

But chiefly Cotton Mills avoid,
Those nurseries of sin,
For congregated misery dwells
Their hated walls within.

The wretched Africans, when torn
From home and kindred dear,
And sold to toil from day to day,
And weep from year to year,

Are not more wretched or forlorn,
More hopeless or more lost,
Than these poor children thus on scenes
Of sin and misery tost.

O! you! these little slaves who own,
Protect with tenderest care,
Your fostering mercy let them feel,
Your cheering kindness share.

And if a parent's name you boast,
And all his transports prove,
Think what you'd feel, should such a fate
Await the child you love.

That pity then, which you would wish
Should to your child be shewn,
Extend to these poor orphan babes
And treat them as your own.

Nor let the upstart, big with power,
Oppress with wanton pain,
Let no unfeeling tyrant e'er
A tyrant's power obtain.

But watchful observation throw
Around on every side,
Hear their complaints, redress their wrongs,
And be their friend and guide.

Instruct their minds in learning's paths,
In wisdom, virtue, truth,
So shall their riper years repay
The guardians of their youth.

And you, ye *Legislators* wise!
Your country's boast and pride,
Whose wisdom frames her powerful laws,
To punish, guard and guide;—

You whom a wondering world admire,
Whose counsels all revere,
Who calm, impartial, just and wise
The state in safety steer;—

Whose kind protection never yet
To misery was denied,
Who heard the Slaves in *distant climes*
When *they* for mercy cried;—

To *you* these little *Slaves at home*,
In confidence may call,
And *claim* that mercy and that aid,
Which you extend to all.

To you, their eyes and hands are raised,
To you their prayers prefer'd;
Then let them not implore in vain,
But let their prayer be heard.

So may that GOD to whom you all
The *power* of blessing owe,
Grant you that comfort and that bliss,
Which you on them bestow.

END OF TALE II.

THE ORPHANS.

[A BALLAD.]

MY chaise the village inn did gain,
Just as the setting sun's last ray
Tipt with refulgent gold the vane
Of the old church across the way;

Across the way I silent sped,
The time till supper to beguile,
By moralizing o'er the dead,
That moulder'd round the ancient pile.

There many a humble green grave shew'd
Where want, and pain, and toil had rest;
And many a flattering stone I view'd
O'er those who once had wealth possess'd.

A faded beach its shadow brown
Threw o'er a grave where sorrow slept,
On which, though scarce with grass o'ergrown,
Two ragged children sat and wept.

A piece of bread between them lay,
Which neither seem'd inclined to take,
And yet they look'd so much a prey
To want, it made my heart to ache.

"My little children, let me know,
"Why you in such distress appear?
"And why you wasteful from you throw
"That bread which many a heart would cheer?"

The little boy, in accents sweet,
Replied, whilst tears each other chased;
"Lady! we've not enough to eat,
"And if we had we would not waste.

"But sister MARY's naughty grown,
"And will not eat whate'er I say,
"Tho' sure I am the bread's her own,
"And she has tasted none to-day.

"Indeed," the wan, starved MARY said,
"Till HENRY eats I'll taste no more,
"For yesterday *I* got some bread,
"*He's* had none since the day before."

I found my swelling bosom heave,
And felt as though deprived of speech;
As mute I sat upon the grave,
And press'd a clay-cold hand of each.

With looks that told a tale of woe,
With looks that spoke a grateful heart,
The shivering boy did nearer draw,
And thus that tale of woe impart.—

" Before my father went away,
" Inticed by bad men o'er the sea,
" Sister and I did nought but play;
" We lived beside yon great ash tree:—

" But *then* poor mother did so cry,
" And look'd so changed I cannot tell,
" She told us that she soon should die,
" And bade us love each other well.

" She said that when the war was o'er,
" Perhaps we might our father see,
" But, if we never saw him more,
" That God would *then* our father be

" She kiss'd us both, and then she died,
" And we no more a mother have;
" Here many a day we sat and cried
" Together on poor mother's grave.

" But when our father came not here,
" I thought if we could find the sea
" We should be sure to meet him there,
" And once again might happy be.

