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A Collection Of Poems In Six Volumes. By Several Hands

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The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow: A Fable. Address'd to Phebe and Kitty
C. at Boarding School.

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The BEE, the ANT, and the SPARROW :

A F A B L E.

Address'd to PHEBE and KITTY C. at Boarding School.

MY dears, 'tis said in days of old,
That beasts cou'd talk, and birds cou'd scold.

But now it seems the human race
Alone engross the speaker's place.

Yet lately, if report be true,
(And much the tale relates to you)

There met a Sparrow, Ant, and Bee,
Which reason'd and convers'd as we.

Who reads my page will doubtless grant
That Phe's the wise industrious Ant.

And all with half an eye may see
That Kitty is the busy Bee.

Here then are two—but where's the third ?
Go search your school, you'll find the Bird.

Your school ! I ask your pardon fair,
I'm sure you'll find no Sparrow there.

Now to my tale—One summer's morn
A Bee rang'd o'er the verdant lawn ;

Studios

Studious to husband every hour,
 And make the most of ev'ry flow'r.
 Nimble from stalk to stalk she flies,
 And loads with yellow wax her thighs ;
 With which the artist builds her comb,
 And keeps all tight and warm at home :
 Or from the cowslip's golden bells
 Sucks honey to enrich her cells :
 Or every tempting rose pursues,
 Or sips the lilly's fragrant dews ;
 Yet never robs the shining bloom,
 Or of its beauty or perfume.
 Thus she discharg'd in every way
 The various duties of the day.

It chanc'd a frugal Ant was near,
 Whose brow was wrinkled o'er by care :
 A great œconomist was she,
 Nor less laborious than the Bee ;
 By pensive parents often taught
 What ills arise from want of thought ;
 That poverty on sloth depends,
 On poverty the loss of friends.
 Hence every day the Ant is found
 With anxious steps to tread the ground ;
 With curious search to trace the grain,
 And drag the heavy load with pain.

The active Bee with pleasure saw
 The Ant fulfil her parents' law.

Ah!

Ah! fister-labourer, fays ſhe,
 How very fortunate are we!
 Who taught in infancy to know
 The comforts, which from labour flow,
 Are independent of the great,
 Nor know the wants of pride and ſtate.
 Why is our food ſo very ſweet?
 Becauſe we earn, before we eat.
 Why are our wants ſo very few?
 Becauſe we nature's calls purſue.
 Whence our complacency of mind?
 Becauſe we act our parts aſſign'd.
 Have we inceſſant taſks to do?
 Is not all nature buſy too!
 Doth not the ſun with conſtant pace
 Perſiſt to run his annual race?
 Do not the ſtars, which ſhine ſo bright,
 Renew their courſes every night?
 Doth not the ox obedient bow
 His patient neck, and draw the plough?
 Or when did e'er the generous ſteed
 Withhold his labour or his ſpeed?
 If you all nature's ſyſtem ſcan,
 The only idle thing is man!
 A wanton Sparrow long'd to hear
 Their ſage diſcourſe, and ſtrait drew near,
 The bird was talkative and loud,
 And very pert and very proud;

As

As worthless and as vain a thing,
 Perhaps as ever wore a wing.
 She found, as on a spray she sat,
 The little friends were deep in chat ;
 That virtue was their favourite theme,
 And toil and probity their scheme :
 Such talk was hateful to her breast,
 She thought them arrant prudes at best,
 When to display her naughty mind,
 Hunger with cruelty combin'd ;
 She view'd the Ant with savage eyes,
 And hopt and hopt to snatch her prize.
 The bee, who watch'd her opening bill,
 And guess'd her fell design to kill ;
 Ask'd her from what her anger rose,
 And why she treated Ants as foes ?

The Sparrow her reply began,
 And thus the conversation ran.

Whenever I'm dispos'd to dine,
 I think the whole creation mine ;
 That I'm a bird of high degree,
 And every insect made for me.
 Hence oft I search the emmet brood,
 For emmets are delicious food :
 And oft in wantonness and play,
 I slay ten thousand in a day.
 For truth it is, without disguise,
 That I love mischief as my eyes.

