

Author: Nairne, Edward (1741-1799)

Text type: Verse

Date of composition: 1791

Editions: 1791, 2005, 2011

Source text:

Nairne, Edward. 1824. *Kentish Tales in Verse, and Other Humorous Poems with Notes, Historical, Wittical, Critical, Wag, and Pragmatical, &c &c &c.* Sandgate: Purday and Son.

e-text

Access and transcription: December 2014

Number of words: 18,255

Dialect represented: Kent

Produced by María F. García-Bermejo Giner and Kun Tang

Copyright © 2014- DING, The Salamanca Corpus, Universidad de Salamanca

VNiVERSITAS
STVDII
SALAMANIINI

KENTISH TALES,
IN VERSE,
AND OTHER HUMOROUS POEMS.

WITH
NOTES,
HISTORICAL, WITTICAL, CRITICAL,
WAG, AND PRAGMATICAL,
&c. &c. &c.

BY THE LATE
EDWARD NAIRNE, Esq.

Of Sandwich, in Kent.

SECOND EDITION.

SANDGATE:
PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. PURDAY AND SON;
AND SOLD BY
J. OFFOR, NEWGATE STREET. LONDON.

[NP]

Printed by J. F. DOVE, St. John's Square.

[v]

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THESE Humorous Tales and Poems were first published by subscription about the year 1790, and have been for many years past totally out of print—although had the witty and facetious Author lived, there can be little doubt but that a second edition with his own corrections (and possibly with many additions), would long ere now have made its appearance, and most probably with superior advantages. Be that as it may, his little book is now rescued from oblivion, and presented to the public in a new and neat edition, and also at a moderate price.

Those who may happen to possess the first edition of these Poems, will find a few trifling alterations in the phraseologys which the Editor hopes will be generally

[vi]

approved. He has been as sparing as possible in making such alterations, and has confined himself mostly to an exchange of *words*—scarcely allowing himself in any instance to alter *ideas*—choosing rather that the humour of the Sandwich Bard should be preserved in its native dress, than by any mixture of his own ideas to produce a motley garment.

In some of the Tales, and more particularly in that of *Dame Hobday*, the Kentish dialect as spoken by the wholly uneducated part of the peasantry, is introduced; but, thanks to the various societies for the education of the poor, we may now hope, that the curious though barbarous lingo, which is so humorously and faithfully portrayed in

some of the following pages, will soon cease to form any part of the vocabulary even of the poorest classes in British society.

THE EDITOR,

Sandgate, Jan. 12, 1824.

[vii]

THE

AUTHOR'S ADDRESS

TO

THE SUBSCRIBERS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT was originally my intention (in compliance with the mandates of that tyrant Custom), to have written a preface to the following sheets; but reflecting that a preface to a work of this kind has seldom any other design, or can indeed answer any other purpose than to convey an apology for obtruding it on the public, and for its appearance in a garb of coarse materials, indifferently worked up, I have relinquished the intention, and will not anticipate

[viii]

any sorrow that may arise to you for an unthrifty expenditure of money.—

If I have entertained an idea of there being the least degree of merit in the performance, and it shall appear not to contain any, I may truly say—

My hope was like a negro's child, born fair,
But chang'd, alas! as soon to black despair!

THE DEDICATION,

which may as well be inserted here as in a separate page, is

TO MY VERY NUMEROUS AND RESPECTABLE

SUBSCRIBERS.

If, peradventure, anything may be found in the work to please, I shall be happy for their sakes; but the faults, which I fear are numerous, I must beg leave to consign to those, who have abilities and inclination to correct them.—

It has been complained of, that the long and ingenious eking out appendages of

[ix]

title page, preface, dedication introduction, head-piece, tail-piece, &c. and FINIS (the happy issue out of these afflictions) frequently compose a large part (excuse the expression) of a small work, and have been, not unaptly, compared to the decoraments of the table when the joint is but small. I hope I shall not incur a similar imputation, by being thought too prolix and tedious—indeed I once had it in contemplation to make the following addition to my title-page, *viz.* with notes, historical, wittical, critical, wag, and pragmatistical, &c. &c. &c.—but as it might have been deemed ostentatious, I have omitted it.

To conclude, if comparisons were admissible, I should like some of the above enumerated articles of preface, &c. to an author's personal application for a favour — The preface is, the rap at the door, to notify his approach—The dedication, the complaisant and respectful bow—The work, the author himself—and the FINIS

[x]

or END, the SUBSCRIPTION MONEY. To which end, the present work (like many others of the kind) was composed, and, when accomplished, the favour will be gratefully remembered by

THE SUBSCRIBERS'

most obedient and obliged

humble Servant,

[NP]

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Prologue.....	9
Epilogue.....	11
The Jews Partners, and the Stolen Pork, a Tale.....	14
The Man and his Three Wives, a Tale.....	18
The Benighted Traveller, a Tale.....	21
The Drummer and the Turkey, a Tale.....	22
The Inference, a College Tale.....	26
The Gipsies, and the Stolen Hog, a Tale.....	36
The Beggars, a Tale.....	46
Dame Hobday, a Tale.....	56
The Bartering Jew, and the Lace Merchant, a Tale.....	64
Irregular Address to the Moon.....	67
Travelling.....	82
Dutch Academical Bear-dancing.....	96

[9]

HUMOROUS POEMS.

The following prologue to the tragedy of *The Gamester*, and epilogue to the farce of *The Mayor of Garrat* (performed at Sandwich, some time since, to a very numerous and brilliant audience, for the benefit of a Charity School), were written at the request of the gentlemen who obligingly took parts on that laudable occasion; and were the first productions of the author's muse.

PROLOGUE.

ONCE more, advent'rous on these boards we tread.

'The noble cause of CHARITY to plead;

Pleas'd to experience what we've humbly plann'd,

So kindly foster'd by your lib'ral hand;

But, whilst we try your minutes to beguile,

We deprecate your frowns and court your smile;

Then oh! forbear our weak attempts to blame,

Who act from purest motives, not for Fame.—

Constant companion of the meek-ey'd maid,

Divine Philanthropy shall lend her aid,

With gentle care to lead the friendless youth

Through the blest paths of innocence and truth,

To rectitude shall kindly point the way,

Illum'd by Education's genial ray—

[10]

Virtue's reward be thine, the conscious meed

Of doing well, and Heav'n approve the deed.—

To-night our author's tragic scenes disclose

A gamester's fate, fraught with ten thousand woes,

By play induc'd, whose fascinating pow'r,

Draws victims to destruction every hour;

Scarcely a trace of honour leaves behind,

But warps to infamy the gen'rous mind;

Destroys the innocent intent of cards and dice,

And what's for recreation made, perverts to vice.

Well has our author in his lines pourtray'd

The deep distress by baneful gaming made,

Reprov'd the growing vices of the age,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

And lash'd the gamester in his moral page;
Success attend his plan, and ere too late,
To snatch one victim from impending fate.
Yet, though the sordid contest we disclaim,
We'll, by permission, try a nobler game,
To win the stakes our cards we'll careful range,
And, though success attend, we'll make exchange
We freely lose our *spades* and *clubs* to boot,
Anxious to prosper only in *one* suit;
E'en from a bulse of *diamonds* gladly part,
Amply repaid if we can win the *Heart*.

[11]

EPILOGUE.

LADIES! I'm come to set you all agog,
I've found a bantling, call'd an EPILOGUE!
A meagre, shapeless thing, all skin and bone,
Which, without aid, can never walk alone:
Your tend'rest care its infant state demands;—
Trembling I leave it to your bounteous HANDS.
He who would learn these subjects well to handle,
Must, at the fire of knowledge, light his candle;
If it burns dull, and glimmering withal,
And flashes not, then we it *rush-light* call;
But if its scintillation's bright and quick,
A genius that, and then we call it—*wick*.
Permit me now a word or two to speak,
In character of *rush-light* Jerry Sneak;
Then with friend Jerry's contrast take a turn,
And try if master *Wick* will brighter burn.
"Rais'd to a high and monstrous station,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

"And squier mayor choos'd, I'll make noration;
"But softly!—If my gentle vife should come,
"Her presence, somehow, always strikes me dumb"
Veil then—I'll tell you vot, and how't must be,
"Chris Heeltap—he shall speechify for me!—
"A clever fellow that—can read the news,
"And speeches cobble, as he cobbles shoes!
"If such-like things you want, and Crispin ax,
"He'll knock you off a stave as clean as wax,

[12]

"Sharp as his boring awl!—speaks well, by golls,
And by his art can pierce your very souls!
"Heyday! all off!—then I'll to *Mug's* begone,
"Sir *Jacob's* there, and *Bruin*, ten to one—
"My vife can't bide him, ne'er will be at peace,
"She says, till *Vick'ry* has him for his grease!—
"Lint's gone, I guess, to listen out for groans,
"And *Simon Snuffle* to his land of bones.*

"Is snap-cat *Goosey* gone, do you suppose,
"Home, without pay, to mend his tatter'd clothes?
"No—he's too deep for that!—he's gone to sell"
Some cabbag'd remnants, from his wooden hell!
"Praps *Mrs. Sneak* with *Sturgeon* sneak'd away,
"I wish I know'd—I'd to the major say:—
When to your arms shall fall a mistress *Sneak*,
By finery caught and compliments made meek,
Be careful when the time of meeting suits,
To stop the key-hole, 'fore you draw your boots.'

Now with friend *Jerry* having done to-night,
We'll speak for *Wick*, but first let's snuff his light.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

"From mimic scenes we'll call your contemplation,
"To scenes which soon shall agitate the nation; £
"First comes a parchment *herald*, £ I like a bird, §
"Long may its joyful style be—*George the Third*;

* Church-yard.

£ The then approaching general election.

£ The writ.

§ On account of the expedition with which the writ is sometimes conveyed

[13]

"Then come the *champion candidates* for votes,

"And hint intended favours, thick as oats,

"With gilded train light up our hemisphere,

"And blaze like comets once in seven year;

"But when the glaring revolution's done,

"And a fresh lease extracted from their sun,

Our high-raised expectation quickly fails,

"They take a comet's leave, and turn their tails!

"And who their trackless passage can explore,

"Lost in oblivion's void, and seen no more!

"Not so our little stars,* their course shall run

"In paths eccentric, and desert their sun;

Reflecting all the radiance in their pow'r,

"They'll bless their patrons till their latest hour."

*Charity children.

[14]

AND

THE STOLEN PORK.

A TALE.

Some twenty years ago—'tis true,
ISSACS, a poor pedestrian Jew,
By wishful inclination prest,
A ribspare stole, already drest;
He had a partner in his trade,
Call'd MOSES—him an offer made
To be concern'd—and let him in
For half the pork and half the sin;
Soon to his scheme poor smouchy won,
Not choosing to be d—mn'd alone.

From Deal to Dover their abode,
Onward they trudge—a pleasant road,
And as the day began to waste,
Eager the unknown cates to taste,
They halted at a little wood,
Near where a rustic alehouse* stood;
That dinner o'er, they soon might join
To wash it down with barley wine,
And, lest a trav'ller, passing by,
The meat forbidden should espy,
And interrupt their dainty meal,
Isaacs propos'd to call it veal;

*Ringwould.

[15]

But Moses seemed more inclin'd
"Mutton" to call it "mid de tick roind."
Their box a table made for both,
A snuffy muckenger a cloth;
For filth with Jews is deem'd no vice,
They oft-times are more wise than nice.
Eager they cut and slash away,
Not e'en for benediction stay;
A heinous crime, I shrewdly guess,
With them unhallow'd pork to bless;
Pleas'd with the daints they lift their eyes,
And eat with wonder and surprise.
Here, gentle reader, double down,
While (*presto*) I look back to town,
And fancy I can plainly hear
Newton,* the owner, rave and swear;
Not philosophic Newton he,
From stoic apathy quite free,
Would swear in style, and never sham,
Nor cheat Old Nic—by dem for damn;
His passion broils, he cannot brook it,
But bl—sts the pork and him who took it.
Ill-fated swine! Who when alive
With broomsticks beat to make ye thrive,[†]

*The loser of the pork, who kept a public house at Deal,

† Said to be a practice among countrymen, when a hog is hidebound, that by loosening his skin, he may have the more room to grow.

[16]

And though ye squeal and make a rout,
They'll thrust a ringle through your snout.
Though e'en from Satan ye are free,
Nor driven headlong to the sea,
Maugre your soul-enchanting note,
The bloody butcher cuts your throat;
Your every part men eat for food,
And puddings make of your heart's blood;
When dead you'r d—mn'd as well as living.
And gorg'd by Jews, without thanksgiving;
This in the sequel will appear,
And this we presently shall hear,
How short men's happiness on earth,
Doom'd to misfortunes from their birth!