"So hand in hand for many a mile,
"We asked our way of all we met;
"And some did sigh, and some did smile,
"And we of some did victuals get.

"But when we reach'd the sea, and found
"'Twas one great water round us spread,
"We thought that father must be drown'd,
"And cried and wished we both were dead.

"So we're return'd to mother's grave,
"And only long with her to be;
"For Goody, when this bread she gave,
"Said father died beyond the sea.

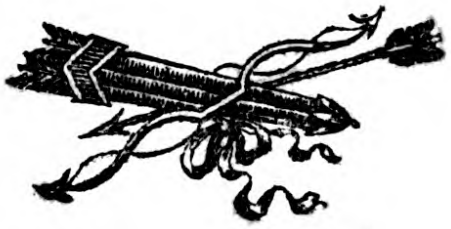
"Then since no parents we have here,
"We'll go and seek for God around;—
"Lady! pray can you tell us where
"That God our father may be found?

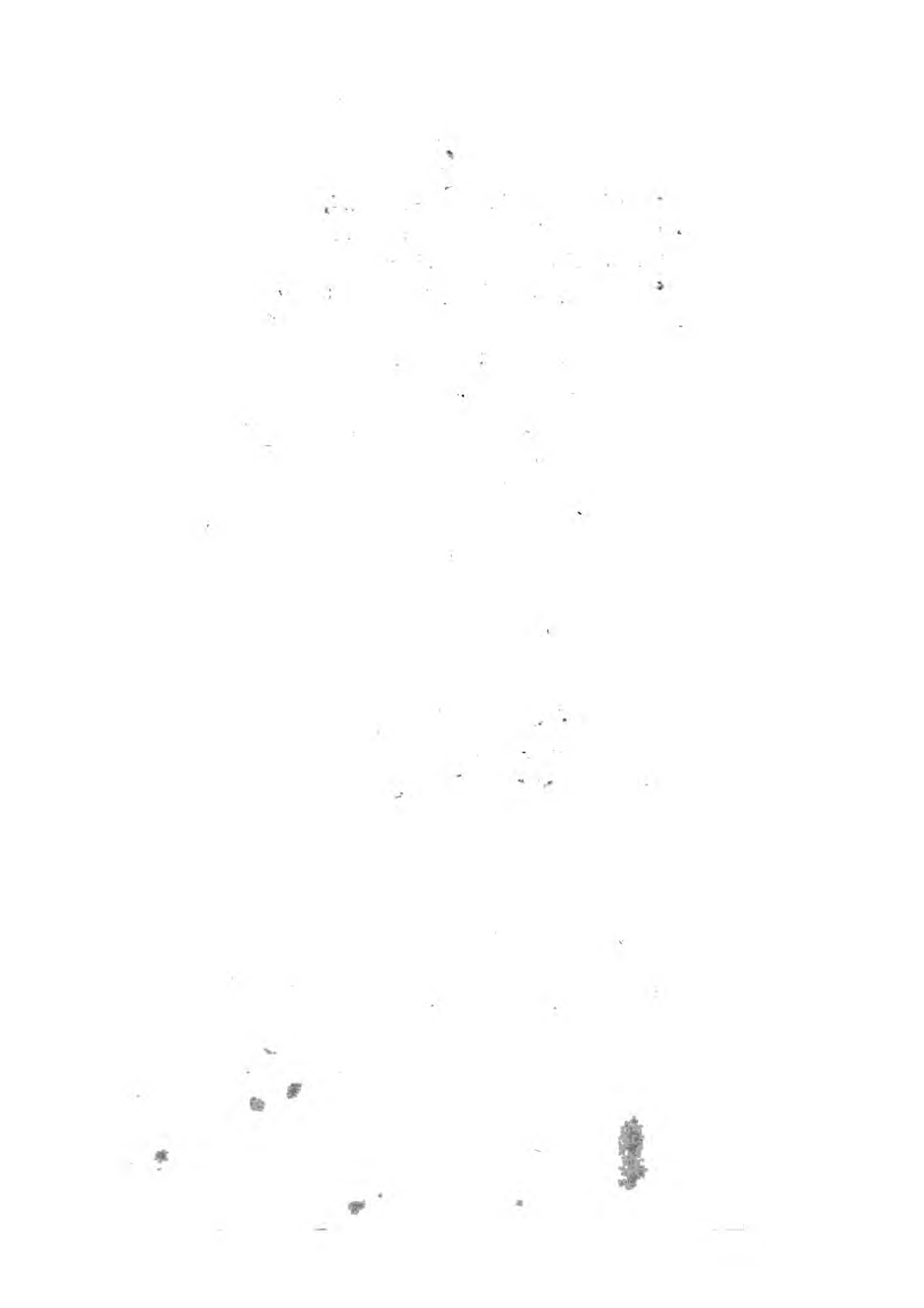
"He lives in heaven, mother said,
"And Goody says that mother's there,
"So if she knows we want his aid,
"I think perhaps she'll send him here."

