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THE
STORY BOOK,
IN
VERSE.



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THE
STORY-BOOK IN VERSE



THE FARM.

BRIGHT glows the east with blushing red,
While yet upon their wholesome bed,
The sleeping laborers rest ;
And the pale moon and silver star,
Grow paler still, and wandering far,
Sink slowly to the west.

And see behind the sloping hill,
The morning clouds grow brighter still,
And all the shades retire ;
Slowly the sun, with golden ray,
Breaks forth above the horizon gray,
And gilds the distant spire.

And now, at nature's cheerful voice,
The hills, and vales, and woods rejoice,
The lark ascends the skies ;



And soon the cock's shrill notes alarm,
The sleeping people at the farm,
And bid them all arise.

And now comes Thomas from the house,
With well-known cry to call the cows,
Still sleeping on the plain ;
They quickly rising, one and all.
Obedient to the daily call,
Wind slowly through the lane.

And see the rosy milk-maid now,
Seated beside the horned cow,
With milking stool and pail ;
The patient cow, with dappled hide,
Stands still, unless to lash her side
With her convenient tail.

And then the poultry, Mary's charge,
Must all be fed, and let at large,
To roam about again ;
Wide open swings the great barn door,
And out the hungry creatures pour,
To pick the scattered grain.

Forth plodding to the heavy plough,
The sun-burnt laborer hastens now,
To guide with skilful arm ;
Thus all is industry around,
No idle hand is ever found,
Within the busy farm.

MEDDLESOME MATTY.

O how one ugly trick has spoiled
 The sweetest and the best !
 Matilda, though a pleasant child,
 One ugly trick possessed,
 Which like a cloud before the skies,
 Hid all the better qualities.

Sometimes she'd lift the tea-pot lid,
 To peep at what was in it ;
 Or tilt the kettle, if you did
 But turn your back a minute.
 In vain you told her not to touch,
 Her trick of meddling grew so much.

Her grandmamma went out one day,
 And by mistake she laid
 Her spectacles and snuff-box gay,
 Too near the little maid ;
 " Ah, well," thought she, " I'll try them ones.
 As soon as grandmamma is gone."

Forthwith she placed upon her nose
 The glasses, large and wide ;
 And looking round, as I suppose,
 The snuff-box too, she spied.
 " O what a pretty box is this,
 I'll open it," said little miss.

" I know that grandmamma would say,
 ' Don't meddle with it, dear ;'

But then she's far enough away,
And no one else is near :
Beside, what can there be amiss,
In opening such a box as this ?"

So thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid :
And presently a mighty jerk,
The mighty mischief did ;
For all at once, ah ! woful case,
The snuff came puffing in her face !

Poor eyes, and nose, and mouth, and chin,
A dismal sight presented ;
And as the snuff got further in,
Sincerely she repented.
In vain she ran about for ease,
She could do nothing else but sneeze !

She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes ;
And as in twenty bits they lay,
Her grandmamma she spies.
"Hey day ! and what's the matter now ?"
Cried grandmamma, with lifted brow.

Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still, and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From meddling evermore ;
And 'tis a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word.



THE IDLE BOY

THOMAS was an idle lad,
And lounged about all day ;
And though he many a lesson had,
He minded naught but play.
He only cared for top or ball,
Or marbles, hoop, or kite :
But as for learning, that was all
Neglected by him quite.
In vain his mother's kind advice,
In vain his master's care,
He followed every idle vice,
And learnt to curse and swear !
And think you, when he grew a man,
He prospered in his ways ?
No ; wicked courses never can
Bring good and happy days.
Without a shilling in his purse,
Or coat to call his own,
Poor Thomas grew from bad to worse,
And hardened as a stone.
And oh, it grieves me much to write
His melancholy end,
Then let us leave the dreadful sight,
And thoughts of pity send.
But may we this important truth
Observe and ever hold,
" All those who're idle in their youth,
Will suffer when they're old."



THE LITTLE FISHERMAN.

THERE was a little fellow once,
And Harry was his name,
And many a naughty trick had he:
I tell it to his shame.

He minded not his friends' advice,
But followed his own wishes;
And one most cruel trick of his
Was that of catching fishes.

His father had a little pond,
Where often Harry went.
And in this most inhuman sport,
He many an evening spent.