E'en now the tiffing winds arise,
And low'ring clouds deform the skies;
The thunders roll, the lightnings glare,
And shake their Hebrew souls with fear!

"Smoses in sackcloth we must bow,
"For Cot Almoitish' angry now,
"No such vile stuff again must eat,
"But trow away de shiful meat."

The winds soon chase the storm away,
And Phoebus darts a brighter ray,
And as they view the unclouded scene,
Their ruffled minds became serene;
Nay almost into courage grow,
Nor will they yet the pork forego

[17]

On settled weather they presume,

And instantly the meal resume

"O! dat I ne'er de pork had sheen,

"Or ratder had a Christian been,

"For, mister Smoses, don't it eat."

Moch better dan our cosher meat?"

(How shall I Jewish jargon coin?)

"By Cot Almoitish vashly foin."

But, as it were, by magic spell,

And conjur'd up again pell-mell,

The lightnings flash, and—dire mishap!

Succeeds a louder thunder clap!

In vain a contest with the skies,

They soon give up the luckless prize;

But Isaacs, who had been the thief,

Indignant—call'd to his relief

These words, to give his passion vent,

Which soon the blast to heaven sent—

"I see de meat we mosht forsake;

"But had I taught dat Heaven wou'd make"

Soch dreadful noise and piece of work,

"Apout a leetel pit of pork!

"And Cot Almoitish had begrutcht it."

Smoses, pe tam't if I'd have toucht it.

*Purified

[18]

MAN AND HIS THREE WIVES.

A TALE.

It happen'd once,
It happen'd twice,
And *three* times did it happen,

In life's short span

A certain man

In wedlock was yntrappen!

The first he wed,

To church he led,

And, as the story's told,

This beauty bright

Betroth'd downright

For love, and not for gold.

How quick, alas!

Runs mortals' glass;

How fleeting beauty's pride!

For one short year

Stopp'd her career,

She sicken'd, and—she died!

Now Prudence, sly,

Says, mind your eye,

Don't let your passions rove;

[19]

Marry, I say,

But do it, pray,

For *money*, not for *love*.

Not now so nice,
He takes advice,
And weds a wealthy dame;
She had, beside
Her tawny hide,
One eye, and she was lame.

But what cares he,
From earth set free,
By kind *obliging* Death;
Seiz'd with a cough,
She soon hopp'd off,
And died for want of breath!

What's to be done,
Her glass thus run?
Why, marry once again;
Another wife
May have a life,
Longer than t'other twain.

And so she had,
For him, egad,
A terrible disaster!
For she would fight,
Morn, noon, and night,
Determin'd to be master.

[20]

Long time this wife
The dubious strife
Maintain'd—at last she fell,
The battle lost,

Gave up the ghost,
And went, 'tis thought, to Hell!

Now I, says he,

May happy be,

Whilst here on earth I tarry,

Till my life's end

Enjoy my friend,

But hang me if I marry.

I've done what's right,

Fought a good fight,

Have tam'd an *imp* uncivil;

And conquer'd too

(A thing quite new)

The *world*, the *flesh*, and *devil*.

[21]

VNiVERSiTAS
STVDII
SALAMANIINI

THE

BENIGHTED TRAVELLER.

A TALE.

BEWILDER'D in a winter's night,

No friendly star affording light,

A traveller his road had lost;

And almost lost his wits, through fear,

That he might ride, without great care,

Into a chalkpit or against a post.

At length he spied a glimm'ring ray,

And thither, trembling, bent his way;

A queer, curmudgeonly old put
Inhabited the lonely hut,
Who, having scrap'd together pelf,
Wisely protected it himself
"Hilloa! hilloa!" the trav'ler cries,
"I've lost my road! do, good sir, rise
"And, kind, direct me in the way;"
Who art? whose *servant* art? I say—
"No man's, sir—my own *master* I."
Old slyboots drily made reply—
"If, as thou say'st, thou'rt thine own *master*,
'May'st slowly ride, or travel faster,'
And go (extinguishing the light)
'Which way you please'—*And so he might,*

[22]

THE
DRUMMER AND THE TURKEY.
A TALE.

WHEN cut-throat War had spread alarms,
And Britain's sons were call'd to arms,
Invading forces to repel,
And fight, like Trojan boys, pell-mell,
A hopeful regiment—*sans doute*,
Receiv'd their orders, call'd a route;
To march with speed—and, bold as Mars
Set off, to spoil Monsieur's droll farce.

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Now at the drum and fife's shrill call,
The troops assembled, one and all,
With glitt'ring arms, on glory bent,
And, left feet foremost, off they went!
With march fatigu'd, and heat oppress'd,
A halt was call'd, to give them rest,
And shelter too—for mid-day's blaze
Had burnt their brains out with its rays!
Now Discipline's coercive hand
Relax'd—and now the band,
No more to rank and file confin'd,
Upon the verdant grass reclin'd—

[23]

A stream, meand'ring through the vale,
Supply'd these folks with Adam's ale,
And bread and cheese supply'd their wallet,
And mother Earth—Chadnezzar's* pallet,†—
Soon came, with eager haste, to view,
Labour's stout sons, and DAUGHTERS too!
Eve's offspring all—from LADY frail,
To DOLL, who bears the milking-pail,
Enough to furnish a seraile!—
Meanwhile, a DRUMMER of the core,‡
Who'd fought old soldier o'er and o'er,
A wily elf, more knave than fool,
Train'd up in ancient Pistol's school,
And who a happy knack could boast,
Of finding things before they're lost,
(Yet, as his panegyrists teach,
Ne'er took a thing beyond his reach)

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

With hurried step, intent on pillage,
Hast'ned to the *deserted village!*
Soon did our hero, in his furtive range,
Espy the burnish'd champion of the grange,
With ruthless hand (unpitied by a tear)
Stopp'd the 'shrill clarion' of proud Chanticleer,
Not here desisted!—nor can pen describe
The havoc made amongst the feather'd tribe!
This blade would steal a horse or mare, and mount her,
Nor poultry spar'd, nor dreaded Poultry-compter;

* Nebuchadnezzar.

† Bed, or resting-place

£ Corps.

[24]

Nor fear'd the wrath of day to come,
But slyly stuff'd into his drum
The produce of his noon-tide ramble,
Fowls, ducks, and turkeys, *tout-ensemble*—
Now did the modern Alexander
(I mean the gallant troops' commander)
Give word to march—Rous'd at th' inspiring sound,
Soldiers, like Cadmians, started from the ground,
The road retiring from their constant beat,
Quickly the destin'd place their optics greet,
Where, smiling bland, the beauties press,
Allur'd by all-subduing dress!—
Proceeding through the *fair-throng'd* street,
The drums th' accustom'd march 'gan beat;
The comrades' *hollow* drums beat loud and clear,
Our drum (*so fully-cramm'd!*) assail'd the ear

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

With noise like sound emitted from a tub,
For theirs went *row-dow-dow!* but ours went *rub- dub-dub*,
The rest kept beating on—our cunning tike
The motions flourish'd well, but did not strike!
By accident observed (though so sly)
An officer (who ne'er a fault pass'd by)
Call'd out, vociferous, in prodigious heat;—
'Pray why, infernal rascal? Don't you beat?'
Finding at once excuses for his tricks,
Thus whisper'd soft the man of skin and sticks:

[25]

"Your HONOUR!—please when we to quarters come,
"I've got a turkey for you, in my drum!"—
Incontinent, with the idea pleas'd,
He smooth'd his wrinkl'd brow, and wrath appeas'd,
And cry'd— 'Well, well—I pity you—but pray,
If th' had'st *Rheumatics* got—why did'st not say?

[26]

THE INFERENCE.

A COLLEGE TALE

INTRODUCTION.

Nothing so *certain* is, or *serious*,
But that a wily *wicked* wit
May (if his *dogship* thinketh fit)
Turn into *jest*, or make *mysterious*.
I'll set before you an example,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Promiscuous ta'en from Memory's store,

With simile your ears I'll bore,

And afterward produce the sample.

Those who in *Middle-row* have loiter'd,

A dark and narrow place in *Holborn*,

And mark'd the tatter'd wight and low born,

And shabbaroos have reconnoiter'd,

And, while the stalls they've rummag'd o'er,

For obsolete and ancient lore,

Enough to make'em crazy,

Have seen the raggamuffins pop,

Into the ready-rhino shop,

To dip hap-hazard for a *jazey*,*

No doubt have laugh'd to view their *nobs*,

*Cant word for a wig. Formerly in Middle-row. Holborn, wigs of different sizes were put into a bag, and any person for three- pence, might dip his hand and take out the first he laid hold of; and if dissatisfied with his prize, might, on paying three-halfpence, return it and dip again. Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue.

[27]

Furnish'd with perukes, hempen, flaxen,

Or goat-hair, long-tail, cow-tail caxon,

Or grizzles, perriwinks, * or bobs.

So will your worships laugh to spy

Your humble servant in a wig,

Too long, 1 fear, too rough, too big,

And put on too so much *awry*.

My tale's the *emblematic scratch*,

And most *fortuitously* hit on,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

When drest by me 'twill be a catch

For critics to discharge their wit on;

For though I press and comb it out

Smooth as I can, and oil it,

A very little *touch* I doubt,

Will discompose and spoil it;

Then more the lash severe I dread,

And strictures keen of hypers, I

Than water dripping on the head,

Or scorpions' stings or vipers.

Ah! do not beadles of Parnass

With cat-'o-nine-tails follow,

A braying, straying, sinning ass,

Against the god Apollo;

*Perriwinkles—a sort of wig formerly much in vogue amongst seafaring persons; consisting of a great number of small curls spirally twisted to a point, and not unlike an assemblage of perriwinkles.

I Hypercritics.

[30]

Soon to effect a demolition,

Of the learn'd tutor's definition;

And *Madam Fortune*, or the *Devil*,

(Who to his children's mighty civil

On *Earth*, they say—and if 'tis true,

Why let the Devil have his due;)

Contriv'd at once to make him pop

On a gay academic fop,

Who priz'd the mind's acquirements less

Than the refinement of his dress,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

And with the fair sex chose to dangle,
Rather than hear the students wrangle,
Of chopping logic knew no more.
Than's known of sea, by us on shore.—

For though our tender, nurturing dame.*
Has milk enough for all who claim,
Yet some more wayward than the rest,
Will never kindly take the *breast*. —

The *proposition* public made,
Was soon accepted by the blade;
'Twas *done*, and *done*—an umpire chosen;
The wager was, a *rump and dozen*.—

And now to bring the joke about,
Sir Pickle briskly sallies out;
But presently he makes a stop;
At the sign-painter *Wiseman's* shop;

*Alma Mater.

[31]

(The modest muse, 'twould ill become her,

To hint that this was a *misnomer*!)

"Sir, I'm no stranger to your fame,

"And find you have a *wond'rous* name!

"Will you, sir, so obliging be"

To draw an *Inference* for me?

"For you, I hear (I do not flatter),

"Can draw prodigiously *from* nature."

'Good sir! I can't an *Inference* draw,

'For such a thing I never saw!

Wish'd to *obleege* you—"Do not doubt it,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

"No matter, sir, can do without it—

"Good day t'ye, sir"—'Good day'—and now

Makes to the painter his best bow,

With feign'd confusion, bending double,

"Sham'd to have given so much trouble."—

Elated with this first success.

He bless'd his stars, nor could do less;

And as he trips along the street,

With bright'ned looks and nimble feet,

Had the good fortune in the way,

To meet a heavy loaded dray,

Drawn by a horse of strength so great,

Three tons did scarce appear a *weight*.

Eftsoons our roguish chick address

The sturdy driver of the beast;

"Hip, my good friend,"—(says he)—of course,

'A-*whohey*'—instant stops the horse;

[32]

For, as I learn, though always mellow,

He's a good-temper'd, civil fellow,

Whose ruby cheek, reflective, shows

The strong-beer fever of his nose,

Which glowing in the ripen'd snout,

Best proves the strength of *master's stout*,

And recommends the *potent brown*,

Better than any sign in *town*.—

"My honest friend," begins the wag,

"A little favour may I beg?

"I wish to have a short discourse,

"About the powers of your horse;

"The noblest beast I ever saw!

"Pray how much think you he can draw?"

'I cannot, master, jestly tell,—

'He draa's his loads most desp'rate well!'—

"D'ye think, as he has so much bone.

"He'd draw an *Inference* alone?"