I clasp'd the prattler to my breast,
And cried; "come both and live with me,
"I'll clothe you, feed you, give you rest,
"And will a second mother be;

"And God will be your father still,
"'Twas He in mercy sent me here
"To teach you to obey his will,
"Your steps to guide, your hearts to cheer."

END OF TALE III.





TALE IV.

MARY DAVIS.

[A TRUE STORY.]

TALE III.

THE

ORPHANS.

[A BALLAD.]

MARY DAVIS.

[A TRUE STORY.]

The Truth of the following Relation, which appeared, in ſubſtance, in the Boſton Gazette, of 1ſt September, 1812, is atteſted by Mr. C. E. Welbourn, of Folkingham, himſelf a witneſs, in part, of the circumſtances, and the writer of the original account as it appeared in the aforeſaid Paper.

ON the evening of August 25th, 1812, a poor yet interesting young woman, with an infant about six weeks old in her arms, came with a pass billet to remain all night at the Greyhound Inn, at Folkingham, in Lincolnshire,. Apparently sinking with hunger and fatigue, she unobtrusively seated herself by the kitchen fire to give that sustenance to her baby, of which she appeared to be in equal want herself. Silently shrinking from observation, she neither solicited nor obtained the notice of any one. The sons of intemperate mirth neither ceased their riotous tumult, nor relaxed their

hilarity to soothe her sorrows. The bustling servants brushed past without regarding her, and the rustic politicians continued to spell over again the thrice conned paper, without casting his eyes upon her.

There is, however, an eye that never slumbers, there is an ear that is ever open to the supplication of the afflicted, and there is a hand which is ever ready to be stretched out to succour and to support them in their necessities.

That eye now beheld her unobtruded sorrows, that ear was listening to her silent prayers, and that hand was supporting her apparently sinking frame, and preparing for her the cup of consolation. Hers was indeed a Tale of many sorrows!—*This*, the following slight sketch of her story previous to her arrival at Folkingham will serve to evince. Her name was MARY DAVIS; she resided with her husband and one child, a boy about seven years of age, in the City of Westminster. Her husband, who is a private in the 2d Regiment of Foot Guards, was compelled to leave her big with child, in the beginning of the present year, to accompany the Regiment to fight the battles of his Country under the gallant and victorious WELLINGTON. Impelled by poverty and maternal affection, poor MARY (though in a situation, in which the daughters of affluence often find every accommodation and consolation which riches and friends can afford, unequal to banish

despondency,) was under the necessity of leaving her darling boy, now her only remaining comfort, to the care of strangers, whilst she went out to wash for his maintenance and her own.

She however repined not; her toil was lessened, and her cares were enlivened by the reflection, that she could, after the labours of the day, return to her beloved boy, gaze on the reflected features of his father, give him smile for smile, press him to her maternal bosom, join him in his sports, enlighten his understanding, and teach him to know, to fear, and to love his God. With these delightful enjoyments, even the poor, labouring, widowed MARY could not be termed unhappy; but these were the *only* sweet ingredients in her cup of bitter sorrows. Let those then, who have feeling hearts, and know the force of parental affection, when confined to one object, judge, if they can, what must be the agonies of poor Mary, when on returning from her daily task, only eight days after the departure of her husband, she learned that the woman (if she deserves that name,) in whose care she had left her darling boy, had absconded with him, nobody knew whither. *Now then* she might indeed be termed unhappy, for hope itself could scarcely find admittance to her bosom, so entirely was it occupied by affliction and despondency. View her seated after the toils of the day, in her chearless apartment, exhausted with exertions beyond her present strength, solitary and friendless, a childless mother and

a widowed wife; awaiting in silence and solitude, in grief and despondency, her painful trial;—her gloomy imagination figuring and dwelling upon a dying husband and a famished child.