Oh!

Oh! fie, the honest Bee reply'd,
 I fear you make base man your guide;
 Of every creature sure the worst,
 Tho' in creation's scale the first!
 Ungrateful man! 'tis strange he thrives,
 Who burns the Bees, to rob their hives!
 I hate his vile administration,

And so do all the emmet nation.
 What fatal foes to birds are men
 Quite to the Eagle from the Wren!
 Oh! do not men's example take,
 Who mischief do for mischief's sake;
 But spare the Ant—her worth demands
 Esteem and friendship at your hands.
 A mind with every virtue blest,
 Must raise compassion in your breast.

Virtue! rejoin'd the sneering bird,
 Where did you learn that gothic word?
 Since I was hatch'd, I never heard,
 That virtue was at all rever'd.

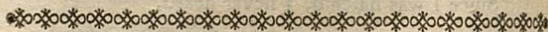
But say it was the ancients' claim,
 Yet moderns disavow the name;
 Unless, my dear, you read romances,
 I cannot reconcile your fancies.
 Virtue in fairy tales is seen
 To play the goddess or the queen;
 But what's a queen without the pow'r,
 Or beauty, child, without a dow'r?

Yet

Yet this is all that virtue brags,
 At best 'tis only worth in rags.
 Such whims my very heart derides,
 Indeed you make me burst my fides.
 Trust me Miss Bee — to speak the truth,
 I've copyed men from earliest youth ;
 The same our taste, the same our school,
 Passion and appetite our rule.
 And call me bird, or call me finner,
 I'll ne'er forego my sport or dinner.

A prowling cat the miscreant spies,
 And wide expands her amber eyes:
 Near and more near Grimalkin draws,
 She wags her tail, protends her paws ;
 Then springing on her thoughtless prey,
 She bore the vicious bird away.

Thus in her cruelty and pride,
 The wicked wanton Sparrow dy'd.



O D E on a S T O R M.

WITH gallant pomp, and beauteous pride
 The floating pile in harbour rode,
 Proud of her freight, the swelling tide
 Reluctant left the vessel's side,
 And rais'd it as she flow'd,

The

The waves with Eastern breezes curl'd,
 Had silver'd half the liquid plain ;
 The anchors weigh'd, the sails unfur'd,
 Serenely mov'd the wooden world,
 And stretch'd along the main.

The scaly natives of the deep,
 Prefs to admire the vast machine,
 In sporting gambols round it leap,
 Or swimming low, due distance keep,
 In homage to their queen.

Thus, as life glides in gentle gale
 Pretended friendship waits on pow'r,
 But early quits the borrow'd veil
 When adverse Fortune shifts the sail,
 And hastens to devour.

In vain we fly approaching ill,
 Danger can multiply its form ;
 Expos'd we fly like Jonas still,
 And heaven, when 'tis heaven's will,
 O'ertakes us in a storm.

The distant surges foamy white
 Foretel the furious blast ;
 Dreadful, tho' distant was the fight,
 Confed'rate winds and waves unite,
 And menace ev'ry mast.

Winds



Winds whistling thro' the shrouds, proclaim
 A fatal harvest on the deck,
 Quick in pursuit as active flame,
 Too soon the rolling ruin came,
 And ratify'd the wreck.

Thus, Adam smil'd with new-born grace,
 Life's flame inspir'd by heav'nly breath;
 Thus the same breath sweeps off his race,
 Disorders Nature's beauteous face,
 And spreads disease and death.

Stripp'd of her pride, the vessel rolls,
 And as by sympathy she knew
 The secret anguish of our souls,
 With inward deeper groans condoles
 The danger of her crew.

Now what avails it to be brave,
 On liquid precipices hung?
 Suspended on a breaking wave,
 Beneath us yawn'd a sea-green grave,
 And silenc'd ev'ry tongue.

The faithless flood forsook her keel,
 And downward launch'd the lab'ring hull,
 Stun'd she forgot awhile to reel
 And, feel almost, or seem'd to feel
 A momentary lull.

Thus