'I may not understand you right,

'But think 'tis likely that he might,

'For yet I never know'd him flinch,

'At anything, upon a pinch;

'And ta' him in a proper season,

'He'll draa' ye anything in *reason*,—

"That's good—'tis just the *thing* by *jingo*,

"Here's for a shilling's worth of *stingo*,

Long look'd for even came at last,

And shew'd which way the die was cast;

[33]

The wag (all parties being met)

Thus states his title to the bet:—

"A *man*, a *Wiseman* too, I saw,

"Who never could an *Inference* draw,

"And afterward I saw a *horse*,

"Who could an *Inference* draw, of *course*;

"For, on the credit of his tutor "

(Who's not here now, though may in future)

'Tis certain, in a proper season,

"He'd draw ye anything in *reason*"—

'This (says the umpire) proves his fitness

'To draw an *Inference*, with a *witness*;

'It makes it very clearly out,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

'And puts the matter past a doubt.'—

The *Flat** now finding to his *cost*,
That he had *thus* the wager *lost*.

*There are three sorts of genii, or geniuses, in the great seminaries of learning, as well as in other places, who, put them into a musical scale, may be thus characterized:

A person like the one above alluded to may be properly denominated

A FLAT.

A student in the university having a desire to peruse a book which was in the possession of another student in the adjoining chambers, sent his compliments and requested the loan of it for a short time— He returned this answer by the servant; "My compliments to your master, and inform him I never lend a book *out*; but if your master will come to my chambers and read it *there*, he shall be welcome." The gentleman conceiving this to be an uncivil refusal, did not go.—A short time afterward the book *holder*, having occasion to get a fire made in haste, sent his compliments to the first mentioned student, and begged he would lend him a pair of bellows—The gentleman returned this answer: "My compliments to your master, and inform him that I never lend my bellows *out*; but if your master will come to my chambers and make use of them *there*, he may amuse himself by blowing at my fire till the bellows and himself are both out of breath."—

This you see is The SHARP.

Another gentleman of the university having a favourite cat, and that she should not be confined in his absence, had a hole cut in the bottom of the door, to give her free egress and regress. Sometime afterward she kittened, and one of the kittens being very much like the mother, he determined to save it as her representative, in case she should die first. This point settled, he sent for Mr. *Chopstick* the carpenter, and ordered him to cut another hole in the door, of a similar form, but of a smaller size; which being done, *Chopstick* begged to know for what purpose the last hole was cut? Why you must know, friend, replied the gentleman, I have *two* cats, a great one and a little one: the great hole is for the great cat, and the little hole is for the little cat to go through.—

Here is The NATURAL.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

Another gentleman being under examination in the science of astronomy, was asked, among other questions, whether the Sun revolved round the Earth, or the Earth round the Sun? After a little hesitation, he answered, " Sometimes one, and sometimes Mother." —This last genius, being a genius *sui generis*, and a non-descript, I have left a blank for my readers to fill up the space with such a term as they may think appropriate to him—

[34]

Pays in a *huff*—d—mns his dull sconce.
And rusticates himself at once;
Whilst half a dozen jolly fellows,
Sing out *Old Rose and burn the bellows*,*

*Expression used for excess of jollity.

[35]

And while the rosy wine they quaff,
Indulge, at his expense, the laugh,
And kept it up in joyous plight,
'Till they had seen the *noon* of *night*.

[36]

THE

GIPSIES AND THE STOLEN HOG.

A TALE.

THE human race, we all agree,
By Nature's unrestraint and free?
Yet the depravity of man
Requires a strong coercive plan,
The weak and feeble to protect.
And our enormities correct;
Else boundless liberty, I trow,
Into licentiousness would grow:
Though some in spite of law's decree,
Wander, disgrace to policy.

Search all this planet's ample round,
Not one assemblage can be found,
Amongst the tribes of human kind,
Much more to liberty inclin'd,
Than are the artful gipsy crew,
Of sallow and disgusting hue,
Who, scorning law's compulsive sway,
Despoil the farmer night and day.

Close by the skirtings of a wood,
Near where a pleasant hamlet stood,

[37]

A dingy, smoke-dried, squalid race,
Which even *Norwood** might disgrace,
Had pitch'd their tents—convenient spot
For fuel, when they boil the pot,
Or when they roast a dainty bit,
To cut the ready ashen spit:
For oft, excursive as they stroll,
They niſ m a pig, a duck, or fowl;

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

In short, whatever they can get,
"All's fish with them that comes to net."

Now when the moon had forc'd away
The shining monarch of the day,
And had amidst the starry train,
Began her OLIVERIAN reign,£
Forth from the predatory crew,
Sly issue a selected few,
Of those whose keen observant eye,
Had mark'd the pride of all the sty;
With soft and cautious tread, and slow,
Securely to the farm-yard go,
'There execute their fell design
Amongst the batt'ning race of swine;

*A place near London, famous for the resort of gipsies.

£ To steal or pilfer.

£"Oliver" is the gipsies'cant word for the moon.—These commonwealth's people frequently commit thefts in the night time during the protectorate, or under the favour of this planet, and for that reason, I presume, they call it Oliver.—The gipsies are sometimes called moon-men, from their plundering excursions by moon-light.

[38]

For well th' inebriate drug they knew,
And what its influence could do,
To stop their harsh discordant cries,
And seal with sleep their maudlin eyes,
Their booty take without remorse,
And to the Ruffman's* bear his corse.
His cruel fate who can but weep,
Murder'd so basely in his sleep!

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Ere Sol, with golden rays bedight,
Had dried away the tears of night,
Or ere the heralds of the morn,
Had crow'd responsive—or the horn,
Sweet echoing through the woodland's space,
Had call'd the hunters to the chase,
The man of industry awoke,
To feed his swine and tend the yoke,
No care his placid mind to cross,
As yet unwitting of the loss.—
Words can but give (how'er combin'd)
A faint idea of his mind,
The loss perceiv'd! his bosom bleeds,
And rage to poignant grief succeeds.
At length suspicions justly fell.
Upon the worthless imps of hell;
But they have arts to hide their prey,
And keep detection still at bay;

*Cant term for a wood.

[39]

For though a trusty friend was sent,
By seeming chance, to view the tent,
Nought could be seen but old rags there,
Straw, and their culinary ware,
And one pretended sick, whose moan
Would almost move a heart of stone,
On purpose left— his looks command.
A shilling from the lib'ral hand!
"God bless you, sir!"—but ah! forbear

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

To reckon on the spurious pray'r;
For though to Charity be given
The blessings of approving Heaven,
Deceit can never call them forth,
Nought but the deed's intrinsic worth!

Where now is gone each vagrant tramp?
Deserted thus the filthy camp!

Gone to the villages and farms,
With asses, pedlar-dogs,*and swarms
Of brats and bantlings, living lumber,
Stuff'd into panniers£, without number,

*A particular sort of dog, so called from their being chiefly kept by pedlars and trampers.

£The gipsies are a very prolific people—they have a community of wives, and indeed of everything else; perhaps the celebrated author of "Thelypthora" might have witnessed the happiness of their system—it is very pleasant in theory, but the practice may, in some cases, be dangerous. This reminds me of a circumstance which happened some time since—A testy old gentleman, who, it seemed, had more occasion for a nurse than a wife, being wedded to a person of inferior age, and taking offence at some slight inattention, exclaimed, in a very peevish manner, "he wished he lived in Turkey, for there," says he, "a man may have as many wives as he pleases," 'Pho,'pho, my dear,' replies the wife, 'you'd make but a *poor Turk*.'— And I firmly believe that the thelypthoratic scheme of the late reverend Mr. Madan, if he did not make us *poor Turks*, would make some of us ridiculous Christians.

[40]

And ballad-baskets, and with packs,
And some with urchins at their backs.

And now they make a short abode.
Fixing head-quarters by the road,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

From whence some steal away, and lurk,
Watching the peasants to their work,
And then detach a *whining mort*,*
To importune for *scraps and ort*; †
They're soon bestow'd by *Rose* or *Grace*—
"Bless your kind soul! bless that sweet face!"

And now fair *Rose* with art she plies,
"Sweet girl, there's *babes* in those bright eyes!"
Views her spread palm, and says, "in sooth
"I here can trace the happy youth!

"Your fortune I can truly tell,
"Don't be afraid, you'll like it well,
"'Tis but a tester—come—now do"—
'I will' says *Rose*, 'if *Grace* will too!'—

"I will," says *Grace*, "if *Rose* will first,"
And *Rose* prepares to hear the worst!
Her swelling bosom heaving strong,
Like wave propelling wave along,

*Woman—Cant term.

† Broken victuals.

[41]

Reveals (for Nature so design'd)

The pleasing tumult of her mind!

Now must the fair, the blooming *Rose*,
Her private marks and blies disclose!

Oh! I should like, upon my honour,
To play a merry trick upon her,
And in a female gipsy's guise,
Reading her fortune in her eyes,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Extract the secrets of her soul,
And find out where she has a mole!

But soft!—Remember that we ought
To sin not-t-no—not e'en in thought.
Then must I bid the maid adieu,
And turn reluctant from the view!

Reflecting (as we sometimes ought)
On worldly matters, I have thought,
That these prognostics often prove,
The sources of illicit love;
For when the credulous or frail,
Hears her whole fortune in detail—
How many times she shall be wed,
How often shall be brought to bed;
Or, if perchance the gipsies tell,
That Eve, her great-great-grandame, fell,
And (as one pea is like another)
She ere she weds may be a mother;
No marvel when a youth assails,
That he so easily prevails;

[42]

What must be, will be, soon or late,
'Tis fruitless to oppose our fate.
Whilst these, and scenes like these, move on,
Until the fleeting day is done,
The farmer meditates a plan
At night to catch them—if he can!
Delusive hope! can he expect
A crew so wary to detect!
As soon I should expect to find

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Munchausen's page to truth inclin'd,
Or hear it told in serious mood,
That Hell itself is built with wood!
For see the corpse* they slyly take
From the deep dell o'erspread with brake,
And shelt'ring furze, whose flow'rets gay,
Exclude Apollo's fiercest ray!
Now to the tent securely brought,
He's habited as quick as thought,
In the pretended sick man's clothes,
With hat, and gloves, and shoes, and hose;
And where the garments loosely sit,
With hay plumpt out they're made to fit;
A dirty cap and cravat deck
His head, and ears, and face, and neck;
His bosom stain'd th' Egyptian hue,
With walnut juice, is left to view,

*The stolen hog.

[43]

And thus equipt from feet to head,
He represents the gipsy dead!
And now his corpse in form laid forth,
Upon the lap of mother Earth,
And torches lighted; they begin
A loud and most infernal din,
And, with their shrieks, make more ado
Than Paddy with his *pillaloo**—
Whilst one more artful than the rest,
The pitying farmer thus address:

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

"If thou hast not a heart of steel,
"For our misfortune you must feel,
"For see our father's lying dead."
Upon the cold and grassy bed;
"Then at the dawn thy servants send,
"Thy wain and horses likewise lend,
"And take him to a distant place,
"The burying-ground of all our race;
"Which if thou dost, may Heaven shed."

Its choicest blessings on thy head,
"Preserve thy offspring day and night,
"Thy folds from rot—thy corn from blight;
But if thou cruelly reject
"This small request, can'st thou expect,"
Thy cattle to be free from harm,
"From malice, or from spell or charm?"

*The Irish death-howl

[44]

Detested wretch! who impious dares
Include a menace in his prayers!—

Whether compassion most prevails,
Or fear the farmer's mind assails,
We know not—but he gives consent,
And unsuspecting leaves the tent:
Next morn the wain conveys *sir gruff**,
Full many tedious furlongs off,
He's quickly unattir'd, and then
No gipsy he, but hog again!
With Shylock knives they carve him up,

And on his flesh in riot sup!

What though these feats may please awhile,
Or force a momentary smile,
Reflection's *calm* will sure succeed,
And mark the mischiefs of the deed!
'Tis not the loss we most deplore,
Groundless suspicions injure more;
For now, unhappily, we find
Misgivings foul possess his mind,
For at the guiltless humble cot,
He pays the visit long forgot,
And hoping he some trace may find,
Calls in, uncharitably kind!

Oh! may the wisdom of the state
Old laws enforce, or new create,

*Gruff, or gruffy—jocular term for a hog.

[45]

To rid us of the sons of spoil,
The vagrant pests of Albion's isle;
And far off, on this earthly ball,
Transport the miscreants, one and all.

[46]

THE BEGGARS.

A TALE.

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

A BEGGAR happ'ning once to pop
Into a BEGGAR-MAKER'S SHOP,*
Found there a brother of the trade,
Who the same port had likewise made,
To screen him from the pelting rain,
And get his wardrobe dry again;
Snug—till the wind should lose its breath,
And calmly die a nat'ral death!