Could a weakened, human, female frame support all this and live? yes! through all these sore afflictions, these accumulated evils, did her God support her, and even after the birth of her child, shed a ray of hope on her returning strength.

Soon after that event she was informed, that it was discovered that the wretch who had stolen her child was a native of Leeds. This truly, to those who bask in sunshine, would appear a feeble ray, yet *this* on MARY'S midnight gloom, shed a glimmering, cheering light.—*This*, faint as it was, aroused and animated her desponding soul; it seemed to her as sent in mercy to direct her to her son, and she lost no time in taking the path to which it pointed. Five weeks after the birth of her child did she set out in her weak state, without money, on foot, to carry her infant nearly four hundred miles, (thither and back again) on a road and to a place, with which she was totally unacquainted. O! Nature! how powerful are the feelings, which thou hast implanted in the maternal bosom! how do they set at defiance all opposing difficulties and dangers! how do they grasp at, or create, objects to which hope may cling, or on which it may rest to spurn away despair!—Never,

perhaps, were those feelings more strongly evinced than in this instance: never, perhaps, were their exhilarating and beneficial influence more powerfully experienced.

An object, apparently, more truly wetched than poor MARY, as she pursued her journey, could, one would think, scarcely be imagined: weak, languid, poor, and friendless; plodding, with an infant in her arms, through the alternate vicissitudes of heat and wet, of dust and dirt; now sinking beneath the sun's oppressive rays, now dripping with the driving storm: without a husband to support her; a beggar and an unwelcome obtruder wherever she came.

And yet, with all these aggravating circumstances, poor MARY was, in reality, perhaps less miserable than many, even of the sons and daughters of affluence. So little does happiness depend upon external circumstances; so comparatively impartially has God distributed good and evil amongst his creatures, even in this life, that the most miserable are not without their consolations, nor the most prosperous without their sorrows. Mary, it is true, seemed to have only *one* hope, one animating expectation, but it was one which appealed to and warmed the heart, it was one in which the whole faculties of her soul and body were embarked; it was one which nature, conscience, and God approved. It set difficulties at defiance, and it penetrated, or disper-

sed the deepest gloom that despondency attempted to cast around her. But what is the hope? what is the source of consolation, to the *unnatural mother, who forsakes her sucking child?* who abandons her offspring to the guidance and the care of others, or initiates them *herself,* into scenes of frivolity, vanity and vice;—who smothers every maternal feeling, and flies to scenes of tumult and dissipation, in search of that happiness which they cannot bestow! Listless and disatisfied with herself and all around her, possessing no source of consolation, no object to arouse and stimulate to spirited exertions, her conscience upbraiding and the world failing her, she is an object, much more demanding our pity than poor MARY, under all her external sufferings.

Labour and sorrow are the lot of humanity, and *they* must be unhappy indeed who, from a mixed company, cannot select those with whom they would be unwilling to exchange situations. So, perhaps, thought poor MARY, as she sat by the side of the kitchen fire of the Inn at Folkingham, regarding with looks of attention and pity two poor Chimney Sweeper's Boys, who were getting their frugal supper, before the same fire. They had been sent for from a distance, to sweep some chimnies early in the morning, and were now taking their scanty meal, before they retired to obtain, by a few hours sleep, a short respite from their sufferings. MARY long viewed them attentively; perhaps the sufferings of her lost Boy might be connected with

the commiseration which she felt for these poor oppressed children. However that might be, she continued to gaze upon them, till the younger, who sat with his back towards her, turned his sooty face, and fixing his eyes upon her, regarded her for a few seconds with attention, then springing up he exclaimed "*MY MOTHER! that's MY MOTHER!*" and in an instant was in her arms. The affectionate and astonished MARY, on hearing his voice, in a moment recognised her boy, and clasped him to her bosom, but she could not speak, till a flood of tears having relieved her almost bursting heart, she gave utterance to her feelings.

