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Poems On Several Occasions

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Work for a Cooper. A Tale.

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W O R K *for* a C O O P E R.

A T A L E.

A Man may lead a happy life,
 Without that needful thing a wife :
 This long have lusty Abbots known,
 Who ne'er knew spouses ——— of their own.

What though your house be clean and neat,
 With couches, chairs, and beds compleat ;
 Though you each day invite a friend,
 Though he should every dish commend,
 On *Bagshot-beath* your mutton fed,
 Your fowls at *Brandford* born and bred ;
 Though purest wine your cellars boast,
 Wine worthy of the fairest Toast ;
 Yet there are other things requir'd :
 Ring, and let's see the maid you hir'd ———
 Bless me ! those hands might hold a broom,
 Twirl round a mop, and wash a room,

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A batchelor his maid should keep,
 Not for that servile use to sweep,
 Let her his humour understand,
 And turn to ev'ry thing her hand.
 Get you a las that's young and tight,
 Whose arms are, like her apron, white;
 What though her shift be seldom seen?
 Let that though coarse be always clean;
 She might each morn your tea attend,
 And on your wrist your ruffle mend;
 Then if you break a roguish jest,
 Or squeeze her hand, or pat her breast,
 She cries, oh dear Sir, don't be naught!
 And blushes speak her last night's fault.
 To her your household cares confide,
 Let your key jingle at her side,
 A footman's blunders tease and fret ye,
 E'en while you chide you smile on *Betty*.
 Discharge him then, if he's too spruce,
 For *Betty's* for his master's use.

Will you your am'rous fancy balk,
 For fear some prudish neighbour talk?



But you'll object, that you're afraid
Of the pert freedoms of a maid ;
Besides your wiser heads will say,
That she who turns her hand this way,
From one vice to another drawn,
Will lodge your silver spoons in pawn.
Has not the homely wrinkled jade
More need to learn the pilf'ring trade ?
For love all *Betty's* wants supplies,
Laces her shoes, her manteau dyes,
All her stuff suits she flings away,
And wears thread sattin every day.

Who then a dirty drab would hire,
Brown as the hearth of kitchin fire ?
When all must own, were *Betty* put
To the black duties of the slut,
As well she scow'rs or scrubs a floor,
And still is good for something more.

Thus to avoid the greater vice,
I knew a Priest, of conscience nice,
To quell his lust for neighbour's spouse,
Keep fornication in his house.

But

But



But you're impatient all this time,
 Fret at my counsel, curse my rhyme,
 Be satisfy'd. I'll talk no more,
 For thus my tale begins — Of yore
 There dwelt at *Blois* a Priest full fair,
 With rolling eye and crisped hair,
 His chin hung low, his brow was sleek,
 Plenty lay basking on his cheek,
 Whole days at cloyster grates he sat,
 Ogled, and talk'd of this and that
 So feelingly; the Nuns lamented
 That double bars were e'er invented.
 If he the wanton wife confest
 With downcast eye, and heaving breast;
 He strok'd her cheek to still her fear,
 And talk'd of sins *en Cavalier*.
 Each time enjoyn'd her penance mild,
 And fondled on her like his child.
 At ev'ry jovial gossip's feast
Pere Bernard was a welcome guest,
 Mirth suffer'd not the least restraint,
 He could at will shake off the faint:
 Nor frown'd he when they freely spoke,
 But shook his sides, and took the joke;



Nor fail'd he to promote the jest,
And shar'd the fins which they confest.

Yet that he might not always rome,
He kept conveniencies at home.

His maid was in the bloom of beauty,

Well limb'd for ev'ry social duty ;

He meddled with no household cares,

To her consign'd his whole affairs ;

She of his Study kept the keys,

For he was studious — of his ease :

She had the power of all his locks,

Could rummage ev'ry chest and box,

Her honesty such credit gain'd,

Not e'en the cellar was restrain'd.

In troth it was a goodly show,

Lin'd with full hogheads all a-row ;

One vessel, from the rank remov'd,

Far dearer than the rest he lov'd.

Pour la bonne bouche 'twas set aside,

To all but choicest friends deny'd.

He now and then would send a quart,

To warm some wife's retentive heart,



Against confession's fullen hour :
 Wine has all secrets in its power.
 At common feasts it had been waste,
 Nor was it fit for layman's taste,
 If monk or friar were his guest,
 They drank it, for they know the best.
 Nay, he at length so fond was grown,
 He always drank it when — alone.

Who shall recount his civil labours,
 In pious visits to his neighbours ?
 Whene'er weak husbands went astray,
 He guest their wives were in the way,
 'Twas then his charity was shown,
 He chose to see them when alone.

Now was he bent on cuckoldom :
 He knew friend *Dennis* was from home ;
 His wife (a poor neglected beauty,
 Defrauded of a husband's duty)
 Had often told him at confession,
 How hard she struggled 'gainst transgression.
 He now resolves, in heat of blood,
 To try how firm her virtue stood.

He

He knew that wine (to love best aid)
 Has oft' made bold the shamefac'd maid,
 Taught her to romp, and take more freedoms,
 Than nymphs train'd up at *Smith's* or *Needham's*.

A mighty bottle straight he chose,
 Such as might give two Friars their dose :
Nannette he call'd : the cellar door,
 She straight unlocks, descends before,
 He follow'd close. But when he spys
 His fav'rite cask ; with lifted eyes
 And lifted hands aloud he crys.
 Heigh day ! my darling wine astoop !
 It must, alas ! have sprung a hoop ;
 That there's a leak is past all doubt,
 (Reply'd the maid) — I'll find it out.
 She sets the candle down in haste,
 Tucks her white apron round her waste,
 The hoghead's mouldy side ascends,
 She straddles wide, and downward bends ;
 So low she stoops to seek the flaw,
 Her coats rose high, her master saw —
 I see — he crys — (then clapt her fast)
 The leak through which my wine has past.

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Then

Then all in haste the maid descended,
And in a trice the leak was mended.
He found in *Nannette* all he wanted,
So *Dennis'* brows remain'd unplanted.

Ere since this time all lusty Friars
(Warm'd with predominant desires,
Whene'er the flesh with spirit quarrels)
Look on the sex as leaky barrels.
Beware of these, ye jealous spoufes,
From such like coopers guard your houses;
For if they find not work at home,
For jobs through all the town they rome.