The proverb says, "Birds of a feather
"Do usually flock together;"
'Tis true—And yet we seldom see
Two of a trade who can agree!
Nor, as you'll find, did these two wights,
These eleemosynary knights!
They knew, instinctively, each other,
Each was a *judge*, and spy'd a *brother*!
The last who came, good at a joke,
His new acquaintance thus bespoke,
"What say's thee SNAP-CRUST—hast a min't
"To treat OLD TATTERS I with a pint?

*An alehouse.

I The facetious Mr. Foote observed, "that till he saw the beggars in Ireland, he always wondered what the English beggars did with their old clothes!"—I have seen some of the fraternity with such labyrinthine suits on, that if they ever undress themselves, they must have excellent memories to get into them again the same way! —The wags jocularly observe of these suits, that they must be very warm; for, say they, if the wind blows in at one hole, there are a hundred others to let it out again!

[47]

"I see thee'st been a lucky man,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

"And got thy wallet full of scran;*

"But if thee better lik'st—find meat,

"And I'll with nappy brown^I stand treat;

"Come, stir the mokes £—let's have a broil,

"And talk of charity the while!

 "Here, boy! a mug of barley broth;

"Don't tip us, though, a pint of froth!

"I don't, much like the head so big,

"It minds me of a quorum wig,"

And quorum wigs, upon my soul,

'Mind me,' says *Snap-crust*, 'of a goal;'[§]

"But to proceed," says *Snap-crust*, "pray

"Hast met with any luck today?"

'Why pretty well—I don't complain,

'A score of hogs ^{||} before th ain.'

"Where did you ply?" 'On yon steep hill,

'Where walking seems like standing still,

*Cant term for victuals.

^I Brown ale.

£ Embers or coals.

§ Improperly thus pronounced and spelt; its derivation is from the French word *gaol*, and should be pronounced jail.

^{||} Cant word for a shilling—Hog of twelve score (*i. e.*) twelve pence.

[48]

'There pickt my men just as I list,

'And coppers* very seldom miss'd.—

 'One oldish gentleman I saw,

'Divinity, I guess'd, or law,

'I could not tell at first, of course;

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

'But when I saw him *lead* his horse,
'Knew by his kindness to the beast,
'He'd give me two-pence at the least.
"'Twas a dead certainty I knew,
"These are sure signs 'twixt me and you."
 'Now higher on the hill advanc'd,
'When at his coat and wig I glanc'd,
'I had the curate in my eye,
'The fag end of divinity;
'I almost always know my men,
'A double certainty 'twas then:

* Halfpence.

If These people, by frequent observations, can estimate occurrences from the remotest expectation up to a dead or *double* certainty! and that such a thing as a double certainty does exist, is incontestably and ingeniously proved, in the folio dictionary of that colossus of literature, the late celebrated Dr. Johnson, and may be seen under the word nine, which he thus defines:—"NINE, a number one more than *eight*, and one less than *ten*."—That nine must be one more than eight, is a numerical certainty; and that it is one less than ten, is as certainly another: so that, if one and one make two, this is a *double* certainty!— 'As sure as eggs are eggs, is a common expression, indicative of the truth of an assertion; and, 'As sure as one and one make two, is another: each of these is but a *single* certainty, and therefore, were I inclined to make an observation, in order to impress it the more forcibly on the minds of my auditors, I should, on the credit of the Doctor's discovery, say, "As sure as *nine* is *nine*"

[49]

'At length safe landed on the brow,
'He stopt; thought I, 'tis my time now;
'For charity I humbly sue,
'I pray'd for God's sake—Christ's sake too!

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

'And, when I twiggd his moist'ning eye,
'Shook like an aspen, feign'd a cry,
'And *did* his rev'rence for a si!
'At dinner-time, and bus'ness slack,†
'I stopt to Joe's, £ and got a snack,*
'A pot of mildchee, £ and a whiff,
'And off again in half a jiff!§

*Cant term for a sixpence.

† A short, irregular, and informal meal, frequently taken on journeys, to save time.

£ Mild ale.

§ Jiff or jiffy, a jocular expression, and means a short space of time. Innumerable are the expressions (particularly amongst sailors) to shew what expedition may be, or is intended to be made, in the doing of any act; the progress of these is curious. I perfectly recollect, when a school-boy, an expression of this kind—'Before you can say Jack Robinson'—was very common. After the intervention of various others, that of—'As soon as you can say peas'—came into vogue; but some persons, who were not over precipitate, very properly qualified it by adding—'and boil them.' Next, the elegant expression of doing any thing 'In a pig's whisper' came into fashion! (What particular period of time this contains, I am at a loss to determine, having never yet had the pleasure of hearing these melodious animals exhibit in this way!—I have frequently, and with admiration, observed them make transitions from one note to another, and which usually has a most charming effect.)—The ingenuity of modern times has, I believe, brought this business to its *ne plus ultra*, its greatest perfection! and people can now, according to their own declarations, do things '*In less than no time!*' This beats Joshua's making the sun stand still; for that only protracted daylight, and puzzled the clocksmiths! but this has all the advantages of *time*, without the inconvenience of waiting for it.

[50]

'Went to the other side the town,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

'And at the bridge-foot sat me down;
'Was doing wonders, till the rain
Drove me from off my place again:
'I had an ague fit to-day,
'Till the rain wash'd it quite away!*

'And now the folks began to push
'For shelter to a tree or bush,
'And those on horseback whipt and rid,
'Faster than Gilpin^f ever did—
"Twas dickey[£] all—so off I ran;
'Pity was lost for beast and man!
Not fiercer broil'd the blazing meat,
Than SNAP-CRUST did at TATTERS' feat,
He curst him, d—mn'd him, call'd him cheat,
For interfering in his beat.—
TATTERS vindictive was, but sly,
And smooth'd him with a soft reply:

*This expression is well understood by the fraternity, but requires some explanation here. A beggar, in order to excite compassion, must *look* as well as act the character he assumes. He had that day taken upon him a *sham* ague, and for the purpose of looking *pale* and *cold*, had made use of a clayey substance on his face, but which the rain had washed off.

^f That renowned quidnunc, immortalized by his equestrian journey from London to Edmonton.

[£] Dickey—(j, e.) The game is up—'Tis all over—There's an end of the matter.

[51]

'Come, drink about, and don't be hot,
'I'll give thee part of what I've got,
'And treat to boot—There's half a crown—

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

'Hast ever begg'd in Gotham town?

"No, I am shagged, for I know."

Jack Ragaboy, awhile ago,

"Got sorely flogg'd for begging there;

"The beadle had him to the may'r!"

'So he did; me but what of that,

'I d—mn'd his worship for a flat,

'Throw'd it in sharp—it is as true'

As God made Moses—so may you;

'He's but a cake, and that I saw,

'And frighten'd if you talk of law?

"Gotham's a charitable town!

"I thought myself of going down;

"But 'tis *thy* beat, I'll not go nigh,

"I'd rather *thou* should'st go than I!"

Next morn was fine—why should he wait

So took a dram, and gang'd his gait—

To the good place he posted down,

And ply'd the outskirts of the town,

Took cash galore—and then a dram,

And found by these his courage came;

Then to the town proceeds, but first

Took *stingo*,*to allay his thirst;

*Strong beer.

[52]

And thus made bold with drams* and beer,

Could face the devil, or a may'r!

At length, whilst wandering about,

The beggar's bo-boy £ spied him out,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

And to the mayor's in a trice,

Took him with all his rags and lice!

Mayor. 'What fellow's that? how came he here?'

Beadle. "An please your worship, muster mayor,

"I found him begging in the town,

"So took him up, and brought him down"—

Mayor. 'That's right—and I've a monst'rous mind

'To have the thief-lookt chap confin'd;

'What say ye, beadle? will it do?'

Beadle. "I know I wou'd, if *I was you*;"

Beggar. *What you?* *Mayor.* 'Yes, *he*—and if you prate,

'I'll have you flogg'd as sure as fate.'—

Beggar. Do, if you dare—and if you do,

D-mn you, the law shall make you rue!

Mayor. 'What swear too, do ye? That's enough!

'Take him, and strip him to the buff,

*The smugglers (jocularly called smugsmiths) in some parts of Sussex, frequently sit down and drink white brandy (which they call moonshine) in the same manner that wine-drinkers do port: each has a pot of strong beer by him, out of which he drinks between every toast, to allay the heat occasioned by the ardent spirit; and this they, very properly, call *Fire* and *quench*! A stomach of bell-metal would be very convenient on these occasions,

£ The beadle.

[53]

At the cart's tail—ne'er mind his cries,

'But lash him till the claret flies—

Beadle. "Yes, yes, your worship, that I'll do—

"I'll teach him how to say—WHAT YOU!"

He soon exerted all his skill,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

And fann'd his hide with heart and will!

The man who whipt apostle Paul,

Five times forgot to give him all

His lashes; sith he gave no more

Than nine and thirty for two score!

But this *obliging* beadle gave

One over what SNAP ought-to have,

And, to indulge his country cousin,

Let him have thirteen to the dozen!

Drew out and painted on his back,

A Yankee-doodle Boston jack,*

Then set the wincing culprit free,

With thirteen stripes and liberty!—

The feeling muse could never bear

A tale of woe, unmov'd to hear,

Or one relate, so draws a veil

O'er the affecting sad detail,

And brings poor SNAP-CRUST back again,

Without recital of his pain.—

*A small flag or colour used on ship-board, for ornament or use.—Since the secession of the American colonies, their characteristic flag is composed of thirteen stripes of various colours, representing the number of the United States.

[54]

Soon as arriv'd he 'gan t' upbraid

The sly rogue TATTERS, that he'd play'd.

Such a vile trick, and got him flay'd!

Said, 'TATTERS, you have never been

'To Gotham, nor the may'r have seen;'

TATTERS declar'd he had done both,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

And back'd th' assertion with an oath!

"You said, you d—mn'd, (but 'twas not true.)

"The beadle, and the mayor too!

"And d—mn'd his worship for a flat!"

'Yes, yes, my friend, I did all that'—

"And d—mn'd his worship to his face!"

'I'd see him d-mn'd first—no, THOU ASS!

"I d—mn'd his worship, sure enough,

'But that was at a distance off,

"'Twas when I rested on a stile

'Without the town, about a mile!

'I always d-mn such CATTLE where

I know the HUMBUGS cannot hear.*

*A humorous gentleman, when mayor of a certain corporate town, being averse to the severity of flogging, hit upon the following more lenient experiment to prevent begging there. He gave strict injunctions to the beadle, to take every man he found begging, to a barber, and, at the expense of the corporation, to have him shaved, and his hair or wig frizzed, dressed and powdered to the very *tippy* of the *ton*! he was then dismissed, with a caution not to discompose his head-dress whilst in the town, on pain of being severely flogged! This prohibition from scratching the *head*, affording the *hands* more leisure to rub the back, which his troublesome associates were continually annoying, drew forth the observation from a wag, that 'the gentleman's bosom *friends* had become his

[55]

backbiters—This was really the origin of the now common and sarcastic observation. The new ornament made so ridiculous a contrast between the head and the garment, that the semi-beaux generally quitted the town immediately—And the ladies of the mendicant society, who frequented the neighbourhood, many of whom were strapping young wenches, suspecting that the ingenious magistrate might devise some equally or perhaps more ridiculous operation for THEM, very prudently kept out of the way. And

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

thus, by the examples of the male, and the apprehensions of the female beggars, the inhabitants of the town were relieved from the whining importunity of these troublesome impostors.

The beggars litany runs thus:

"From Hell, Hull, and Halifax—Good Lord deliver us!"

The betrayed hero of our tale has added another supplicatory article, and repeats it with great energy, as follows:

"From Hell, Hull, and Halifax—From mayors, beadles, PRETENDED friends, and from all uncharitableness—Good Lord deliver us!"

[56]

DAME HOBDAY.

*Dame Hobday, and her grandson, and a whale,
And Noah's flood, and many other things!—A TALE.*

DAME HOBDAY had a darling grandson, Jan,

The hopeful issue of her *daater* Nan;

Jan was so mortal cute, that when astride
A broomstick, he could whistle and could ride!
Could play at marbles too—surprising thing!
And even draw a pantile with a string!!

Jan, nor his granny, ever yet had been
To *Dover*, nor the sea or ships had seen;
So Jan must have a holiday, and go,
With granny, down, to see the wond'rous show.

Jan was bedizen'd with a bran new coat
Of shepherd's velvet,* for the purpose bought,
And waistcoat red as blood, and breeches† lother, £
And was to be 'a man before his mother. §

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

* Jocularly so called—It is a coarse and very thick sort of cloth, well known by the name of fear-nothing, or fear-nought.