After the confusion and the agitating sensation, which this unexpected rencontre had occasioned amongst both actors and spectators, were in some degree subsided, the Master of the Boy, who was present, was particularly questioned how he came by him. His account was as follows:—He was walking on his business, in the neighbourhood of Sleaford, where he resides, when he met a ragged woman with a little boy, whom she was beating most unmercifully. On enquiry, she told him, that "she was in great distress, that she had a long way to go, that the boy, her son, was very obstinate, and that she did not know how to get him along with her." This led to further conversation, which ended in her offering to sell the boy to him as an apprentice, for two guineas. The bargain was soon

struck, and the lad was regularly bound, the woman making oath to his being her own son. There did not appear to be any reason for questioning the account of the master, especially as it was corroborated by the boy, with this addition,—that the woman was beating him so unmercifully, as she had frequently done before, because he would not call her MOTHER.

The story soon became generally known in the place, and, through the exertions of Mr. WELBOURN and others, a subscription was raised for poor MARY, and the little CHIMNEY-SWEEPER, who was soon cleaned, clothed, and transformed into a very different looking little being,—

"And restored to his mother, no longer needs creep
Through lanes, courts and alleys, a poor little Sweep."

After they had stopped for some time to rest and refresh themselves, the mother and son had places taken for them in the coach to proceed to London. Thither they departed, with hearts overflowing with gratitude both to their heavenly and earthly Benefactors.

Amongst the many, almost daily, occurring vicissitudes, which we are in these times witnessing and hearing of, few are stronger or more sudden than that which has been now related, from apparent hopelessness and wretchedness, to a state little short of the highest earthly felicity. However the affluent or the great may despise such humble happiness, it was, in its nature

and degree, such as, it is probable, few *of them* will ever experience. If the sudden and unexpected attainment of the object on which the whole of our desires have been long fixed, for which we have willingly abandoned every other pursuit, for which we have strained every nerve, and for which we have constantly and fervently prayed;—if this can constitute happiness, then was MARY *happy*.—If the assurance of having, by our exertions, warded off from the absent partner of our hearts, the severest blow with which the hand of affliction could strike him on his return, and of having secured for him a highly valued treasure, whose worth will be enhanced in a ten-fold degree, by the risk which has been incurred of losing it,—if this constitute happiness, then was MARY *truly happy*. If the consciousness of having succeeded in obtaining the strongly evinced and clearly ascertained favour of the Almighty, can confer happiness, then was MARY *supremely blessed*.

How many, and how striking are the useful lessons, which may be learned from this short and simple story! Above all, how forcibly does it corroborate the truths sought to be established by the Tale, and Notes accompanying it, standing the first in this collection, which were in the press before the occurrences here related took place? How strikingly does this *relation of facts* serve to shew the injustice, the cruelty, and the impolicy of suffering children to be em-

ployed *at all as Climbing Boys!* Amongst the many other evil consequences with which this shocking practice is attended, how strong a temptation to kidnapping, robbery and perjury does it hold out! A wretch has only to steal a child, strip him of his clothes, dress him in rags, beat him till he is compelled to call her mother, and then by taking a false oath, she puts a few guineas into her pocket, and casts a free born subject, of this *land of Liberty*, into a state of the most vile and oppressive SLAVERY:—under a Tyrant too, who probably neither considers him, nor treats him better than a brute beast:—a Tyrant who, under the present existing Law relative to Chimney-Sweepers, is scarcely *liable* to be called to account for his cruel treatment of him. Amongst the numerous instances, which annually occur, of poor little wretches falling a sacrifice to this barbarous species of Slavery, how rare are the instances in which the masters are even *called upon* to answer for it!

FINIS.

[J. MONTGOMERY, PRINTER, SHEFFIELD.]