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### THE LANCASHIRE WITCH

BY THE LATE JOHN SHOLES

An owd maid aw shall be, for aw'm eighteen to-morn,  
An' aw m'yen to keep sengle an' free;  
But the dule's i' the lads, for a plague they were born,  
An' thi' never con let one a-be, a-be,  
They never con let one a-be.

Folk seyn aw'm to' pratty to dee an owd maid,  
An' 'at luv' sits an' laughs i' my ee;  
By-leddy! aw'm cap't 'at folk wantin' to wed;  
Thi' mey o tarry sengle for me, for me,  
Thi' mey o tarry sengle for me.

There's Robin a' Mill, — he's so fond of his brass, —  
Thinks to bargain like shoddy for me;  
He may see a foo's face if he looks in his glass,  
An aw'd thank him to let me a-be, a-be,  
Aw'd thank him to let me a-be.

Coom a chap t'other day o i' hallidi' trim,  
An' he swoor he'd goo dreawn him for me;  
"Hie thi whoam furst an' doff thi," aw sed, "bonny Jim!  
Or thae'll spuyl a good shute, does-ta see, does-ta see,  
Thae'll spuyl a good shute, does-ta see."

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Lancashire Witch" (1866)

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Cousin Dick says aw've heawses, an' land, an' some gowd,  
An' he's plann'd it so weel, dun yo' see!  
When we're wed he'll ha' th' heawses new-fettled an' sowd,  
But aw think he may let um a-be, a-be,  
Sly Dicky may let um a-be.

Ned's just volunteer'd into th' "roifle recruits,"  
An' a dashin' young sodiur is he;  
If his gun's like his een, it'll kill where it shoots,  
But aw'll mind as they dunnot shoot me, shoot me,  
Aw'll mind as they dunnot shoot me.

He sidles i' th' lone, an' he frimble at th' yate,  
An' he comes as he coom no' for me;  
He spers for eawr John, bo' says nought abeawt Kate,  
An' just gi'es a glent wi' his ee, his ee,  
An' just gi'es a glent wi' his ee.

He's tall an' he's straight, an' his curls are like gowd,  
An' there's summat so sweet in his ee,  
'At aw think i' my heart, if he'd nobbut be bowd,  
He needna' quite let me a-be, a-be,  
He needna' quite let me a-be.