¶ I have retained the word BREECHES, as they are known by no other name amongst country folk. The change from vulgarity to refinement, in cities and towns, has introduced other appellations; there they are generally called SMALL CLOTHES; but some ladies of high rank and extreme delicacy call them INEXPRESSIBLES.

£ Commonly so pronounced by the lower class of country people.

§1 An expression sometimes signifying approbation of a child's conduct, but more frequently used as an incitement to its good behaviour. If this expression be not founded on the probability of sexual changes, it is nonsense.—Whether such mutations really pen, I cannot, on my own knowledge, affirm. I have in my time met with things which were flat contradictions to the hypothesis; but, as Mynheer Van Dondermans says, that 'nothing is impossible' &c. and as I have somewhere read, "Quod mulier nihil aliud est quam homo introversus," I will not hazard a contradiction, but leave the mysterious business for the learned in combustibles to speculate upon.

[57]

Nan comb'd his carrots out, and washt his face,
Where the whole moral*of his dad she'd trace,
And with a mort£ of halfpence she enriches
The pockets of his new-made breeches;
Gives him her blessing, and with hearty busses,
Bids him "be sure and no gu nigh de hosses,
"Nor yit de sea;" her care so much abounded,
She fear'd he'd fall into it and "be drowned!"
These proper cautions given, off they march,
Th' indulgent dame and Jan, as stiff as starch,
And as they travel on the pleasant way,
Jan, curious, ever and anon would say,
"Granny, what's that?" just as the thought might strike,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

"Who made the sea, and what the sea was like"

Now Janny's mother, granny's only dater,
Had told him, that the sea was full of water,
But did not tell who made it, nor did say
What it was like, before they went away;

*Moral—I apprehend, for *model*—frequently used by count folks.

£ A great number.

[58]

So granny undertook the task you'll see,
And made it out as clear as A, B, C —

"Duddent yow see dat pon dun roun wood mud
"In de farm yard?" Jau answer'd—"Yes, he dud,"
"Why den dat's like de sea, (a mortal place to dig,)
"Oney dey say de sea's ten thousand times as big!"

As yet uninterruptedly they wait
And pass the time away in such like talk,
Till on the other side a turning,
(Jan's ears had given timely warning)
A man on horseback, drunk with gin and flip,
Bawling out—Yoix—and cracking of his whip,
Came driving on, and spurr'd his horse and hit him,
And rode, confound him, like the devil split him,
Turning the road as short as e'er he cou'd,
Where Jan and gran close up for safety stood,
The startish beast took fright, and flop
The mad-brain'd rider tumbled, *neck and crop!*
Yet as he'd luckily receiv'd no hurt,
Only a little bruise or two, and dirt,
He scrambled up, but feeling soon the smart,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

He d—mn'd the horse's soul, and d—mn'd his heart

And when he'd mounted, looking round at John,

D—mn'd his great pumkin head, and gallop'd on!

Whilst harum-scarum's getting out of sight,

And Jan and gran recov'ring from their fright,

That no hiatus may be left, of course

I'll make a handsome come off, for the horse;

[59]

And therefore, gentle reader, you must know,

That Jan's tight hat, had bound his sweating brow,

So that both hands were necessary now.

To drag it off, to make a sprawling bow;

And this (for no one doubts the thing) must tend,

To set his glowing head of hair an end!

Which seem'd to blaze upon his pallid face,

Like a gilt frame around a sculptur'd vase!

Nothing, they say, will make a horse retire

So quickly as th' instinctive dread of fire;

Should this be granted, then 'tis surely right

To plead excuses for his sudden fright;

For if Imagination, fearful, can

Deceive, as some time since it did, a man,

And made him cry out, when he struck a post

In a dark night—O Lord, a ghost! a ghost!

And an old woman full of gin and evil,

'O, my good God!' when she fell o'er the devil!

Or pencil'd tints delude in various shapes,

And make a sparrow peck at painted grapes!

How can we wonder at it or admire,

That the scar'd horse should think his head on fire!

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Now Fortune's wheel had moved half a turn,
By which, those who attentive are may learn,
That most disasters have a healing balm,
And when a storm is over comes a calm;
Or, if the simile we would extend,
'When things are at the worst, of course they'll mend—

[60]

'T was just so now, for soon Jan's beating heart
Grew still, at coming of a neighbour's cart;
The civil owner kindly took them down,
To a good public-house in Dover town,
And gave them bread and cheese and good strong beer,
And likewise gave directions to the Pier.—
Here ev'ry thing was matter of surprise;
Above a cot, how much the houses rise!
Above the houses too, how much the spire!
It was so high, it COULD NOT BE NO HIGHER!
And now the cliffs the travellers dismay,
So they kept close on t'other side the way,
For they were apprehensive that it must,
Fall down and knock the houses into dust!
And now approaching slowly to the Pier,
They see the crowded ships' tall masts appear;
So little of these things they understood,
That they determin'd it to be a wood;
The colour'd vanes for weather-cocks they took,
Each climbing sailor-boy, a crow, or rook;
But when the shipmen's boist'rous noise Jan heard,
He cried, "Dant gu no funder—I'm afeard"—
'No more we waunt den, lovey,' says the dame;

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

So turn'd about, and back again they came,
But not the self-same road by which they went,
But took he way that borders on the Pent.*

*A large bason, or sort of inner harbour, called the *Pent*, because at high tide the water is penned in by large flood-gates, for the purpose of being let loose at low water to cleanse the outer harbour.

[61]

Now the spring tide, by Neptune's firm control,
Had serv'd out bumpers from his mighty bowl,
To all his friends by land, and made
The rivers drink "Success to Albion's trade
Nor was there one neglected, for he'd sent
(Among the rest) a bumper to the Pent!
Here open'd then a wondrous scene my friends,
Which made the good old grand dame full amends;
For when she saw the water spreading wide,
'Dere, dats de sea!—I'm sure it is!' she cry'd,
And there she stood and star'd, and made a halt,
As firm as Lot's wife did, when turn'd to salt!
Dame Hobday never in her life could read,
So took, of course, tradition for her creed;
She'd heard of Jonah's whale, and Balaam's ass,
And things which formerly had come to pass;
And Noah's dreadful flood had heard of too,
But said "she hop'd in God it was not true!"
Yet still her mind impressions took like dough,
And any thing believ'd, if told 'twas so!
Now eager looking on th' expanded tide,
At a small distance on the flood she spy'd,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

A large proportion of a vessel's hull,
Dismasted, and with mud and water full,
Where by her side was fastened a boat,
Which with the buoyant tide was kept afloat.

[62]

Soon came along the margin of the Pent,
('Twas just as though the fates on purpose sent
The man of all men else)—strange to relate!
That he no other was than Mr. Mate!*
Who tells a story with as good a grace,
And hums as highly with a serious face,
As any one whatever in the place.
"An please your honour, may I be so bold,"
To ask (says dame) your worship, for we've prowl'd
"All de way down from home to see de sea,
"To tell us what dat dere great thing may be?"
Seeming attentively to hear her tale,
'That thing,' says he, 'good woman, is a whale'—
"Yow dant say so indeed! den what's dat tother?"
'Why that's a *young whale*, playing with its mother.'
Stock still she stood—at length the refluent tide
Had partly left the bulky vessel's side,
When through a leaky part, the wat'ry store
Full in the fasten'd boat began to pour;
Not the least doubt could dwell upon her mind.
If she before to doubt had been inclin'd.—
"De laud! oh gemany!" she cry'd, with wonder struck
"How natharal the old one gives the young one suck!"

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

*Mr. Mate was then patentee of the theatre royal at Margate.— He is an excellent comedian, and, with or without his ingenious, but innocent amplifications, is a most admirable companion.

[63]

And now these leading circumstances brought
To her considering mind the puzzling thought,
That should the eager sucking WHALEKIN cry
For t'other bottle, when't had drawn that dry,
How its mamma could (since no arms she spied),
Turn the babe over to the other side!
And would have staid to view the wondrous sight,
But that she wisely thought of coming night,
And the long shadows of declining day
Reminded her 'twas time to go away;
So home she went with Jan, and told her tale,
How she had "seen de sea! and seen a whale!!"
Yet though she'd neither seen, as it befel,
She *thought* she had, *and that was quite as well*

[64]

THE
BARTERING JEW AND THE LACE
MERCHANT.
A TALE

A KNOWING one of the foreshort'ned race,
Who had two strings unto his bow,
That is, two TRADES ye all must know,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Resided in a certain place.

The one (though strange) was yet a lawful trade!

He vaunting told the world it was DECEIT!

Not the deceit so much in vogue

With ev'ry Jew or Christian rogue,

The common, luring, gudgeon bait,

In bart'ring, barg'ning, selling, buying,

Short weights, or measures, swearing, lying,*

By which they get their daily bread:

No, 'twas deception of a fairer nature,

Et qui vult decipi decipiat;

'Twas sleight of hand, whose feat no stigma leaves,

But's most applauded when it most deceives!

*Some persons (they say) are apt to tell lies whilst they are busy in talking; Obadiah Broadbrim said to one of his fraternity—"What pity, neighbour, that lying is a sin—it is so handy in business!"

[65]

His other trade was chiefly in the sales

Of jewels, buttons, watches, rings,

And many other little nick-nack things

For ladies, or for fribbling lady-males!

Coach-harness buckles* for long quartered shoes,

Locketts for lovers' hair so closely twin'd,

Sweet emblem of their dove-like souls combin'd,

And seals with mottos for enamoured beaux.

But, understand he never laid the bait,

In this *last* branch, by BRAGGING of deceit.

He'd barter too at any time or place,

For gold, or silver, thread or silken lace—

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

In Portsmouth street, as walking to and fro,
This Jew a person met, whom many know,
The gentleman I mean (for such the case is)
Drives a neat one-horse chaise and deals in laces—
"Pray, Mr.W——, shall we try to teal,
"I wants to puy some very handsome lashe
"To ornament de pretty ladish fashe,
"Haf you cot some dat's good and sheap to sell?"
'I have got Mechlenburghs,' replies my friend,

*The reader will naturally suppose that coach-harness buckles are mentioned in allusion to the enormous size of the modern shoe-buckle—I believe the simile is adequate to the subject, being only PARVA COMPONERE MAGNIS—a link of a man of war's mooring-chain might have been a better comparison.—N. B. The reader will please to notice that this was written in the year 1791. EDITOR.

[66]

'And to say truth, they're to be sold,
'But then I must have heavy gold
'For all the Mechlenburghs I vend,—
The Hebrew shrugs his shoulders up, and scratches
His knowing, deep, and full brusht head,
Where many a cunning scheme was bred,
Fit reservoir for what he hatches!
Search the twelves tribes you'll never find
A *Jew* who leaves his head behind!
"Py Cot I have no monish in my preeches,
"Put I vill parter met you for some vatches"—
'No cockalorum, there we shant agree,
'I have one watch, and that's enough for me!'
Not long time afterwards the Jew had got

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

For sale, a handsome silver coffee-pot,
'Twas chas'd without, and polished within't,
And bore the genuine lion of the Mint—
Soon my friend's eye the shining object catches,
Says he, 'I'll barter for the coffee-pot,'
"As shall Cot help me, I've no oder cot!—
"Met all my heart, I'll parter for de vatches"—
'But why for watches only? pray reveal?
'Twill make no difference—since we cannot deal.'
"By Cot Almoitish den de truth I'll own,
"Vatches haf veels, * put coffee-pots haf none!"

*Wheels.

[67]

IRREGULAR ADDRESS TO THE MOON.

Castigo te, non quod Odio habeam
Sed quod amem

GODDESS of night! on whom I doat,
Bid my ideas wildly float,
For how can I in sober lays,
And unerratic, sing thy praise!
Thine! whom no constant form can bind,
For ever varying as the wind!
He who defines thee in profile
May catch a dog upon a stile!
Or full as likely, thou'rt so frail,
Hold a prize pig* with soap on's tail!
Thy rays, resistless, who can feel,

Or long retain a slipp'ry eel?
Then if the poet's rash attempt should fail,
The eel is gone, the moonshine, and pig's tail!
When first thy new-born light we see
Emerging from obscurity,
'Tis but a slender silvery thread
To circle round thy darken'd head;

*A country diversion in holiday time—the pig's tail is cut short, well soaped, and he is then turned loose, and whoever first catches him by the tail, and holds him up above his head, wins him.

[68]

But quickly growing into horns,
(Like fronts on earth) thy front adorns;
No jealous husband now should roam,
But constantly keep watch at home,
Else *cara sposa**—dearest wife,
May plant a pair to last for life,
Whilst thine, no longer now asunder,
Have never been a nine nights' wonder.
Now as thy light progressive spreads,
Its influence maddens mortals heads,
Vexes with whims their curdled brains,
And lunacy or folly reigns;
Else how could some so silly be
To speak obliquously of thee!
If Herschel's tube should come this way,
I'll tell thee through it what they say,
If not, I'll wait upon thee soon,
Wafted in Blanchard's new; balloon.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

Some do affirm—sure 'tis a WHAPPER! £

Thou'rt silver plated upon copper!