One day he took his hook and bait
And hurried to the pond,
And there began the cruel game,
Of which he was so fond.

And many a little fish he caught,
And pleased was he to look,
To see them writhe in agony,
And struggle on the hook.

At last when having caught enough,
And tired too himself,
He hastened home, intending there
To put them on a shelf.

But as he jumped to reach a dish
To put his fishes in,
A sharp meat hook that hung close by,
Did catch him by the chin.

Poor Harry kicked and called aloud
And screamed, and cried, and roared,
While from his wound the crimson blood
In dreadful torrents poured.

The maids came running frightened much,
To see him hanging there,
And soon they took him from the hook,
And sat him in a chair.

The surgeon came and stopped the blood,
And up he bound his head;
And then they carried him up stairs
And laid him on his bed.

Conviction darted on his mind,
As groaning there he lay;
He with remorse and horror thought
Upon his cruel play.

“And oh,” said he, “poor little fish,
What tortures they have borne;
While I well-pleased have stood to see
Their tender bodies torn!

“O what a wicked boy I’ve been,
Such torments to bestow;
Well I deserve the pain I feel,
Since I could serve them so;

“But now I know how great the smart
How terrible the pain!
As long as I can feel myself
I’ll never fish again.”



THE HORSE.

A HORSE, long used to bit and bridle,
But always much disposed to idle,
Had often wished that he was able
To steal unnoticed from the stable.

He panted from his inmost soul,
To be at nobody's control,
Go his own pace, slower or faster,
In short, do nothing—like his master.

But yet he never had got at large,
If Jack, who had him in his charge,
Had not, as many have before,
Forgot to shut the stable door.

Dobbin with expectation swelling,
Now rose to quit his present dwelling
But first peeped out with cautious fear,
To examine if the coast was clear.

At length he ventured from his station,
And with extreme self-approbation,
As if delivered from a load,
He galloped to the public road.

And here he stood awhile debating,
Till he was almost tired of waiting,
Which way he'd please to bend his course,
Now there was nobody to force.



At last, unchecked by bit or rein,
He sauntered down a pleasant lane,
And neighed forth many a jocond song,
In triumph, as he past along.

But when dark night began to appear,
In vain he sought some shelter near,
And he was sure he could not bear
To sleep out in the open air.

The grass felt very damp and raw,
Much colder than his master's straw,
Yet on it he was forced to stretch,
A poor, cold, melancholy wretch.

The night was dark, the country hilly,
Poor Dobbin felt extremely chilly;
Perhaps a feeling like remorse,
Just now might sting the gentle horse.

As soon as day began to dawn,
Dobbin, with long and weary yawn,
Arose from this his sleepless night,
But in low spirits and bad plight.

"If this," thought he, "is all I get,
A bed unwholesome, cold, and wet;
And thus forlorn about to roam,
I think I'd better be at home."

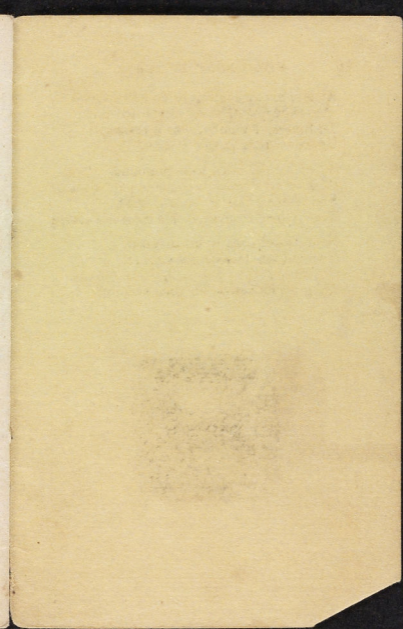
'Twas long e'er Dobbin could decide,
Between his wishes and his pride,
Whether to live in all this danger,
Or go back sneaking to the manger.

At last his struggling pride gave way ;
The thoughts of savory oats and hay
To hungry stomach, was a reason,
Unanswerable at this season.

So off he set, with look profound,
Right glad that he was homeward bound ;
And trotting fast as he was able,
Soon gained once more his master's stable

Now Dobbin after this disaster,
Never again forsook his master,
Convinced 'twas best to let him mount,
Than travelling on his own account.





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