Others thou art, (and just as true,)

Brasbridge's neat ARGENT MOULU!

*A half-witted *cornuto* said to a person, who was condoling with him on his unfortunate situation, that he should not have cared about his wife's making a WH—E of herself, if she had not made a CUCKOLD of him—but I do not see why any blame could be imputable to her, for if any man is, by the unalterable decrees of fate, born to be a CUCKOLD, how is it the wife's fault?

£ A jocular expression for a lie of considerable magnitude.

[69]

And some thou art—Gods how they clinch it!*

Double block tin, and made by Finchett!!

Once on a mantled stagnant pool

Thy image dimly seen at full,

Was for a cheese mistaken;

What fun to see the rabble rout

Rush in, resolv'd to drag thee out,

And eat thee with their bacon!

But foil'd in the attempt they fly,

And never dare again come nigh,

Though they of courage vaunted;

Go constantly another way,

Because they're sure, they know, they say,

As how the place is haunted!

'Tis malice or 'tis want of sense

At venial faults to take offence;

Yet hast thou faults, they will be sung

Loudly, by Envy's venom'd tongue!

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Lo, tell-tale Fame, with busy lips,
Meaning to show thee in eclipse,
Hath said with SEEMING indignation,
That thou hast made an assignation!
And lewdly, and without compunction,
Hast acquiesc'd in a conjunction!
POOR ROBIN, PHILOMATH, and MOORE,
Had hinted at the thing before!

*The ne plus ultra of lying.

[70]

I grieve to see on thy fair face
A diagram of thy disgrace,
Drawn by the weather-brewing pack,
To ornament an almanack;
I hate these peeping Toms, these spies,
Who blab the secrets of the skies,
I'd play the scoundrels such a trick
As ne'er was thought on by Old Nick;
Td meditate the gazers' fall,
And take revenge upon them all,
Give the lex talionis;—that
You know's the law of tit for tat;
Against each vile prognosticator—
I'll be thy counsel in the matter,
Tell thy fierce love, an interview
So much in public will not do;
Say 'tis unseemly, unbefitting—
Have no objection to a meeting
At some hotel in Zodiac place,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Where none can witness the disgrace;
Else stars on chastity may trample,
Encourag'd by thy lewd example,
And Venus, thy bright maid of honour,
By Mars may get a shade upon her!
Appoint some house or sign of note,
For instance now, the RAM, or GOAT;
Still secret kept the deep design,
And stop at spotless VIRGO'S sign;

[71]

'Twill disappoint thy wanton spark,
And leave the gazers in the dark;
Immaculate preserve thy fame,
And bring the blinking owls to shame;
Prove 'twas a lie, whoever said it,
And, like their WEATHER, blast their credit.
But, apropos, I can disclose!
A circumstance to fret thy foes;
'Twas not a hundred years ago
(As anno Domini can shew),
In their STAR-CHAMBER inquisition
(It was a GARRET by POSITION)
Twelve sapient wights were met together,
To fix the next year's wind and weather;
Who could help smiling at the sight!
The broken tiles let in the light,
These UNTAX'D windows brought to view,
At night, thyself, a star, or two;
And in the day to throw were able,
A puzzling light upon the table—

Here as the ELVES profoundly sat
In meteorologic chat,
Unto the SENIOR of the rest,
The JUNIOR thus himself address;
"For the first month what weather's meet,
"To put down?" *Answer*—'SNOW and SLEET.'

[72]

"For February now again?"
'Why put down WIND, and HAIL, and RAIN.
"When is the sun to cross the line?"—
Don't know, by Jove—can none divine?
'Can you? or you?—All answer, No!
'Then privately let some one go
'To SUCH A ONE—he'll let us know.
'O Lord! how times and seasons vary!
'And the MOON'S got so curst contrary!
'Let's cut the matter short—we know
'In harvest there must be no snow;
As for the rest, 'tis just like FRANCE,
'I firmly b'lieve 'tis all a CHANCE!
'Hush! hush! hark! hark!—who's there
that knocks!
"A porter, gemmen, with a box;
"Tight work, your honours—long way up—
"Thought I should never reach the top."
'Who sent the box? what is there in it?'
"I'll tell your honours in a minute;
"Two surly gemmen by their looks,
"They keep a shop and deal in books;
"Heard one of them to t'other say,

"I'll send these cursed things away;
"Something of almanacks he seem'd to tell,
"To be return'd, that would not sell;

[73]

"Swore terribly 'twas none on't right,
"Not worth a farthing—not a doit—
"Was worse and worse instead of better,
"And a mistake in DOM'NY'S* letter;
"Were more than ever now to seek,
"For Sunday'd got into the week,
"And play'd the deuce,£ and 'twou'd be vain
"To try to get it in again!
"Then told me where to come, and said,
"I for my labour must be paid—
"The load has almost bent me double—
"Hope you'll allow me for my trouble."
'No, no—not we—come—march away,
'Let the curst fools that sent you pay
"But if they wont," says he,—“what then?
"Must I bring back the box agen?"
'Confound you, no—but for the errand,
'Take box and all, let's hear no more on't!'—
This was enough to raise their ire,
And fill them full of rage and fire!

*Dominical letter.

£ This sort of perplexity was well conceived and described by an Irish preacher, who, whilst he was offering bulls to heaven, remarked, that the wisdom and goodness of Providence were wonderfully conspicuous in the arrangement of the weekly days—that any other mode would have been a check to industry, and must have produced a great

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

deal of confusion, "for," says he (with apparent emotions of gratitude), "if Sunday had fallen on any other day, it would have made a broken week!"

[74]

Like tigers on the man they flew,
And gagg'd him, and the culprit drew
Up to a post, a sort of prop,
Which serv'd to shore the sinking top;
And then, indecently they tear
His clothes, and leave his body bare;
Next making twelve sharp-pointed sticks,
From the box lid, each wight inflicts
A wound upon some tender part,
The loins, the reins, or near the heart!
There leave the darts, just like a set
Of skewers on a scullion's net,
Or hedge-hog on a mushroom seat;
Or like the waxen sympathetic doll,
With pins sharp-pointed, and with needles full,
Which Hell-contracted witches nightly make
To harm mankind for inbred malice sake,
For which they firmly pledge themselves, and sell
Their soul's reversion to the pit of Hell!
The contract does in Satan's court stand good,
The mortgag'd sign'd with their own vengeful *blood!*
Each part was now suffus'd with gore,
Which pious Ernulph curst before;
Then a rude outline of the wretch,
With clumsy graphic art they sketch,
And on th' exteriors of their sticks,
Basely the characters they fix

[75]

Of all the twelve celestial signs,
Where Sol occasionally dines;
Thus cruelly their fame deride,
And wound their credit through his side—
Then when the bloody deed was done,
Alarm'd, they flew in haste to shun
Detection of their great demerit,
Unto another filthy garret,
Where fashionable bats by daylight sleep,
And spitfire cats their midnight revels keep—
Oh! may just retribution on them fall
E'er they depart from this terrestrial ball,
May faithful recollection bring to view,
The mangled figure which their fury drew,
And when their dissolution draweth near,
Let uncouth visionary forms appear,
Of shaggy lions with uplifted paws,
And fangs, and wide extended threatning jaws,
And bulls, and goats, and rams, and crabs that crawl
In frightful forms upon the loathsome wall;
Whilst puzzling almanacks distract their heads,
And ghosts transfixt with darts stalk round their beds.
No more my pencil shall be made a hack,
Nor stain'd my pallet with unshining black,
Chiaro-scuro gives relief they say,
And vivid colours make the picture gay—

[76]

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Aroynt, ye wizards!—then I'll try to paint
Something that bears the semblance of a saint—
For where consists, forsooth, the mighty merits
Of painting subjects only fit for garrets!
No pains or cost's requir'd to paint a devil,
Done in a trice, with black ink and a *skivel!**
And Paddy swears (what an ingenious trick!)
By JASUS, when he's talking of OLD NICK,
That horns and forked scourge, and cloven foot,
Distinguish perfectly the prince of soot;
Because as how—(Oh! bless the charming craiture)
He says the devil's tail's his leading *faiture*.

Well, since such dismal pictures when they're done
Like sullen soot-bags shine against the sun,
The mimic art no longer I'll degrade,
But find some tints to meliorate the shade;
Yet strive to mix them, with impartial hand,
In such proportion as the works demand.—

How oft with infinite delight,
I watch thy rising, when the night,
Calm and serene, diffusive pours
O'er Heaven's expanse its radiant stores;
View thy bright train in order rise,
To guard thy progress through the skies,
See from the blue aetherial gate,
Thy full majestic orb in state,

*Skewer.

[77]

Progressive move in radiance bright,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

To gain the Zenith's giddy height,
And rapt'rous view the lucid flood
Illume the path I've often trod!

But when thou chang'st thy placid mien
To looks unworthy of a queen,
Rising so like a fiery punk,
I think thou'rt either mad or drunk,
With vengeance at the sight I burn,
And all my love is chang'd to scorn—
Dost sometimes hover over France,
And catch the fumes of potent Nantz?
Then starting wild from Thetis' lap,
Put on the wrong, thy foul wrath cap?
I'd rather thou should'st lie in bed,
Than see that halo round thy head!
Did some unwelcome guest appear
To trouble this our hemisphere?
Some blazing comet fierce assail,
And make thee tremble at his tail?
Did any of the heav'nly host
Desert last night and leave his post?
Or did some flashy meteor try
To vapour through the vaulted sky?
Coxcomb of base and low degree,
Rais'd up by his own levity!
What if a dog did at thee bay
Fret not on that account I pray;

[78]

The cats, who are so much thy friends.
Will make ten thousand times amends:

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

In thy pale beams their great delight
Is to perform the frantic rite,
And (as in compliment to thee)
On the house-top, that thou may'st see;
There purr, and frisk, and play their wiles,
And run like devils o'er the tiles!
Hath Herschel's bonfire play'd thee tricks,
And lighted up thy old man's sticks?
Hath Georgium Sidus never been
At court, to bow to thee his queen?
Then let him take, with conscious pride,
The star of BRUNSWICK for his guide,
And to acquire immortal fame,
Join GEORGE'S MANNERS to his NAME!
Let not such crimes excite thy mind
To wreak thy vengeance on mankind,
With causeless anger—yet I dread
The ring prophetic round thy head!
For now th' approaching storm's foreseen,
Threaten'd in thy portentous mien!
Behold the tempest gathers round,
From the horizon's distant bound;
The rushing winds the tranquil deep deform,
An awful prelude to the coming storm!
The clouds obscure, and wild commotions rise.
And high-swoll'n Titan waves assault the skies

[79]

The lurid lightning's death-devoting flash,
The pealing thunder's harsh ear-rending crash,
The jarring elements' tremendous roar,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Appal the ocean and affright the shore!
Confusion reigns! whilst awfully, by turns,
Darkness envelopes, and the lightning burns,
Cimmerian night spreads wide its sable sway,
And corruscations blaze a transient day!
Uproar disturbs the slumbers of the deep,
And murders silence, as Macbeth did sleep!
Can'st thou, unmoved, the raging tumult bear
Of this distracting elemental war?
When the bold seaman can no longer brave
The dreadful spooondrift of the foaming wave?
Or fear'st thou not, lest should the surges high,
Vindictive hurl thee from the troubled sky?
Or lest confusion's wild destructive reign,
Send thee to endless chaos back again?
Oh! let thy mind revolting at the thought,
Of all the terrors which thy wrath had brought,
Relent, ere yet the seas resistless sweep,
Sink the proud bark in the unfathom'd deep;
Or sailors whelm beneath the ruthless wave,
Their trackless and unconsecrated grave!—
Alas! no verdant turf shall point out where
Their friends may drop the tributary tear,
Or rise, their dearest relatives to show,
Where they're sepultur'd in the depths below!—

[80]

Retract thy purpose ere it be too late,
Nor daring tempt thy own ambiguous fate;
Lest should Aurora, early-rising maid,
When she the recent mischief hath survey'd,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Blushing recoil, and as her duty binds,
Inform her master what, alas! she finds!
And he offended, justly, at the sight,
Withdraw from thee his patronage and light!
Urge not the censure of the low-bred throng,
Lest rudeness, brawling in the vulgar tongue,
Should mortify thy pride and, taunting, say,
"She's only mistress to the God of day!"
Make thee the subject of their obscene mirth,
Say thou'rt of abstruse, and suspicious birth,
And let thy adversaries understand,
Thy boasted splendour is but second-hand
"Who gives the lustre to her shining gems
"Who finds materials for her flashy beams?
"The wanton drap'ry which around her plays
"Is but the lining of Sol's cast-off rays,
"Faded, and turn'd, and quickly brought to view,
"To make the fools on earth believe they're new;
"Marry, come out! what airs the minx assumes!
"My conscience! how she shines in borrow'd plumes!"
And rhetoric like this, to gall thy pride,
And inuendoes wickedly apply'd,

[81]

Then oh! be calm—these wanton freaks give o'er,
Be tranquil, and compos'd as heretofore,
And jeering ridicule shall point no more;
Bid instantly the waves subside,
And stop the fiercely raging tide;
Bid thunder's loud dismaying sound
No more through echoing clouds rebound;

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Restrain the vivid lightning's ire,
And bid th' insurgent blasts retire;
Change the rude billows with tremendous roar
To gentle riplings on the peaceful shore,
Whilst zephyrs pass almost unheeded by,
Unless augmented by a lover's sigh;
Let all be husht—save where the list'ning grove
Hears Colin pour his artless tale of love,
Or Philomela's undulating throat,
Warbles th' enchanting richly varied note.—
Then come thyself in majesty serene,
Repent and renovate the happy scene;
So shall, enraptur'd at thy smiles benign,
The radiant stars with added lustre shine,
And all applauding, to thy int'rest true,
Their wonted devoirs gladly shall renew;
Nor the gay brilliants which thy court adorn,
If haply they may wink, shall wink in scorn;
But all thy faults forget, since thou again,
Resum'st thy peaceful inoffensive reign.

[82]

TRAVELLING;
AND
AN ACCOUNT OF A NEWLY INSTITUTED
SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.

Nec aspera terrent.

How much superior is the man of *travel!*
Who, things, obscur'd for ages, can unravel,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

Who sees the wonders of the *vasty* deep,
And over trackless deserts takes a sweep;
Or wanders many a dreary dang'rous mile,
To the coy fountains of th' irriguous Nile,
And, with intrusive boldness, dares assail
The Abyssinian nuns, who've ta'en the veil!
Or climbs and sweats to find out—how bewitching!
Whether mount Etna is the devil's kitchen,
 And, o'er the dreadful crater downward looking,
Sees the whole process of infernal cooking;
Thus, slyly peeping, knows, presumptuous sinner,
What Beelzebub has order'd for his dinner!
 It may be droll to see them baste the meat,
At the great fire which makes e'en devils sweat,
And laughable to view the sooty group,
With busy ladles stirring hells pea-soup;

[83]

But should a fork'd-tail imp his napper spy,
To the chief cook he'll give a signal sly,
Who if he thinks such interference hinders,
Chucks up a shovel full of red hot cinders;
Or, order'd by the *yeoman of the mouth*,
Tips him a ladlefull of lava broth!
Impertinence like this I fear may make
Innocence suffer for the guilty's sake,
For tho' himself may possibly escape,
Less curious folks may fall into a scrape.
So when some tiptoe scoundrel in a town,
Mindful of no one's safety but his own,
At night, his neighbour's secrets to explore,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

Slides out and basely listens at his door,
Should he, at length, suspect the black design,
And, sorely vext, to punish it incline,
An inoffensive stranger, passing by,
Instead of him, may catch the chamber-lye!
But having broken—(well it is no worse)—
I'll tie again the thread of my discourse.—
How much, I say, must such great folks exceed
The circumscrib'd and ign'rant Cockney breed!
Who, nothing knowing, nothing can they tell,
Of what's beyond the sounding of Bow-bell;
E'en a short trip from *Dover*, will enhance
The value of a man who visits *France*,*

*An instance of the wonderful improvement of a travelling genius occurred lately on his landing from *France*, where he had been but a few days—his conversation was confined to what he had noticed in his excursion—I saw (says he) such a thing in *France*—(and many extraordinary things I believe may be seen there!) I observed so and so, I remarked this and that, and, on my passage back, it being a clear day, I had an opportunity of seeing, half seas over, two kingdoms, *France*^a and *England*, at one time!—A wag, who was standing by and overheard the observation, said, "Why, I who have never been out of *England*, have seen THREE *kingdoms* from one spot."—"Indeed!" says the traveller, "that's very extraordinary! and pray what kingdoms might they be?"—"Why," says the wag—"the kingdom of *England*, the kingdom of *France*, and (looking upwards) the kingdom of *Heaven*."—"Upon my honour," replies the accomplished genius, "I never once thought of "the latter."

^a France first to be sure!

His gum-elastic* soul begins t'expand,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

As soon as drawn from this his native land.

But what are such exploits, compar'd to those
Which my true narrative shall soon disclose!
How much superior is *my* hero's claim,
(Who soars above them all) to traveling fame!

Readers, it is a most affronting fashion
To chew the stupid cud of dubitation;
Pin then your faith upon the poet's sleeve,
And all he sings implicitly believe!
Do not, like froward children, whine, and frown,
And blubber, e'er you take your physic down;

*I hope the reader will not conclude from this expression, that I am a convert to the doctrine of materialism,—whether the soul is material, seated on the pineal gland, and nourished by its pabulum the brain, is, in general, I believe, *immaterial* to a *poet*.—If the soul is really material, and feeds upon this pulpy substance, some souls, which have been *enlarged* by travelling, and of course requiring more sustenance, must be in a pitiable plight, their scanty allowance being more rapidly consumed without the probability of a recruit.

[85]

Make no unmanly foolish piece of work,
But bolt* it, as some country clowns do pork,
First with a marv'llous tale distend your swallow,
Believe me all the rest will glibly follow.
Heathen mythologic writers tell,
How Orpheus took his harp, and went to hell,
And risk'd his precious soul, and risk'd his life,
To fetch away Eurydice his wife,£
And play'd as well to PROSERPINE and PLUTE,
As Florio does upon the German flute,

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Thus sooth'd their ears, and gain'd his ardent suit.
(Yet few, I believe would choose it, or would dare go,
Lest Beelzebub should order an embargo;)
But this his wife Eurydice we know
Was *living*, and, some think, was handsome too.
But what a journey did *our* trav'ller take,
Who went such lengths for a *dead woman's* sake!
Yet 'twas no futile, no ignoble cause,
No 'ticing jack-o-lantern of applause,

*Swallowing without mastication.

£ This species of knight-errantry is, I believe, grown into disuse; I do not recollect such another instance of gallantry; if the ladies ever go thither, they are surely become less attracting, or the men are more dissipated; some *very rude* husbands, of the present day, seem more inclined to send them to, than to endeavour so rescue them *from*, the infernal regions.

Had I, says Benedick, just such another,
I'd give the devil one, to fetch the other.

[86]

Seduc'd our traveling hero far from home,
Nor whistling childish errand made him roam,
'Twas to make converts of a sceptic crew,
To prove th' historic page of MOSES true,
And view an antique garment, and explore
What sort of dress our great-great-grandames wore;
By which, decisively, it might be known,
Whether that dress was better than our own.

They say a *living* woman is a RIDDLE,
All o'er, from top to toe, both sides, and middle;
Then a *dead woman* must—I swear by Phoebus!

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

Be a conundrum, or at least a REBUS;
Our *lady*-rebus, dead some thousand years
(As by authentic records it appears),
Tho', when alive, was nought but mould'ring clay,
Remains unburied till this very day;
Has neither flesh, nor blood, nor bones, nor hide,
Nor has had since the moment that she died;
She tempted, contumaciously, her fate,
And paid for peeping at the dearest rate;
In short, 'twas she who lost her precious life,
Turn'd into pillar'd salt—Lot's foolish wife!

I'll call her, if you please, why should I not?
Sometimes Lot's wife, and sometimes mistress Lot.

'Tis needless, seriatim, to recount
His dangers, or to give the gross amount;
Suffice it, tender readers, then to say
He had his average upon the way,

[87]

Until he came upon the blissful spot,
Where stood the effigy of mistress Lot.
In varied numbers how can I display,
Or tell th' events of that important day,
Or, by impressive language most sublime,
With each new gesture give a novel rhyme.
First, he with gazing optics, wide asunder,
With admiration, view'd the salted wonder;
He look'd at her, she *seem'd* to look at him,
As tho' they'd been detected in *con. crim*
And thus this precious pair of statues stood,
As form'd of stone the one, the other, wood.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

But soon amazement took a lively turn,
For, by his own relation, we may learn,
That he burst forth, and play'd the very antic,
In leapings and in skippings most gigantic,
With strange gesticulations danced round,
And scarcely seem'd to touch the magic ground;
Then, frisking like a lamb or merry grig,
Presto, he danceth a fandango jig;
And throws about his legs and scoggan* wings,
Like paper scaramouches jerk'd by strings.
No pitchy savage ever did excel,
Or shew'd fantastic twistings half so well,
When round the burning flames his limbs he throws,
Rejoicing at the tortures of his foes!

*Scarecrow.

[88]

E'en the *Tarantula's* infecting bite,
Such *outré* postures never did excite:
What a delicious treat to see him shine,
In writhings, most extravagantly fine!
'Till, with exertions almost tir'd to death,
He rests awhile to gain a little breath;
Then, in his native land's acclaiming way,
Holloa's aloud—HUZZA! HUZZA! HUZZA!
And in the genuine old English style,
Whirls up his beaver, seemingly, a mile;
But reader—understand I speak by guess,
As lawyers do of acres, *more or less*;
Then, casting his delighted eyes around.

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

He saw his hat descending to the ground,
And, running, snatcht it up from where it lay,
Flourish'd his cane, and cap'ring went away!
Now Bedlam, in the name of madness tell,
Does any one within your confines dwell,
Who can exhibit ecstasy so well!
At length return'd; his uncles, nephews, cousins,
Neighbours, and friends, and friends' friends, by whole dozens,
On expectation's rapid pinions come,
With *how d'ye do, sir? sir, you're welcome home!*
And with wide frog-mouth'd admiration wait,
To swallow ev'ry thing he might relate,
For all this strange and het'rogenous mass,
Thro' the main hatchway, to the hold must pass,

[89]

When thus was laden, almost ev'ry hulk,
With true, tho' marv'llous hist'ries, stow'd in bulk,
Thou can'st not wonder, reader, if I tell ye,
This salmagundy in their squeamish belly,
With those agreed not, who, like childish dunce,
Swallow'd the gilded alphabet at once;
Some tender stomachs, which could not contain
So large a meal, return'd it back again;
And some rejected part, some part kept quiet,
Dreading the dangers of intestine riot.
To drop the simile—This grand affair
Had struck the *tympanum* of public ear,
And doubtful murmurs thro' the nation ran,
Yet was there no suspicion—but the man
Had been in foreign countries and believ'd

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

He'd something *like it* seen, but was deceiv'd—
That such mistakes had happen'd heretofore,
"'Twas sculptur'd marble, and 'twas nothing more."
This coming to his disappointed ears,
Alarm'd his wav'ring mind, and rous'd his fears,
And tended much suspicions to awaken,
Lest he might possibly have been mistaken;
So to preclude all chance of future doubt,
To the same place he takes a second route,
And there arriv'd, with sober cautious tread,
Surveys her o'er again, from toe to head,
Views her all round, and makes a longer halt,
Kisses her liliated lips, and found them salt,

[90]

And notic'd as he did behold her
Her head was turned o'er her shoulder.
Seeing's believing, coxcombs say forsooth,
Tasting and *feeling* sure must be the truth;
Suspicion did not ask a farther test,
And convert sceptics cried—*Probatum est!*
Thus did truth's sun dart down his fervid Ray,
And burn the fog of doubtfulness away.
Ne'er since the days of heretofore,
When Adam fell, to rise no more,
Was curiosity on fire,
With such a burning strong desire,
To be eye-witness to the matter,
But how could ev'ry one get at her!
At length some friends of wisdom's train,
Persuaded him to go again,

Suggesting the exalted thought,
If mistress Lot could here be brought,
'Twould be a permanent foundation,
For Britain's happy exultation;
Would gratify each eager friend.
And make this realm all realms transcend;
Be, as it were, the corner-stone
To found an edifice upon,
A firm and venerable pile
Of *ancient* architect'ral style,

[91]

For mistress Lot, a mausoleum,
For *ante dillies, a £museum;

*Antediluvian is the intended name of the society.

£ The society have it in contemplation to detach, annually, from the main body, parties of the most enterprising members to go on discoveries, some for curiosity, some on speculation, with a view to the promotion of useful knowledge; and others for profit, and to increase the finances of the society, and thereby enable them the better to prosecute their future designs.—For the present year the society has one of each of these objects in view—The first is,

CURIOUS,

And is meant to ascertain whether the North Pole was the main or fore-mast of Noah's Ark.—The second,

SPECULATIVE,

As it is well known that the ark rested on mount Ara-rat, in Armenia, and that when the waters of the flood subsided, it then becoming of no use as a nautical building, it was broken up and converted into pig-sties, many of which remaining till this very day, are proofs of the durability of the wood.—The intention of this embassy is to discover of what species of timber the ark was built, that large quantities of it may be

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

immediately planted, so as to be in growth against the expected naturalization of the Jews, when the increased consumption of swine's flesh will of course occasion an increased demand for these elegant edifices.—The third,

ADVANTAGEOUS

A vessel for this purpose is to sail to the Red Sea, and to freight back with a cargo of its waters, by which the society will be enabled to undersell the stationers in the article of red ink.

*INFORMATION TO ETYMOLOGISTS.—The mount was called Ararat, from the following circumstance, which shews, at the same time, that rat is a word of high antiquity.—(According to our English etymologists the word rat is the same in many languages, except in the terminations.)—When the ark first rested upon the mount, the rats or as they are sometimes called, rots (rot them say I) having no provision made for them by Noah, got on shore first, and propagating their species there with great celerity, the mount was called, from that circumstance, *Ara Rat*, or *rats' altar*.—Note, the word ARA signifies mount or altar.—At a future period, the author may possibly oblige etymologists with some authentic and valuable communications of this sort, having a stock of raw materials, which he intends to manufacture at his leisure.

[92]

But where no relique should have place
So low as those of ROME or GREECE;
Thus ante-dils shall modern *tiques** exceed,
Be monstrous giants to the pigmy breed;
Feel their superior worth, as well they may,
Like *gentle crafts* upon *St. Crispin's day*.—
Then, O, ye worshippers of heathen nails,
Pieces of iron hoops, and ears of pails,
And match-lock guns, that men the while
They were discharging, ran a mile,
And Roman dishes, made at Delf, £

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

To ornament an old vrouw's shelf;
Give over the fallacious scheme,
'Tis but at best a waking dream;
Do not your slender judgments rest
On any vague precarious test;
Truth may not come, though you expect her,
In the loose habit of conjecture;
For though antiquities you seek,
Nails may corrode within a week,
And rust and aquafortis may combine
To turn new farthings into ancient coin;

*Abbreviation of antique.

£ Delft, a city in Holland, famous for its manufactory of glazed earthenware.

[93]

Whilst imposition,* with her magic tricks,
Changes Dutch clinkers into Roman bricks.
Then take advice, ambitious frogs,
Confine yourselves to miry bogs,
Make prudently a quick retreat
Unto your native country seat,
Fit residence for your vain race,
Retire, I say, to tadpole place;
Aspire not to the mountain brow,
Lest a majestic ox or cow,
Should o'er thy puny carcass stride,
And spurn thee down its sloping side;
Th' unequal contest were a sin,
Then cry, enough—and give it in.
Yet neither should it be deny'd

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

To sing'lar antiquarian pride,
That modern *tiques* applause may gain,
And, *not a little*, entertain.
Thus for example, should we meet
A group of mortals in the street,
And some, to make themselves appear
Conspicuous, fall into the rear,
And *backwards*, 'sted of *forwards*, walk,
And lose themselves in mystic talk,

*The author is serious when he declares he has been informed and believes, that there are persons in Italy who employ themselves in copying ancient pictures, and, after giving them by art the appearance of antiquity, impose them on the credulous as originals.

[94]

We view the sight with great surprise,
And wonder how they came so wise!
But then they must not be too bold,
And try to emulate the old,
For rotten wood will give I' th' dark,
The spunkey semblance of a spark;
But if a candle cometh near,
The counterfeit must disappear;
It is no match, run backwards when they will,
Betwixt a modern *tique* and *ante-dil*—
 But see! his eminence appears,
Dispelling all our friendly fears,
And bearing on his bending back,
A full and proudly swelling sack,
In which (sufficient for his strength) he'd got

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

The lower moiety of Mistress Lot!
Now noisy triumph stimulates the lungs,
And men, and even boys, let loose their tongues,
Each shouting as he lifts his beaver,
HUZZA! HUZZA! Lot's wife forever!

Fatigu'd, and with the freight opprest,
He dedicates some days to rest,
And then sagaciously began,
As wisdom dictated, the plan;
Invites the candidates to meet
At such a house in such a street;
Thither, exulting, they repair,
And vote the hero in the chair.

[95]

And now th' elect, of course, must both
Profess their faith, and take an oath.
(Oaths there must be—let who will scout 'em,
What are societies without 'em?)
The chair with wisdom's fav'rite grac'd,
And relic on the table plac'd,
The candidates, all standing round.
And wrapt in silence most profound;
The form proceeds—first he, then they
As follows, must alternate say,
"Are you all ready?" — 'Aye, aye, aye'

PROFESSION OF FAITH

"Do you believe that this is Mistress Lot?"
'We do—so much of her as you have got,'
"Then lay your hands on her posterior parts,"
'That we will do, with all our souls and hearts.'

"You must to this society be true,
"And ANCIENT things prefer to what are new.
'*We do! we do! we do! we do!*'—
"And with respect upon such relics look,
Are you content?"—'*We are!*'—THEN KISS THE BOOK.

[96]

DUTCH ACADEMICAL BEAR-DANCING.

ADDRESSED TO
THE SALTANTI OF EUROPE.

WHEN *dogs* or *monkeys* learn to dance,
It is in *Italy* or *France*;
But the slow, dull, phlegmatic bear
Is tutor'd in a northern air;
And grave mynheers, will, I aver,
Whilst Holland is undrown'd, prefer
The motions of a bear that's grown,
As most congenial to their own.

In days of yore, or *niemendal*
Means nothing more than nought at all,
The hogen mogen Dutch estates
(For so Mynheer Van Blank relates).
A placart made, with one accord,
Offring ten tulip roots* reward,
For a sure mode of teaching bears
To dance, in less than seven years;
But mark the diffrence great, for now
Van Triple Breeches well knows how

A docile bear may learn with ease
To dance in less than seven days;

*Tulip roots were formerly of almost inestimable value in Holland, but by a kind of sumptuary law, the highest price for a tulip root was restricted to the amount of about 500 *l.* sterling.

[97]

And lately has obtain'd a pension
For this most excellent invention!
If, gentle reader! you repine,
And call too dear this book of mine,
Swearing by Jove there's nothing in't,
Bat the good paper and the print,
That we may yet continue friends,
I'll make your honour great amends,
By whisp'ring softly in your ear
The high-priz'd secret* of mynheer.
To *Sandwich town* if thou shouldst stray
(A place improving every day),
Thou mayst be shewn, or thine's the fault,
The process us'd in making malt,
And see, without a penny cost,
The barley on the heated oast;
Friend *Van* has built, and he's no fool,
On a like plan, his dancing school;
Where, when the pupil's fasten'd in,
The lessons will, of course, begin;
For the hot plates unwelcome greet
The growling scholar's scorching feet,

The Salamanca Corpus: *Kentish Tales* (1824)

*This secret is contained in a manuscript written by the above gentleman in *elegant* Low Dutch, and will be published by authority, as soon as it has obtained the privilege of the States of Holland and West Friesland, with whom, I apprehend, it is now *ad referendum*— I have been favoured with a sight of this manuscript, as an interchange for a notable discovery of my own, and which will certainly be published in England as soon as that of Mynheer Van Triple Breeches is in Holland.

[98]

And this induces him to rear
His clumsy daddies in the air;
Since raised on his hinder feet,
He's fairly rid of *half* the heat;
It cannot be or less or more,
You see, 'tis just *two* points in *four*.
What changes are produc'd by heat! *
It makes an ague fit retreat,

*Heat certainly promotes the inclination to dance. The fever occasioned by the bite of the tarantula, with the assistance of a jig-tune, immediately throws the patient into a fandango.—A friend of mine seems to have been perfectly acquainted with the nature of this property; for when a dancing master was complaining of the dulness of his scholars, and of the difficulty he experienced in making them learn, he very seriously advised him to set fire to his academy, assuring him that it would infallibly make them take to their *heels*. Severity is certainly the greatest principle used in teaching animals to perform extraordinary feats. Heat in dancing is indispensably necessary.—The English, justly celebrated for their ingenuity in improving upon foreign inventions (witness, among others, the addition of the shirt to the French ruffle), have, with a laudable perseverance in this plan, improved the science of brute-dancing.—I apprehend that some intimation of the Dutch method of teaching bears has lately been obtained, for a friend of mine informs me, that walking through a bye-lane in London, his attention was drawn to a paper stuck in the window of a dirty looking pie-house, on

The Salamanca Corpus: Kentish Tales (1824)

which was the following curious inscription, viz. "Pigs inserted here."—The oddity of the thing set his curiosity on tiptoe, and, determined to gratify it, he tapped at the door; a shabby woman appearing, he begged the favour of her to explain the notice to him.—At first she seemed unwilling to communicate any thing, but on his purchasing a mutton pie, and throwing down a shilling for it, at the same time assuring her, that he would not disclose any thing which might operate to her disadvantage, she informed him that she received pigs to be instructed in dancing; that the word inserted was recommended by a gentleman, and the meaning well understood by the trade; that for the purpose of training them (when the pies were drawn) a number, sometimes a whole race, were *inserted* (that is, put into the oven) together, and being prevented from escaping by an iron grate, and a boy with a hurdy-gurdy grinding music to them, they soon became erect, and began to dance a sort of irregular cotillon, which has a pretty effect; and is attended with this peculiar advantage, that in case any of them die in the process, they are immediately gutted, shaved, spitted, and *inserted* again (with a close oven lid) and when well baked, sent to a cook's shop, and sold for the benefit of the owners, as overdone roast pigs, at reduced prices.

[99]

It melts with ease the solid lead,
And biped makes of quadruped;
Professors, technically all,
This posture *first position* call.

Now as our bruin farther can
Pursue the' heat-avoiding plan,
He on the floor, in this hot clime,
Keeps down but one foot at a time,
Whips up each hinder foot in turn,
And t'other only leaves to burn;
But as he was not made to fly,
Must, *certes*, either dance or die,

And as his pads alternate play,
Rolls like a ship in Biscay-bay.
At length, when found as true to rock
As does the pend'lum of a clock,
The tutor takes his sniv'ling crowd,
Slurs in slow time, and very loud,

[100]

And by strict observation soon
Finds for the time a proper tune,*
And scrapes away until the bear
Roars, and his muzzle tries to tear;
This ev'ry day's repeated o'er,
Nor has he time to lick a sore.

Now when the ardent part is done,
He's let out with his muzzle on,
And taken to a cooler place,
To solidize his sweated grease;
Which is apply'd, and always will
At Amsterdam, the Hague, or Brill,
To reproduce, where it is bare,
The graceful covering of hair;
And even in th' assembly room,
Is much in vogue as a perfume!

Some time elaps'd, it is a rule
To try the pupil *out* of school,
By which the tutor may discern,
How soon 'tis likely he may learn,
For even there he hoists his feet,
Thinking the fiddle makes the heat
Thus in few lessons you will find

That he for dancing was design'd,

*The hewers of fiddles in Holland have lately very much improved these instruments.—They put them into warm feather-beds, which producing a genial and equable heat, gives them a mellowness of tone of which I have often been an extatic admirer.—There is no comparison between these and Cremonas.

[101]

And, when he's perfect in this part,
And danceth, though he feels no smart,
And waddles when he hears a fiddle
As children do who want to piddle,
He then exhibits out of doors*
Among th' admiring crowd of boors,
And, furnish'd with a rugged staff,
To bear him up, and make them laugh,
He in a rotatory way
Can dance twelve hours in a day,
And thus th' itinerant ragged mummings
Make a good article of commerce.

A child that's burnt will dread the flame;
Instinct in brutes is just the same:
E'en if our bear is quite at rest,
'Tis so indelibly imprest,
That should he at a future time,
By chance regain his native clime,
And daring men should try t'explore
The wonders of a frozen shore,
I'd risk my great estate, I swear,
In fam'd Utopia, or elsewhere,
Nay more than that, I'd stake my life,

All my *nine* children, and my wife,

*When *ursus major* has finished his academical education, and is ready to make his *debut* in public, he is able to dance with as much agility and gracefulness as any Burgomaster in Amsterdam, or any other dam in Holland.

[102]

If any one a fiddle took.

And slowly play'd the tune *Malbrook*,

Were it on Greenland's gelid snow

He'd feel his feet begin to glow,

And, rousing from his frigid trance,

Get up, and roll a solemn dance.

FINIS

